1 Introduction

• In this talk, I will outline the facts of focus constructions in Somali, which display an interaction between clitic doubling and Anti-Agreement.

• I will describe three basic patterns:
  – Subject clitic pronouns are optional when doubling a DP that is in its base-generated position, obligatory if the subject is a topic or a pronoun, and are prohibited if the subject is in focus.
  – Under various types of $\bar{A}$-extraction of a subject (e.g. focus, wh-movement, relative clause construction) the verb can only enter into partial agreement with the subject, resulting in a reduced verbal paradigm.
  – When the subject is in focus, it appears in accusative case. In all other positions it appears in nominative case.

• Today I want to make two central claims:
  i Previous analyses of Somali that assume it is a polysynthetic language cannot straightforwardly account for cases where a clitic is optional or prohibited.
  ii Current theories of anti-agreement face challenges when applied to the Somali data.

• In §2, I’ll outline the basic patterns of anti-agreement found in Somali focus constructions. In §3, I’ll discuss the nature of the clitic pronouns, and argue against the claim that they are in argument position. In §4, I’ll briefly summarize three competing analyses of anti-agreement, and I’ll present the challenges that each face in accounting for the facts of Somali. In §5, I’ll offer some concluding remarks.

2 Background

2.1 Clitic Pronouns

• Somali has set of focus particles ($baa$, $ayaa$) that must be used when introducing new information (e.g. the answer to a wh-question).
(1) a. Y-àa yimi?
    who-FOC come.PST.3SGM
    ‘Who came?’

b. [Cali]F bàa yimi
    Cali FOC come.PST.3SGM
    ‘[Cali]F came.’

[Saeed (1999) pg. 192]

• The focused XP surfaces directly to the left of the focus particle and topics, if any, appear further left of the focused constituent.

• Somali has a set of clitic pronouns which can double overt DPs. Subject pronouns are enclitics on the focus particle or embedding complementizers. Local-person object clitics occur immediately before the verb.

A sketch of the Somali clause

(2) (topic 1) (topic 2) ... {focused XP} FOC-SCL OCL VP

• In the case that the subject is an R-expression immediately following the focus particle, a doubled subject clitic is **optional**. For example:

(3) [moos]F baa/b-uu, wiik-ii, cunayaa
    banana FOC/FOC-3SGM boy-the eat.PROG.3SGM
    ‘The boy is eating [a banana]F’

[Svolacchia et al. (1995) pg. 68]

• A pronoun in the same position, however, must be doubled by a clitic.

(4) [moos]F b-aan/(*baa) anigu, cunay
    banana FOC-1SG 1SG eat.PAST.1SG
    ‘I ate [a banana]F’

[Svolacchia et al. (1995) pg. 68]

• When the subject is in topic position, the doubled clitic becomes **obligatory**.

(5) Cali, [lacagt-ii]F b-uu/(*baa) nink-ii siinayaa
    Cali money-DEF FOC-3SGM man-DEF give.FUT.3SGM
    ‘Cali will give the man [the money]F.’

[Saeed (1984) pg. 9]

• However, when the subject is in focus position, the doubled clitic is **prohibited**.

(6) [Cali]F baa/(*b-uu) nin-kii lacag-tii siinaya
    Cali FOC man-DEF money-DEF give.FUT.3SGM(P.A.)
    ‘[Cali]F will give the man the money.’

[Saeed (1984) pg. 9]
• This pattern is not consistent across all clause types, however. In the case that the focused element is the subject of an embedded clause, then the clitic is required (i.e. there are no anti-agreement effect).

(7) \[Cali_j/F\ b-aan\ sheegay\ \sqrt{C_P}\ in-uu_j\ \underline{\_i\ buug\ qoray}\]
Cali FOC-1SG say.PAST COMP-3SGM book write.PAST
‘I said that [Cali]$_F$ wrote a book.’
[Svolacchia et al. (1995) pg. 89]

• Additionally, local person object clitics are always required, even if they are co-referential with a focused strong pronoun.

