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ERGATIVITY AND ACCUSATIVITY IN SHOKLENG (GÊ)¹

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0. Introduction. Dixon (1979) called for information on ergative and “split-ergative” patterns in languages of the world. This article responds to that call, making available some information on ergativity and accusativity in the Shokleng² language of Brazil. In large measure, Central Brazil remains a linguistic wilderness, although recent works (e.g., Ham et al. 1979, McLeod and Mitchell 1978, and Wiesemann 1972) are beginning to allow us some understanding of basic Gê language structures. Nevertheless, from the point of view of global comparative issues such as have been raised by Dixon (1979), and before him by Silverstein (1976), almost nothing is known about this region. This article is therefore perforce somewhat exploratory.

For basic definitions and notation, I follow Dixon (1979:61): S = Intransitive subject; A = Transitive subject; O = Transitive object. An ergative-absolutive (or simply ergative) pattern is one that treats S and O identically, differentiating A, regardless of the specific way in which this is linguistically manifested. The “case” associated with A is called the “ergative,” that with S and O the “absolutive.” A nominative-accusative (or simply accusative) pattern is one that treats S and A identically, differentiating O, once again regardless of the specific way in

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² “Shokleng” is an anglicization of the Portuguese “Xokleng.” The Shokleng, who are presently located on the government reservation near Ibirama, in the south Brazilian state of Santa Catarina, have also been called “Botocudo of Santa Catarina,” “Aweikoma,” and “Kaingang,” the latter owing to their close linguistic and cultural affiliation with the neighboring tribe of that name. Previous linguistic work on Shokleng includes two papers by Henry (1935; 1948) and a paper by Wiesemann (1978).

which this is linguistically manifested. The case associated with S and A is called the “nominative,” that associated with O the “accusative.”

Shokleng, together with probably the majority of languages in the world, is a “split-ergative” language, manifesting both ergative and accusative patterning. The purpose of this article is (1) to identify the principal “splitting points” in Shokleng, that is, where the language manifests an ergative and where an accusative pattern, and, indeed, where neither ergativity nor accusativity emerges, and (2) to see how the splitting in this language matches up against the cross-linguistic universals of splitting posited by Silverstein (1976) and Dixon (1979). I am concerned here primarily with three splits in Shokleng: (1) an aspectually conditioned split in case marking in simple sentences, (2) a split in number agreement on the verb, and (3) a main/subordinate clause split. I shall also mention a specific type of cross-clause coreferencing, which happens to manifest neither ergative nor accusative patterning. It must be stressed, however, that the major portion of the syntax remains to be studied.

While this article is concerned primarily with Shokleng, I do endeavor in 5 to show how split-ergativity manifests itself formally in other Gê languages. Most closely akin to Shokleng is Kaingang, and it is possible to discern in Kaingang similarities to the Shokleng patterns. Unfortunately, the available grammars (Wiesemann 1972; 1978), tagmemic in orientation, fail to provide the data necessary for a thorough understanding of Kaingang split-ergativity. Farther afield in the Gê family is Kraho (Shell 1952). From the available data, it is possible to conclude that, while formal realizations differ from those in Shokleng, Kraho nevertheless manifests a clear pattern of split-ergativity. Moreover, data on Shavante—another Gê language—confirm the prevalence of complex patterns of split-ergativity in this family.

1.1 Case marking in simple sentences: the aspectually conditioned split. The basic split in simple sentences is illustrated in the following examples,³ where (1)—an intransitive sentence—and (2)—a transitive sentence—display the ergative pattern:

³ The phonology of Shokleng is discussed in Wiesemann (1978). The present transcriptions accord with that phonology. There are some orthographic differences between my transcriptions and those of Wiesemann, but the correspondences can be readily decoded by anyone consulting her work. I have translated the majority of examples in this article using the English past tense. Shokleng does not obligatorily encode tense, however, and very often these sentences can be elicited in other ways, e.g., by means of the present progressive. Aspectual distinctions in Shokleng are discussed in 1.4. It should be noted that examples (30)–(33) are translated using the present progressive in English because they were actually elicited in this way.

- S
- (1) *ti tēŋ wã*
 he go stative
 'He went'.

- A O
- (2) *ti tš ti penũ wã*
 he erg he shoot stative
 'He shot him'.

Shokleng is a language that employs reasonably stable postpositions, and it is evident from these examples that the postposition *tš* is used ergatively. It marks the subject of a transitive sentence, but not the subject of an intransitive sentence, which is rather, in being formally unmarked, aligned with the transitive object.

Two further examples, (3) and (4), respectively intransitive and transitive, illustrate the accusative pattern:

- S
- (3) *tã wũ tẽ mũ*
 he nom go active
 'He went'.

- A O
- (4) *tã wũ ti penũ mũ*
 he nom he shoot active
 'He shot him'.

These sentences differ semantically from (1) and (2), respectively, only in having "active" as opposed to "stative" aspect. In them, however, transitive and intransitive subjects are treated identically, in two respects: (1) they have the same pronominal shape, as opposed to the pronominal shape of the transitive object; and (2) they both take the postposition *wũ*, which never occurs as a marker of the transitive object. With A and S aligned and differentiated from O, we thus have a nominative-accusative pattern. However, according to Dixon (1979:76-78), in nominative-accusative systems it is almost always the nominative case that is unmarked, but in Shokleng it is the accusative. For this reason, I classify the Shokleng nominative-accusative in Dixon's "marked nominative" type.

