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The Role of Case Marking in Derivation of Pahari Clauses : A Minimalist Analysis

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the formation of clauses in Pahari within Chomsky's (1995, 2000, 2001, 2005) Minimalist Derivational Theory. This work is based on the natural data consisting of five conversations that were collected from Pahari speakers living in the district Sudhnoti Azad Kashmir, Pakistan. The study identified seven morphologically distinct case morphemes in Pahari. Except for the NP in the nominative case, the NPs in other cases in this language are morphologically marked. This study reveals that the case marking on NPs plays a vital role in the derivation of clauses in Pahari. Pahari shows different types of case combinations in its clauses. So depending upon the case marking on NPs, Pahari clauses can be divided into six different types like nominative-nominative clauses, nominative-accusative clauses,

nominative-dative clauses, ergative-nominative clauses, ergative- accusative clauses, and ergative-dative clauses. This work also brings in to light that Pahari clauses are derived through different movement operations. Subject in a Pahari clause originates in spec. VP, from where it moves to Spec T position to check the Nominative case. The object always moves out of its position VP, gets attached with T to check the EPP features on T. This study also reveals that the nominative case is assigned by T while the ergative case is assigned by the Asp. The little v assigns two cases in Pahari; it assigns the dative case to the subject and accusative case to the object.

Keywords: *Case Marking, Pahari, Minimalist Theory, Nominative, Dative, Accusative, Split Ergative*

1. Introduction

Languages have been studied from different perspectives throughout the history of studies on languages. Some of the perspectives that are used to study languages are psychological, sociological, philosophical, biological, physical or historical. The generative perspective of studying languages, which identifies language as a cognative scientific for research, was one of them, and it was introduced by Noam Chomsky in the 1950s (Chomsky, 1975). Although Lenneberg's (1967) fundamental work provides a clear illustration of the biological origin of language, linguistic theorising, especially generative grammar, has been too "linguistics-specific" to integrate biology. The perspective of generatie grammar on the construction of language, however, has undergone a significant shift since Chomsky (1993) introduced the minimalist programme (MP) for linguistic theory. At present the studies on the syntax of languages are much inclined towards applying MP as the theoretical framework. Pahari being a lesser studied language could not get the attention of the linguists from this perspective. This study aims to provide an account of the role of case marking in Pahari clauses while focusing on the derivation of Pahari Clauses within the Minimalist Program presented by Chomsky (1995, 2000, 2001, 2008).

1.1 Framwork

The Minimalist Program is the most recent version of Generative Grammar. It consists of the four ssays that aim to place linguistic theory in the broder context of the cognitive sciences. The minimalist program provides a system for understanding of the grammar of a language. The Minimalist Prgram assumes that Universal Grammar provides a distinctive computational system, with derivations driven by morphological properties, to which the syntactic variation of languages is also restricted. This framework is based on the theory of principles and parameters and, in particular, on principles of economy of derivation and representation. The economy of derivation examines how interpretable features matches with uninterpretable features

in grammatical transformations. While, the econmoy of representation focuses on the purpose of a structure and gives some generaizations that do not allow a structure to become larger than it requires to be. According Minimalisim, the the levels of linguistic representation are interface levels, which are produced by optimally effective derivations that must satisfy certain requirements.

1.2 Reseach Objectives

This study aims to achieve the following research objectives:

  i. To determine the role of case mariking in Pahari clauses
  ii. To analyze the derivation of clauses in Pahari within Minimalist Program

1.2 Reseach Questions

In order to achieve the above metioned research objectives the study will address the following research questions:

  iii. To determine the role of case mariking in Pahari clauses
  iv. To analyze the derivation of clauses in Pahari within Minimalist Program

2. Methodology

The data for this study was collected during different field visits to district Sudhnoti, Azad Jammu & Kashmir. A combination of narratives and and direct elicitation were used for data collection. To confirm the grammaticality and acceptability of some structures, judgement tests were also carried out. The data was transcribed phonetically by following the International Phonetic Alphabets (IPA). The data collected was analysed with the main goal to examine role of case marking in ther derivation of Pahari cluses. The qualitative research approach was employed to find out the types of different clauses depending on combination of different cases in Pahari clauses and also the formation of Pahari clauses within Minimalist theory was analyzed.

