Ergativity in Shawi
(Chayahuita)

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## Glosses

1. **first person pronoun**
2. **second person pronoun**
3. **third person pronoun**

- **ADDIT** additive
- **ABL** ablative
- **ASSERT** assertive
- **BEN** benefactive
- **CAUS** causative
- **COM** comitative
- **COMP** comparative
- **DIM** diminutive
- **ERG** ergative
- **DEF** definiteness
- **DES** desiderative
- **DUB** dubitative
- **EXCL** exclusive
- **FRUS** frustrative
- **GEN** genitive
- **IMP** imperative
- **INCL** inclusive
- **IND** indicative
- **INSTR** instrumental
- **LOC** locative
- **NEG** negation
- **NMZ** nominalizer
- **O** object
- **ONOM** onomatopeia
- **P.INF** personal infinitive
- **PL** plural
- **POSS.ALIEN** alienable possession
- **POSS.INALIEN** inalienable possession
- **POT** potential
- **PROG** progressive
- **REC** reciprocity
- **REFL** reflexive
- **SEQ.ACT** sequential action with coreferential subjects
- **SEQ.ACT\_2** sequential action with non-coreferential subjects
- **SOC.CAUS** sociative causative
- **STRENGTH** strengthener
- **VAL** valenciator
# Index

1. Introduction ............................................................................................................. 6
2. Literature review ..................................................................................................... 8
   2.1. Ergativity ........................................................................................................... 8
   2.2. Optional ergative marking .................................................................................. 11
      2.2.1. Optional ergative marking in the world ....................................................... 12
      2.2.2. Kawapanan family ..................................................................................... 14
3. Methodology ............................................................................................................ 16
4. The Shawi case: description of the distribution of the ergative marker in a context-free situation ........................................................................................................... 19
   4.1. Split ergativity ................................................................................................... 20
      4.1.1. Relevant factors to split ergativity ............................................................... 20
      4.1.2. Obligatoriness of the ergative marker ......................................................... 23
      4.1.3. Prohibition of the ergative marker ............................................................... 26
   4.2. Optional ergativity .............................................................................................. 30
   4.3. Inconsistent answers to elicited sentences ......................................................... 35
   4.4. Results of the elicitation .................................................................................... 35
5. The Shawi case: the use of the ergative marker in context ........................................ 37
   5.1. The NP in the A function must be overtly expressed ......................................... 37
   5.2. The disambiguating function of $–ri$ ................................................................ 39
      5.2.1. Violation of the canonical word order ....................................................... 39
      5.2.2. Omission of the O argument ..................................................................... 42
   5.3. The contrastive focus function of $–ri$ ............................................................... 44
   5.4. Results of the in-context data analysis ............................................................... 45
6. An explanation of the distribution of the Shawi ergative marker ................................ 45
   6.1. Obligatory ergative marking when 1 acts upon 2 (1>2) ..................................... 46
   6.2. Optional ergative marking ................................................................................ 47
7. Conclusion ............................................................................................................... 48
List of figures

Map 1: Kawapanan languages’ linguistic area p. 6

Figure 1: Kawapanan dialectology p. 7

Figure 2: Nominal Hierarchy p. 10

Figure 3: Aranda’s ergative marking pattern p. 10

Figure 4: Shawi’s Nominal Hierarchy p. 35

Figure 5: Shawi’s rules of use of the ergative marker –ri p. 36
1. Introduction

This thesis is meant to contribute to the study of the Shawi language, a language of Peru also known as Chayahuita (Barraza de García 2005:25). Its speakers live in the province of Alto Amazonas, department of Loreto, in which they occupy the shores of the Paranapura river and its tributaries Sillay and Cahuapanas. To visualize the Shawi linguistic area, I refer to Map 1.

Map 1: Kawapanan languages’ linguistic area (Rojas Berscia in prep. a)

On the whole, Shawi must be spoken by around 21,000 people, following the last indigenous people census carried out in 2007 by the Peruvian National Statistics Institute (INEI) (Rojas Berscia 2013). This census reports the number of people identifying themselves as Shawi, not the number of speakers of the language. Nonetheless, the language is still vital and the number of speakers thus should not differ significantly from the number of Shawi people. As a matter of fact, the website Ethnologue (http://www.ethnologue.com/language/cbt) considers Shawi as a ‘developing language’, which means, according to their vitality scale, that “the language is in vigorous use, with literature in a standardized form being used by some though this is not yet widespread or sustainable” (http://www.ethnologue.com/about/language-status). In the case of Balsapuerto Shawi, the variety this thesis is about, the language is indeed transmitted to the children as their mother tongue and is
overwhelmingly used when interacting with relatives or with the neighbours and friends belonging to
the speech community. In fact, the Shawi from Balsapuerto live in contact with the mixed-blood that
can speak Spanish only. This results in a high degree of bilingualism of men, who learn Spanish
through their trips and trading. On the other side, women are nearly all monolingual in Shawi and take
care of preserving the language and the culture. Nowadays still, girls generally remain monolingual in
Shawi despite their schooling in the frame of the EIB (Bilingual Intercultural Education) programme.
The reason is that the local school displays the label EIB, but fails to implement it, since most of the
teachers cannot speak Shawi (Rojas Berscia 2013). The teaching is thus in Spanish and no efficient
communication is possible between the teachers and the pupils, who remain monolingual in Shawi
and do not get to learn much.

At the linguistic level, Shawi is one of the two remaining representatives of the Kawapanan family with
Shiwilu, its sister language. Rojas Berscia (in prep. b) follows Rivet and Tastevin (1909) and contends
that the Kawapanan family includes Shiwilu, also known as Jebero, the extinct language called Mayna
and the three dialects of Modern Shawi, namely: Cahuapanas, Sillay and Balsapuerto or Paranapura.
To have a clear view of the genetic relationships between these languages, see the linguistic family
tree (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Kawapanan dialectology (Rojas Berscia in prep. b)

As for the resources available on the Shawi language in general, the most useful source is the Shawi-
Spanish / Spanish-Shawi dictionary by Hart (1988). It has about 4500 entries, which makes it rather
complete, and turned out to be of an invaluable help. Besides, the dictionary holds a grammatical
sketch of 39 pages which is far from exhaustive, but still gives an idea of the basic constructions and
represents a good introduction to Shawi grammar.
For the Balsapuerto variety more precisely, the main reference is the bachelor thesis of Rojas Berscia (2013) on the syntax and the semantics of causative constructions in Balsapuerto Shawi. The analysis of causation is preceded by a grammatical sketch which is until now the most recent and complete available. Some grey areas remain and some specific topics lack in order for it to be considered a reference grammar, but an enhanced more detailed version is under way (Rojas Berscia in prep. a).

There is another thesis on the Sillay variety of Shawi by Barraza de García (2005). This doctoral dissertation focuses on the verbal system of the language, but the core analysis is also preceded by a very general grammatical sketch, the purpose of which was mainly to introduce the concepts required for the subsequent discussion of the verbal system.

In this thesis, I will focus on a specific grey area of the Shawi grammar and try to shed some light on it, at least for the Balsapuerto variety. The so far problematic morpheme is the suffix –ri, which displays an ergative distribution but does not appear on every agentive subject of transitive utterances. Its use may thus be optional and the question I would like to address is: what conditions the use of the suffix –ri?

2. Literature review

2.1. Ergativity

Dixon (1994:1) has defined ‘ergativity’ as follows: “grammatical pattern in which the subject of an intransitive clause is treated in the same way as the object of a transitive clause, and differently from transitive subject.” Thus, ergativity is about the mapping of the three basic semantico-syntactic roles A, S and O onto the grammatical relations, where S refers to the unique argument of a monovalent predicate, A to the first argument (agent-like) of a polyvalent predicate and O to the second argument (patient-like) of a polyvalent predicate (Dixon 1994, Payne 1997). So in other words, a language displays an ergative pattern when it treats S like O and gives A a specific treatment. This pattern can manifest itself in different ways and different formal properties of the grammatical relations are to be considered (Payne 1997:129): case marking, participant reference marking on verbs and constituent order.

In the case of Shawi, the most striking ergative feature is the suffix –ri, which appears sporadically in natural speech but follows a clearly ergative distribution in that it can be hosted by an A argument exclusively (cf. section 4).

Besides, Shawi displays an ergative canonical word order, since S and O are aligned as illustrated below in (1) and (2) (Rojas Berscia 2013:63).
Finally, this language shows an ergative verbal cross-referencing system in copulative constructions (Rojas Berscia 2013:64), where the S is cross-referenced on the nominal predicate via the use of a suffix from the object set of pronominal suffixes of the verbal morphology (3).

(3) Ka kampuiyapi-ku.
1 Shawi-1.0
‘I am Shawi.’ (Rojas Berscia 2013:64)

But ‘ergative languages’ are scarcely homogeneously ergative and most of them alternate between the nominative-accusative and the ergative-absolutive patterns. This is what Dixon (1994) calls ‘split ergativity’, phenomenon which is subsumed by the more generic term ‘Differential Subject Marking’ (DSM) that refers to the fact that “some subjects have a different Case, agree differently, or occur in a different position than others” (Woolford 2009:17). The factors conditioning the split ergativity systems, and the DSM systems in general, are the semantic features of the verb and/or the NPs and/or clausal features such as tense/aspect/mood and/or the distinction between main and subordinate clause (Dixon 1994; de Hoop & de Swart 2009). The verbal semantic features lead to split systems concerning the S argument only: split-S and fluid-S (Dixon 1994). Yet, in the Shawi grammar, no distinction is made between S_S and S_o in intransitive clauses and the S argument is always unmarked, irrespective of the verbal semantics (cf. section 4). As such, these kinds of split are irrelevant to this study. On the other hand, the semantic properties of NPs and the clausal features can explain other kinds of split systems affecting A, which is what might happen in Shawi with the suffix –ri that appears on some A arguments and not on others.

The split systems stemming from the semantic properties of the NPs referring to the core arguments are accounted for resorting to the hierarchization of NPs along the parameters of ‘animacy’ and ‘definiteness’ (Dixon 1994; Woolford 2009), both being sometimes grouped together under the term ‘prominence’ (de Hoop & de Swart 2009). The resulting cline is referred to as ‘Nominal Hierarchy’ by Dixon (1994) and as ‘Person/Animacy Hierarchy’ by Woolford (2009). These clines are basically the same except that Woolford (2009) takes the number parameter into account and that Dixon (1994) makes the extra distinction Proper Nouns/Common Nouns. I present below (Figure 2) a merge of these two clines in order to be as exhaustive as possible. I kept the name ‘Nominal Hierarchy’ since it
is more generic than ‘Person/Animacy Hierarchy’ and more parameters than just ‘animacy’ can actually account for this cline, such as ‘definiteness’ or ‘volitionality’.

**Figure 2: Nominal Hierarchy**

![Nominal Hierarchy Diagram](image)

When constrained by the semantics of the NPs, the split systems are accounted for on the basis of two principles:

- In transitive clauses, case marking serves as a means of distinguishing A from O
- Certain NPs are more likely to appear as A than others based on the capacities of their referents to control an event

The first principle explains why a split actually exists. Indeed, if case marking is just here so as to distinguish A and O, then it is only needed when there is ambiguity. Yet, as put forward by the second principle, not all the NPs have the same probability to appear in the A function. As such, no special marking is required when the NP in A function is a prototypical agent but an ergative marker is used to identify the A argument when the latter is an unexpected NP (Dixon 1994; Woolford 2009).

But what kind of NP is likely to be in A function? According to Dixon (1994:84), “averaging out over all types of verbs, there is no doubt that human NPs are more likely to be in A than in O function, and that inanimates are more likely to be in O function than in A, with non-human animates falling between these.” He also adds that in discourse, the participants involved in the interaction – the speaker and the addressee – tend to be privileged actors and are generally presented as agents, the first person pronoun being the most likely to refer to an A argument since the speaker regards himself/herself as the “quintessential agent” (Dixon 1994:84). These are the tendencies that the Person/Animacy cline represents and therefore, in the split systems conditioned by the semantics of the core arguments, the ergative marker is expected to appear on NPs ranking on the right-hand end of the cline, which are typical O, and to be dropped on the NPs ranging on the left-hand end of the cline, which are typical A. As for the treatment of the NPs in the middle of the cline, it is language-specific. In any case, these are mere tendencies and not all the languages display, on the Person/Animacy cline, a unique breaking point between marked and unmarked subjects, attributing an ergative marker to NPs ranging on a continuous span of the hierarchy. Indeed, Woolford (2009) presents the case of Aranda, an Australian language displaying the discontinuous marking pattern below (Figure 3).

**Figure 3: Aranda’s ergative marking pattern (Woolford 2009)**

![Aranda’s Ergative Marking Pattern](image)
The ergative marking of NPs referring to inanmites fits the theory and the distinction made by the language between inanmites and animates is common. Nonetheless, the principles presented above do not explain the ergative marking of the 1st person pronoun singular, which is supposed to appear typically in the A function and thus is not meant to be marked with the ergative.