In this area of Shokleng grammar, therefore, there is an ergative/accusative split, conditioned by the stative versus active aspect of the sentence. The split is found as well when A, S, and O are nouns, rather than third-person pronouns, although the only manifestation of the split is the postpositional nominative (*wũ*) or the ergative (*tš*) marker.

TABLE 1

SHOKLENG PRONOMINAL FORMS

	Pronouns	Person Markers
1st-person singular	<i>ɛŋ</i>	<i>nũ</i>
1st-person plural	<i>ãŋ</i>	<i>nã</i>
2d person	<i>a</i>	<i>mã</i>
3d-person singular masculine . . .	<i>ti</i>	(<i>tã</i>) <i>wũ</i>
3d-person singular feminine	<i>ði</i>	<i>wũ</i>
3d-person plural	<i>ɔŋ</i>	<i>wũ</i>

1.2. Personal pronouns. Shokleng does not exhibit an ergative/accusative split along the noun phrase hierarchy (Silverstein 1976 and Dixon 1979), as is common in Australia and elsewhere. However, this hierarchy is relevant to the specific ways in which the Shokleng split manifests itself, since there is a difference between first and second person, on the one hand, and third person, on the other, with regard to the manifestation of accusativity. Consequently, it is necessary to say something about the pronominal system here.

Shokleng has a set of pronouns and a set of what may be called “person markers” (see table 1). The pronouns function in A, S, and O position in ergative constructions, and as objects of postpositions and as the possessive form in both ergative and accusative constructions. They are also used for A and S function in accusative constructions when the A or S noun phrase is focused, as will be shown below. They can also be used together with the focus marker, as in (5) and (6), or without it, as in (1) and (2), in ergative constructions:

(5) $\overbrace{a \quad hã \quad tĩ}^A \quad \overbrace{ti \quad penũ \quad wã}^O$
 you focus ergative he shoot stative
 ‘It was you who shot him’.

(6) $\overbrace{ti \quad hã \quad tel \quad wã}^S$
 he focus die stative
 ‘It was he who died’.

The “person markers,” in contrast, are inherently nominative case forms, occurring only in A and S noun phrases. There they function as either (1) nominative case markers, when the noun phrase is focused, or (2) the sole pronominal form, when the noun phrase is not focused,

although complications appear in the third person. In the former usage, their distribution is perfectly parallel to the ergative case form *tš*. This is shown in the following examples, which parallel examples (5) and (6):

- S
- (7) $\overline{\text{ẽñ hã nũ tẽ mũ}}$
 I focus 1s-nom go active
 'It was I who went'.

- S
- (8) $\overline{\text{ãŋ hã nã mũ mũ}}$
 we focus 1p-nom go active
 'It was we who went'.

- S
- (9) $\overline{\text{a hã mã tẽ mũ}}$
 you focus 2-nom go active
 'It was you who went'.

- S
- (10) $\overline{\text{ĩ hã wũ tẽ mũ}}$
 he focus 3-nom go active
 'It was he who went'.

- S
- (11) $\overline{\text{đĩ hã wũ tẽ mũ}}$
 she focus 3-nom go active
 'It was she who went'.

- S
- (12) $\overline{\text{ɔŋ hã wũ mũ mũ}}$
 they focus 3-nom go active
 'It was they who went'.

This pattern, making use of *wũ*, extends into the noun range as well, as shown in:

- S
- (13) $\overline{\text{kɔñŋəŋ hã wũ tẽ mũ}}$
 man focus 3-nom go active
 'It was the man who went'.

The same pattern emerges when the focused noun phrase is in A function, as in (14), though I do not give all of the examples here:

- $\overbrace{\hspace{10em}}^{\text{A}} \quad \overbrace{\hspace{2em}}^{\text{O}}$
- (14) *ẽñ hã nũ ti penũ mũ*
 I focus 1s-nom he shoot active
 ‘It was I who shot him’.

In the focused noun phrase, therefore, usage of the person markers is uniform throughout the noun phrase hierarchy. The person markers function as nominative case markers. They occur obligatorily and indicate that the preceding pronoun or noun is in A or S function. It should be noted that there is no role for the third-person singular masculine form *tã*, displayed in table 1 as intermediate between the pronouns and person markers. The reasons for my classification of this form as intermediate will emerge subsequently. However, it is of interest that in the speech of younger Shokleng speakers the *tã* form has become fully aligned with the person markers. From them can be elicited such sentences as:

- $\overbrace{\hspace{10em}}^{\text{S}}$
- (15) *ẽ hã tã tẽ mũ*
 3 coreference focus 3s-nom go active
 ‘It was he who went’.

ẽ is a third-person coreferencing device, discussed below (4). Such sentences never occur in the speech of elder Shokleng speakers. They indicate that a reinterpretation of the *tã* form is underway, in which *tã* can also be used, like the other person markers, as a nominative marker when the A or S noun phrase is focused.

If the A or S noun phrase is not focused, a distinct pattern emerges, conditioned by the noun phrase hierarchy. For first and second person, the person marker alone is employed. It appears as a postverbal particle, as in:

- (16) *tẽ nũ mũ*
 go 1s-nom active
 ‘I went’.
- (17) *mũ nã mũ*
 go 1p-nom active
 ‘We went’.
- (18) *tẽ mã mũ*
 go 2-nom active
 ‘You went’.

A common noun, in contrast, can never occur in postverbal position. If it is nonfocused, in a simple sentence, it occurs with the nominative marker *wũ*, as in (13), but without the focus particle *hã*:

- (19) *kɔñŋəŋ tẽ wũ tẽ mũ*
 man definite 3-nom go active
 'The man went'.

