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## **Animacy constraints: syntagmatic or paradigmatic?**

### Summary

Since Silverstein's (1976) research on split ergative languages, person/animacy hierarchies have been regarded as an important factor in grammar. One view holds that unmarked objects are low in animacy (Comrie 1980, Aissen 1999), but the opposite has also been argued to be the case (Hopper & Thompson 1981). In this talk I will argue that both views are actually correct, but that the former holds for syntagmatic relations, while the latter holds for paradigmatic relations. I will support this interpretation with data from three distinct phenomena: case marking of the "pivot" in impersonal reflexives, syncretism in the agreement system of Mordvin, and the position of direct objects in Fijian.