

Thomas Dougherty

Marked Nominative from Differential Object Marking in Okinawan

Okinawan developed a typologically unusual marked nominative system from the differential object marking system found in other Japonic languages. In this presentation I address how this shift occurred, and suggest possibilities why a marked nominative system is not a typologically more common evolution of differential object marking systems, as well as being rare in general. Previous work has only rarely noted, and often completely overlooked the fact that Okinawan is a marked nominative language, and Okinawan may be the only example of a transition from a differential object marking system to a marked nominative system, so this presentation addresses not only a so far overlooked synchronic phenomenon (marked nominativity in Okinawan), but also proposes a novel diachronic theory for how said phenomenon came about. Additionally, I discuss the presence of an overt accusative case marker Old Okinawan, which may in fact be contact influence from Late Middle or Early Modern Japanese.