3. Word Order in Pahari

Conventionally South Asian languages are claimed as SOV word order languages (Grierson, 1917, Masica, 9191, Grimm, 2006). Pahari shares most of the features with South Asian languages. Like other South Asian languages, Pahari, shows the SOV order of constituents in its clauses. For illustration consider the following example:

  1. a. Shafique-e   namaz   pari

Shafiique-ERG.M.SG   prayer-NOM.F.SG   read-PST.F.SG
"Shafique offered prayer."

b.   wo   sohni   kuri   di
    she-NOM.SG.F   beautiful   girl-NOM.SG.F   be.PRES.3.SG.F
    "She is a beautiful girl."

Example (1) demonstrates the unmarked word order in a Pahari clause having verb at the clause final position. But Pahari cannot be said a strictly verb final language as in some clauses it exhibits SVO word order. In unmarked order of constituents, the verb comes at the final position, but Pahari due to the rich case and agreement system Pahari shows various unmarked word order possibilities where different types of words can appear at the post-verbal position. The syntactic function of a constituent is not determined by its position in the structure in Pahari but it is determined by its form. For example, all the possible word orders in the following example are grammatical constructions in Pahari.

2.   a. shafique-e   kitaav   pari
      shafique-ERG.M.SG   book-NOM.F.SG   read-PST.F.SG
     "Shafique read the book."   (unmarked)

   b. shafique-e   pari   kitaav
     shafique-ERG.M.SG   read-PST.F.SG   book-NOM.F.SG
    "It was Shafique who read the book."   (topiclization)

  c. kitaav   shafique-e   pari
    book-NOM.F.SG   shafique.M-ERG.SG   read-PST.F.SG
   "The book was read by Shafique."   (topiclization)

  d. pari   shafique-e   kitaav
    read.PST.F.SG   shafique-ERG.M.SG   book-NOM.F.SG
   "Did Shafique read the book?"   (echo question)

The sentence in 2(a) illustrates the unmarked word order in a Pahari clause. Other different word order possibilities in (b-d) are pragmatically restricted and appropriate only in a particular context. For example, 2(b) is the answer to the question who read the book and 2(c) would be suitable when the speaker is inquiring what did Shafique read? Interestingly all the above structures can also be used to ask question with the change of tone. The order of constituents in a clause, for pragmatic function, depends upon speaker's intention. The focused constituent always comes at clause-initial position. As it is illustrated in the following example:

3.   a. shakir   pindi   julna
      shakir-NOM.3.M.SG   pindi-NOM.   go-IMPF

"Shakir is going to Pindi."

b. pindi   julna   shakir
  pindi-NOM   go-IMPF   shakir-NOM.3.M.SG
  "Shakir is going to Pindi."

c. julna   pindi   shakir
  go-IMPF   pindi-NOM   shakir-NOM.3.M.SG
  "Shakir is going to Pindi."

In example 3 (a) the emphasis is on Shakir so, it occupies the position in the beginning of the sentence. In 3 (b) the emphasis is on Pindi so, it comes at sentence initial position. Similarly, in 3 (c) the verb julna 'go'' comes at the beginning of the sentence in order to become the point of focus.

From the above discussion it can be seen that like other Indo- Aryan languages including Gojri, Hindi (Allen, 1951, Koul, 2008), Urdu (But, 1995, Ahmad, 2006) Punjabi (Akhtar, 2000) Turwali (Lunsford, 2001) and Marathi (Kelkar, 1998), Pahari exhibits unmarked SOV word order, from which different orders can be generated by reordering the constituents in the construction for different pragmatic functions. The case marking on NPs plays a vital role in the formation of clauses in Pahari. The following section discusses the syntax of Pahari clauses.

4. Case Marking and Syntax of Pahari Clauses

The case marking on the NPs divides the clauses into different types that are as follows:

4.1 Nominative-Nominative Clauses

Out of six identified types of Pahari clauses, the clauses with Nominative-Nominative case combinations were found abundant in data. In This type of construction both the subject and object bear the nominative case. The nominative case in Pahari appears on the NPs with an imperfective verb that grammatically functions as the agent subject or direct object in transitive or intransitive sentences. Since there is no overt case marker for nominative case in Pahari, so this case is treated as overt or bear case. As the following example shows:

4. a. faisal   kitaav   parna
     Faisal-NOM.SG.M book-NOM.SG.F   read.IMPF.SG.M
    "Faisal is reading / reads a book.''

b. maryam   kapray   toni
  maryam.NOM.SG.F   clothes.NOM.PL.M wash.IMPF.SG.F

"Maryam is washing / washes clothes."

c. maryam   pani   anni   si
   maryam-NOM.SG.F   water-NOM.   bring -IMPF   be.PST.SG.F
   "Maryam was bringing water."