For either common nouns or first- or second-person pronouns, the pattern is identical when the noun phrase is in A function, as in:

- (20) *ti pẽnũ nũ mũ*
 he shoot 1s-nom active
 'I shot him'.

- (21) *kɔñŋəŋ tẽ wũ ti pẽnũ mũ*
 man definite 3-nom he shoot active
 'The man shot him'.

There is thus a dichotomy in patterning between common nouns and first- and second-person pronouns.

From the perspective of the noun phrase hierarchy, it is of interest that an overlap occurs in the third person. The third-person plural and third-person singular feminine pronouns occur together with the third-person marker in postverbal position, as in:

- (22) *tẽ wũ ði mũ*
 go 3-nom she active
 'She went'.

The third-person singular masculine pronoun *ti*, however, does not occur in postverbal position. Instead, the intermediate form *tã* appears, as in:

- (23) *tẽ wũ tã mũ*
 go 3-nom he active
 'He went'.

Sentences of this form without the *wũ* particle also occur and, indeed, are probably more common, especially in the speech of younger Shokleng speakers. There is no apparent semantic difference. Since the third-person pronouns, except *ti*, together with *tã*, occur in postverbal position, they pattern similarly to the first- and second-person pronouns. This is true for both transitive and intransitive verbs.

However, the third-person forms can also occur in sentence-initial position, and in this sense they pattern like the common nouns:

- (24) *tã wũ tẽ mu*
 he 3-nom go active
 ‘He went’.
- (25) *ði wũ tẽ mũ*
 she 3-nom go active
 ‘She went’.
- (26) *ɔŋ wũ mũ mũ*
 they 3-nom go active
 ‘They went’.

tã replaces *ti*, which can never occur in this position. So in third person a three-way distinction develops, resulting from the overlap of two distinct manifestations of the focused/nonfocused contrast—that of the first- and second-person pronouns, on the one hand, and that of the common nouns, on the other.

It is apparent from the above examples that *tã* and *wũ* are both distributed differently from the first- and second-person markers. *tã* is intermediate between a pronoun and a person marker. Like the other third-person pronouns, except *ti*, it can occur in preverbal position as a nonfocused A or S noun phrase, and, indeed, it specifically replaces *ti*, which cannot occur here. Alternatively, like the person markers and unlike the pronouns, its use is restricted to A and S function. *wũ* is intermediate between the person markers and other nominative case markers. Like the other person markers, it is used as a nominative case marker when the A or S noun phrase is focused. Significantly, its use is restricted to third person. Unlike the other person markers, however, it does not occur as the sole pronominal form when the A or S noun phrase is nonfocused. With regard to the distribution of forms as well, therefore, the third person is distinct from first and second person.

It should be observed that still another pattern emerges when we are dealing with clauses bound together by means of connectives in extended discourse. When following a connective, the first- and second-person markers can occur in preverbal position when the A or S noun phrase is nonfocused, as in:

- (27) *a tã tu kũ katele kũ*
 you ergative carry-off conjunction descend back conjunction
mã klẽ tə ðãŋ
 2-nom mountain there place . . .

‘When you carry (them) off and descend back here, then you place (them) on a mountain over there . . .’.

Here the *tã* form becomes even more closely aligned with the person marker set.

1.3. The ergative marker *tã*. *tã* is an ergative marker insofar as it is always used together with a noun phrase that is in A function and it is never used with a noun phrase in S function (or O function), provided that no postpositional phrase appears between the S noun phrase and the verb. This is shown in (1) and (2) above. However, the proviso about postpositional phrases is crucial. A seemingly S noun phrase is followed by *tã* when a postpositional phrase appears between it and the verb, as is shown in:

- (28) *ti tã ãmẽn lɔ tẽŋ wã*
 he ergative path along go stative
 'He went along the path'.

However, if the postpositional phrase appears in initial position, then the *tã* particle disappears, as in:

- (29) *ãmẽn lɔ ti tẽŋ wa*
 path along he go stative
 'He went along the path'.

It is not clear precisely what function fronting has, but there is a general correlation between initial position and emphasis.

If *tã* can appear in this way, it becomes open to question whether *tã* is actually marking A function. That it does so is shown by its appearance in sentences with transitive verbs where no object is actually present:

- (30) *ti tã kupe wã*
 he ergative wash stative
 'He is washing'.

Of course, this verb may appear with a direct object, as in:

- (31) *ti tã ẽ kuyan tẽ kupe wã*
 he ergative his body def. wash stative
 'He is washing his body'.

For intransitive verbs, the *tã* does not appear:

- (32) *ti wãñlən wã*
 he write stative
 'He is writing'.

The verb in (32), which is probably better translated as 'to make marks', since it was used until recently only for body painting, cannot take a direct object. This supplies a formal basis for the classification of verbs

into “transitive” and “intransitive.” It shows, moreover, that the presence of *tɕ* cannot be explained solely by the appearance of a constituent between the A or S noun phrase and the verb. The phenomenon in examples (28) and (29) must be explained in some other way. *tɕ* is used to mark A function.

In addition to marking A function, *tɕ* is also used as a postposition to mark instrumental function, as is shown in:

- (33) *ti tɕ meŋ tɕ lãñlãñ wã*
 he ergative ax instrumental work stative
 ‘He is working with an ax’.