Even more problematic for the theory is the case of Hindi. De Hoop and Narasimhan (2009) put forward that in Hindi, the ergative case actually appears on prototypical subjects only, which shows that the marking of core arguments is not just about distinguishing A from O. Instead, de Hoop and de Swart (2009) propose that case-marking can “express certain semantic or pragmatic information, such as agentivity or volitionality” (de Hoop & de Swart 2009:5) and introduce the notion of argument strength, claiming that strong arguments are likely to be overtly marked in languages displaying the DSM feature. But the strength of the core arguments is affected by various factors that go beyond nominal semantics. Following Hopper and Thompson (1980), de Hoop and Narasimhan (2009) correlate the degree of strength of the core arguments with the degree of transitivity, which itself depends on features of the subject NP (volitionality, potency), of the object NP and of the verb phrase (telicity, action, reals). The strongest subject possible is thus argued to be “the subject of an active, telic transitive or ditransitive clause that is volitional, high in potency, and that co-occurs with an animate and definite object” (de Hoop & Narasimhan 2009:65).

In fact, in addition to the degree of animacy of the subject, the ergative marking in Hindi is constrained by the lexical verb class (the verb must refer to a volitional process) and the aspect. Indeed, perfectivity was recognized as a subject-strengthening feature and the ergative marker appears in perfective clauses only.

2.2. Optional ergative marking

As McGregor (2009) puts it: “Optional ergative case-marking refers to the situation in which the ergative marker may be present or absent from the Agent NP without affecting the grammaticality or interpretation of the clause in terms of who is doing what to whom.” However, ‘optional ergativity’ does not imply a random use of the ergative marker (McGregor 2009), so the question becomes: what conditions the use of the ergative marker in the languages displaying the ‘optional ergativity’ feature? A partial account of this can be given considering the various languages concerned, the number of which would exceed 100 and the spread of which would be worldwide. McGregor (2009) writes that such languages can be found in Australia, Papua New Guinea, India, Western China, Africa (at least in Sudan with the Shilluk language), the Caucasus and the Americas, notably with Shiwilu, Kawapanan language discussed below.
2.2.1. Optional ergative marking in the world

Based on McGregor (2009), we can assume there exist three types of optional ergativity in the world (as far as we know): the pragmatically distributed one, the grammatically-distributed one and the mixed one. A pragmatically distributed ergativity means that the ergative marker is likely to appear on any kind of A participant, regardless of the morphosyntactic context but depending on discourse-related factors. A grammatically distributed optional ergativity corresponds to the case where the A argument is optionally marked with ergative in some specific grammatical contexts and obligatorily marked in other contexts. The factors conditioning the optionality of the ergative marking are generally the same as in the split systems. This is notably the case in Lhassa Tibetan, a language in which the use of the ergative marker is constrained by the semantico-syntactic category of the verb and the aspect of the clause. Indeed, Tournadre (1991) explains that with bivalent verbs, the A argument is normally marked with ergative in the accomplished aspect while it is optionally marked in the unaccomplished aspect. Similarly, in Umpithamu, inanimate NPs in A function have to be marked with ergative while the ergative marker can be dropped for all the other types of NPs (Verstraete 2006).

Eventually, what I dubbed the ‘mixed optional ergativity’ results from an interplay of pragmatic and grammatical factors. Indeed, in the languages displaying this kind of optional ergativity, the ergative marker is likely to appear on any kind of A following pragmatic principles, just like in the pragmatically-distributed optional ergativity case, but the frequency of use of the ergative marker also shows some correlation with the factors conditioning the split systems. McGregor (1998) illustrates this case with Gooniyandi, an Australian language in which the ergative marker is clearly optional for animate NPs but rarely omitted on inanimate NPs.

Just like for split systems, the optionality of the ergative marker is generally explained in terms of distinguishability of A and O. The ergative would thus be overtly expressed when the knowledge of the world and the grammar are not enough to determine who acts upon whom. As McGregor (2009) mentions, this is notably the case when the canonical word order is altered in an utterance. This is what happens in Shiwiwu (see detailed discussion below in 2.2.2) or in Cholón, an SOV extinct language from Peru in which the compounded suffix –tu-p that Alexander-Bakkerus (2005) dubs ‘agent marker’ appears each time the agent follows the object as in (4).

(4) Mel’us-pit insoney-tu-p i-ø-n’antuŋ-šipe-y
    boat-COR gulf-AD-ABL 3A-3O-cover-nearly-do-PST
    ‘And the gulf nearly covered the boat.’ (Alexander-Bakkerus 2005:148)

Nevertheless, McGregor (2009) highlights that the distinguishing function account of the use of the ergative marker in the case of optional ergativity is not sufficient as cross-linguistically, the ergative marker is also commonly found in contexts where no ambiguity exists about the roles of the
participants. Indeed in the Hindi sentence given in (5), the A argument receives the ergative marking while knowledge of the world makes it clear that this NP is in A function.

(5) Raam=ne kapD|e=ko / kapD|aa- ø phaaD|-aa.
Raam=ERG cloth=ACC cloth=NOM tear-PFV.SG.M
‘Raam tore (a/the) cloth.’ (de Hoop & Narasimhan 2009:64)

Other explanations are available and some linguists account for the use of the ‘optional’ ergative marker in terms of information structure. In fact, Aikhenvald (1994) writes about Tariana, an Arawakan language, that the ergative marker is not much used and appears mainly on focalized NPs in A function. In other languages such as Lhassa Tibetan and Kuuk Thaayorre, the ergative marker developed such pragmatic functions that it came to mark S arguments, going beyond the normal ergative distribution. Indeed, Tournadre (1991) reports that the ergative marker can be hosted by S arguments in Lhassa Tibetan even when the process described by the verb does not suggest any control or volition of the subject like in (6).

(6) Kho-s lο gnyis.shu rtson.khang nang-la bsdad-pa.red.
he-ERG year twenty jail in-OBL stay(past)-AOR+GNOMIC
‘He stayed twenty years in jail (but Lobsang did not).’ (Tournadre 1991:100)

Tournadre (1991) contends that in the settings characterized by optional ergativity (bivalent verb in the unaccomplished aspect or monovalent volitive verb in the accomplished or future), the ergative marker assumes a ‘rhetorical function’, expressing focus (7) or contrastive emphasis (8) on the subject, be the latter in A or S function.

(7) a. Khong-gis phyin-pa.red.
he-ERG go(past)-AOR+GNOMIC
‘He is the one who went.’ (Tournadre 1991:102)

b. Dpe.cha de nga-s lta-gi.yod, ‘khyer ma ‘gro a.
book this I-ERG look-UNAC+EGOVOL take not go PART
‘I am the one who is reading this book, don’t take it (away)!’ (Tournadre 1991:102)

(8) a. Khyed zhugs a nga-s phyin-dgos.
you stay(HON) PART I-ERG go(past)-MODAL AUX
‘(Please) you stay, I will go (for you).’ (Tournadre 1991:101)

b. Khyog ma thub-pa ga’i-byed-kyi-ma-red nga-s rogs byas-dgos.
carry not able-NOM nothing-matters-UNAC-not-GNOMIC I-ERG help do(past)-MODAL AUX
‘If you can’t carry it, it doesn’t matter. I will help you.’ (Tournadre 1991:104)

Similarly in Kuuk Thaayorre, a language belonging to the Paman family (Australia), the ergative marker was reported to appear on pragmatically marked subjects and to be omitted on pragmatically unmarked subjects no matter whether the subject is a S or an A (Gaby 2008). More precisely, Gaby (2008) argues that the underlying principle for the use of the ergative is the ‘Expected Actor Principle’
introduced by McGregor (1998). As such, the core parameter to account for the pragmatic ergativity of Kuuk Thaayorre is ‘expectedness’ on the basis of the discourse structure. While the established protagonist remains foregrounded, it is said to be ‘expected’ or ‘unmarked’ and thus does not require any ergative marking. But when this continuity in the protagonist is broken to the benefits of another one, the new foregrounded protagonist is pragmatically marked, because unexpected, and an ergative marker highlights it.

Finally, the use of the ‘optional’ ergative marker was related to agency. McGregor (2009) mentions the cases of Folopa (Papuan) and Mongsen Ao (Tibeto-Burman), languages in which the ergative expresses the willful agency of the subject. For instance, in the following Mongsen Ao sentences, (9) refers to the situation in which the hens were fed and (10) to the situation in which they willfully steal the paddy.

(9) a-han a-tjak tjàʔ-aj-úʔ
NRL-chicken NRL-paddy consume-PRS-DECL
‘The chickens are eating paddy.’ (McGregor 2009:496)

(10) a-han na a-tjak tjàʔ-aj-úʔ
NRL-chicken ERG NRL-paddy consume-PRS-DECL
‘The chickens are eating paddy.’ (McGregor 2009:496)

So far, a specific value was attributed to the ergative marker in order to justify the use of the ergative. However, in some languages, the marked situation is not the overt expression of the ergative but its absence, the overwhelming majority of the A arguments being marked with the ergative. Gooniyandi (Bunuban, Australia) and Warrwa (Nyulnyulan, Australia) illustrate this as in these languages the omission of the ergative, which concerns only 20% of the A arguments, has a backgrounding function (McGregor 2009). Indeed, in Gooniyandi, an A in the absolutive has its agency downplayed, and in Warrwa, such an A is not only low in agency but also expected in the sense of the ‘Expected Actor Principle’.

2.2.2. Kawapanan family

Valenzuela (2008, 2011) claims that Shiwi, the sister language of Shawi, displays an ergative pattern constrained by discourse-pragmatic aspects. In fact, the suffix –ler follows an ergative distribution in that it can appear on an A only. On the other hand, omitting it does not result in ungrammaticality (11).

Jesus eat-NFUT.3SG that paujil
‘Jesus ate the paujil.’ (Valenzuela 2008:215)
b. KiJu-ler kaʔ-λi nana ija.
Jesus-ERG eat-NFUT.3SG that paujil
‘Jesus ate the paujil.’ (Valenzuela 2008:215)

Besides, Valenzuela (2008) contends that the distribution of –ler cannot be accounted for resorting to any of the split factors put forward by Dixon (1994) – Nominal Hierarchy, aspect, tense, verb type – and adds that the clause type has no explanatory power either. Instead, Valenzuela (2008) grants this suffix discriminatory functions, which are however valid in three specific morphosyntactic contexts only:

- When A and O are both third person (12)
- In presence of valence-increasing morphemes such as the causative and the applicative (13)
- When the canonical word order AOV is altered and the O precedes the A, in which case the use of –ler is absolutely obligatory (14)

(12) a. ɲiɲiʔ-wawa-ler kitək-λi nana wila-wawa.
dog-baby-ERG bite-NFUT.3SG that child-baby
‘The puppy bit the child.’ (Valenzuela 2008:216)

b. Ipulitu(-ler) ɖiʔ-tu-λi Pulu.
Hippolyte(-ERG) kill-PRFV-NFUT.3SG Paul
‘Hippolyte killed Paul.’ (Valenzuela 2008:216)

(13) a. Waɬinchi sakaʔ-tu-λi Kiju-kin.
Valentin work-PRFV-NFUT.3SG Jesus for
‘Valentin worked for Jesus.’ (Valenzuela 2008:217)

b. Waɬinchi-ler saki-tu-λi Kiju.
Valentin-ERG work:BEN-PRFV-NFUT.3SG Jesus
‘Valentin worked for Jesus.’ (Valenzuela 2008:217)

Charlotte-ERG CAUS-sing-FUT.3SG Cruz
‘Charlotte will make Cruz sing.’ (Valenzuela 2008:216)

(14) a. Ipulitu ɖiʔ-tu-λi Pulu-ler.
Hippolyte kill-PRFV-NFUT.3SG Paul-ERG
‘Paul killed Hippolyte.’ (Valenzuela 2008:216)

Jesus APL-dance-CONT-NFUT.3SG Paul-ERG
‘It is Jesus that Paul is making dance.’ (Valenzuela 2008:217)

In other types of construction, it is common for both A and O to remain unmarked as the syntactic roles can be retrieved thanks to the context and/or the word order. Valenzuela (2011) then grants -ler discourse-pragmatic functions arguing that its use is sparked by the first mention of an entity in the discourse, a contrastive focus or the reactivation of a participant after an absence of four or more clauses (Valenzuela 2011). Grouping ‘first mention’ and ‘reactivation of a discourse participant’ together into the category ‘unexpected agent’, Valenzuela (2011) found that this latter category
accounts for 48.8% of the uses of –ler (15), some other 30.4% of its occurrences being related to a contrastive focus function (16).

(15) Napi’  ala’sa’ iyalli’ Shiwiulu=k a n ama’=lek i(n)-denma-lli. Nana iyalli’ itu-ler,

long.ago one man Jeberos=LOC jaguar=COM REC-fight-NFUT.3SG that man speak.of-NFUT.1SG

Luis Inuma. Pampatek-lu’duns= k tampu’-nen ŋa-pa-sik, nanek=la’

Luis Inuma pasture-land-edge=LOC shelter-3SG.POS exist-CONT-DUR.3SG.DS there=ABL

aman=ler pilli’-tu-nta’-lli kusheñe

jaguar=ERG seize-VM-come/go-NFUT.3SG pig:3SG.POS

‘Long ago, a man in Jeberos fought with a jaguar. That man I’m talking about is Luis Inuma.

