Split ergativity and Subject in Bribri

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0. In the present study I examine evidence from simple and complex Bribri sentences, first, to show that split ergativity exists in this language and, second, to present some problems which confront any attempt to define 'subject' in a grammar of Bribri.

Ergativity has commonly been defined in relation to transitivity, with the ergative case encoding the agent (or other directly-related case) of a verb which in addition requires at least an object. The absolutive case encodes the object of a transitive verb and the single argument (agent or object) of an intransitive verb.

The basic Bribri sentence consists of either

1. an intransitive verb with either a deep semantic agent or object as its unique required argument. In surface structure this noun phrase has Ø marking and immediately precedes the verb.

or

2. a transitive verb with two or more obligatory arguments, which may occur only in the following combinations of deep (semantic) cases (Villalobos, mimeo: 5):

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{Ag (agent)} & \text{0 (object)} \\
\text{Ex (experimcer)} & \text{0} \\
\text{B (benefactive)} & \text{0} \\
\text{Ex} & \text{B} \\
\text{B} & \text{0} \\
\text{0} & \text{0}
\end{array}
\]

Although a deep locative case appears to be required by certain
verbs, it does not play a role in determining syntactic transitivity: Ag and O, even where L is the second required case, are nevertheless marked $\emptyset$, as with intransitive verbs.

One of the two or more obligatory arguments of the set O, Ag, Ex, B is marked with the postpositional $\text{to}$ in accordance with the hierarchy $\{ \text{Ex} \} \{ \text{B} \}$ (where Ex and B never co-occur). Thus, if Ag is present, it is marked with $\text{to}$; if not, either Ex or B is so marked. A second argument is marked $\emptyset$ in accordance with the hierarchy $\{ \text{Ex} \} \{ \text{B} \}$ (where Ex and B never co-occur). Thus, if O is present it is marked $\emptyset$; if not, either Ex or B is so marked. Where three obligatory arguments are present, the third (never marked with either $\text{to}$ or $\emptyset$) will always be either Ex or B; it is marked with a. Other postpositional markers in Bribri mark NPs with an oblique relation to the verb. On the basis of this NP marking transitivity can be defined in terms of the verb requiring at least two arguments or NPs, marked $\text{to}$ and $\emptyset$.

On the basis of this case marking Bribri has been classified as an ergative language, and, indeed, NP marking in Bribri does involve a set of rules which apply on the basis of a distinction between two classes, determined, as indicated above, in part by deep structure semantic cases and in part by co-occurrence with other cases. We may call these classes ergative and absolutive in the sense that one obligatory NP of a transitive verb will always be marked $\emptyset$ in the surface structure, as will the unique obligatory NP of an intransitive verb; this class may be called "absolutive". And a second obligatory NP of a transitive verb will always be marked $\text{to}$; this class may be called "ergative". However, it is worth noting that the deep semantic cases which make up the "absolutive" class are to some degree different: for transitive verbs: $\{ \text{Ex} \}, \emptyset$; for intransitive verbs: $\{ \text{Ag} \} \{ \emptyset \}$. Thus, Ex
or B is never the unique obligatory argument of an intransitive verb
and will never surface as a Ø-marked NP in an intransitive sentence,
while either may do so in a transitive sentence. Nor will the Ag of a
transitive verb ever surface as a Ø-marked NP, as it may in an intran-
sitive sentence.

1. Split ergativity in Bribri. To establish split ergativity in a
so-called ergative language, rules must be shown to exist which apply
only to a set of NPs other than the set of ergative (E) or absolutive
(A). Below, certain rules applying to simple sentences of Bribri will
be examined first, followed by rules applying to sentences containing
embeddings in noun and other verb complement functions.

1.1. Simple sentences. Of the following rules which apply to simple
sentences, only one furnishes evidence of true ergativity, while the
others apply to contexts defined by other sorts of NP classifications.

1.1.1. Noun-phrase marking. The insertion rule that places postposi-
tional case markers after noun phrases applies obligatorily to at
least two well-defined classes, as described above. One class, A, takes
Ø, while the other, E, takes tö. Other oblique cases are marked vari-
ously with a, wa, ki, etc. Thus the NP-marking rule makes clear distinc-
tions between the class of A, the class of E and others; it therefore
provides evidence for ergativity in Bribri.