(8) \[Adiga_y/F\ b-uu_j\ Cali_j\ *(ku_j)\ dilay\]
you FOC-3SGM Cali OCL.2SG beat.PAST
‘Cali beat [you]$_F$’
[Svolacchia and Puglielli (1999) pg. 102]

2.2 Partial Agreement

• Under \(\ddot{A}\)-extraction of a local subject (including movement to focus position), the verb enters into a partially agreement relationship with the subject, and only a subset of \(\varphi\)-features are exponed (Saeed (1999), Andrzejewski (1956)).

• The majority of Somali verbs are formed by a root followed by agreement and inflectional morphology which mark the \(\varphi\)-features of the subject.

The internal structure of Somali ‘weak verbs’

(9) \[\text{[ROOT-LEX-AGR-INFL]}\]
[Saeed (1999) pg. 79]

• When the subject is in focus, the AGR morpheme that marks 2nd person is not exponed.

(10) Suffixing verb AGR Morphemes

a. Full Agreement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1SG</th>
<th>2sg</th>
<th>3SG.M</th>
<th>3SG.F</th>
<th>1PL</th>
<th>2pl</th>
<th>3PL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Ø-</td>
<td>-t-</td>
<td>-Ø-</td>
<td>-t-</td>
<td>-n-</td>
<td>-t-</td>
<td>-Ø-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b. Reduced Agreement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1SG</th>
<th>2sg</th>
<th>3SG.M</th>
<th>3SG.F</th>
<th>1PL</th>
<th>2pl</th>
<th>3PL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Ø-</td>
<td>-Ø-</td>
<td>-Ø-</td>
<td>-Ø-</td>
<td>-n-</td>
<td>-Ø-</td>
<td>-Ø-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Additionally, inflectional morphology becomes the same across all \(\varphi\)-features, losing distinctions that are present under full agreement.
(11) Present General Inflectional Morphology

a. Full Agreement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1SG</td>
<td>-aa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2SG</td>
<td>-aa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3SG.M</td>
<td>-aa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3SG.F</td>
<td>-aa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1PL</td>
<td>-aa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2PL</td>
<td>-aan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3PL</td>
<td>-aan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b. Reduced Agreement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Reduced Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1SG</td>
<td>-á</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2SG</td>
<td>-á</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3SG.M</td>
<td>-á</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3SG.F</td>
<td>-á</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1PL</td>
<td>-á</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2PL</td>
<td>-á</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3PL</td>
<td>-á</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- There are also 4 prefixing verbs in the language, which display the same pattern with slightly different AGR morphology (which surfaces as a prefix).

(12) ‘Prefixing Verb’ AGR Morphemes

a. Full Agreement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1SG</td>
<td>∅</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2SG</td>
<td>t-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3SG.M</td>
<td>y-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3SG.F</td>
<td>t-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1PL</td>
<td>n-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2PL</td>
<td>y-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3PL</td>
<td>y-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b. Reduced Agreement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Reduced Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1SG</td>
<td>∅</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2SG</td>
<td>y-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3SG.M</td>
<td>y-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3SG.F</td>
<td>t-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1PL</td>
<td>n-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2PL</td>
<td>y-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3PL</td>
<td>y-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Saeed (1993) pg. 83]

- The AGR morphology on the prefixing verbs clearly shows that under reduced agreement 2nd person is neutralizing to 3rd person.