On the edge of the pasture…, where his shelter was located, from there a jaguar seized his pig.’

(Valenzuela 2011:112)

(16) “Enta’ina a’-pida-t-(k)er. Innich-impu’-pachen kwa=ler a’ka a’-pida-t-echek”

let’s see CAUS-take.off-VM-IMP can-NEG-SUB 1SG=ERG indeed CAUS-take.off-VM-FUT.1SG

tu-lilma Kekki.
say:3SG:HSY Sun

‘ “Prove it, make him take it off. And if you can’t I will make him take it off,” said the Sun.’

(Valenzuela 2011:113)

Despite the existence of morphosyntactic factors triggering the use of the ergative marker –ler, it overwhelmingly serves discourse-pragmatic purposes, hence Valenzuela’s (2011:91) speaking of “pragmatic marking of the transitive subject”.

All in all, the ergativity feature shows no homogeneity, be its marking obligatory or optional. Indeed, when comparing the languages of the world, one becomes aware that the ergative splits are likely to appear at whichever pole of the Nominal Hierarchy cline and to display a seemingly chaotic behavior, the ergative marking span being discontinuous on this same cline. Eventually, the same heterogeneity is to be noticed about the ‘optional’ ergativity. The overt expression of the ergative corresponds to the marked situation in some languages of the world and to the unmarked situation in some others. As a result, the frequency of use of the ergative marker can differ drastically from one language to the other.

3. Methodology

The linguistic data analyzed for this thesis were collected during a one-month fieldwork in Summer 2014. The elicited data are mine but the natural speech data were collected in collaboration with Luis Miguel Rojas Berscia who introduced me to the Shawi people. We recorded, transcribed and translated the natural speech data together on the field with the help of the native speakers. Still, most of the data I based myself on to describe the use of the ergative –ni in Shawi are the result of elicitation sessions. This method allowed me to quickly come to understand the core principles underlying the use of the ergative marker. However, this method also presents major drawbacks.
Among others, it implies translation, which is misleading, above all when your informants are late L2 speakers of the communication language (here Spanish) and do not have any metalinguistic knowledge. Some sentences were particularly problematic; this is the case of the sentences involving the second person plural. In fact, in South American Spanish, this person is always expressed resorting to the pronoun ustedes, which is supposed to be the polite form (according to the standard Spanish) and behaves like the third person plural: when in the A function, it requires a verb in the third person plural and when in the O function, it takes the same accusative form as the third person plural pronoun ellos/ellas, that is los/las. This triggered numerous misunderstandings and translation difficulties. Besides, elicited sentences are context-free, which biases the posterior analysis because of the overlooking of the discourse-pragmatic factors and the introduction of an artificial variation, that is to say a variation that is not representative of the real linguistic variation but results from elicitation itself. Indeed, a speaker might have an erroneous idea of what he actually says or might want to teach the linguist what he thinks is the proper form. The problem can also stem from the type of sentences elicited as the linguist might want to elicit unnatural sentences just for the sake of grammaticality testing, sentences which certainly cost difficulties to the speakers who are thus likely to give inconsistent answers. This might explain some contradictions observed in sentences involving pronominal agents. Indeed, the ending of the verb makes clear who acts upon whom and in natural speech, the pronoun in the A function is almost always dropped. Therefore, the ergative marker seldomly appears on pronouns in natural speech and asking a speaker whether the ergative is obligatory or not in the elicited sentence may sound artificial. That is why I wanted to complement my elicited data with natural or narrative speech data. Unfortunately, transcribing this kind of recording is time-consuming and requires the availability of a native Shawi speaker. Yet, Shawi people are quite busy all day long with community work or growing their own food, and my stay among them was short. As a result, I only have two small narrative texts transcribed by Rojas Berscia (2013), an excerpt of the Bible (Yosë Nanamën) that I translated, and one frog story and one ten-minute conversation between Shawi speakers that we (Luis Miguel Rojas Berscia and I) directly transcribed on the field with native speakers. Besides, the suffix –ri appears quite rarely in natural speech, so I do not find myself in the optimal situation so as to give a thorough account of the discourse-pragmatic factors the suffix may display as its Shiwilu counterpart –ler does. Some more detailed investigations will thus be needed afterwards to corroborate my hypotheses.

As for the elicitation in itself, I asked for the translation of Spanish sentences into Shawi and performed a grammaticality judgment task; that is, for each sentence elicited, I asked the speaker whether the sentence was still grammatical if I took the ergative marker away, in case he had used it, or if I added the ergative marker, in case he had not made use of it. I began with sentences dotted with a prototypical transitive verb, typically teparaw ‘to kill’, making the NPs vary along the Nominal Hierarchy cline. I thus began asking for sentences involving a pronominal A and an O from each
nominal category of the cline (pronominal, proper noun, human NP, etc.). Afterwards, I degraded the A to ‘proper noun’ and put it in sentences with Os from each category and so on. I also paid attention to the semantic roles and got translated sentences with a force or an instrument in the A function. But if a force is commonly expressed in the A function like in “the fire destroyed my house”, sentences with an instrument in the A function are less likely to be uttered and can cause difficulties of interpretation and translation just like the sentence “the arrow wounded the monkey” that Shawi speakers tend to translate “I/he wounded the monkey with an arrow”, denying the possibility for an instrument to be an agent.

Afterwards, I played on the semantics of the verb, asking for sentences with less prototypical transitive verbs or psychological verbs. I also verified whether the suffix –ri could appear in interrogative and negative clauses and in subordinate clauses. Unfortunately, at the moment of my fieldwork, and nowadays still, the conditions of use of the different moods of Shawi were unclear and the exact meaning and labeling of several morphemes related to mood were subject to debate. While Barraza de García (2005) regarded the suffixes –ra and –r as allomorphs expressing the indicative mood, Rojas Berscia (2013) considered these two forms as distinct suffixes, -ra being labeled ‘progressive’ and –r ‘support’. In Rojas Berscia’s (2013) view, -r was thus the morpheme appealed to in order to make pronunciation possible when a verbal base ending with a vowel had to host a suffix beginning with a vowel like in the example (17) below:

(17) Yunki-r-aw.
    think-SUP-1
    ‘I think.’

Recently, Rojas Berscia (in prep. a) has reconsidered his position and now advocates the allomorph analysis, claiming that –ra “indicates that the speaker evaluates the event as existent or very likely to exist” (personal communication), hence the label ‘indicative mood’1. In any case, this mood is undoubtedly the most recurrent one and appeared constantly in elicitation no matter whether the Spanish sentence to be translated was in the past, the present or the future. As to the subordinate clauses, they are overwhelmingly expressed with nominalizations and no specific moods appear in these as it is the case in Romance languages in which the subjunctive mood is mainly used in subordinate clauses. As such, the opposition main clause / subordinate clause is more straightforward in Shawi and I did check the existence/absence of split ergativity along this parameter. As for aspect, the only distinction made in Shawi, as far as I know, is between perfective and imperfective. The former is not overtly expressed and the latter is expressed via the ‘progressive’ marker –ra.

I thus investigated all the split parameters put forward by Dixon (1994). Nonetheless, another study of the impact of modality in the expression of ergativity will have to be carried out once the expression of modality in Shawi is clearer.

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1 Rojas Berscia (in prep. a) uses the label ‘existential mood’ instead.
4. The Shawi case: description of the distribution of the ergative marker in a context-free situation.

Elicitation made clear straight away that the suffix –ri is ergatively distributed as claimed by Rojas Berscia (2013). Indeed, the use of this suffix was considered ungrammatical by Shawi speakers when affixed on the S arguments of the sentences in (18), which I represented by the symbol –(*ri). These examples also show that there is no split S in Shawi. No matter the semantics of the verb, and above all no matter whether the process described is volitional or not, the S argument receives the absolutive case.

(18) a. Wi’nawe-(*ri) chiwe-r-in tanan-ke.
    my son get.lost-IND-3 forest-LOC
    ‘My son got lost in the forest.’

b. Ka-(*ri) yunka-w.
    1 swim-1
    ‘I swim.’

c. Pitruch-(*ri) saka-te-r-in Kusi-mare.
    Peter work-VAL-IND-3 Joseph-BEN
    ‘Peter works for Joseph.’

d. Ina-(*ri) iya-r-in i’sha-ke.
    3 pee-IND-3 water-LOC
    ‘He pees in the river.’

e. Ka-(*ri) pa’-sa-ra-w pei-ke.
    1 go-PROG-IND-1 house-LOC
    ‘I am going home.’

On the other hand, the A arguments commonly host the suffix –ri. Examples are given in (19) below.

(19) a. Ka-ri ni’nìi tepa-ra-w.
    1-ERG jaguar kill-IND-1
    ‘I killed the jaguar.’

b. Pichu-ri ina au-r-in chiniken.
    Peter-ERG 3 hit-IND-3 strong
    ‘Peter hit him strongly.’

c. Nu’nu-ri pakì-r-in mi’ne napira-ke.
    monkey-ERG break-IND-3 mocahua stone-INSTR
    ‘A monkey broke the mocahua with a stone.’

The suffix –ri can thus be labeled ‘ergative marker’. However, not all the A arguments are marked with the ergative. For instance, the sentences in (20) are perfectly grammatical.

(20) a. Ya’wan tepa-r-in yu’yu-we.
    snake kill-IND-3 brother-1.POSS.INALIEN
    ‘A snake killed my brother.’
b. Pichu au-\text{-}r-\text{-}\text{n}ke chiniken.
\hspace{2em}Peter hit-IND-3-2.0 strong
\hspace{2em}‘Peter hit you strongly.’

c. I’\text{\textit{wara}} pen pei a-wikite-\text{-}r-\text{-}in.
\hspace{2em}yesterday fire house CAUS-burn-IND-3
\hspace{2em}‘Yesterday, the fire destroyed my house.’

More precisely, the use of the ergative was considered by Shawi speakers as obligatory, prohibited or optional depending on the sentence. Obligatoriness and prohibition are binary features (yes/no features) that do not, at first sight, depend on discourse-pragmatic principles. As such, the contexts in which the ergative marker is obligatory or prohibited are definable based on the elicited data. As for the sentences in which the use of the ergative marker was said to be optional, the Shawi speakers kept asserting that the presence/absence of the suffix in question has absolutely no impact on the meaning of the utterance. As a matter of fact, the use of the ergative marker in such sentences must be conditioned by discourse-related factors that have validity only when they are in context. As such, the cases of optionality are to be studied through narrative or natural speech data, which will be done in section 5.

Before describing the conditions of use of the ergative marker \text{-}ri into more details, it is to be noted that when the host noun ends with /n/, the suffix \text{-}ri is reduced to \text{-}i.

\section*{4.1. Split ergativity}

\subsection*{4.1.1. Relevant factors to split ergativity}

First of all, the elicitation sessions showed that the kind of sentence is not a factor conditioning the use of the ergative marker. Indeed, the suffix \text{-}ri was found in assertive, negative and interrogative sentences. Its use in assertive sentences was shown in (19) and the compatibility of the negation with the ergative marker is exemplified in (21).

\begin{exe}
\ex \text{(21)} Ka-ri ku tepa-ra-{w}\text{-}we ina.
\hspace{2em}1\text{-}\text{\textit{ERG}} NEG kill-IND-1\text{-}\text{\textit{NEG}} 3
\hspace{2em}‘I did not kill him.’
\end{exe}

As far as the use of the ergative in interrogative sentences is concerned, the examples in (22) and (23) show that the ergative marker \text{-}ri is likely to appear on NPs referring to an A argument (22) or on the interrogative pronoun \textit{inta} ‘who’ that replaces the A argument. In the latter case, \textit{inta} becomes \textit{inkari} and the sentence in (23a) can be expressed like in (23b).

\begin{exe}
\ex \text{(22) a. Kema-ri kenan-an taya’?}
\hspace{2em}2\text{-}\text{\textit{ERG}} see-2 alligator
\hspace{2em}‘Do you see the alligator?’
\end{exe}
b. Inta’ ina-ri kete-r-in atari?
who give-IND-3 hen
‘To whom did he offer the hen?’

(23) a. Inta’ penutun tepa-r-in?
who healer kill-IND-3
‘Who killed the healer?’

b. Inkari penutun tepa-r-in?
who:ERG healer kill-IND-3
‘Who killed the healer?’