1.1.2. Verb-marking for plural. The Bribri verb in past tense takes a
plural marker, either dak (-rak) in recent past or -lur in remote
past, when the NP thus indexed on the verb has a human referent. The
plural marker indexes NPs in the absolutive case (Ai or At) and not
ergative NPs:

(1) iepa túnérak
    he:pl. ran:pl.
'They ran.'
(2) ye' tö i waksudak
    I E him knew:pl.
    'I knew them.'

(3) iepa tö ye waksu (* -dak)
    he:pl. E me knew
    'They knew me.'

(The plural marker -pa (-r for ala 'child') may be suffixed to human nouns in any case role; it is optional on absolutes. This suffix thus has no importance as an indicator of case classes.)

The plural verb suffixes index non-agentive as well as agentive human absolutes:

(4) iepa duólur
    he:pl. died:pl.
    'They died.'

(5) ye kj alăr kianadak böl
    I exp. child: wanted:pl. two
    pl.
    'I wanted two children'.

Although the insertion rule that suffixes the plural marker to verbs indexes any and all plural human absolutes, it can not be said to apply in a clearly ergative fashion. The contexts in which this rule does and does not apply are not defined by the classes E and A, but rather by A and non-A. Thus, while the rule does provide evidence for the syntactic reality of a non-ergative system, it does not provide clear evidence for ergativity either.

1.1.3. Noun-phrase movement. A movement rule in Bribri applies to the class of non-complex case-marked (non-A) NPs. The A of a non-embedded sentence never undergoes movement from its immediately preverbal position.
(6) a. María klituke María danced
b. *klituke María

(7) a. Juan tō uhkō pēkēwā Juan E door broke
   'Juan broke the door.'
b. uhkō pēkēwā Juan tō

(8) a. Juan tō sjwą chake Luis a
   Juan E story asked Luis Exp.
b. sjwą chake Juan tō Luis a

(9) a. ie' wa u tą etkwe
   he Ben house exist one
   'He has one house.'
b. u et kue tą ie' wa

Non-complex NP movement rules fail to provide evidence for split ergativity, since they do not apply to a non-ergative conjunct. But they do not apply uniquely to E as opposed to Ai/At either, thereby failing to provide clear evidence for ergativity as well. The crucial distinction in the case of these rules is that between the class of absolutes and that of non-absolutes, as was the case in plural-marking on verbs. There the affected class was A, here it is non-A.

1.1.4. Indefinite voice derivation. All transitive verbs and certain intransitive verbs in Bribri can undergo a derivation which suffixes `-r (,-n, 0)` to the remote past form of the verb and reduces by one the number of arguments the verb can accept in surface structure.

(10) a. (Vt) ie' tō naj' süe
he E tapir saw

b. (Vt-indefinite voice) ngį \~s'\aa
E;i īe \~s* \(\rightarrow \emptyset\) tapir was:seen

(11) a. e' ie' klo\~t
here he danced

b. e' klo\~t\~ene
here (one) danced
\(A;i īe' \rightarrow \emptyset\)

In (10) b. and (11) b. above the E and Ai, respectively, have been suppressed by indefinite-voice derivation, suggesting that the rule operates on the basis of an E/Ai conjunct and thus would furnish evidence for an accusative system in Bribri. However, non-agentive intransitive verbs such as du\~ok 'die' do not undergo indefinite voice derivation, and thus non-agents cannot be deleted by this rule. The crucial classes in the case of indefinite voice derivation, then, are agentive and non-agentive (Note that the surface "agent" of a transitive verb may be a deep (semantic)-structure benefactive or experiencer, while this possibility does not exist for intransitive verbs). Once again, while the indefinite voice derivation rule does not supply evidence for an accusative system, it does not support an ergative system either, where E is opposed to all A. Here, A are subclassified into agents and non-agents.

1.1.5. Summarizing the contexts for rule application observed in simple sentences, we find that the contexts determining application of rule 1, NP marking, are truly ergative: an absolutive class is distinguishable from an ergative class, which in turn is distinguishable from all other non-absolutives.

The contexts determining application of rule 2, verb-marking for plural, are not conclusively ergative since the verb agrees only with an absolutive NP and thus no class of ergative NPs, as opposed to other non-absolutive NPs, can be defined by this rule. The case of rule
2 is unusual in that it is the absolutive which is marked, rather than the ergative.

The contexts determining application of rule 3, non-complex NP movement, do not evidence true ergativity: the distinctive NP classes in this case are absolutive and non-absolutive, with the latter including cases besides the ergative.