- So, the basic partial agreement pattern seems to be that 2nd person agreement is impoverished, and inflectional morphology becomes consistent throughout the paradigm. For example:

(13) Past Tense of *keen* ‘to bring’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
<th>Reduced Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1SG</td>
<td>keen-∅-ay</td>
<td>keen-∅-ày</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2SG</td>
<td>keen-t-ay</td>
<td>keen-∅-ày</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3SG.M</td>
<td>keen-∅-ay</td>
<td>keen-∅-ày</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3SG.F</td>
<td>keen-t-ay</td>
<td>keen-t-ày</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1PL</td>
<td>keen-n-ay</td>
<td>keen-n-ày</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2PL</td>
<td>keen-t-een</td>
<td>keen-∅-ày</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3PL</td>
<td>keen-∅-een</td>
<td>keen-∅-ày</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Saeed (1984) pg. 83]
• This pattern seems to indicate a need (at least in Somali) for distinct [SPEAKER] and [ADDRESSEE] features—crucially, 2nd person morphology becomes 3rd person, not 1st person.

(14) \[ \text{PARTICIPANT} \]
\[ \text{SPEAKER} \quad \text{ADDRESSEE} \]

[Harley and Ritter (2002) pg. 488]

2.3 Case alternations

• Most researchers argue that Somali has a case system, with subjects being marked nominative and objects DP non-nominative (Saeed (1999), Lecarme (1999), though see Green and Morrison (2015) for a different view.)

• Case is often marked tonally, but some nouns take a nominative suffix.

• However, when the subject is focus, it must appear without nominative case.

(15) a. \text{Niman-kaas-u} [hilib]_F b-ay cunayaan  
    men-those-NOM meat FOC-3PL eat-PROG  
    ‘Those men are eating [meat]_F’

b. \text{Hilib} [niman-kaas-(\text{*u})]_F \text{baa} cunaya\acute{a}  
    meat men-those FOC eat-PROG(P.A.)  
    ‘[Those men]_F are eating meat’

[Frascarelli (1999) pg. 207]

• In his survey of anti-agreement effects, Baier (2014) notes several other languages where subjects appear in ‘default’ case under focus or after A-movement.

3 What is the nature of the clitic pronouns?

3.1 Pronoun in A-position

• Much work on Somali syntax assumes that it is a polysynthetic or discourse configurational language. That is, many researchers assume that clitic pronouns are arguments, with overt DPs surfacing as adjuncts (Lecarme (1999), Svolacchia and Puglielli (1999), a.o.)

• The main arguments in favor of this claim are based on the rigid position of clitics within the clause, compared to the the relatively free word order of DPs.
• Both these arguments face challenges, however. For instance, there are circumstances (such as in negative declaratives) when the order of subject and object clitics switches:

(16) a. \textit{W-uu i\textit{i} k\textit{\text{'eenayaa}}}
\begin{tabular}{l}
\text{DM-he me+for bring.PRES.PROG} \\
\text{‘He is bringing it for me’}
\end{tabular}

b. \textit{Ii-m\textit{a} w\textit{u} k\textit{\text{'eenay\text{y}o}}}  \\
\begin{tabular}{l}
\text{me+for-NEG he bring.PRES.PROG.NEG} \\
\text{‘He is not bringing it for me’}
\end{tabular}

[Saeed (1999) pg. 172]

• Moreover, unsurprisingly, there are information structural consequences for rearranging DPs within the clause (Saeed 1999), and nuanced descriptions of the data (e.g. Gebert 1986) describe cases of infelicity based on word order, indicating that the position of DPs is not simply a matter of adjoining anywhere on the clause.

• For instance, Saeed (1984) notes that pragmatically ‘new’ information cannot appear post-verbally. Thus, in a broad focus context, a post verbal object DP leads to infelicity.

(17) a. \textit{Max-\text{\text{`aa} dha\text{c\text{\text{y}}}y}}  \\
\begin{tabular}{l}
\text{what-FOC happen.PST} \\
\text{‘What happened?’}
\end{tabular}

b. \textit{Cali b\text{\text{\text{a}}} Mary\text{\text{\text{a}}}m d\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{a}}}y}}}y}  \\
\begin{tabular}{l}
\text{Cali FOC Mariam hit.PST} \\
\text{‘[Cali]$F$ hit Mariam.}
\end{tabular}

c. \#\text{\text{\text{Cali b\text{\text{\text{a}}}a d\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{a}}}y}}}y}} Mary\text{\text{\text{a}}}m}  \\
\begin{tabular}{l}
\text{Cali FOC hit.PST Mariam} \\
\text{‘[Cali]$F$ hit Mariam.}
\end{tabular}

[Saeed (1999) pg. 241]

• Interestingly, however, more obvious adjuncts such as temporal adverbs can appear post-verbally, even in a broad focus context.