It is also straightforward that the Shawi language displays no split ergativity opposing main clauses to subordinate clauses. In fact, the subordination of a clause is realized through its nominalization and the issue to address is thus the compatibility of the ergative marker –ri with the nominalized forms ‘Finite Verb + -su’ and ‘Finite Verb + Case’. In this respect, elicitation made clear that the ergative can be used on the A argument of a verb nominalized with –su, no matter whether this nominal clause serve as a subordinate (24) or a subject clause (25).

child-DIM 2-ERG yesterday search-IND-1-NMZ this
‘The children [I searched for yesterday] are these ones.’

b. Sa’an ku yunki-r-in-we [kema-ri ite-r-an-su].
your.wife NEG remember-IND-3-NEG 2-ERG say-IND-2-NMZ
‘Your wife does not remember [what you told her].’

c. Ka pa’-na-w ta’n-an-ke ni’ni-ru-ku [ina-ri pa’an-in-su].
1 make-IND-1 food dog-LOC 3-ERG buy-3-NMZ
‘I go to the forest with the dog [that he bought].’

(25) Ka-ri cocina-ra-w-su tepa-r-in.
1-cook-IND-1-NMZ kill-IND-3
‘What I cooked killed him.’

Similarly, the sentences in (26) show there is no incompatibility between the ergative and the nominalization of the form ‘Finite Verb + Case’.

(26) a. Ni-na-w kusharu ina-ri nusha tepa-r-in-ke.
make-IND-1 food 3-ERG meat kill-IND-3-INSTR
‘I prepare food with the meat of the animal he killed.’

b. Kema-ri pe’chinan ni-te-r-an-ke i’wara yunkurun tepa-r-in.
2-ERG bow make-VAL-IND-2-INSTR yesterday partridge kill-IND-3
‘Yesterday, he killed a partridge with the bow that you had made for him.’

However, the use of the ergative marker in nominalized clauses of this type does not seem to be as systematic as in the clauses nominalized with –su. In (27), the same Spanish sentence was translated in two different ways by the same Shawi speaker and while he accepted the use of the ergative with
the nominalization in –su (27a), he denied the possibility to use it with nominalized clause following the pattern ‘Finite Verb + Case’ (27b).

(27) a. Ka pe’sha-ra-w nara sawini-ke kema-(ri) pa’an-an-(s)u.
    1 cut-IND-1 tree machete-INSTR 2-ERG buy-2-NMZ
    ‘I cut trees with the machete you bought.’

    b. Ka pe’sha-ra-w nara kema-(*ri)sawini pa’an-an-ke.
       1 cut-IND-1 tree 2 machete buy-2-INSTR
       ‘I cut trees with the machete you bought.’

Here are two other examples of ‘Finite Verb + Case’ nominalized clauses for which the speakers did not accept the use of the ergative (28).

(28) a. Ka a’ni-ra-w nara ina-(*ri) sawini pa’an-in-ke.
    1 cut-IND-1 tree 3 machete buy-3-INSTR
    ‘I cut trees with the machete he bought.’

    b. Pa’-sa-ra-w pei kema-(*ri) pa’an-an-ke.
       go-PROG-IND-1 house 2 machete buy-2-LOC
       ‘I go to the house you bought.’

Unfortunately, I am unable to account for this pattern. As a matter of a fact, the factors relevant to the split ergativity existing in Shawi and presented below in this section do not cover this case. It might just be due to variation, some speakers putting the su-nominalizations and the ‘Finite Verb + Case’ nominalizations on an equal footing and others considering that the instrumental case blocks the appearance of the ergative marker in the second kind of nominalization. But this is only a rough guess and a study centered on this phenomenon is to be realized in order to find out what is going on.

Finally, the Shawi split ergativity does not seem to be accountable in terms of TAM. First of all, the Shawi language makes no tense distinctions. Barraza de García (2005) writes that verbs host morphemes of derivation, aspect, mood and person (cf. Picture 3) but does not mention tense markers. Only Rojas Bercia (2013) hypothesized that the suffix –te gives the verb a past value while the suffix –ta gives it a present value. Nevertheless, he has revised his position and now proposes another analysis of these suffixes. In line with Barraza de García’s (2005 & 2007) terminology, Rojas Berscia (in prep. a) groups the suffixes –te and –ta under the label ‘valenciator’\(^2\), because their functions are to alter the valence of the host verb, increasing or decreasing it, and claim that the suffix –ta results in fact from the merge of the unique valenciator –te with the progressive –sa/-ra, hence the impression of present value at first. As just mentioned, the Shawi language disposes of a progressive suffix and thus overtly expresses aspect. However, this does not seem to trigger any ergative split as the presence/absence of the progressive suffix –sa/-ra does not have any impact on the distribution of the ergative marker –ri. Indeed, the verbs of the sentences in (29) are marked with

\(^2\) For more details about the notion of ‘valenciator’, see Barraza de García (2005) and Barraza de García (2007).
the progressive while the ones of the sentences in (19) are not, still all these sentences have their A arguments marked with the ergative.

    man-ERG cut-VAL:PROG-IND-3 manioc.stick machete-INS
    'The man is cutting manioc sticks with a machete.'

    b. Tashiraya kema-ri tepa-ra-r-in Pitrú.
    tomorrow 2-ERG kill-PROG-IND-3 Peter
    'Tomorrow, you’ll kill Peter.'

    c. Wa’an-i ipura ta’n-ke ma’sha tepa-ra-r-in.
    leader-ERG now forest-LOC animal kill-PROG-IND-3
    'The leader is hunting in the forest now.' (lit. is killing animals)

Finally, mood does not represent a factor of split ergativity either since the ergative marker appears in sentences, the verbs of which are in the indicative (19 and 29), imperative (30a), potential (30b), dubitative (30c) or hypothetical mood.

(30) a. Ka ta’n-ke pa’-patu-ra ka-ri tepa-chi nu’nu.
    1 forest-LOC go-1SEQ.ACT-? 1-ERG kill-1.IMP monkey
    'When I go to the forest, I’ll kill a monkey.'

    b. Tashiraya kema-ri tepa-un Pitrú.
    tomorrow 2-ERG kill-2.POT Peter
    'You will kill Peter tomorrow.'

    'We may kill you.'

4.1.2. Obligatoriness of the ergative marker

The elicitation sessions revealed the existence of one strict morphosyntactic rule about the use of the ergative which wins unanimous support among the Shawi speakers. This is the obligatoriness of the ergative marker when the A function is occupied by a 1\textsuperscript{st} person pronoun and the O function by a 2\textsuperscript{nd} person pronoun, regardless of the number. There are thus four cases in which the use of the ergative is obligatory. First, when the first person singular ka acts upon the second person singular kema as exemplified in (31).

(31) 1SG>2SG

    1-ERG-2 O hit-IND-1-2 O
    'I am going to hit you.'

    1-ERG-2 O trust-IND-1-2 O
    'I trust you.'
Yesterday 1-ERG-2.O call-IND-1-2.O
‘I called you yesterday.’

The first person singular pronoun ka is in the A function in all the sentences in (31) and obligatorily bears the ergative marker –ri because of the second person singular kema, which is not overtly expressed, occupying the O function.

Similarly, the pronoun ka is marked with the ergative in all the sentences given in (32).

(32) 1SG>2PL
   a. Ka-ri-(nke)ma yunki-ra-(w)-nkema.
      1-ERG-2.PL.O remember-IND-1-2.PL.O
      ‘I remember you.’
   b. Ka-ri-(nke)ma nu’wi-ra-(w)-nkema.
      1-ERG-2.PL.O make.fun.of-IND-1-2.PL.O
      ‘I make fun of you.’
   c. Ka-ri-(nke)ma tashinanpei-ta-we-nkema.
      1-ERG-2.PL.O prison-VAL:PROG-1-2.PL.O
      ‘I am going to imprison you.’

Again, the pronoun occupying the O function remains implicit in all the sentences in (32) but the pronominal object suffix –nkema on the verb indicates the O function is occupied by the second person plural pronoun kampita. As the examples show, the ergative marking of the A argument ka is obligatory in this case too.

The same obligatory ergative marking was found on the first person plural exclusive kiya when it acts upon a second person. In the examples presented in (33), the O function is occupied by the second person plural kampita and the pronoun kiya in the A function is obligatorily marked with the ergative.

(33) 1PL>2PL
      1.PL.EXCL-ERG-2.PL.O-?DEF 2.PL like-IND-1.PL.EXCL-2.PL.O
      ‘We like you.’
      1.PL.EXCL-ERG-2.PL.O forget-IND-1.PL.EXCL-2.PL.O 2.PL
      ‘We will forget you.’
      1.PL.EXCL-ERG-2.PL.O hit-IND-1.PL.EXCL-2.PL.O 2.PL
      ‘We hit you.’

In the sentences given in (34), the O function is occupied by the second person singular kema, and still the agent kiya is systematically marked with the ergative.
(34) 1PL>2SG
   1.PL.EXCL-ERG-? DEF help-IND-1.PL.EXCL-2.O-NEG
   ‘We are not going to help you.’

   1.PL.EXCL-ERG a lot think-IND-1.PL.EXCL-2.O
   ‘We think a lot about you.’

   ‘We will kill you.’

All the examples presented in (31)-(34) confirm that in Shawi, the first person pronouns, singular ka and plural exclusive kiya, have to be marked with the ergative whenever they occupy the A function while a second person pronoun, be it singular kema or plural kampita, occupy the O function. In brief, the rule can be stated as follows: when 1 acts upon 2, then 1 bears the ergative. Besides, this rule remains valid whichever the semantics of the verb and specifically its degree of transitivity. Indeed, the ergative marker is obligatory with prototypical transitive verbs like in (35a-b) as well as with less transitive verbs (35c-d) and psychological verbs (35e-h), which are, semantically speaking, not transitive at all.

(35)  a. Ka-ri tepa-ra-(w)-nke.
     1-ERG kill-IND-1-2.O
     ‘I am going to kill you.’

b. Ka-ri-nke a-ni’i-ra-(w)-nke.
     ‘I made you jump.’

     ‘I make you work (and work with you).’

d. ‘I’wara ka-ri yuni-ra-(w)-nke.
     yesterday 1-ERG look.for-IND-1-2.O
     ‘I looked for you yesterday.’

e. Ka-ri nuwate-ra-(w)-nke.
     1-ERG love-IND-1-2.O
     ‘I love you.’

f. Ka-ri yunki-ra-(w)-nke.
     1-ERG think-IND-1-2.O
     ‘I think about you.’

g. Ka-ri na’wan-(r)a-(w)-nke.
     1-ERG miss-IND-1-2.O
     ‘I miss you.’

h. Ka-ri-nke nate-ra-(w)-nke.
     1-ERG-2.O trust-IND-1-2.O
     ‘I trust you.’
Besides, the transitivity of the clause has no impact on this rule either. No matter whether the process described by the verb was/will be actually realized or whether it is just a desire (36) or a probable process (37), the ergative marker is obligatory.

(36) Ka-ri ya-naniante-ra-(w)-nke.
    1:ERG DES-forget-IND-1-2.O
    ‘I want to forget you.’

(37) Kiya-ri-nke(ma) tepa-mara-i-nkema.
    1:PL.EXCL-ERG-2.PL.O kill-DUB-1:PL.EXCL-2.PL.O
    ‘We may kill you.’

The rule in question is also valid with ditransitive verbs, even when the 2nd person pronoun refers to the recipient and not the patient of the action (38).

(38) a. Kiya-ri-n-su pei keta-ra-i-nkema.
    1:PL.EXCL-ERG-?DEF house give-IND-1:PL.EXCL-2.PL.O
    ‘We will offer you a house.’

    1:ERG-2.O already tell-VAL-IND-1-2.O
    ‘I already told you.’

As a final observation, note that in the case of an action performed by a 1st person and oriented towards a 2nd person exclusively, the Shawi speakers tend to double the object marking on the A argument right after the ergative marker –ri, as illustrated by most of the examples given between (31) and (38). The double marking of the O argument, like in (39), does not seem to convey any additional information compared to the unique marking strategy (40). These two morphosyntactic strategies may momentarily in free variation, giving track of an ongoing change in the language.

(39) Ka-ri-nke tepa-ra-(w)-nke.
    ‘I will kill you.’

(40) Ka-ri tepa-ra-(w)-nke.
    1:ERG kill-IND-1-2.O
    ‘I will kill you.’

4.1.3. Prohibition of the ergative marker

In other contexts, the use of the ergative was regarded as ungrammatical by all the Shawi speakers and as we will see in this part, the prohibition of the ergative is directly related to the NP type occupying the O function.
The first strict rule is: the A argument remains in the absolutive when the O function is occupied by a 1st person pronoun, be it the singular (ka), plural exclusive (kiya) or plural inclusive (kampua) form, the verbal object endings of which are respectively –ku, -kui, -pua. This rule is exemplified below in (41), (42) and (43), where the symbol –(*ri) represents the prohibition of use of the ergative.

(41) O = 1st person singular (ka)

a. I'wara kema-(*ri) nu’wi-r-an-ku.  
   yesterday 2 tell-INF-2.1.O  
   ‘You told me off yesterday.’

b. Kampita-(*ri) ka-su apayan-(r)a-ma-ku.  
   2.PL 1-DEF frighten-INF-2.PL-1.O  
   ‘You frighten me.’

c. Pitru-(*ri) a-wina-r-in-ku.  
   Peter CAUS-laugh-INF-3-1.O  
   ‘Peter makes me laugh.’

d. I’sha chini-r-in-su-(*ri) kepa-r-in-ku.  
   river have.strength-INF-3-NMZ take.away-INF-3-1.O  
   ‘The current of the river took me away.’