1.4. Aspect. Shokleng manifests aspectual distinctions in two ways: (1) by means of a system of verbal suffixes, and (2) by means of sentential predicating particles, such as the *mũ* and *wã* particles in the above examples. These two types of aspectual marking are related, but sometimes the relationship is a complex one. In the simplest case, when we have a single clause occurring as an independent sentence, with a single verb and a single predicating particle, *mũ* predication cooccurs with the active form of the verb and *wã* with the stative form. This is shown in these examples:

- (34) *ti tel wã*
 he die+stative stative
 ‘He died’.
- (35) *tã wũ ti mũ*
 he 3-nom die+active active
 ‘He died’.

The system of verbal suffixes is extremely complex and need not be described in detail here. It is nearly identical to that described by Wiesemann (1972:90–94) for the closely related Kaingang language. Verbs can have from one to four distinct forms (cf. Wiesemann 1978:208), but the complex system of suffixes is reducible to two morphemes, which Wiesemann glosses for Kaingang as *Handlungs-* (here ‘active’) and *Zustands-* (here ‘stative’) *anzeiger* (Wiesemann 1972:90). The basic meanings of these morphemes do indeed seem to be event or activity and state of affairs, respectively.

More immediately relevant to the problem of ergativity and accusativity is the system of postverbal predicating particles, which simultaneously encode aspect. This system is again largely cognate with that of Kaingang (Wiesemann 1972:107–10), though the semantic interpretations proposed for Kaingang differ somewhat from the semantic interpretations proposed here.

Semantically, the basic contrast in sentential predication seems to be between stative (or 'resultative' stative) and nonstative (or 'active'), encoded in the formal contrast between *wã* and *mũ*. The former is used regularly for classical statives, for example, 'to be hungry', 'to be sick', though here it alternates with the marked form *kɔ*, which is used primarily for what in English are predicate adjectives. Thus, both (36) and (37) are possible in Shokleng:

- (36) *ti kɔŋɔ wã*
 he sick stative
 'He is sick'.
 (37) *ti kɔŋɔ kɔ*
 he sick
 'He is sick'.

However, *wã* is also used with any verb of action to indicate that the sentence describes the state of affairs resulting from the action. Thus, (38) really has a meaning akin to 'he is in the state of having run':

- (38) *ti lələ wã*
 he run stative
 'He ran'.

mũ indicates active aspect, but it also encodes the unmarked member of two additional aspectual distinctions: (1) incomplete/nonincomplete (or complete), and (2) continuative versus noncontinuative (or punctual). A series of particles, homophonous with the verbs 'to stand' (*ñã*), 'to sit' (*nẽ*), 'to lie' (*nɔ*), and 'to hang' (*čɔ*), indicates continuative aspect. These are only used when the action is viewed as enduring over time. When set in contrast to them, as in (39) and (40), *mũ* indicates punctual action:

- (39) *tã wũ kupɛŋ mũ*
 he 3-nom wash-active noncontinuative
 'He washed'.
 (40) *tã wũ kupɛŋ ñã*
 he 3-nom wash-active continuative
 'He was/ remained washing'.

Similarly, the particle *tẽ*, homophonous with the verb 'to go', expresses imperfectivity or incompleteness. In specific contrast to *tẽ*, *mũ* indicates perfectivity or completion, although it is also used when neither imperfectivity nor perfectivity is specifically intended. As in many other languages the imperfectivity/perfectivity contrast in Shokleng has become associated as well with a present-future versus past tense contrast, as in:

- (41) *tã wũ tẽ tẽ*
 he 3-nom go-active imperfective
 'He is going' or 'He is going to go'.
- (42) *tã wũ tẽ mũ*
 he 3-nom go-active perfective
 'He went'.

It should be noted that the markedness relations here correspond to those posited as universal by Friedrich (1974).

When *mũ*, *tẽ*, *ñẽ*, or the other continuative aspect particles occur in sentence-final position, the sentential aspect is active. However, the continuative/noncontinuative contrast can also be made within stative predication, as in:

- (43) *ti hã tĩ wãñkaŋlɔn ñã wã*
 he focus ergative practice continuative stative
 'It was he who was practicing'.

This is a comparatively rare construction. For the most part, when a sentence is marked for stative aspect, it is not also marked for the other aspectual contrasts. Yet examples such as these show that the stative/active contrast is distributionally the most basic of the aspectual contrasts.

From the perspective of ergativity and accusativity, the semantics of aspect are important. For, in Shokleng, when the main clause of a sentence is predicated with the stative particle, the case marking of noun phrases is ergative. When the main clause is predicated with any of the active particles, whether continuative or noncontinuative, complete or incomplete, the case marking of noun phrases is accusative.

This suggests that the ergative/accusative contrast in Shokleng is conditioned by the semantic contrast between resultative stative and active aspect. From the perspective of Dixon's (1979) and Silverstein's (1976) theory of ergative/accusative splits, this makes perfect sense. Dixon points out that accusative marking is used, in a given split, where the semantics of the conditioning variable—be it aspect, tense, the noun phrase hierarchy, or verb classes—allow for greater control by the actor over the action. Ergative marking is used when less actor control is possible. Thus, if there is a split conditioned by tense, accusative marking will occur with future and ergative marking with past tense, never the other way around. Similarly, if there is a split conditioned by the noun phrase hierarchy, accusativity will be associated with more animate and hence controlling noun phrases, ergativity with less animate and hence less controlling noun phrases. The Shokleng case fits with this cross-linguistic principle. In active aspect, there is inherently greater

possibility for actor control than in resultative stative aspect, where actor control is minimized.