Finally, the contexts determining application of rule 4, indefinite voice derivation, do not support a purely ergative analysis either. In this case the distinctive classes are agentive and non-agentive NPs, thereby dividing the single arguments of intransitive verbs into two groups. This division runs counter to both ergative/absolutive and nominative/accusative systems.

1.2. Complex sentences. Rules which apply to complex sentences (in this study, sentences containing embeddings in noun function) include deletion and raising, both of which apply to the conjunct E/Ai and not to At. Thus split ergativity, in the form of a nominative/accusative context for rule application, is found in these sentence types.

1.2.1. General restriction on deletion and raising. A small semantically-defined class of transitive verbs such as yenj, 'say' do not permit either deletion or raising. Nor do deletion or raising apply to an embedding in the ergative case, although backwards pronominalization occurs:

(12) a. \[\text{ie}'_1 \text{ie'}_2 \text{e'}_1 \text{tö}_1 \text{Pedro}_1 \text{tsiriwe}_1\]
    he cried that E Pedro upset
    'It upset Pedro that he cried.'

b. *\[\text{ju}_1 \text{e'}_1 \text{tö}_1 \text{Pedro}_1 \text{tsiriwe}_1\]

Extraposition, which must precede raising, does not apply to a "heavy" ergative element (as it does to an absolutive); instead, a common structure of Lübiri is used: the ergative embedding remains in
its normal position, followed by the resumptive pronoun e'that' plus the ergative marker tō.

Intransitive matrix verbs also place restrictions on the application of deletion and raising rules. No raising is possible with any intransitive matrix verb, if "intransitive" is taken to include stative verbs and non-derived intransitives, but not verbs derived in intransitive voice. A subclass of stative verbs, such as bua irir 'is good', ta 'exist', ujchenyg 'is known', and kianyg 'is wanted' do not allow deletion either. Sentences with these as matrix verbs take the form [J]Ai Vi.

An extraposition rule applies, moving the "heavy" absolutive element to sentence-final position and inserting it 'it' in its place, except in the case of bua irir and ta. (Interestingly, extraposition of an embedded clause applies only to absolutes, while simple NP movement applies to non-absolutes):

(13) ye' wa i ujcher [tō3 ye' tō golondrina me (Exp. it is:known that I E Golondrina jtséitsem)]
     will:sing 'I know I will sing "La Golondrina".'

(14) bua irir [tō Juan tō knē e' yue] good is that Juan E work this do 'It is good that Juan does this work'.

Deletion in these sentences is not possible because only a higher absolutive, identical to an embedded E/Ai, can trigger it, and here the matrix absolutive i refers to the extraposed clause as a whole.

1.2.2. Deletion. Another class of intransitive sentences does undergo deletion in the embedding. Matrix verbs in these sentences may be agentive or non-agentive intransitives, but not those derived by indefinite voice. These structures have the underlying structure Ai1
The Ai of the matrix verb must be identical to the E or Ai of the embedding. The syntactic role of the embedding in these sentences is not wholly clear; possibly it is not in noun function but instead is some sorb of reduced coordinate with adverbial function. There is no evidence for extraposition having applied. Deletion of the identical embedded E/Ai is obligatory; when this rule applies the verb must appear in infinitive:

(15) ye' kāwōta [____ be' sąuk be' ū ̊ ̊ ̊ ̊ ̊]
    I must E you see your house in
    'I must see you in your house.'

(16) wēm yēar [_____ saku yawōk]
    man is:standing E net make
    'The man is standing making a net.'

(17) Juana ūrkē [_____ ūshkalo tāuk èt]
    Juana went E broom buy one
    'Juana went to buy a broom.'

(18) ye' kābalōkē [_____i sąuk]
    me is:wanted E it see
    'I want to see it.'

(19) ye' kiār [_____ shkōk]
    me is:liked Ai walk
    'I like to walk.'

(20) ye' mi [_____kōpōk]
    I go Ai sleep
'I am going to sleep.'

(21) ye' tso<sup>4</sup> köpök
1 am Ai sleep

'I am sleeping.'

In the sentences above, deletion applies to either E or Ai, the conjunct of the nominative case. Nor is the Ai that undergoes deletion limited to agents; the example below shows deletion applying to the Ai of a non-agentive verb:

(22) Juan tso duşık
Juan is Ai die

'Juan is dying.'