(42) O = 1st person plural exclusive (kiya)

a. Kema-(*ri) ya-tepa-r-an-kui.  
   2 DES-kill-2-1.PL.EXCL.O  
   ‘You want to kill us.’

b. Kampita-(*ri) ya-tepa-ra-ma-kui?  
   2.PL DES-kill-2-1.PL.EXCL.O  
   ‘Will you kill us?’

c. Kampita-(*ri) tewate-ra-ma-kui kiya?  
   2.PL be.afraid.of-IND-2-1.PL.EXCL.O 1.PL.EXCL  
   ‘Are you afraid of us?’

d. Ya’wan-(r)usa-(*ri) kete-r-in-ku.  
   snake-PL bite-INF-3-1.PL.EXCL.O  
   ‘Snakes bit us.’

(43) O = 1st person plural inclusive (kampua)

   Aguaruna-PL DES-kill-FRUS-IND-3-1.PL.INCL.O-FRUS 1.PL.INCL  
   ‘The Aguaruna wanted to kill us, in vain.’

   rain be.wet-VAL-INF-3-1.PL.INCL.O  
   ‘The rain made us wet.’

   maybe jaguar-PL kill-3.POT-1.PL.INCL.O  
   ‘Maybe jaguars will kill us.’
The second strict rule is: the A argument, if different from a 1\textsuperscript{st} person pronoun, remains in the absolutive when the O function is occupied by a 2\textsuperscript{nd} person pronoun, be it the singular (kema) or plural (kampita) form, the verbal object endings of which are respectively –nke, -nkema. Examples are given in (44) and (45). To be clear, this rule is valid if and only if the A argument is not a 1\textsuperscript{st} person pronoun for otherwise, the rule given in section 4.1.2. applies and requires that the 1\textsuperscript{st} person pronoun should bear an ergative marker.

(44) \textbf{O = 2\textsuperscript{nd} person singular (kema)}

a. Ina-pita-\textasteriskcentered{ri} tashinanpei-te-r-inen-(n)ke.  
3-Pl prison-VAL-IND-3.PL.O  
‘They imprisoned you.’

b. Pitru-\textasteriskcentered{ri} nate-r-in-(n)ke.  
Peter trust-IND-3.O  
‘Peter trusts you.’

c. Isu wa’wa-sha-\textasteriskcentered{ri} inan-in-(n)ke.  
this child-DIM shoot-at-3.O  
‘This child shot at you.’

d. Kankan-\textasteriskcentered{ri} win-in-(n)ke.  
wasp sting-3.O  
‘A wasp stung you.’

e. Kaniu-\textasteriskcentered{ri} tepa-ra-r-in-(n)ke.  
ilness kill-PROG-IND-3.O  
‘The illness is killing you.’

(45) \textbf{O = 2\textsuperscript{nd} person plural (kampita)}

a. Ina-\textasteriskcentered{ri} nimara kampita kepa-r-in-(n)kema i-ke-rupa.  
3 maybe 2.PL take-IND-3.PL.O river-LOC-land  
‘He will maybe take you to the river’s shore.’

b. Ina-pita-\textasteriskcentered{ri} nu’wi-r-ine(n)-(nke)ma kampita.  
3-PL hate-IND-3.PL.O 2.PL  
‘They hate you.’

c. Kema-rusa-\textasteriskcentered{ri} ku tepa-r-ine(n)-(nke)ma-w kampita.  
Aguaruna-Pl NEG kill-IND-3.PL.O-NEG 2.PL  
‘The Aguaruna did not kill you.’

d. Ya’ipi-\textasteriskcentered{ri} nuwante-r-ine(n)-(nke)ma kampita.  
all like-IND-3.PL.O 2.PL  
‘Everybody likes you.’

e. Wawasapa-\textasteriskcentered{ri} uwan-in-(n)kema.  
spear jab-3.O  
‘A spear jabbed you.’
In line with the rule about the obligatoriness of the ergative illustrated in (38), the two rules exposed in this section are also valid with ditransitive verbs when the 1st or 2nd person pronoun refers to the recipient of the action. The sentences given in (46) show this.

(46)  
\[\begin{align*}
\text{a. } & \text{Kampita-}*ri \quad \text{kete-ra-ma-ku} \quad \text{a'na} \quad \text{nun-sha.} \\
& \text{2.PL give-IND-2.PL-1.O one canoe-DIM} \\
& \text{‘You offered me a canoe.’}
\end{align*}\]

\[\begin{align*}
\text{b. } & \text{Kema-}*ri \quad \text{kete-r-an-kui} \quad \text{pepekunu.} \\
& \text{2 give-IND-2-1.PL.EXCL.O necklace} \\
& \text{‘You gave us necklaces.’}
\end{align*}\]

\[\begin{align*}
\text{c. } & \text{Kampita-}*ri \quad \text{keshe-ra-ma-kui} \quad \text{vino.} \\
& \text{2.PL bring-IND-2-1.PL.EXCL.O wine} \\
& \text{‘You brought us wine.’}
\end{align*}\]

Yet, the use of the ergative marker in presence of a 1st or 2nd person pronominal object marker on the verb (-ku, -kui, -pua, -nke or –nkema) seems to be possible. Indeed, in the sentences given in (47), the A argument can be marked with the ergative even though the O function is occupied by a 1st or a 2nd person pronoun. The reason is the pronominal object marker on the verb does not refer to an undergoer or a recipient but to a beneficiary/detrimentary, that is to say to a participant who benefits or suffers the consequences of the action.

(47)  
\[\begin{align*}
\text{a. } & \text{Pa’ma-ri} \quad \text{nun} \quad \text{kepa-te-r-in-ku.} \\
& \text{rising-ERG canoe take.away-VAL-IND-3-1.O} \\
& \text{‘The rising of the river took my canoe away.’ (lit. took me away the canoe)}
\end{align*}\]

\[\begin{align*}
\text{b. } & \text{Kaniu-ri} \quad \text{tepa-te-r-in-ku} \quad \text{iya-we.} \\
& \text{illness-ERG kill-VAL-IND-3-1.O brother-1.POSS.INA} \\
& \text{‘An illness killed my brother.’ (lit. killed me my brother)}
\end{align*}\]

\[\begin{align*}
\text{c. } & \text{U’nan-} \quad \text{kutun} \quad \text{shipi-te-r-in-ku.} \\
& \text{rain-ERG shirt be.wet-VAL-IND-3-1.O} \\
& \text{‘The rain made my shirt wet.’ (lit. made me wet the shirt)}
\end{align*}\]

The rules leading to the prohibition of the ergative thus loosen in presence of the derivating suffix –te, dubbed ‘valenciator’ by Barraza de García (2005, 2007), when it is used with a benefactive/detrimentative meaning. As a result, the rules in question do not seem to be conditioned by the linguistic form in itself but rather by semantics.

According to the sentences in (48), reported by Rojas Berscia (2013), the same phenomenon as in (47) is triggered by another derivating affix, namely the causative.

(48)  
\[\begin{align*}
\text{a. } & \text{Kema-ri} \quad \text{tanta} \quad \text{a-ka’-n-an-ku.} \\
& \text{2-ERG bread CAUS-eat-IND-2-1.O} \\
& \text{‘You make me eat bread.’ (Rojas Berscia 2013:99)}
\end{align*}\]
b. Ina-ri nara a-a’ne-r-in-ku.
   3-ERG tree CAUS-cut-IND-3-1.O
   ‘He makes me cut trees.’ (Rojas Berscia 2013:99)

In my elicited data on the other hand, the presence of a causative prefix does not alter the restriction described in (39) as my informants did not accept the use of the ergative on the A arguments of the sentences in (49).

(49) a. Ina-(ri) a-nansa-r-in-ku.
    3 CAUS-dance-IND-3-1.O
    ‘He makes me dance.’

b. Pitru-(ri) a-wina-r-in-ku.
   Peter CAUS-laugh-IND-3-1.O
   ‘Peter makes me laugh.’

Given these conflicting data, a clear and definitive picture of the use of the ergative marker in presence of a 1st or 2nd person pronominal object marker on the verb cannot be given. An in-depth study of the phenomenon would be needed so as to understand what is going on.

4.2. Optional ergativity

In all the other contexts, the use of the ergative –ri is optional in the sense of McGregor (2009) that was put forward in the literature review. Following this definition of optionality, the presence or absence of the ergative marker in the sentences presented in this section has no influence on the grammaticality judgment of a native speaker of Shawi even though the use of this suffix is not literally ‘optional’, that is random. Instead, its use must follow some other principles that I will address in section 5. For the present section, I will represent the optionality of the suffix –ri in the following way: -(ri).

The ‘optional ergativity’ phenomenon is widespread in Shawi. Optionality is actually the rule and seems to concern all the morphosyntactic contexts outside of those triggering the ergative splits described in section 4.1. More precisely, the use of the ergative marker is optional whenever the O function is occupied by a 3rd person pronoun or a NP, regardless of the A argument. Indeed, as the sentences in (50) show, the first person pronouns ka and kiya, which were said to be obligatorily marked with the ergative when the object is a second person pronoun, can remain unmarked when the O function is occupied by a full NP like in (50b-e) or a 3rd person pronoun such as ina ‘he/she’ like in (50a), where the pronoun ina remains implicit though.
(50)  **A = 1**<sup>st</sup> **person (singular or plural)**

a. Ka-(ri)  uwan-(r)a-w  wawasapa-ke.  
   1-ERG  jab-IND-1  spear-INST
   'I jabbed him with my spear.'

b. Kiya-(ri)  na’wan-(r)a-i  Pitru.  
   1.PL.EXCL-ERG  miss-IND-1.PL.EXCL  Peter
   'We miss Peter.'

c. Nani  tauri  ka-(ri)  ichi-ama-ra-we  wi’nawe.  
   each day  1-ERG  SOC.CAUS-have.a.bath-IND-1  my.son
   'I make (and help) my son have a bath every day.'

d. Kiya-(ri)  nu’nu  ni’-sa-ra-i.  
   1.PL.EXCL-ERG  monkey  look-at-PROG-IND-1.PL.EXCL
   'We are looking at the monkey.'

e. Ka-(ri)  mapa-te-ra-we  kara  kayu  atari  kayu.  
   1-ERG  receive-VAL-IND-1  three  egg  hen  egg
   'I received three eggs.'

Besides, these examples show that verbal semantics exerts no influence on the distribution of the ergative marker since perception verbs (50d), reception verbs (50e), psychological verbs (50b) and non-prototypical transitive verbs (50c) can have their A arguments marked with the ergative, alike prototypical transitive verbs (50a).

The examples in (51) show that the second person pronouns singular **kema** and plural **kampita** are also optionally marked with the ergative when they are in the A function when a 3<sup>rd</sup> person pronoun/NP occupies the O function.

(51)  **A = 2**<sup>nd</sup> **person (singular or plural)**

a. Kampita-(ri)  nate-ra-ma  isu?  
   2.PL-ERG  trust-IND-2.PL  this
   'Do you trust him?'

b. Kampita-(ri)  tepe-ra-ma  Pitru  i’wara.  
   2.PL-ERG  kill-IND-2.PL  Peter  yesterday
   'You killed Peter yesterday.'

c. Kema-(ri)  wa’wa-sha  au-r-an.  
   2-ERG  child-DIM  hit-IND-2
   'You hit the child.'

d. Kema-(ri)  ya’wan  te’wa-te-r-an?  
   2-ERG  snake  be.afraid-VAL-IND-2
   'Are you afraid of snakes?'

e. Kema-(ri)  paki-r-an  mi’ne.  
   2-ERG  break-IND-2  mocahua
   'You broke the mocahua.'

Again, verbal semantics does not seem to play any role in the use of the ergative marker –ri.
The 3rd person pronouns singular *ina* and plural *inapita* were also found to be optionally marked with the ergative when the object is a 3rd person pronoun/NP. The sentences in (52) illustrate this.

(52)  A = 3rd person (singular or plural)

a. Ina-pita-(ri)  tepa-pi  (ina).
   3-PL-ERG  kill-3.PL  3
   'They killed him.'

b. Ina-(ri)  a-nansa-r-in  inawa.
   3-ERG  CAUS-dance-IND-3  3.PL
   'He makes them dance.'

c. Ina-(ri)  Pichu  nuwite-r-in  irakaeraware.
   3-ERG  Peter  know-IND-3  for.a.long.time
   'He has known Peter for a long time.'

d. Ina-(ri)  sha’wi-te-r-in  sa’in  kusharu  ni’-karu-mare.
   3-ERG  tell-VAL-IND-3  his.wife  food  make-3.P.INF-BEN
   'He told his wife to prepare food.'

e. Ina-pita-(ri)  inan-(r)a-pi  ni’ni.
   3-PL-ERG  shoot.at-IND-3.PL  jaguar
   'They shot at the jaguar.'

f. Ina-(ri)  teyate-r-in  piruta  ahke.
   3-ERG  throw-IND-3  ball  far
   'He threw the ball far away.'