2. Number agreement. A great many, though not all, Shokleng verbs inflect for number. Number is marked by means of a complex system of prefixation, reduplication, and suppletion, very similar to that described by Wiesemann (1972:94–99) for Kaingang. What is important for present purposes is that number agreement is systematically ergative. Verbs are marked for plurality when the O or S noun phrase is plural. Furthermore, verb marking is independent of the singular or plural nature of the A noun phrase. Examples (44) and (45) show number agreement with S:

(44) *tã wũ tẽ mũ*
 he 3-nom go, sg. active
 'He went'.

(45) *ɔŋ wũ mũ mũ*
 they 3-nom go, pl. active
 'They went'.

Examples (46) and (47) show agreement with O:

$\overline{\text{A}}$ $\overline{\text{O}}$
 (46) *tã wũ ti pɛnũ mũ*
 he 3-nom he shoot, sg. active
 'He shot him'.

$\overline{\text{A}}$ $\overline{\text{O}}$
 (47) *tã wũ mẽ ɔŋ pin mũ*
 he 3-nom distributive they shoot, pl. active
 'He shot them'.

When A is plural and O is singular, as in (8), the verb remains in the singular:

$\overline{\text{A}}$ $\overline{\text{O}}$
 (48) *ɔŋ wũ ti pɛnũ mũ*
 they 3-nom he shoot, sg. active
 'They shot him'.

Ergative number agreement occurs regardless of aspectual marking and independently of the ergative or accusative marking of noun phrases.

Ergative number agreement occurs systematically in elicited sentences, where we are dealing with "careful" speech. In transcriptions of actual

discourse, however, the plural verb forms sometimes fail to occur.⁴ This is more true of transitive than of intransitive verbs, and the tendency to use singular rather than plural verb forms is more pronounced in younger speakers than in older ones. Indeed, such plural forms as *win* ('to give more than one object') are never used by many younger speakers. For them, number agreement is largely associated with the S noun phrase. This may be part of a shift away from ergative agreement.

While there is no true pattern of split-ergativity in number agreement, since the agreement is never accusative, there is an accusative pattern in number agreement with use of the continuative aspectual particles. This pattern appears primarily in elicited sentences, reflective of "careful" speech, and even there it does not occur with perfect regularity. The agreement between the continuative particle and the S noun phrase is shown in:

(49) *tã wũ lələ ñã*
 he 3-nom run continuative ('stand'), sg.
 'He is running'.

(50) *ɔŋ wũ lələ nɔdɛ*
 they 3-nom run continuative, pl.
 'They are running'.

The agreement between the continuative particle and the A noun phrase is shown in:

(51) *tã wũ ti wɛŋ ñã*
 he 3-nom he see continuative, sg.
 'He is looking at (seeing) him'.

(52) *ɔŋ wũ ti wɛŋ nɔdɛ*
 they 3-nom he see continuative, pl.
 'They are looking at (seeing) him'.

⁴ It should be observed that the plural form of the verb is occasionally used to express the repetition of an action. This is shown in the following elicited sentence:

tã wũ kɪ lãŋlãŋ katɛ
 he 3-nom cry out, stat. jump, pl. come, sg., act.
 'He came shouting and jumping'.

Here the verb 'to jump' is in the plural despite the singular nature of the S noun phrase. Evidently, the informant intended to capture by means of the plural form the repeated nature of the action. The pattern of number agreement discussed here, however, has been thoroughly established by means of numerous examples. It is evident that the encoding of repeated action is only a secondary function of the Shokleng plural verb form.

When A is singular and O plural, the singular form of the continuative particle appears, as in:

- (53) *tã wũ ɔŋ wɛŋ ñã*
 he 3-nom they see continuative, sg.
 'He is looking at (seeing) them'.

This is a definite pattern of accusativity, and it lends to number agreement the appearance of a split-ergative system.

It is of interest that some intransitive verbs, which obligatorily take a postpositional phrase, inflect for plurality in agreement either with the S noun phrase or with the postpositional noun phrase. Examples (54) and (55) show agreement with the S noun phrase:

- (54) *tã wũ ẽn tẽ lɔ la mũ*
 he 3-nom house def. through enter, sg. active
 'He entered the house'.

- (55) *ɔŋ wũ ẽn tẽ lɔ ŋe mũ*
 they 3-nom house def. through enter, pl. active
 'They entered the house'.

Example (56) shows inflection for plurality just with the postpositional noun phrase:

- (56) *tã wũ ẽn tẽ mẽ ŋe mũ*
 he 3-nom house def. distributive enter, pl. active
 'He entered the houses'.

The distributive particle *mẽ* occurs here and elsewhere as the plural form of the postposition *lɔ* 'through'. The key factor, however, is use of the plural form of the verb, which shows that the postpositional noun phrase is being treated syntactically in some measure like O. This may be related to the phenomenon discussed above in 1.3, where in the presence of an O-like postpositional phrase (i.e., one interposed between S and the verb) the S noun phrase is treated in A fashion (i.e., it takes the ergative marker).