It is important to note that since deletion across clause boundaries occurs only with a (non-derived) intransitive verb in the matrix sentence, the element which triggers application of the rule is always an absolutive (the Ai of the matrix verb). But the elements affected by the deletion rule are any identical E or Ai in the embedding, indicating that in this instance at least Bribri functions according to a nominative/accusative case system.

1.2.3. Raising. Raising is best seen as a set of rules which applies fully in some cases and partially in others, as determined by the nature of the matrix and embedded verbs. As indicated above, the necessary conditions for any kind of raising to apply are (1) a transitive or indefinite voice matrix verb and (2) an embedding in the absolutive case: (E)

A e' Vt. For raising to occur, extraposition must first apply, moving the 'heavy' absolutive element to sentence-final position and inserting 1 in its place: (E) 1 Vt A. In the case of a transitive verb or verb in indefinite voice as matrix, extraposition is optional:
(23) a. ye'r\(^5\)  
\[\text{tö Juan kpóter}\]  
\[\text{e' sýq}\]  
\[\text{l:E}\]  
that Juan slept that saw  
'I saw that Juan slept.'

b. ye'  
\[\text{tö i sýq}\]  
\[\text{tö Juan kpóter}\]

If extraposition occurs, then the set of raising rules can apply, as follows:

1. E/Ai is copied onto the At position in the matrix sentence, replacing i, which is deleted.
2. E/Ai of the embedding is deleted OR pronominalized.
3. The embedded verb takes infinitive form if deletion has occurred in 2.

The raising process that applies rule 1 above and, in applying rule 2, only pronominalizes the embedded E/Ai, I will call "incomplete" raising. The process which applies rules 1-3 I will call "complete" raising.

1.2.3.1. Incomplete raising. If the embedded verb is stative or in indefinite voice, only incomplete raising can occur. This process, starting with extraposition, is shown below:

(24) a. \[\text{ye'r}\]  
\[\text{tö Maria tso bua}\]  
\[\text{e' sýq}\]  
\[\text{l:E}\]  
that Maria is well that saw  
'I saw that Maria is well.'

Extraposition of absolutive clause:

b. ye'  
\[\text{tö i sýq}\]  
\[\text{tö Maria tso bua}\]

Raising rules 1 and 2, copying and pronominalization of Ai:

c. ye'  
\[\text{tö Maria sýq}\]  
\[\text{tö i e't tso bua}\]

Rule 3 cannot apply here to cause an infinitival verb form in the embedding because a pronoun form of the raised Ai remains.

The same process applies to an embedded verb in indefinite voice,
as follows:

\[(25)\]

a. ye'r \(\text{tö Juan tlarkę} \) e' kųs
1:E that Juan grow that helped
'I helped Juan grow.'

b. ye' tö i kųs \(\text{tö Juan tlarkę} \)
c. ye' tö Juan kųs \(\text{tö ie' tlarkę} \)

Incomplete raising is the only form that can apply to stative or indefinite voice embeddings. It is also applicable to embeddings with non-stative intransitive verbs or transitive verbs in cases where a semantic distinction exists between completely and incompletely raised forms. The sentences below are not the result of a choice between two kinds of optional raising rules, but rather express different meanings:

\[(26)\] Incomplete raising:

ye' tö Juan jtte \(\text{tö ie' jtsōkę} \)
'I E Juan heard that he sings
'I heard that Juan sings.'

\[(27)\] Complete raising:

ye' tö Juan jtte \(\text{jtsōk} \)
I E Juan heard sing
'I heard Juan sing.'

In the case of certain matrix verbs such different meanings are possible, and in these cases the application of complete or incomplete raising rules reflects the difference. In cases where meaning contrast does not result, complete and incomplete raising appear to be optional rules, either of which can apply to the E/Ai of a non-stative, non-indefinite voice embedding.

Incomplete raising provides evidence for split ergativity in Bribri, since it is the conjunct E/Ai that is raised and pronominalized,
with Ai including the arguments of both agentive and non-agentive verbs (see examples (26) and (24)).

1.2.3.2. Complete raising. If the embedded verb is neither stative nor in indefinite voice, complete raising can occur. The process is shown below, with both transitive and intransitive embeddings:

(28) a. Intransitive embedding:
ye'ɾ [tō Juan kněblō] e' kime
'I helped Juan work.'

(29) a. Transitive embedding:
ye'ɾ [tō Juan tō arroz alō] e' kime
'I helped Juan cook the rice.'