The sentence (52d) shows that speech verbs can also have their A arguments marked with the ergative and thus confirm that verbal semantics play no role in the distribution of the ergative marker.

The examples in (53)-(56) show that when the O function is occupied by a 3rd person pronoun/NP, the ergative marker on the full NP in the A function is always optional, no matter whether the full NP in question is a proper noun (53), a human NP (54), an animate NP (55) or an inanimate NP (56).

(53)  A = Proper Noun

a. Pichu-(ri)  nuwante-r-in  nakun.
   Peter-ERG  want-IND-3  much
   'Peter loves her much.'

   Peter-ERG  John  kill-3.POT
   'Peter will kill John.'

c. Pitru-(ri)  na’wan-in  sa’in.
   Peter-ERG  miss-3  his.wife
   'Peter misses his wife.'

d. Pitru-(ri)  inan-in  atari.
   Peter-ERG  shoot-IND-3  hen
   'Peter shot a hen.'
e. Pitrú-(ri) iwa-r-in pepekunu.
   Peter-ERG steal-IND-3 necklace
   ‘Peter stole a necklace.’

(54) A = human NP

a. Papi-n-(i) apa-r-in kisha maka-ru-mare.
   father-3.POSS.INALIEN-ERG send-IND-3 manioc collect-NMZ-BEN
   ‘His father sent him to collect manioc.’

b. lyê-(ri) ten-in Pitrú ma’ša tepa-kasu-mare.
   my_brother-ERG say-3 Peter animal kill-3:P.INF-BEN
   ‘My brother told Peter to go hunting.’

c. Kemapi-(ri) nu’wi-r-in wi’nin.
   man-ERG shout-IND-3 his.son
   ‘The man shouts at his son.’

d. Ka-ken su’ya-we-(ri) ni’ni tepa-r-in.
   1-GEN husband-1.POSS.INALIEN-ERG jaguar kill-IND-3
   ‘My husband killed the jaguar.’

e. Kemapi-(ri) ni’šite-r-in kinan sawini-ke.
   man-ERG cut-IND-3 manioc.stick machete-INSTR
   ‘The man cuts manioc sticks with a machete.’

f. Sa’an-(i) naniente-r-in kema ite-r-an-su.
   your.wife-ERG forget-IND-3 2 say-IND-2-NMZ
   ‘Your wife forgets what you say.’

(55) A = animate NP

a. Kankan-(i) win-in ina.
   wasp-ERG sting-3 3
   ‘A wasp stung him.’

   jaguar-ERG Peter kill-IND-3 forest-LOC
   ‘A jaguar killed Peter in the forest.’

c. Ni’ni-(ri) na’wan-in wa’an-in.
   dog-ERG miss-3 leader-3.POSS.INALIEN
   ‘The dog misses his owner.’

d. Ya’wan-(i) ka’n-in atari.
   snake-ERG eat-IND-3 hen
   ‘A snake ate the hen.’

e. Nu’nu-(ri) paki-r-in mi’ne napi-ra-ke.
   monkey-ERG break-IND-3 mocahua stone-DIM-INSTR
   ‘A monkey broke the mocahua with a little stone.’

(56) A = inanimate NP

a. Wawasapa-(ri) uwan-in ina.
   spear-ERG jab-3 3
   ‘A spear jabbed him.’
   illness-ERG Peter catch-3
   ‘An illness caught Peter.’

c. Pa’mä-(ri) wi’nawe kepa-r-in.
   rising-ERG my.son take-away-IND-3
   ‘The rising of the river took my son away.’

d. Wira-(ri) ni-tä’a-te-r-in ma’sha-rusa.
   thunder-ERG REFL-run-VAL-IND-3 animal-PL
   ‘The thunder makes animals flee.’

e. Iwan-(i) nara teyate-r-in pei aipi.
   wind-ERG tree throw-IND-3 house over
   ‘The wind made a tree fall over my house.’

In case the A function is occupied by two coordinated NPs, different strategies are possible for the ergative marking. The speaker can choose to mark one of the NPs, either the first one (57a) or the second one (57b), or both of them (57c). Finally, he can also choose to leave the NPs in the absolutive case and to refer to them both afterwards through the use of the third person plural pronoun inapita, which he will mark with the ergative (57d).

(57) a. Katu kemapi-rí a’nara sanapi-∅ tepa-pí Pitru.
    two man-ERG one woman kill-3.PL Peter
    ‘Two men and a woman killed Peter.’

    two man one woman-ERG kill-3.PL Peter
    ‘Two men and a woman killed Peter.’

    two man-ERG one woman-ERG kill-3.PL Peter
    ‘Two men and a woman killed Peter.’

    two man one woman 3-PL-ERG kill-3.PL Peter
    ‘Two men and a woman killed Peter.’

Besides, as shown in (24), the ergative marker can appear in subordinate clauses. In this respect, it is also worth mentioning that the use of the ergative in the main clause is not incompatible with its use in the subordinate clause. In other words, the A arguments of both the main and the subordinate clause from a same sentence can be marked with the ergative. The sentences in (58) are thus perfectly grammatical.

(58) a. Sa’an-i naniante-r-in kema-rí ite-r-an-su.
    your.wife-ERG forget-IND-3 2-ERG say-IND-2-NMZ
    ‘Your wife forgets what you say.’

b. Wa’an-i tepa-r-in sanapi kema-rí nuwante-r-an-su.
    leader-ERG kill-IND-3 woman 2-ERG want-IND-2-NMZ
    ‘The leader killed the woman you loved.’

34
4.3. Inconsistent answers to elicited sentences

When comparing between speakers, I got some inconsistent translations, most of them in the cases of sentences in which a first person A acts upon a NP or a pronominal third person, or a third person pronoun A upon another third person pronoun. Indeed, some speakers considered the use of the ergative –ri obligatory on the A argument while others regarded it as optional. Nevertheless, I took the side of the optionality advocators and included these cases in the section ‘optional ergativity’ (cf. examples in (50) and (52)). I made this choice because it seems to me that the use of the ergative marker in these cases is not conditioned by Nominal Hierarchy alone, but also and mostly by discourse-related factors, and that the ‘obligatoriness’ of the ergative marker advocated by some Shawi speakers for these sentences is more of an artifact stemming from the frequency of appearance of the ergative on the personal pronouns in natural speech. Indeed, Shawi is a pro-drop language, that is to say a language in which the subject personal pronouns are generally omitted. As a consequence, the subject personal pronouns rarely appear in natural speech and if they do appear, it is for a good reason. It can be to mark a contrast with another participant of the discourse or to mark a subject shift. Yet, as explained in section 5, these two functions of ‘contrast’ and ‘subject shift’ are fulfilled by the ergative marker. As a result, the subject personal pronouns overwhelmingly appear marked with the ergative, hence the fact that some Shawi speakers consider the ergative marker obligatory in the cases in question.

4.4. Results of the elicitation

In accordance with the elicited data, there are behavioral differences neither between the 3rd person pronouns, the proper nouns, the human NPs, the animate NPs and the inanimate NPs nor between the singular and the plural pronouns/NPs. As a consequence, for the description of the Shawi language, the Nominal Hierarchy given in Figure 2 can be simplified as follows (Figure 4):

**Figure 4: Shawi’s Nominal Hierarchy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 &gt; 2 &gt; 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(where 3 refers to the 3rd person pronouns as well as to any type of NP)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on this simplified Nominal Hierarchy, we can summarize the results of the elicitation with few rules, which are presented in the table below (Figure 5), in which ‘X’ refers to any pronoun/NP of the Nominal Hierarchy (1, 2 or 3).
Figure 5: Shawi’s rules of use of the ergative marker –ri

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule number</th>
<th>Orientation of the action</th>
<th>Obligatoriness, optionality or prohibition of -ri</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>1&gt;2</td>
<td>-ri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>X&gt;3</td>
<td>-(ri)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>X – (1) &gt;1</td>
<td>-(*ri)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>3&gt;2</td>
<td>-(*ri)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The rules (1) and (2) concern the transitive clauses in which the A argument ranks higher than the O argument on the Nominal Hierarchy, which is represented by the first arrow. The rule (1) is that the use of the ergative –ri is obligatory when a 1st person A acts upon a 2nd person O. The rule (2) is that the use of the ergative –ri is optional when the O function is occupied by a 3rd person pronoun or NP, no matter whether the A argument is a 1st, 2nd, 3rd person pronoun or a NP.

The following rules, (3) and (4), concern the transitive clauses in which the O argument ranks higher than the A argument on the Nominal Hierarchy as the second arrow shows it. The rule (3) is that when the O function is occupied by a 1st person pronoun, the A argument remains unmarked whatever its type (2nd/3rd person pronoun or NP). The 1st person pronoun was taken out of the possible set of values (types) taken by X since both the A and the O functions of a transitive clause cannot be occupied by a 1st person pronoun. The rule (4) is that the use of the ergative –ri is prohibited when a 3rd person pronoun or NP A argument acts upon a 2nd person pronoun O argument.

The most striking conclusion we can make out of this table is that the use of the ergative is only possible when the action described by a transitive verb is prototypically oriented, that is to say when the A argument ranks equally or higher than the O argument on the Nominal Hierarchy. In other words, the ergative marker can be used on the NP in the A function, if and only if this NP is at least as subjectlike as the NP in the O function, which is contrary to the expected pattern. Indeed, in the literature review, it had been found that case marking serves as a means of distinguishing A from O and that consequently, it is at work only in case of ambiguity. As such, following Dixon (1994) and Woolford (2009), the NPs ranging on the left-hand end of the Nominal Hierarchy, which are prototypical agents, were expected to remain unmarked when in A function while the NPs ranging on the right-hand end of the Nominal Hierarchy, which are prototypical objects, were expected to be marked with ergative when in A function.
5. The Shawi case: the use of the ergative marker in context

The rules prescribing the obligatory use of the ergative marker or its prohibition are always valid, regardless of the context. On the other hand, over the whole span of the Nominal Hierarchy on which the ergative is optional, some other principles must condition the use of this marker since as McGregor (2009) explains, ‘optional’ does not imply ‘random’. In this part, the issue is thus to determine the principles underlying the use of the ergative marker. Among the underlying principles reported by McGregor (2009) figure: volitionality, informational structure, Expected Actor Principle, distinguishability of A and O, etc. Obviously, context is therefore decisive to the understanding of the use of an optional ergative marker. As such, this part relies exclusively on data in context, namely one frog story, one natural speech conversation between Shawi speakers and an excerpt of the Shawi version of the Bible, written by Hart (1978).

Given the limited narrative and natural speech data I have, it goes without saying that my study cannot be thorough and that a posterior investigation will be required in order to propose a definitive analysis. Still, I try to highlight the main principles conditioning the use of the ergative –rî for the morphosyntactic contexts within the span of the optional ergativity.

5.1. The NP in the A function must be overtly expressed

For the ergative marker to be used, be it in the obligatory or the optional cases, it goes without saying that the NP in the A function must be overtly expressed. I make this obvious statement because Shawi is a pro-drop language in which the A and S arguments tend to be omitted when easily identifiable in context. As such, the ergative marker is never strictly obligatory, but obligatory if and only if the A argument is overtly expressed. In the cases of optional ergativity, the A argument is also likely to appear unmarked. In conclusion, the overt expression of A has a single realization over the span of ‘obligatory ergativity’ (59) and two possible realizations over the span of ‘optional ergativity’ (60).

(59) Obligatory ergativity:

(1) A is overtly expressed and marked with the ergative

(60) Optional ergativity:

(1) A is overtly expressed and unmarked
(2) A is overtly expressed and marked with the ergative
In Shawi, the zero anaphor is preferred when the A argument remains unspecified, that is when the actor is unknown. Indeed, in the excerpt of the Frog Story below (61), the verbal ending –pi in (c), which is the form for a 3rd person plural subject, indicates that the A function is occupied by the 3rd person plural pronoun inapita. However, this pronoun actually does not refer to any group of participants introduced earlier as the sentences presented in (61) are the first three sentences of the story. This construction is thus impersonal and the syntactical subject implicit, which I represent with brackets.

(61) a. Ya’we-r-in a’nara pi’i irahka isu, a’nara piyapi-rawa nisawatun.  
\hspace{2cm} ‘There was a sun before and a little boy.’  

b. A’nara tururu’.  
\hspace{2cm} ‘A toad.’

c. (Inapita) putilla-e pumu-pi.  
\hspace{2cm} ‘It was put into a bottle.’ (lit. They put it into a bottle.)

In other cases, the A argument is specified but yet omitted since the context makes it easily identifiable. More precisely, it seems that the ‘Expected Actor Principle’, resorted to by McGregor (1998) so as to account for the distribution of the ergative, can be extended to the overt expression of the A argument. Indeed, the excerpts in (62) suggest that the NP in the A function remains implicit as long as it refers to the foregrounded protagonist, who is expected to be the Actor and thus to be mapped onto the A argument.