3. Main and subordinate clauses. The aspectual conditioning discussed in 1 applies not only to simple sentences, consisting of a single clause, but also to the main clause of any sentence. If the main clause is predicated with a stative particle, the case marking of noun phrases in that clause is ergative, as is shown in (57), taken from text:

- | Main clause | Subordinate clause |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| (57) <i>tə tẽ ɔŋ tĩ</i> | <i>ŋal ẽ mɛn ɔŋ</i> |
| woman def. plural ergative | corn coref. husband plural |

The S noun phrase of the subordinate clause in (59) takes zero marking; the A noun phrase of the subordinate clause in (60) takes the ergative particle. The same pattern emerges in conditionals and, indeed, also in desire or purposive complements, as in:

- | | | | | | | |
|------|------|-------|-------------|---------|---------|-----------|
| | Main | | Subordinate | | Main | |
| (61) | ɔŋ | wũ | ẽ | le | ye | ke mũ |
| | they | 3-nom | coref. | descend | purpose | do active |

‘They want to descend, lit., they do in order to descend’.

- | | | | | |
|------|-------------|----------|----------|----------------------|
| | Subordinate | | Main | |
| (62) | ẽ | tĩ | uŋmi tãñ | ye tã ke mũ |
| | coref. | ergative | pig kill | purpose he do active |

‘He wants to kill the pig, lit., he does in order to kill the pig’.

From these and other examples it is possible to conclude that there is in Shokleng another type of split, in addition to that conditioned by the aspectual marking of the main clause, and in addition to that found in number agreement. This split is conditioned by the distinction between main and subordinate clauses. Dixon (1979:96–98) has already pointed out patterns of main/subordinate clause splitting. He suggests that whether the subordinate clause takes ergative or accusative marking is something determined by the nature of the subordinate clause itself, for example, relative clauses will tend to take ergative marking, purposive complements accusative marking. Main clauses “must show the type of marking OPPOSITE to that of the subordinate clause, IF there is a split” (Dixon 1979:97). Shokleng diverges from this formulation in two respects. First, ergative patterning appears in all recognizable types of subordinate clause. Second, the main clause may pattern either ergatively or accusatively, that is, it does not show the “opposite” marking.

With regard to the second point, it should be noted that, in the great majority of text sentences taken from extended narratives, the main clause, unlike that in example (57), is accusatively marked. This is because narrative sentences generally involve active aspect. There is thus the appearance that the main clause is always accusatively patterned. However, the isolated cases, such as (57), together with various elicited examples, show that it is indeed possible to have ergative marking in main clauses.

4. Cross-clause coreference. The issue of ergativity and accusativity in syntax, as discussed by Dixon (1979), has yet to be investigated in its entirety for Shokleng. However, a reasonably thorough examination has been made of one important phenomenon—third-person cross-clause

coreferencing. The pattern that has emerged here is neither purely ergative nor purely accusative.

Shokleng has a third-person anaphoric or, more often, cataphoric pronoun $\bar{\epsilon}$, which has already appeared in some of the preceding examples. This pronoun is used in a subordinate clause to indicate that the noun phrase it replaces has the same referent as a noun phrase in the main clause. In (63), the S noun phrase of the subordinate clause has the same reference as the S noun phrase in the main clause, as is indicated by the subscripts:

- (63) $\bar{\epsilon}$ *tawi* *kũ* *tã* *wãñkən* *tẽ*
 coref. arrive, sg., stat. conj. he rest imperfective
 ‘When he_i arrives, he_i is going to rest’.

In (64), when the coreferencing device is not used, the two S noun phrases have different referents:

- (64) *ti* *tawi* *kũ* *tã* *wãñkən* *tẽ*
 he arrive, sg., stat. conj. he rest imperfective
 ‘When he_i arrives, he_j is going to rest’.

If we consider the possibilities for the use of $\bar{\epsilon}$ over the various functions (A, S, and O), we come up with the following results. If the coreferent main clause noun phrase is in S function, $\bar{\epsilon}$ may be used to replace S, A, or O in the subordinate clause, as is shown in (63), (65), and (66), respectively:

- (65) $\bar{\epsilon}$ *tã* *uyol* *tãñ* *kɔlkũ* *tã* *tawiŋ* *tẽ*
 coref. ergative tapir kill after he arrive, sg., act. imperfective
 ‘After he_i kills the tapir, he_i is going to arrive’.

- (66) *tə* *ði* *tã* $\bar{\epsilon}$ *we* *kɔlkũ* *tã* *wũ*
 woman fem. ergative coref. see, stat. after he 3-nom
 tẽ *mũ*
 go, sg., act. active
 ‘After the woman saw him_i, he_i left’.

There seems to be no significance to the presence of *wũ* in (66) versus its absence in (65) and (63). It often appears when the sentence is repeated.

When the coreferent main clause noun phrase is in A function, $\bar{\epsilon}$ can again be used, but this time only for S or A in the subordinate clause. This use of $\bar{\epsilon}$ is shown in (67) and (68):

- (67) $\bar{\epsilon}$ *tawi* *kũ* *tã* *a* *ðopalaŋ* *tẽ*
 coref. arrive, sg., stat. conj. he you teach imperfective
 ‘When he_i arrives, he_i is going to teach you’.

- (68) $\bar{\epsilon}$ $t\bar{s}$ $uyol$ $t\bar{a}\bar{n}$ $k\bar{o}lk\bar{u}$ $t\bar{a}$ $w\bar{u}$ ti $n\bar{\epsilon}$ $t\bar{\epsilon}$ ko
 coref. ergative tapir kill after he 3-nom his meat def. eat
 $t\bar{\epsilon}$
 imperfective

'After he_i kills the tapir, he_i is going to eat its meat'.