Extraposition:
(28) b. ye'ɾ tō í kime [tō Juan kněblō]
(29) b. ye'ɾ tō í kime [tō Juan tō arroz]

Raising rules 1, 2 and 3 (copying and deletion of E/Ai; the verb appears in infinitival form):

(28) c. ye'ɾ tō Juan kime [kněblōk]
(29) c. ye'ɾ tō Juan kime [arroz alōk]

In the above cases we see again that it is the conjunct E/Ai which responds to complete raising. Nor is the raised Ai limited to a subclass of agents. In the following example, the raised noun Juan is the patient Ai of a non-agentive intransitive verb:

(30) ye tō Juan sye [duōkwa]
'I saw Juan die'.

Thus complete raising as well as incomplete provides evidence of a nominative/accusative system in certain areas of Bribri syntax. Matrix verbs in indefinite voice behave like transitive verbs in that they permit complete raising out of transitive and intransitive embeddings (as long as the latter are non-stative and non-indeterminate voice):

(31) Juan sur'ke [_____ klòtök]
Juan is:seen dance
'Juan is seen dancing.'

(32) Juan kirke [_____ i tarea yuwök]
Juan is:asked his job do
'Juan is asked to do his job.'

The conjunct E/A!i is seen to undergo raising here as well. Thus all raising operations in Bribri apply according to a nominative/accusative system.

1.3. Summary of rules applying to simple and complex sentences. While this study does not claim to examine all possible syntactic rules of Bribri, a fair sample has been presented above. Looking at these rules in terms of the NP classes they define by their application, we can summarize the facts somewhat as follows:
Table 1: Rule application

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NP class</th>
<th>NP case marking</th>
<th>Plural marking on verb</th>
<th>Extrapo-</th>
<th>Non-complex NP movement</th>
<th>NP deletion</th>
<th>Incomplete raising</th>
<th>Complete raising</th>
<th>Indefinite voice derivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oblique cases: non-agentive</td>
<td>Oblique</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>non-A</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>NP to of transitive verb: agentive</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NP ∅ of intransitive verb: agentive</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A?</td>
<td>A?</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NP ∅ of intransitive verb: non-agentive</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A?</td>
<td>A?</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>NP ∅ of transitive verb: non-agentive</td>
<td>A</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
In table 1, shaded areas indicate the areas of rule application; i.e., the NP classes affected by each rule. It can be seen that only NP case-marking clearly defines ergative and absolutive classes. In the cases where A is affected by rule application (plural marking and extraposition of a complex NP), we cannot determine the classification of oblique and E NPs; the division could just as well be one between A and non-A if oblique and E NPs should be classed together. The problem is caused by A being the marked element in these cases, rather than E. We have good reason to raise this question about the extent of ergativity in Bribri because at least one rule does indeed classify NPs by A and non-A: non-complex NP movement. There we are more justified in calling the unmarked and unaffected NP class absolutive simply because it is unmarked.

As regards the deletion and raising rules it is feasible to see these as defining an accusative class (Ac) by default, because the normally marked case in N/Ac systems is the N, as it is here.

Finally, a classification of agentive versus non-agentive NPs also exists in Bribri, in the derivation of indefinite voice.

Thus Bribri shows NP classifications according to at least four dimensions: E/A, A/non-A, N/Ac, and agentive/non-agentive.

2. Subject in Bribri. With four different systems for classifying NPs, Bribri presents real problems for any attempt at labelling one NP class as 'subject'. One approach to a solution would probably involve some sort of ranking of rule types to determine which might be most crucial to the classification of NPs and which less so. Keenan 1976 attempts this solution: he classifies subject properties into "coding properties", "behavior and control properties" and "semantic properties". The first group includes position, case-marking, and agreement; the second, deletion, movement, case-changing, etc., and the third, agency, autonomous existence, etc. Keenan claims that the semantic properties are most basic to subjects, behavioral and control properties next most basic, and coding properties least. Thus, if a noun possesses the semantic properties it will possess behavioral and...
control properties, and, if these, then coding properties, while the reverse is not true (Keenan 1976:324). In general these predictions hold true for Bribri; we have seen for example, that the absolutive NP of a transitive verb derived in (intransitive) indefinite voice, while marked Ø like other absolutes, does not control verb marking for plural as do other absolutes, and further that indefinite clauses allow raising, unlike other higher intransitive clauses.