In the above-cited examples, both the subject and object are in nominative case without having any case marker. Although both the NPs are bear but the verb agrees with subject being the highest unmarked NP in the construction. The following structure illustrates the derivation of Nominative-Nominative clauses in Pahari.

1.
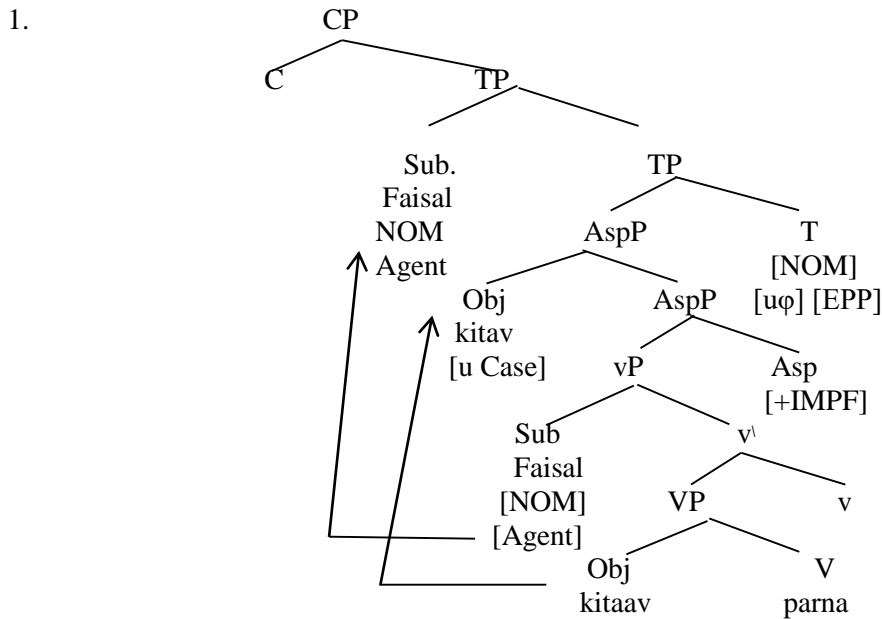
In structure (1), first the verb *par* 'read" and the object *kitav* 'book" merge with each other and form VP. Next, v" is formed by merging little v with VP. Next, the subject is merged with 'v and form vP. Here the subject is assigned agent role by little v. The object cannot be assigned Accusative Case by v as it is –human. The subject and the object both are in nominative case so the verb cannot value the unvalued case features of subject or object. The derivation proceeds and the vP is merged with Asp to project AspP. Then, AspP is merged with T to form TP. T bears unvalued phi- feature and EPP features. Here T requires an NP that can value T unvalued phi-feature and is assigned Nominative case by T. The construction has two unmarked NPs; subject and object. The highest NP in the structure is the subject. Hence, the subject values the unvalued phi-feature of T and receives Nominative case by T. Next, the object is attracted by the EPP feature on T. The object moves out of VP position and gets
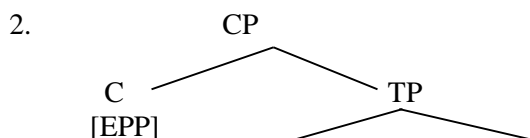
attached with T. As discussed earlier that the object in this construction is –human so it needs to receive Nominative case The Nominative case is assigned only by T head so the object is also assigned Nominative case by T. Bukhari (2008) observes for Gojri that T can assign two Nominative Case in Nominative-Nominative constructions. Bobaljik and Branigan (2003) also observed the same for Chukchi language.
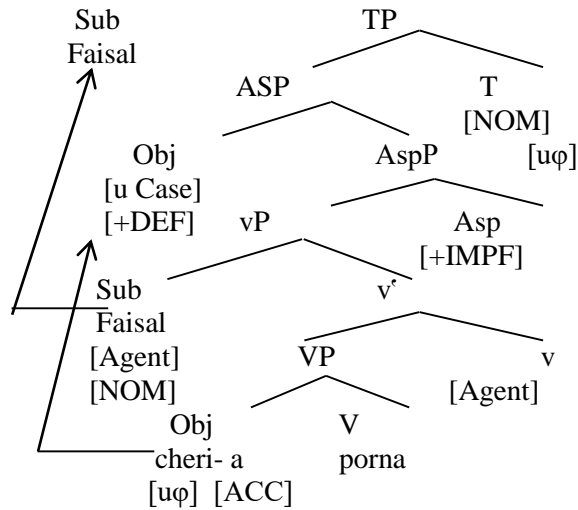
4.2 Nominative-Accusative Clauses

