

# Predicting case frames across languages: a competing motivations approach to (differential) case marking

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In my earlier work (also joint work with Helen de Hoop), I have argued that patterns of differential case marking can be accounted for in terms of two general constraints (or constraint families), Indexing (Role Faithfulness) and Distinguishability, which capture insights behind the indexing and discriminating approaches to case marking in typological literature. In particular, interaction of these two general constraints can account for asymmetries between Differential Object Marking and Differential Subject Marking (Malchukov 2008, de Hoop and Malchukov 2008, cf. Malchukov & de Swart 2009). After a brief discussion of Animacy-based alignment splits, I show how a similar approach can be extended to account for alignment splits, conditioned by TAM-features (cf. also Malchukov & de Hoop 2011). Building on the earlier typological work (in particular, on the work of Lazard 1994), I introduce a comprehensive TAM-hierarchy for alignment splits, which goes far beyond the familiar perfectivity-based splits. One-dimensional and two-dimensional versions of the TAM-hierarchy are presented and evaluated. It is shown how TAM-based splits can be modeled in Optimality Theory, which has proven to be successful in modeling animacy-based splits. It is argued that OT provides a natural way of integrating hierarchies from different domains (Animacy Hierarchy and TAM-hierarchy), as well as accounting for apparent counterexamples through taking other interfering factors (both functional and structural) into account. In conclusion it is briefly demonstrated how a similar approach in terms of competing motivations (as practised in functional typology) or conflicting constraints (as practised in Optimality Theory) naturally extends to transitivity splits, that is, cases where different verbs (verb classes) select for different constructions (case frames, or more generally coding frames). Semantically grounded Faithfulness constraints will also determine ranking of individual verb types in transitivity hierarchies (Tsunoda 1981) or semantic maps (Malchukov 2005). Empirical validity of the outlined approach to construction splits is currently investigated in the Leipzig Valency Classes Project, which takes a predefined list of 70 verb meanings as its starting point and proceeds to investigate clustering of these meanings across languages with respect to coding frames and valency alternations.

## References

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