When the transitive A and O stand in a reciprocal relation, standard Avar uses the construction with the ergative free-standing reciprocal pronoun tsotsaz in the A position and its antecedent in the O position. This configuration will be referred to in what follows as the ergative reciprocal tsotsaz construction. This is illustrated in (1).

(1) Гьел цоцаз чІвана.
G′el tsotsaz ch′wana.
They-ABS each other-ERG kill-PST
‘They killed each other.’

Avar is one of Dagestanian (Northeast Caucasian) languages and it is spoken mainly in the Republic of Dagestan in the Russian Federation and in the Republic of Azerbaijan. Avar exhibits the absolutive-ergative case marking pattern: The intransitive S and the transitive O are marked with the absolutive case, whereas the transitive A is marked with the ergative case. In (1) an absolutive NP g′el antecedes an ergative reciprocal tsotsaz. The standard Avar reciprocal pronoun tsota− does not use the absolutive form, and therefore standard Avar does not have the construction in which the ergative NP antecedes the absolutive form of the reciprocal tsota−. The aim of this presentation is to show that the ergative reciprocal tsotsaz construction is not transitive but intransitive. In this respect this construction is similar to the Romance reflexive clitic construction, which is discussed by many scholars (Grimshaw 1982, etc.). Two arguments for the intransitive analysis of the ergative reciprocal tsotsaz construction are presented. The first argument is provided by the case marking in the causative construction. The intransitive S embedded under the causative verb g′a-AM-ize appears in the absolutive case, whereas the embedded transitive A occurs in the first locative case and the transitive O takes the absolutive case, as is exemplified in (2) and (3).

(2) Мусаца Гали љедезе гъвуна.
Musatsa G′ali l′edeze g′awuna.
Musa-ERG Ali-ABS to swim-INF make-PST
‘Musa made Ali swim.’

(3) Мусаца Галida Гиса чвазе гъвуна.
Musatsa G′alida G′isa ch′waze g′awuna.
Musa-ERG Ali-LOC1 Isa-ABS to kill make-PST
‘Musa made Ali kill Isa.’

When a clause with a reciprocal in the A position and its antecedent in the O position is embedded in a causative construction, the reciprocal is marked not with the first locative but with the ergative case and its antecedent stands in the absolutive case, as is illustrated in (4).

(4) Мусаца гьел цоцаз чвазе гъаруна.
Musatsa g′el tsotsaz ch′waze g′aruna.
Musa-ERG they-ABS each other-ERG to kill-INF make-PST
‘Musa made them kill each other.’

This fact is explained by the intransitive analysis of the ergative reciprocal tsotsaz construction. The second argument for the intransitive analysis of the ergative reciprocal tsotsaz construction comes from case marking of arguments of the verb embedded under the verb l′ug′ine ‘to begin’. The verb l′ug′ine ‘to begin’ takes an infinitive complement. With the verb l′ug′ine ‘to begin’, the embedded S, A, and O all stand in the absolutive case, as is shown in (5) and (6).

ABREVIATIONS: ABL1 = first ablative case, ABS = absolutive case, AM = agreement marker, ERG = ergative case, INF = infinitive, LOC1 = first locative case, PST = past tense.
When the verb $l"ug\'ine$ ‘to begin’ takes an infinitive complement with a reciprocal in the A position and its antecedent in the O position, the reciprocal take not absolutive but ergative case and its antecedent stands in the absolutive case, as is exemplified in (7).

When the verb $l"ug\'ine$ ‘to begin’ takes an infinitive complement with a reciprocal in the A position and its antecedent in the O position, the reciprocal take not absolutive but ergative case and its antecedent stands in the absolutive case, as is exemplified in (7).

This fact supports the intransitive analysis of the ergative reciprocal $tsotsaz$ construction. This presentation additionally shows that the ergative reciprocal $tsotsaz$ does not lose a slot in the syntax and it is demoted to the oblique function. In this respect, there is a difference between the standard Avar ergative reciprocal $tsotsaz$ and the Romance reflexive clitic, which is argued to have no position in the syntax (Grimshaw 1982 etc.). Zec (1985) uses the comparative construction as the evidence that the Serbo-Croatian reflexive clitic has no position in the syntax and many studies uses her test for the analysis of the Romance reflexive clitic (Alsina 1996 etc.). In the ergative reciprocal $tsotsaz$ construction, the ergative reciprocal $tsotsaz$ can be the object of comparison, as is illustrated in (8).

This fact supports the conclusion that the ergative reciprocal $tsotsaz$ has a position in the syntax.

REFERENCES