The Nominative-Accusative combination of clauses is also very common in Pahari. In this type of clauses, the subject NP is marked with Nominative case and direct object NP bears Accusative Case. Clauses having a non-future tense or non-perfective aspect use a nominative-accusative system where the subject irrespective of whether the verb is transitive or intransitive shows the same agreement with the verb. Morphologically the subjects in these constructions are themselves unmarked. Some examples are provided for illustration.

5. a. jangut   kukre-ki   ko   si
        boy.SG.M.NOM.   cock.SG.M.AC   slaughter   be. FUT.
      "The boy will slaughter the cock."

   b. faisal   cheria- ki   porna
        faisal-NOM.SG.M   sparrow-ACC.SG.F   catch-CAUS.
      "Faisal is catching sparrow."

   c. faisal   cheria-ki   porna   sa
        faisal.NOM.SG.M   sparrow.ACC.SG.F   catch.IMP   be.PST.SG.M
      "Faisal was catching sparrow."

Both of the above given sentences comprise unmarked subjects functioning as agent, and take the nominative case. Verbs in both the sentences agree with these agents subjects. The verb in 5(a) is marked for imperfective aspect, which does not inflect to show number and gender agreement, but the agent subject of this sentence is in nominative case. Example 5(b) contains a present tense verb. Subject-verb agreement and case follow the same pattern here as in example 5(a). These features characterize the nominative-accusative combination of the clause. The derivation of Nominative-Accusative constructions is illustrated with the following structure:

2.   CP
        C ╱   ╲
      [EPP]   TP
                    ╱   ╲

```
                    Sub                        TP
                    Faisal                    /  \
                              ↑        ASP          T
                             /        /  \         [NOM]
                            /      Obj       AspP      [uφ]
                           /      [u Case]   /  \
                          /       [+DEF]  vP       Asp
                         /                /  \     [+IMPF]
                        /            Sub        v´
                       /            Faisal     /  \
                      /            [Agent]  VP       v
                     /             [NOM]   /  \      [Agent]
                    /          Obj        V
                   /          cheri- a    porna
                             [uφ]  [ACC]
```

Like other constructions, in the formation of Nominative-Accusative clauses first the main verb merges with the object and generates VP. Here, Ergative Case is not assigned at this position as the verb does not carry + PERF features that are obligatory for Ergative Case marking in Pahari rather it carries –PERF feature. Here v assigns Accusative Case to the object. After receiving the Accusative Case by little v, the object merges with AspP and gets attached with T in order to value EPP feature on T. Next the subject by merging with TP moves from Spec vP position and attaches with C to check EPP feature on C. Here the subject values the unvalued phi-feature and EPP features on the T head. As a result of the T head assigns Nominative case to the subject NP.

4.3 Nominative-Accusative Clauses

In Nominative-Dative combination of clauses, the subject is marked with Nominative case while the object receives Dative Case. In his type of construction, the verb agrees with the subject as the object is dative case marked. Consider the following examples having nominative subject and accusative object:

6.   a. Ali   bakri-a   chaarna
        Ali-NOM.SG.M   goat-DAT.SG.F   graze.IMPEF.SG.M
        "Ali makes the goat graze."

     b. baii   main-ki   paisav   daini
        sister-NOM.SG.F   me-DAT   money-PL.M give-PRESS.SG.F
        "Sister gives me money."