If the coreferent subordinate clause noun phrase is in O function, $\bar{\epsilon}$ is not used. Instead, the ordinary third-person pronoun appears, as in:

- (69) $t\bar{a}$ $\bar{d}i$ $t\bar{s}$ ti $w\bar{e}$ $k\bar{o}lk\bar{u}$ $t\bar{a}$ $\bar{d}i$ to
 woman fem. ergative he see, stat. after he she toward
 $p\bar{a}\eta$ $m\bar{u}$
 shoot/throw active

'After the woman saw him_i, he_i shot (at) her'.

The main clause subject here is treated as in A function, despite the presence of a postpositional particle associated with the object. The pronominal usage is the same with other verbs whose objects do not take postpositional particles. When the main clause coreferent noun phrase is in A function, therefore, a kind of syntactic accusativity emerges; subordinate clause A and S noun phrases are treated identically, and differentiated from O.

When the main clause coreferent noun phrase is in O function, however, $\bar{\epsilon}$ is never used. This is true when the subordinate clause verb is intransitive and only the S noun phrase is present, as in:

- (70) ti $tawi$ $k\bar{u}$ $m\bar{a}$ ti $w\bar{e}\eta$ $t\bar{\epsilon}$
 he arrive, sg., stat. conj. 2-nom he see, act. imperfective
 'When he_i arrives, you are going to see him_i'.

It is also true when the coreferent noun phrase in the subordinate clause is in A or O function, as in:

- (71) ti $t\bar{s}$ $uyol$ $t\bar{\epsilon}$ $t\bar{a}\bar{n}$ $k\bar{o}lk\bar{u}$ $m\bar{e}\eta$ $t\bar{\epsilon}$ $w\bar{u}$ ti
 he ergative tapir def. kill after jaguar def. 3-nom he
 $m\bar{a}\eta$ $m\bar{u}$
 grab, sg., act. active

'After he_i killed the tapir, the jaguar got him_i'.

- (72) $t\bar{a}$ $\bar{d}i$ $t\bar{s}$ ti $w\bar{e}$ $k\bar{o}lk\bar{u}$ $k\bar{o}\bar{n}\eta\bar{a}\eta$ $t\bar{\epsilon}$ $w\bar{u}$
 woman fem. ergative he see, stat. after man def. 3-nom
 ti to $p\bar{a}\eta$ $m\bar{u}$
 he toward shoot/throw active

'After the woman saw him_i, the man shot him_i'.

The general pattern of $\bar{\epsilon}$ coreference is summarized in figure 1.

		Main		
		S	A	O
Subordinate	S	+	+	-
	A	+	+	-
	O	+	-	-

FIG. 1.—Pattern of \bar{e} coreference.

It should be noted that the phenomenon considered here is similar to that discussed under the heading of “switch-reference” (Jacobsen 1967 and Austin 1981). In the Australian languages analyzed by Austin, there are “verb suffixes indicating whether or not the subjects of syntactically related main and subordinate clauses are referentially the same or different” (Austin 1981:309). In the Shokleng case, it is use of the special pronoun \bar{e} that indicates sameness of reference; use of the ordinary pronouns indicates referential difference. However, in Shokleng the syntactic “subject” is not so clearly defined. This is because \bar{e} may be used for subordinate clause O, when this noun phrase is coreferent with main clause S. If this were not the case, the pattern would be one of ordinary “switch-reference,” with a syntactic “subject” defined in terms of the conflation of A and S. Since it is, however, Shokleng shows in this area of syntax a clear pattern, but one that is neither accusative nor ergative in its entirety.

5. Conclusion. Shokleng displays a complex pattern of split-ergativity, with the ergative/accusative contrast manifested formally in two areas: (1) in the case marking of noun phrases, including choice of pronoun and postpositional particle, and (2) in the number agreement on the verb. Two functional variables condition the first type of split—(1) stative versus active predication in the main clause, and (2) the distinction between subordinate and main clause. The second type of split is conditioned by the distinction between verb and aspect marker.

If Shokleng is any indication, the Gê family of central Brazil should furnish rich material for the study of ergativity and accusativity. Among the Gê languages, most closely akin to Shokleng is Kaingang, for which there is available a tagmemic grammar (Wiesemann 1972; 1978). Unfortunately, I have been unable to establish, on the basis of data presented there, the details of Kaingang patterning with respect to ergativity

and accusativity. It is possible only to infer, from the general syntax and morphology, the overall similarity to Shokleng.

With regard to the case marking of noun phrases in Kaingang, the formal counterpart to the Shokleng ergative case-marking type is what Wiesemann (1972:152–53) calls the “action-oriented sentence.” The postposition *tʃ*, used in these sentences, is cognate with the Shokleng ergative postposition *tʃ̃*. However, from the few examples Wiesemann supplies, I have been unable to establish with any certainty a Shokleng-like ergative patterning. The counterpart to the Shokleng accusative case-marking type is what Wiesemann (1972:144–52) calls the “subject-oriented sentence.” Here the key difference with respect to Shokleng concerns the pronominal system and nominative case markers (Wiesemann 1978:209–11), since Kaingang lacks a separate set of what I have called “person markers.” Instead, A and S are aligned formally solely by means of nominative case markers, which also differ somewhat from those found in Shokleng.

With regard to the conditioning factors in simple sentences, the Kaingang action-oriented type occurs with “stative” sentential predication (Wiesemann 1972:110), *vẽ* being the Kaingang cognate of *wã*. With the exception of what Wiesemann (1972:149–50) calls the “nominal sentence,” the subject-oriented type never occurs with stative predication. The evidence for Kaingang is also consistent with a main/subordinate clause split, but it is insufficiently systematic to permit any firm conclusions.

