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Ergativity in Hindko

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A language is considered to be split-ergative if the subject of intransitive verb and the object of transitive verb bear same case. In ergative languages, the subject of a transitive verb exhibits a special marked case which is known as ergative. It is an established conception that the nominative head of a transitive verb exhibits ergative case if the tense is past when a transitive verb represents perfective aspect. This paper aims to analyse Hindko as split ergative language adopting standard mechanism of case marking and verb agreement. Hindko belongs to the Indo-Aryan language family. The data for this study was collected through a questionnaire which was distributed among the Hindko speakers of Neelum valley, Jehlum valley and Mansehra. The data was then analysed to see the ratio of use of Ergative marker by the speakers of these three regions. The results show that like other Indo-Aryan languages, Hindko exhibits split ergative behavior. However, the use of ergative marker ‘-sun’ in Hindko is subject to not only transitivity of verb and perfective aspect but also third person. Moreover, the ergative case marker was not found to be used frequently. The speakers of the same community do not show the same tendency towards the use of ergative case marker.

Key words: ergativity, Hindko, perfectivity, third-person, transitivity