In the above example, the subject values the phi-features present on the T head and receives the Nominative case. The object bears the Dative Case marker, hence, the verb does not agree with it. Rather it agrees with the nominative subject. The structure in (3) illustrates the derivation of the Nominative-Dative clause.

3.
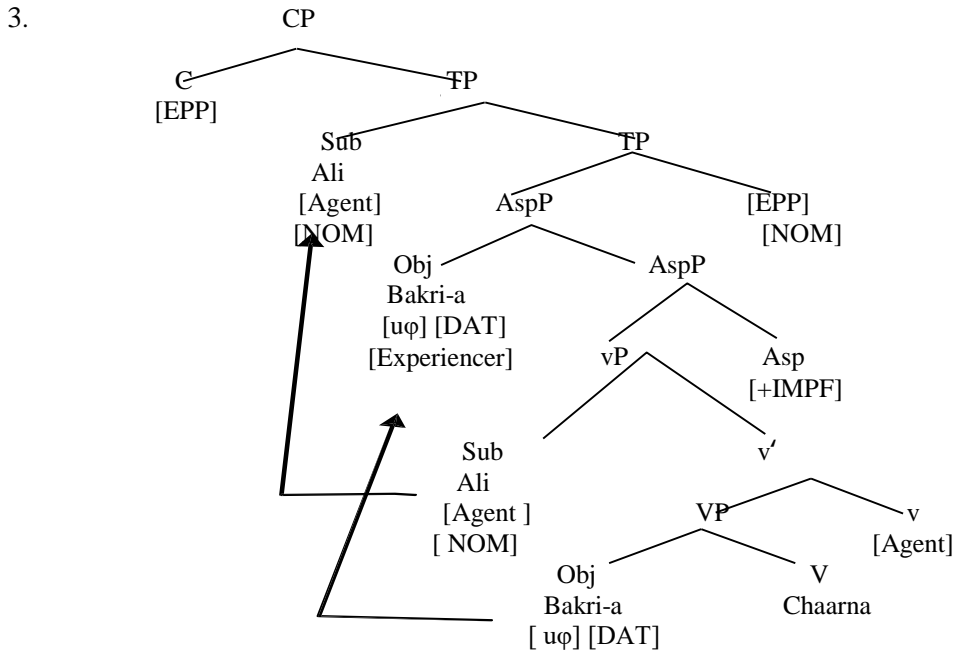
The object is the experiencer of the action in the above structure. As generalized in (2) that little v assigns Dative case to the experiencer subject, the little v here assigns experience role along with Dative Case to the subject. After receiving Dative Case from little v, the object moves from its position and by merging with AspP comes under T to check EPP feature on T. The EPP features on C attract the subject. The subject moves out of its vP Spec position and attaches with C by merging with TP. At this point the subject is assigned Nominative case by T. If we compare the above structure with the structure in (2), we will find that the derivational process for Nominative- Accusative and Nominative-Dative clauses show a little difference. In both constructions, the subjects are assigned Nominative case by T head whereas, the Case marking on objects differentiates between these two types of clauses. In Nominative-Accusative constructions, the object receives Accusative Case from little v while in Nominative- Dative combination of clauses little v assigns Dative Case to the object along with the experience role.

4.4 Eragative-Dative Clauses

Apart from the above mentioned clauses, there are some structures in Pahari where the subject NP bears the Ergative Case and object NP is marked with Dative Case. In Pahari, the ergative case is assigned to the agent subjects of transitive verbs in past tense or perfective aspect. So the Ergative-Dative clauses are just found in past tense and perfective aspects. For illustration, consider the following example:

7. a. shafiq-e   as-ain   hasaya
        shafique-ERG.SG.M   us-DAT   laugh.PST
        "Shafique made us to laugh."

    b. baji-a   kuri-a   paisay   dettay
        sister-ERG.SG.F   girl.DAT   money.PL.M   give.PST.PL.M
        "Sister gave money to the girl."

In example (7), both the NPs are Case marked. The subject is followed by the Ergative Case marker *–e* whereas the object is marked with Dative Case marker. As both the subject and object NPs are overtly Case marked, the verb agrees neither with subject nor object. In this type of constructions the verb agrees with the indirect object. The following structure shows the derivation of such clauses.