I noted earlier (2) that the expression of number on the verb is formally similar in Kaingang and Shokleng. The governing factor, however (i.e., plurality of the S or O noun phrase), can only be inferred, again owing to the lack of systematic evidence. Nevertheless, some of the individual examples (e.g., the plural form *vin* ‘to give or place several objects’) lend a degree of certainty to this inference.

Two of the better-described languages of the Gê family are Kraho (Shell 1952), a language belonging to the northern branch of the Gê family, and Shavante (McLeod and Mitchell 1978), a language belonging to the central branch. From the point of view of split-ergativity, Shavante and Kraho show more similarity to one another than either does to Shokleng, which, together with Kaingang, forms the southern branch of the Gê family (cf. Davis 1966; 1968).

Kraho does not indicate number on the verb and, consequently, shows no pattern of number agreement ergativity. The ergative and accusative patterns discernible in Shell’s (1952) description instead concern the case marking of noun phrases, including choice of pronoun and postpositional particle, as in Shokleng. The basic ergative pattern is shown in:

(73) $\begin{array}{c} \text{A} \qquad \qquad \text{O} \\ \hline wa \quad \quad \quad ite \quad \quad \quad apyw \\ \text{already I+ergative you+grab+past} \\ \text{'I grabbed you'}. \end{array}$

(74) $\begin{array}{c} \text{S} \\ \hline wa \quad \quad \quad iwyk \\ \text{already I+descend+past} \\ \text{'I descended'}. \end{array}$

O and S are here indicated by means of person markers prefixed to the verb. A is treated separately and is followed by the ergative postposition *ite*. All of the pronominal forms used in these examples belong to a single set, which Shell (1952:120–21) calls “decade 10” affixes. These are analogous to, and in part cognate with, the Shokleng pronouns.

The accusative pattern in Kraho is shown in:

(75) $\begin{array}{c} \text{A} \qquad \qquad \text{O} \\ \hline wa \quad \quad \quad apy \\ \text{I you+grab} \\ \text{'I grab (get) you'}. \end{array}$

(76) $\begin{array}{c} \text{S} \\ \hline wa \quad \quad \quad wy \\ \text{I descend} \\ \text{'I descend'}. \end{array}$

Here A and S are treated identically, and in a manner distinct from O. They are expressed by a separate set of “independent pronouns,” which are used only for A and S function and are thus analogous to the Shokleng person markers.

From the examples given by Shell, it is clear that the split in Kraho is conditioned, at least in part, by the past/nonpast tense contrast, past taking the ergative and nonpast the accusative pattern, as would be expected on universal grounds. However, the pattern of splitting is more complicated than this. Some intransitive verbs in past tense treat the S noun phrase as if it were both A and O in example (73). That is, the pronoun occurs together with the ergative marker *ite*, but is also pleonastically marked by prefixation onto the verb, as in:

(77) $\begin{array}{c} wa \quad \quad \quad ite \quad \quad \quad icam \\ \text{already I+ergative I+stand up+past} \\ \text{'I stood up'}. \end{array}$

The verb, of course, may be simply regarded as transitive, that is, the sentence above is read as 'I stood me up'. However, pleonastic marking is also conditioned by tense and negation. Compare (78) to (76), where the pleonastic form occurs in the future negative but not in the present tense form of 'to descend':

- (78) *wakhwa iwyknawe*
 I+future I+descend+past(?)+negative
 'I shall not descend'.

Such a pattern is indicative of neither ergativity nor accusativity, since S is treated similarly to both A and O.

Kraho is further complicated by virtue of having yet another set of person markers, distinct from the independent pronouns and from the person markers discussed above. This third set is used, apparently, only for indicating O and S function, and it may thus be regarded as the set of "absolutive case person markers."

The general pattern of split-ergativity in Shavante, as it can be gleaned from McLeod and Mitchell (1978), is similar to that described for Kraho, although the split is not conditioned by tense. Shavante has a set of person markers appearing as verb prefixes or together with postpositions. The latter is analogous to, and partly cognate with, the Shokleng "pronouns" and the Kraho person markers. There is apparently no set of "absolutive case person markers." Furthermore, while Shavante has no verb-initial process for expressing plurality, it does make use of suppletion, and the pattern of number agreement appears to be ergative. There is also an accusative agreement with certain aspectual particles, as in Shokleng, so that Shavante as well shows split-ergativity in number agreement.

With regard to the conditioning factors for the case-marking split in Shavante, the subordinate/main clause contrast is used as in Shokleng. In addition, the ergative pattern appears in negative constructions, so that there is a negative/affirmative split. Finally, while there is no tense-conditioned split in Shavante main clauses, there may be some type of aspectually conditioned split, although this is not perfectly apparent from the data.

In sum, the Central Brazilian Gê languages generally appear to display complex patterns of split-ergativity. The principal manifestation of ergative/accusative splits is the case-marking system, as in Shokleng, and involves the use of two or more sets of pronouns and postpositional case markers. However, Shokleng and Shavante appear also to show splitting in the pattern of number agreement. With regard to the conditioning factors, a tense-aspect split and a subordinate/main split seem

widespread in the Gê family, and an affirmative/negative split may be operative in some of the languages as well. While as yet there are in most instances no detailed grammars available, the information at hand on Gê languages suggests that the theory of split-ergative systems, as developed by Silverstein (1976) and Dixon (1979), may be crucial to understanding them. Simultaneously, Central Brazil promises to supply a kind of laboratory for studying the phenomenon of split-ergativity itself.

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