(62) a. A’na piyapi-rawa we’e-sa-r-in yuki tashinan-ke-chachin nianta-r-in.  
\hspace{2cm} ‘A little boy is sleeping, it is moonlight.’

b. Kumpa, isu pewenu-sa napu-ra-r-in-(n)u.  
\hspace{2cm} ‘My friend, this is what the mixed-blood ones keep saying.’

c. Ima-pi ipura-ru nipirin wa’wa-rusa nuya miachin nuya-wai pa’-sa-pi.  
\hspace{2cm} ‘Now the children continue this way very well and they proceed well.’
Basically then, the omitted A arguments are always pronouns referring to participants introduced earlier in the discourse via a full NP as exemplified in (62).

As for the 1st and 2nd person pronouns, they are generally omitted since their referents are involved in the interaction and are thus directly accessible and specific. As such, the verbal ending coding the subject-verb agreement suffices for the addressee to identify the A argument.

On the other hand, the Shawi subject (S/A) is overtly expressed when mentioned for the first time or pragmatically marked, such as in (63c) where the pronoun inawa ‘they’, which refers back to the NP pewenansa ‘mixed-blood ones’ in (63b), appears so as to mark a contrast with the first person plural occupying the A function in the first clause of the sentence, contrast highlighted by the presence of the additive –wai that coordinates the two clauses.

The overt expression of the A argument being pragmatically marked and a sine qua none condition for the use of the ergative, we can already conclude that the ergative is pragmatically marked in Shawi. We will see its different contexts of use in the following sections.

5.2. The disambiguating function of –ri

5.2.1. Violation of the canonical word order

In many cases, the ergative marker has clearly a disambiguating function, that is to say that it is used in order to make clear which NP is in the A function. As a result, the ergative is commonly used in sentences in which the word order is different from the canonical one. As argued by Rojas Berscia
(2013), the Shawi canonical word order in transitive sentences is AOV. So in absence of any overt ergative marking, *Pitru* ‘Peter’ will undoubtedly be perceived as the A argument in (64).

(64) Pitru ni’ni tepa-r-in.
    Peter jaguar kill-IND-3
    ‘Peter killed a jaguar.’

Another word order is frequent in Shawi though; this is AVO. It might be due to the contact with Spanish, the canonical word order of which is AVO. In any case, a sentence following this word order does not necessarily need an ergative marker to make clear which NP is in the A function. In (65), *Pitru* ‘Peter’ will again be regarded as the A argument by all speakers.

(65) Pitru tepa-r-in ni’ni.
    Peter kill-IND-3 jaguar
    ‘Peter killed a jaguar.’

In brief, in absence of ergative marking, the first NP in a transitive sentence is more prominent and is thus analyzed as the A argument, the O argument always being next to the verb, either before (AOV) or after (AVO). However, the speaker might move the O argument to the front of the clause (O-fronting), which seems to be the syntactically most prominent position in Shawi, so as to topicalize or focalize it. In this case, the first NP of the transitive clause encountered is the O argument and the A argument appears afterwards, either before (OAV) or after the verb (OVA). The use of the ergative thus becomes obligatory for the addressee to understand who acts upon whom. Indeed, in both (66) and (67), the absence of ergative on the A argument would lead the addressee to understand the exact opposite to the message intended by the speaker, that is that the jaguar killed Peter.

(66) Ni’ni Pitru-ri tepa-r-in.
    jaguar Peter-ERG kill-IND-3
    ‘A JAGUAR, Peter killed.’

(67) Ni’ni tepa-r-in Pitru-ri.
    jaguar kill-IND-3 Peter-ERG
    ‘HE KILLED A JAGUAR, Peter.’

This disambiguating function of –ri associated with the pragmatic purpose of topic or focus is common in my in-context data. In (68), the first sentence of the narrative text reported by Rojas Berscia (2013) and entitled ‘Conflict with the Aguaruna’ (cf. Appendix) illustrates the topicalization by O-fronting.

(68) a. Iraka shawi kema-rusa-ri tiki-r-in.
    formerly shawi Aguaruna-PL-ERG slaughter-IND-3
    ‘THE SHAWI, the Aguaruna used to slaughter.’
b. Inamaru iraka shawi ku tate-r-iun[^3].
   that's.why formerly Shawi NEG shut.up-IND-3.NEG
   ‘That’s why at that time, the Shawi did not shut up.’

c. Ya’iwi ira tu’shi-te-wi.
   all path wait-VAL-3.PL
   ‘They waited on all paths.’

The topic normally occupies the syntactically most prominent position in the front of the clause, the slot of the subject (S/A) in an SOV language such as Shawi. As a result, when the topic is introduced in the O function like in (68a), a conflict appears between the syntactic position of the topicalized O and its grammatical function. This conflict jeopardizes comprehension and the ergative marker is required for the addressee to understand that the canonical word order was violated for pragmatic reasons.

As far as the O-fronting for focus purpose is concerned, the sentence in (69), taken from the Shawi Bible (1978), is a good example of information focus, that is to say “material which the speaker calls to the addressee’s attention” (Gundel & Fretheim 2006). The narrator focuses on the O argument in order to insist on the negation and to strengthen it.

(69) Napuapunawe, ku a’na-ya teranta Yuse-ri naniante-r-in-we.
   NEG one-DIM even God-ERG forget-IND-3-NEG
   ‘God does not forget anybody, NOT EVEN A PERSON.’ (Shawi Bible 1978:704(29))

Another example of information focus was found in the Frog Story (70e).

(70) a. Pu’u-ri nuku-ra-r-in.
    owl-ERG look-at-PROG-IND-3
    ‘The owl is looking at him (the boy).’

b. Piyawi-rawa ni-teyate-r-in nupa-e kewan-in.
    boy-DIM REFLE-throw-IND-3 ground-LOC lie-3
    ‘The little boy threw himself to the ground, he’s lying.’

c. Ya’were ni’ni-ra-su nipiriun kankan-i peya-r-in ta’a-miya-ta-r-in.
    on the contrary dog-DIM-DEF but wasp-ERG sting-IND-3 run-STRENGTH-VAL-IND-3
    ‘But the dog, on the contrary, runs and runs as the wasps sting him.’

d. isekie-ran ta’a-miya-ta-r-in ni’ni-ra.
    here-ABL run-STRENGTH-VAL-IND-3 dog-DIM
    ‘From here, the dog keeps on running.’

e. isekie piyapi-rawa pu’u-ri yai tapa-r-in.
    here boy-DIM owl-ERG ONOM 7-IND-3
    ‘Then, AT THE LITTLE BOY, the owl shouts. (Frog Story (66))

In this case, the O argument was focused on for the sake of clarity. Indeed, the story has no central theme and there is no clear topic in the excerpt since the different events taking place are not clearly linked with one another and the participants are numerous: the owl, the wasps, the boy and the dog.

[^3] Tateriun = taterinwe
Moreover, the two preceding sentences (70c-d) involve the dog and the wasps, and the owl previously acted upon the boy (70a). As a result, the appearance of the boy in the O function in sentence (70e) is unexpected and the speaker must have felt the necessity to put focus on it.

Basically, all the word orders possible are likely to appear depending on what the speaker wants to focus on. As such, I found an OVA-sentence (71a) in the Frog Story and a VAO-sentence (71b) in the debate ‘On Shawi language’. Of course, the ergative is here again obligatory for the sake of understanding, hence its disambiguating function.

(71) a. Iseke kankan nu’wi-ra-r-in ni’ni-ra-ri.
    here wasp shout-PROG-IND-3 dog-DIM-ERG
    ‘Then, IT IS SHOUTING AT THE WASPS, the dog.’ (Frog Story (50))

b. A’china-pi mayistru-sa-ri-nta kanpunan.
    teach-3.PL teacher-PL-ERG-AD Shawi.language
    ‘And THEY WILL TEACH THEM Shawi, the teachers.’ (On Shawi language (66))

5.2.2. Omission of the O argument

In a transitive clause, the A and the O arguments are distinguished thanks to the word order. But this distinguishing device does not help anymore when one of the arguments remains implicit because foregrounded in the discourse. Indeed, Shawi is a pro-drop language, so the A argument is likely to be omitted, in which case the unique NP preceding the verb would be the O argument. On the other hand, when the NP occupying the O function was introduced earlier, it is also likely to be omitted and referred to on the verb with the 3rd person object ending, which is -∅. In the latter case, the unique NP preceding the verb would thus be the A argument. In some situations, the context or knowledge of the world suffices to figure out which one of the two arguments was omitted, but in others, the ambiguity persists. For the sake of comprehension, when the only NP overtly expressed is the A argument, Shawi speakers seem to always mark it with the ergative (72), no matter whether the context or knowledge of the world would have been enough to understand. Indeed, in (72c) and (72d), knowledge of the world makes clear that the wasps sting the dog and that the deer carries the boy and not the other way around; still the use of the ergative is preferred.

(72) a. Ni’ni-ri nuku-ra-r-in-∅.
    dog-ERG look-at-PROG-IND-3-3.O
    ‘The dog is looking at it (the toad).’ (Frog Story (11))

    one boy-ERG look-at-PROG-IND-3-3.O
    ‘A boy is looking at it (the toad).’ (Frog Story (13))

    wasp-ERG sting-PROG-IND-3-3.O
    ‘The wasps are stinging it (the dog).’ (Frog Story (41))
On the other hand, whenever the unique NP overtly expressed is in the absolutive, it is the O argument of the clause (73).

(73) Tururu nuku-ra-r-in.
    toad  look-at-PROG-IND-3

‘He (the boy) is looking at the toad.’ (Frog Story (13))

If the NP in the O function remains implicit, it is because it was introduced earlier with a full NP and because it is currently the foregrounded protagonist. As such, this kind of sentence, with a transitive verb and a unique NP overtly expressed and marked with ergative, appears when the foregrounded protagonist passes from the subject function (S/A) to the O function, the new actor being introduced with the ergative marker on it (74).

(74) a. Piyapi-nta cha’e-r-in inara, iseke a’na nara-tantun ma’shu-ke mate-r-in
    boy-ADDIT escape-IND-3 then here one wood-log old-LOC 7-IND-3

‘And the boy escapes, and then he sticks himself to an old log
    ni’ni-ra-re-chachin. Ina-ke katu tururu-sa-ri kenan-in-g.
    dog-DIM-COM precisely that-LOC two toad-PL-ERG see/meet-3-3.O

with the little dog. Then, two toads see/meet him.’ (Frog Story (87))

b. Kankan nutuaru tumunte-r-in, ya’were wa’an-an-su nara-epa nanpe-r-in.
    wasp a.lot rise(dust, vapor)-IND-3 but his.leader? DEF tree-top.of climb-IND-3

‘A cloud of wasps rises but its owner (of the dog) climbs to the top of a tree.

Nara-eran nuku-ra-r-in. Iseke-wachin kankan-i peya-ra-r-in-g.

He is looking from the tree. Then, the wasps sting him.’ (Frog Story (57))

More generally speaking, when the O argument is omitted, the A argument is overtly expressed and marked with the ergative each time some kind of ambiguity exists. As a matter of fact, the owl participant pu’u is introduced in the A function in (75a) and remains in this function in (75b). The owl is the foregrounded protagonist and its overt expression in (75b) thus seems to be redundant. Nevertheless, if the A argument pu’uri were omitted, the addressee might interpret the message conveyed differently considering that the boy actually hit the owl after the latter shouted at him, which would be more in concordance with the knowledge of the world. Indeed, it is certainly more common to hear about a boy hitting something/somebody than an owl.

(75) a. Iseke piyapi-rawa pu’u-ri yai tapa-r-in.
    here boy-DIM owl-ERG ONOM 7-IND-3

‘Then, at the little boy, the owl shouts.'
b. U’u tapa-r-in iseke pu’u-ri au-ra-r-in.

It shouts at him and then the owl hits him.’ (Frog Story (66))

5.3. The contrastive focus function of –ri

The ergative marker also seems to serve for the expression of a contrastive focus, “evoking a contrast with other entities that might fill the same position” (Gundel & Fretheim 2006), just like in Lhassa Tibetan (Tournadre 1991) as illustrated in (8). Unfortunately, I have only one example of ergative used in this way without any confounded variable (76).

In fact, the second clause of the sentence given in (76) follows an AVO word order pattern which does not require the use of the ergative. The ergative marker is here for pragmatic purposes, and more precisely to mark a contrast between the wasps and the dog, the actions of which are simultaneous and oriented towards each other.

This function of the ergative marker makes it recurrent in complex sentences in which the actors of the main and the subordinate clauses are different. Indeed, in (77), the A arguments bearing the ergative mark a contrast with the NP topic of the discourse, that is to say with Sutumarusa, Kumurarusa ‘the Sodomites and the Gomorrheans’.

(76) Inara iseke kankan-i peya-ra-r-in, ni’ni-ri nu’wi-ra-r-in kankan.

‘Then, the wasps are stinging it (the dog), the dog is shouting at the wasps.’

In line with this observation, the ergative marker seems to regularly appear in complex sentences with subordinate clauses marked with the sequential action suffix –wachin which is used only when the subjects of the main and the subordinate clauses are not co-referential (78).