4.
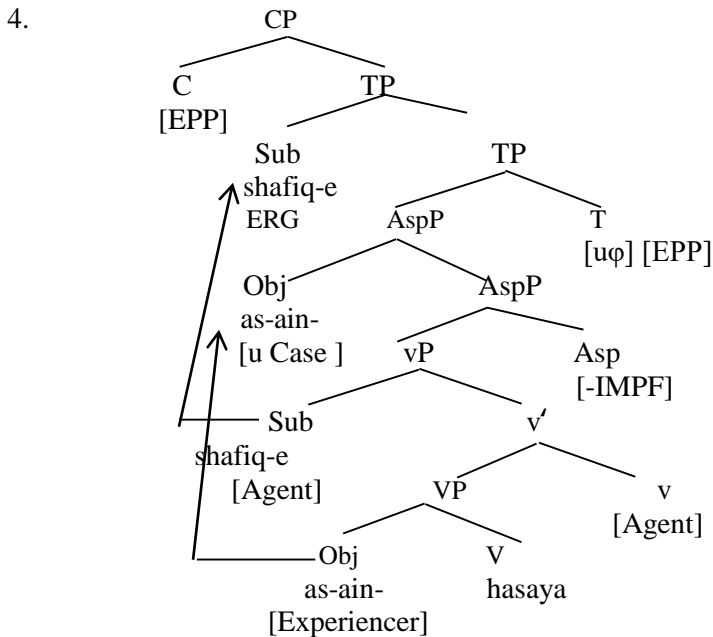
This structure demonstrates that in an Ergative-Dative construction, first VP is formed by merging the main verb with the object. Next, VP is merged with v and forms v". Then subject merges with v" to generate vP. Here the subject receives agent role from
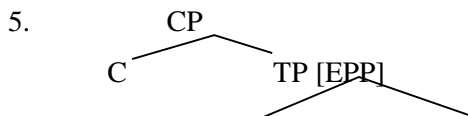
little v. Little v also assigns experiencer role as well as Dative Case to the object. Then vP is merged with Asp to form AspP. Here the subject is assigned Ergative Case by Asp head by valuing its features. The derivation progresses and T merges with AspP to generate TP. T has EPP features that attract the movement of the object, the object moves from its position and attaches with T in order to satisfy EPP features on T. Finally, CP is formed by merging C with TP. Like Ergative- Accusative construction the verb gets default agreement and it agrees with the indirect object. Having a case maker, the verb neither agrees with the subject nor with the Object.
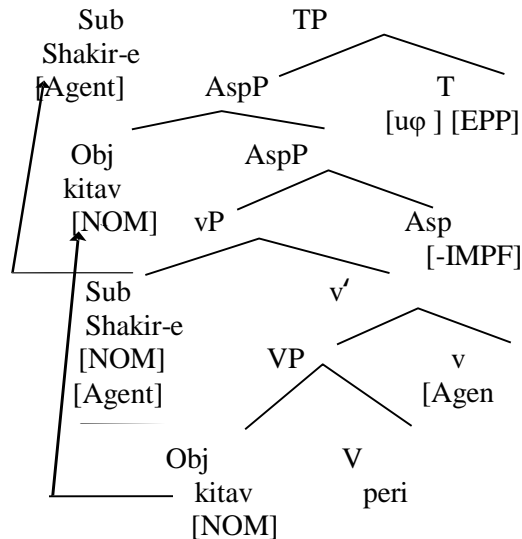
4.5 Eragative-Nominative Clauses

The constructions with Ergative subjects and Nominative objects are commonly found in Indo Aryan languages (Kumar, 2006. Bukhari, Ramasamy &Hussein 2007). Pahari is also a very rich language in this respect. A number of clauses were found in the data that exhibit Ergative-Nominative combination of cases. See the following Examples:

8. a. shakir -e   kitav   pari
       shakir-ERG.SG.M   book-NOM.SG.F   read. PST.F
       "Shakir read a book."

   b. shakir-e   hal   chalaya
       shakir-ERG.SG.M   plough.NOM.SG.M   Drive.PST.M
       "Shakir ploughed."

   c. budi-a   baddua   aiti
       old woman-ERG.   curse   give-PST.F.SG.
      " The old woman cursed ."