However, we also find that in Bribri the rule (or rule set) which derives indefinite voice applies on a purely agentive, non-agentive basis, thus operating in accordance with the semantic properties proposed by Keenan as most basic to subjects. What, then, would prevent us from claiming subjecthood for just the group of agents, since their semantic properties find representation in a syntactic rule? Without independent evidence for the relative importance of classes of properties, the attempt to assign subjecthood to a particular NP class must remain un convincing; as Keenan himself admits: "We should stress here that the relation we postulate between coding and behavioral properties represents merely a hypothesis" (Keenan 1976:325).

Dixon 1979 also attempts to explain the coding and behavior of the non-agentive NP of an intransitive verb in an accusative language. He claims that transitive verbs which do not have deep semantic agents treat one of the required NPs as if it were an agent in surface structure. Additionally, he claims that this extension of surface agency to non-agents of transitive verbs is further extended by analogy to the non-agentive arguments of intransitive verbs, thus explaining nominative/accusative marking (Dixon 1979:107 footnote).

But this extension does not always operate this way in Bribri. Even though the extension occurs in the case of transitive verbs where, as we have seen, semantic benefactive or experiencer cases are marked by tō as surface agents when no semantic agent is present, Bribri often fails to analogize this to intransitive verbs; here the extension of case categories most often includes the semantic agent in the class of surface object cases, to wit, in all instances of rules based on the A/non-A distinction, as well as case-marking. Or no extension takes
place, and semantic agents behave as a class despite surface marking (as in indefinite voice derivation). Only three rules in Bribri, all very closely related, show the situation described by Dixon: deletion and the two types of raising rules. The Bribri data give no clear reason to choose one NP class over another as "subject". Keenan's and Dixon's studies (like others on this problem; see Anderson and Noonan) appear to be attempts to save the term "subject" for universal grammar by assigning it to a single case (nominative) in a single type of language (accusative). But, as Bechert wisely observes, "this legitimate interest in universal terms does not require the assumption of a single syntactic system of reference, but only the translatability of every statement made in one syntactic system into the other, and vice versa and, in addition, a common semantic foundation" (Bechert 1979:49). What is needed is more studies of possible syntactic systems in all their complexity, with the goal of establishing implicational universals.

Payne, in discussing subjects in Guaymi, resorts to a concept of "central participant" (Payne 1982:65). This appears to be identical to the discourse concept of topic, which also bears a close but not necessary relation to agency, animacy, and other semantic properties, depending of course on the type of text. In Bribri narrative discourse the unmarked topic is invariably encoded as surface E/Ai (Dickeman 1983). But, while all languages require the term "topic", it is doubtful whether all require the term "subject". Bribri, for one, appears not to.
NOTES

1. See Margery 1982: LXIII-LXVII A and Constenla and Margery 1979: 59-60 for morphological details. Some intransitive verbs contain the suffix -r in their basic form; these cannot be derived in indefinite voice.

2. Kiany{k \textsuperscript{1}}k 'want' has two distinct forms: kiany{k \textsuperscript{1}}:
   (a) ye' ki i kiànà [tò be' jtsò]
   me Exp. it is: wanted that you sing
   'I want you to sing.'
   And kiany{k \textsuperscript{2}}:
   (b) ye' kì à [tò be' jtsò]
   me is: wanted that you sing
   'I want you to sing.'
   One informant feels that (a) focuses the experiencer \textunderscore, but without further study I have tentatively classified these forms as members of two verb groups (both intransitive and stative), rather than attempting to derive one from the other.
   Kiany{k \textsuperscript{1}}k appears to allow raising:
   (c) ye' ki Maria kiànà [____ i sayk]
   me Exp. Maria is: wanted it see
   'I want Maria to see it.'

3. In the Cabagra dialect of Bribri tò introduces unreduced embeddings as well as marking the ergative case.

4. The form used to express progressive aspect in Bribri is tso
(present tense) or bak (past tense) + infinitive. This verb is readily analyzable as a higher stative verb. In all respects it behaves like any other stative of this verb class.

5. -r is a contracted form of tō, often used to avoid tō tō with different functions.

6. Because the exact process of rule application is not crucial to the question whether split ergativity exists in Bribri, I have chosen to represent the steps in the application of raising rules with grammatical sentences. Thus the fact that tō 'that' introduces an embedding before complete raising has applied, and not after, suggests that it is deleted. This surely does not represent the syntactic process accurately: tō would doubtless be inserted by a late rule, after raising had failed to apply. Similarly, the form taken by the verb will doubtless be determined by a late rule, even though here I show conjugated verbs before raising has or has not applied.
References


