

Ergative Control of Syntactic Processes in Sama Southern

Doug Trick

SIL International

This paper documents the exclusive ergative control of five syntactic processes in Sama Southern (south-western Philippines). It begins with an explanation of ergativity in reference to morphology (with data from Sama Southern which illustrates morphological ergativity). It then introduces and explains each of the following syntactic operations, demonstrating that they exhibit an ergative-absolutive pattern in Sama Southern: relativization, clefting, WH-question formation, equi-NP deletion, and second-position cliticization. That is, it is the O argument of a transitive clause which controls these syntactic processes. This contrasts with most other Philippine languages in which control of these syntactic processes is distributed more or less evenly between the A argument and the O argument.