(78) a. Achinpei-ke pa’-pachina mayistru-sa-ri-nta achin-china.

‘When they (the children) go to school, the teachers too have to teach (them Shawi).’ (On Shawi language (65))
b. Nuya nuwantu-wachinen-(n)kema-su, Yose-ri katawa-r-in.
good want-3.PLSEQ.ACT;2.PL O DEF God-ERG help-IND-3
‘If they welcome you well, God will help them.’ (Shawi Bible 1978:703(13))

c. Ku nuya-we nun-tu-wachinen-(n)kema-su, ku Yuse-ri katawa-r-in-we.
NEG good-NEG speak-VAL;3.PLSEQ.ACT;2.PL O DEF NEG God-ERG help-IND-3-NEG
‘If they welcome you badly, God will not help them.’ (Shawi Bible 1978:703(13))

Similarly, the ergative commonly marks the A argument of the second clause in complex sentences made up of two coordinated clauses (79).

(79) a. Chimin-in ni’ni wa’an-ne-r-i-wai ipu-ra-r-in.
die-3 dog leader-POSS.ALIEN-3-ERG-ADIT hug-PROG-IND-3
‘The dog dies and its owner hugs it.’ (Frog Story (39))

owl-ERG look-at-PROG-IND-3 then deer-ERG-ADIT carry-3
‘The owl is looking at him (the boy) and then the deer carries him (the boy).’
(Frog Story (72))

Nevertheless, the examples given in (78) and (79) present confounded variables in the sense that the use of the ergative marker could also be explained by the fact that the O argument is omitted (cf. section 5.2.2.).

5.4. Results of the in-context data analysis

My in-context data permitted me to unveil new factors conditioning the use of the ergative marker – *ri*. These are still of a syntactic kind, pragmatics being indirectly linked with the use of the ergative. Indeed, even though the ergative was found in sentences in which the word order was altered for pragmatic purposes such as topicalization or focus, its presence is only a consequence of the word order alteration which is the actual pragmatic device. As such, the use of the ergative can rather be explained in syntactic terms, that is the A argument is marked with the ergative when it is not in its canonical position. Similarly, the ergative was said to be required when the O argument is omitted or and when the A argument bearing the ergative marker marks a contrast with another participant. These situations have to do with subject shifting and are thus syntactically motivated too.

6. An explanation of the distribution of the Shawi ergative marker

The most straightforward conclusion is that the use of the ergative marker is possible if and only if the NP in the A function is at least as subject-like as the NP in the O function. In other words, A can bear the ergative if and only if it ranks equally or higher than O on the Nominal Hierarchy. For convenience,
I will call this constraint: ERG(A ≥ O). The pattern described by this constraint is clearly a case of global marking (de Swart 2008; de Hoop & Malchukov 2008) in the sense that the use of the ergative marker is conditioned not only by the properties of the NP in the A function, but also by the properties of the NP in the O function. Yet, a distinguishing function is attributed to this kind of case marking. It means that the ergative marker would serve the purpose of distinguishing A from O. It is not very convincing given that A and O can almost always be distinguished on the basis of the pronominal suffixes on the verb. Indeed, the suffix –anke unambiguously expresses the action of 1 upon 2 and –aw and –an on the actions of 1 upon 3 and 2 upon 3, respectively. The only suffix that can sometimes create problems of ambiguity is –in, which expresses the action of a 3 over another 3. Still, the ergative is commonly used and the Shawi language thus seems to prioritize independent marking over dependent marking for distinguishing A from O. This can certainly be explained by historical change. Unfortunately, no concrete historical data are available for Shawi and I just can offer a speculative account, which is that the system of pronominal suffixes on the verb is a relatively recent innovation. This would explain why the ergative marker is appealed to so as to distinguish A from O, in spite of the presence of clear pronominal suffixes on the verb, and why the span of ergative marking is so limited (ERG(A ≥ O)). In fact, I claim that the pronominal marking system on the verb is consolidating at the detriment of ergative marking, which is losing ground little by little; hence the cases of optional ergativity. Anyway, in the next subsections, I will try to account for the cases of ‘obligatoriness of the ergative’ and ‘optionality of the ergative’.

6.1. Obligatory ergative marking when 1 acts upon 2 (1>2)

To understand the Shawi split ergative system, it is important to note that the Shawi grammar treats 1 and 2 differently from 3. Indeed, both 1 and 2 are overtly marked on the verb when in O function, respectively with –ku (80) and –nke (81), while 3 is not (82).

(80) Ya’wan  kete-r-in-ku.
    snake bite-IND-3-1.O
    ‘A snake bit me.’

(81) Ya’wan  kete-r-in-(n)ke.
    snake bite-IND-3-2.O
    ‘A snake bit you.’

(82) Ya’wan-i  kete-r-in-∅.
    snake-ERG bite-IND-3-3.O
    ‘A snake bit him.’

This suggests that in the Shawi grammar, 1 and 2 are regarded as prototypical agents and unexpected/marked objects; hence the necessity to overtly express them on the verb when in O function, whereas 3 is regarded as a prototypical unmarked object; hence its remaining implicit on the
verb. This is in accordance with Dixon’s (1994) claim that the participants involved in the interaction, that is to say 1 and 2, tend to be privileged actors and are thus generally presented as agents in the discourse. This particular agent status of 1 and 2 must be the reason why the ergative marker is obligatory when the action described in a transitive clause involves both the speaker and the addressee. In fact, the ergative marker fulfills its distinguishing function by selecting the actual agent out of the two possible ones. However, in virtue of the constraint ERG(A≥O), the use of the ergative marker is blocked in the situation 2>1 since 2 ranks lower than 1 on the Nominal Hierarchy. As a consequence, the ergative marker is obligatory in the situation 1>2 only, situation in which the A function is occupied by the speaker which is the ‘quintessential agent’ (Dixon 1994). Besides, it is to be noted that the necessity of marking the 1st person agent in the situation 1>2 is strengthened by the fact that word order does not help in this case. Indeed, when the O argument is a pronoun, it tends to be omitted. In the synchrony though, the pronominal suffixes on the verb -a(w)-nke make clear that 1 is acting upon 2, reason for which the ergative marking of 1, which is obligatory so far, will certainly end up disappearing.

6.2. Optional ergative marking

Basically, the A argument is optionally marked with the ergative whenever the O function is occupied by a 3rd person pronoun or NP. As such, there are three situations in which the ergative marking is ‘optional’:

- The 1st person acts upon a 3rd person (1>3)
- The 2nd person acts upon a 3rd person (2>3)
- A 3rd person acts upon another 3rd person (3>3)

In the first two situations, 1>3 and 2>3, the ergative is ‘optional’ since 1 and 2 are prototypical agents while 3 is a prototypical object. The distinction of A and O is thus immediate. Besides, if both arguments are overtly expressed, word order permits to distinguish A from O without ambiguity.

In the third situation, 3>3, both arguments are prototypical objects and Nominal Hierarchy does not permit to distinguish A from O anymore. Still, the ergative marker is ‘optional’ since word order alone makes the orientation of the action clear. Nevertheless, optional case marking does not mean random case marking. As such, the use of the ergative marker over the ‘optional ergativity’ span of the Nominal Hierarchy is conditioned by a specific set of factors, namely ‘violation of word order’, ‘omission of the O argument’ and ‘subject shift’. That these factors trigger the use of the ergative marker suggests that the distinguishing function of the ergative marker is, most of the time, appealed to when A and O cannot be distinguished on the basis of word order. In the case of the violation of the canonical word order because of O-fronting, the first NP expressed is not anymore the subject but the object. The distinguishing function of the ergative marker is thus required for the addressee to be able.
to identify the A argument. Also, when the O argument is omitted when foregrounded, the distinction of A and O based on word order does not work anymore since only one argument is overtly expressed. This is unproblematic for the situations 1>3 and 2>3 since the pronominal suffixes on the verb, –aw and –an respectively, are unambiguous. However, such is not the case for the situation 3>3. In sentence (83), is the first and unique NP overtly expressed wa’washa ‘child’ the subject or the object of the transitive clause?

(83)  Wa’wa-sha  tepa-r-in-∅.
      child-DIM   kill-IND-3.0

As already explained in section 5.2.2, if the only NP of the transitive clause overtly expressed remains unmarked, it will be considered that the NP in question is the O argument and that the A argument was omitted. As a result, the sentence (83) means ‘he/she/it killed the child’. For the addressee to understand that the message being conveyed is actually ‘the child killed him/her/it’, the NP wa’washa ‘child’ must be marked with the ergative. The omission of the O argument in the situation 3>3 thus triggers the use of the ergative marker to avoid ambiguity about the function occupied by the only NP overtly expressed.

The last factor said to trigger the use of the ergative marker, namely ‘subject shift’, is at play even when A and O can be distinguished on the basis of word order. This is the case in the sentence given in (63) and repeated here in (84) for convenience.

(84)  Inara iseke kankan-i  peya-ra-r-in,  ni’ni-ri  nu’wi-ra-r-in  kankan.
      then here wasp-ERG  sting-PROG-IND-3  dog-ERG  shout-PROG-IND-3  wasp
      ‘Then, the wasps are stinging it (the dog), the dog is shouting at the wasps.’

In the second clause, word order makes clear that ni’ni ‘dog’ is the agent and kankan ‘wasp’ the object. Yet, the distinguishing function of the ergative marker is needed because of subject shift. In fact, the expected agent is the foregrounded actor, which is typically the NP occupying the subject function in the previous utterances of the discourse, that is to say the function S or A in the case of Shawi. As such, in (84), the foregrounded actor is kankan-i ‘wasp-ERG’, which is the A argument of the first clause as the ergative marker it bears shows. The expected agent for the second clause is thus the wasp. Yet, the agent in the second clause is not the wasp anymore but the dog and the ergative marking thus becomes necessary so that the addressee can immediately notice the subject shift and unambiguously identify the agent.

7. Conclusion

To conclude, the Shawi ergative marker has a global distinguishing function. It is used for the addressee to be able to unambiguously identify the agent every time some kind of ambiguity may
exist on the basis of the Nominal Hierarchy, word order or the discourse. However, I speculatively assume that the pronominal marking system on the verb is a relatively recent innovation in Shawi and that its consolidation makes the ergative marker more and more dispensable for distinguishing A from O, hence its limited use in Modern Shawi. The ergative marker already disappeared from the transitive clauses in which O ranks higher than A and appears in limited specific contexts when A ranks equally or higher than O. The only case in which the ergative marker is obligatory is when a 1st person pronoun acts upon a 2nd person pronoun. In this particular type of transitive clause, the ergative marker on ka 'I' seems to persist as a fossilized form, since the pronominal suffixes on the verb –a(w)-nke unambiguously encode an action performed by 1 upon 2, making the ergative marker unnecessary for the distinction between A and O.
References


Rojas Berscia (in prep. b). “Mayna, the lost Kawapanan language.”


Appendix: The conflict with the Aguaruna (Rojas Berscia 2013)

1) Iraka shawi kema-rusa-ri tiki-r-in.
   formerly shawi Aguaruna-PL-ERG slaughter-IND-3
   ‘The Aguaruna used to slaughter the Shawi.’

2) Inamaru iraka shawi ku tate-r-iun⁴.
   that’s why formerly Shawi NEG shut.up-IND-3.NEG
   ‘That’s why at that time, the Shawi did not shut up.’

3) Ya’iwi ira tu’shi-te-wi.
   all path wait-VAL-3.PL
   ‘They waited on all paths.’

4) Kema iraka tuntun nin-tah-r-in.
   Aguaruna formerly tuntun do-VAL-IND-3
   ‘The Aguaruna used to play ‘tuntun’.’

5) Muhtuwi-pa tuntuntun tah-r-in.
   mountain-EDUCT tuntuntun VAL-IND-3
   ‘They played ‘tuntuntun’ away in the mountains.’

6) Iraka shawi ina nahtan-pachina,
   formerly shawi 3 listen-3.PL.SEQ.ACT
   ‘The Shawi used to listen to them in the distance,’

7) iraka shawi-rusa a’na a’na ira wani-tu-i.
   formerly Shawi-PL one one path wait-VAL-3.PL
   and wait on the paths, one by one.’

8) Inauraw iraka wa’wa-te-we, shawi nikun-te-r-awe.
   this.way formerly child-VAL-1 Shawi see-VAL-IND-1
   ‘This way when I was a child, I saw the Shawi.’

9) Nuya-piyachi shawi, nihpiriun kemara tewa-tu-i.
   good Shawi but Aguaruna be.afraid-VAL-3.PL
   ‘The Shawi were good, but they were afraid of the Aguaruna.’

10) Nahpuwatun, iraka kema-rusa tewa-tu-i.
    that’s why formerly Aguaruna-PL be.afraid-VAL-3.PL
    ‘That’s why at that time, the Shawi were afraid of the Aguaruna.’

11) Ya’iwi ma’sha-rusa petawa-wi.
    all animal-PL breed-3.PL
    ‘They bred all the animals.’

⁴ Tateriun = taterinwe