In example (8), the subject 'Shakir' bears the Ergative Case marker so the verb does not agree with it. Instead, the nominative object enters into agreement with verb (as mentioned earlier that in Pahari only Nominative NP gets into agreement with the verb). As in 7 (a) the subject *shakir* takes the ergative marker 'e' and the object 'kitav' is in Nominative case . So, the verb *pari* does not agress with the subject *shakir* rather it agrees with the object that is in Nominative case. Same is the case with example 8 (b) and 8(c). The following tree diagram shows the derivation of Ergative- Nominative clauses.
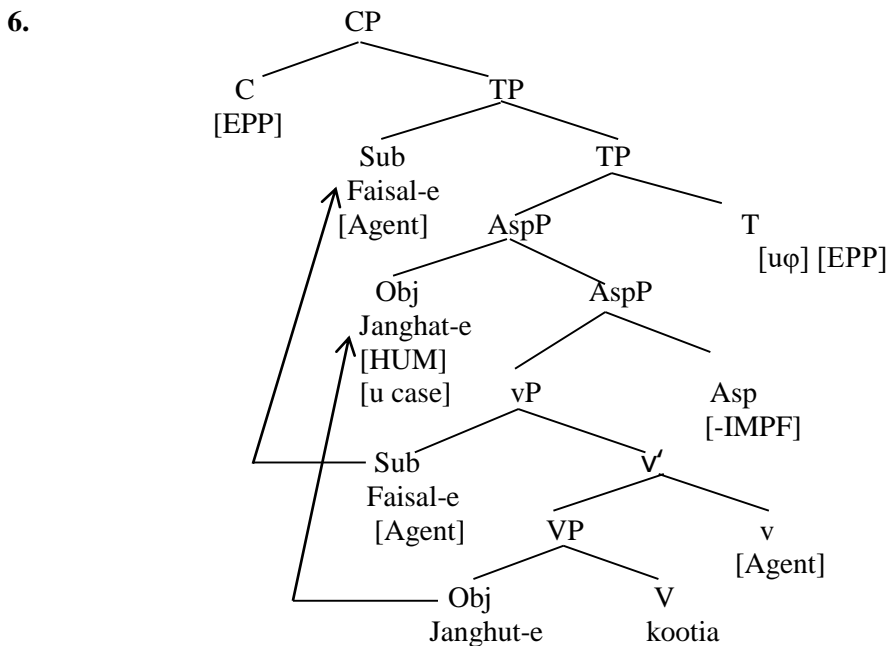
5.   CP
        C   TP [EPP]

```
              Sub                  TP
            Shakir-e
            [Agent]          AspP           T
                                      [uφ ] [EPP]
                Obj        AspP
                kitav
                [NOM]   vP          Asp
                                    [-IMPF]
                    Sub        v′
                  Shakir-e
                  [NOM]    VP        v
                  [Agent]        [Agen

                       Obj      V
                       kitav    peri
                       [NOM]
```

The above structure shows the derivation of Ergative-Nominative constructions. The derivation starts with the merging of V *per* "read" with the object *kitav* "book" forming VP. Then little v merges with VP and forms v". Next v" is merged with subject shakir- e to generate vP. The subject will be assigned the agent role by v. This derivational process proceeds and vP merges with Asp and form AspP. At this point of derivation, the subject *shakir* is assigned Ergative Case by the Asp. At the next step, AspP is merged with T head and results in forming TP. Here T bears uφ (unvalued phi features) and EPP features. At this point T looks for an NP that can value its features and receive the Nominative case The nearest NP is subject but it cannot value T"s phi-features as it is already marked with Ergative Case. The other NP that can possibly value the phi- features of T in order to get Nominative case is the object. Thus the EPP features on T attract the movement of the object. The object merges with AspP and comes under T. The derivation proceeds and TP is merged with C. C bears EPP features that attract the subject. Hence the subject by merging with C comes under TP. In this way, the SOV order of words in a Pahari clause is derived. In this derivational process, two movements take place; the movement of the subject and the movement of the object. The movement of the object is postponed till the movement of the subject takes place from the Spec vP position to the Spec TP position. After that the object moves out of VP and comes under T. This movement of the object from VP to T is obligatory as staying under VP the object is too far from T and cannot receive Case from T.

4.6 Eragative-Accusative Clauses

In some structures, the subject and object are marked for ergative and accusative cases respectively. The ergative accusative pattern can be seen in the following example:

   9.   a.   shakir-e   janghat-e-   kotiya
             shakir-ERG.SG.M   boy-AAC   beat.PST.SG.M
          "Shakir beat the boy."

        b. faisal-e   os-ki   maari   shoriya
            faisal-ERG.SG.M   him-ACC   beat.PST.SG.F   leave-PST.SG.M
            "Faisal has killed him."

 In the above example the subject and the object both are case marked. The subject is followed by the Ergative Case marker –e whereas the object is followed by accusative case marker. As both the subject and the object take Case markers, neither the subject nor the object enters into an agreement with the main verb, so the verb takes a default agreement marker. The following structure shows how such clauses are derived:

6.

```
                              CP
                        _____
                       C                    TP
                     [EPP]          _____
                                  Sub                     TP
                                Faisal-e          _____
                                [Agent]       AspP                  T
                                        _____          [uφ] [EPP]
                                      Obj          AspP
                                    Janghat-e   _____
                                    [HUM]     vP          Asp
                                    [u case]         [-IMPF]
                                          _____
                                        Sub        V'
                                      Faisal-e  _____
                                      [Agent]  VP       v
                                            _____  [Agent]
                                          Obj      V
                                        Janghut-e  kootia
```

The above tree shows that in the formation of Ergative- Accusative constructions, first the VP head is projected by merging the object *janghat* "boy" with the verb *kotya* *beat*". At the next step v" is formed by the merging process of VP with little v. Next, the subject *faisal* is merged with the v" to form vP. The subject NP, at this point of derivation, is assigned agent role by little v. The object satisfies all the requirements [+

HUM/ DEF] to receive Accusative Case so accusative Case is assigned to it by little v. The derivational process progresses and AspP is projected by merging vP with Asp. Here the Asp head assigns Ergative Case to the subject by valuing its Case feature. Next, T merges with higher AspP and forms TP. The object is triggered by EPP feature on T. In order to satisfy the EPP feature requirement, the object moves from its original position and gets attached to T by merging with AspP. In Ergative-Accusative constructions both the subject and object bear Case marker. As Ergative Case has already been assigned to the subject *Faisal* by Asp and the object is already assigned Accusative Case by little v. So, none of the NPs is assigned Nominative case by T head. If the subject and object both are overtly case marked, the verb takes default agreement marking. Finally, TP is formed by merging TP with C. The movement of subject is further attracted by the EPP feature on C. Hence the subject moves from its original vP internal position to C by merging with TP. Following Bukhari (2008) who claims that in Ergative-Accusative constructions the Nominative case features remain unvalued; the researcher also assumes the same for Pahari.

5. Conclusion

In this study, the derivation of clauses in Pahari has been discussed in the Minimalist framework. The account of Pahari clauses in the Minimalist Program reveals that the unmarked word order in Pahari clauses is SOV. However, it shows relatively free word order for pragmatic purposes. Any reordering of words in a sentence will not effect on linguistic meanings of the sentence. Depending upon the case marking on NPs, Pahari exhibits six different types of clauses nominative-nominative clauses, nominative-accusative clauses, nominative-dative clauses, ergative-nominative clauses, ergative- accusative clauses, and ergative-dative clauses. All these clauses are derived by applying different movement operation. Subject in a Pahari clause originates in spec. VP, from where it moves to Spec T position to check the Nominative case. The EPP feature on C attracts the movement of the subject which values the EPP features on C by merging with TP. The object always moves out of its position VP, attracted by EPP features on T and gets attached to T to check the EPP features on T. This study also reveals that nominative case is assigned by T while the ergative case is assigned by the Asp. The little v assigns two cases in Pahari; it assigns the dative case to the subject and accusative case to the object. The combination of different cases on NPs in a clause reveals different agreement patterns. Agreement in Pahari like other Indo-Aryan exhibit an aspectual conditioned split ergative pattern. In the imperfective aspects, the subject of the transitive verb is not case marked, and the verb agrees with the subject. Contrastively, in the perfective aspects, the transitive subject is ergative marked and the verb agrees with the direct object but when both the subject and the object take case markers, the verb takes a default agreement marker.

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