(18) a. \textit{Max-\text{\text{`aa} dha\text{c\text{\text{y}}}y}}  \\
\begin{tabular}{l}
\text{what-FOC happen.PST} \\
\text{‘What happened?’}
\end{tabular}

b. \textit{Cali \text{\text{b\text{\text{a}}}a dhintay shaley}}  \\
\begin{tabular}{l}
\text{Cali FOC died yesterday} \\
\text{‘[Cali]$F$ died yesterday.’}
\end{tabular}

[Saeed (1999) pg. 241]

• Additionally, researchers point to apparent lack of binding violations as evidence that overt DPs must be adjuncts:
According to Svolacchia and Puglielli (1999), this example should produce a Condition C violation if the R-expression is in an A-position, as it can corefer with a c-commanding pronoun. Thus, they conclude that the the R-expression is an adjunct.

However, claiming that the DP is an adjunct would not ameliorate predicted condition C effects. Condition C violations arise when a binder is in an A position and c-commands and binds an R-expression. It doesn’t matter if the R-expression is in an adjunct (see e.g. 20)

Thus, in fact, this is potentially evidence to support the claim that the clitics are not in an A-position, as they can corefer with R-expressions in a structurally lower position.

Additionally, Somali apparently displays no WCO effects, leading Lecarme (1999) to argue that there is no movement to focus position—she instead argues that DPs are adjoined in that position.

However, WCO effects do not arise under resumption (McCloskey 2007), which offers a potential explanation of why the above cases are grammatical—as I will show in the following subsection, there appears to be other evidence as well that resumption is possible in the language.

So, there doesn’t seem to be strong evidence that clitic pronouns are in argument positions and there is at least good evidence that they are not in argument position:

i The pronoun is optional if the subject DP is in what appears to be its base-generated position (see 3).

ii The pronoun is prohibited if the subject is in focus (see 6). This forces Lecarme (1999) to argue that only a null pronoun can appear in argument position when the subject is in focus.
3.2 A clitic head, with features valued through agreement

- Another possible explanation of the distribution of clitics, is that they are a head of a Clitic Phrase, and must be licensed through Agreement (Sportiche (1996))

(22)

- If we assume that numeration of ClP is optional, then we can straightforwardly account for the optionality of the clitic when the subject DP is in-situ.

- However, clitic doubling is apparently always required if the subject is a pronoun, even if it is in a position that we would expect to allow optional doubling.

(23) \( [\text{moos}]_F \ b\text{-aan}_i /(*\text{baa}) \ \text{anigu}_i \ \text{cunay} \)

banana \text{FOC-1SG} \ 1SG \text{ eat.PAST.1SG}

‘I ate [a banana]_F’

[Svolacchia et al. (1995) pg. 68]

- Additionally, clitics are required when the subject is \textit{pro}. For example:

(24) \textit{Fáarax} bʊuggáaš \ b-\textit{ään}_i \ \textbf{pro}_i \ siiyey

\textit{F.} \ book-that \ FOC-1SG \ give.PAST

‘I gave that book to Faarax.’

[Saeed (1993) pg. 9]

- If this is a general requirement of pronouns in the language and it applies to resumptive pronouns as well, then we would expect to see clitics required in environments where resumption is forced, such as within islands.

- In fact, we find that clitics must appear within islands, as expected under the hypothesis that all pronouns must be doubled by a clitic and that resumption can be used to ameliorate island violations.
(25) *Qoraa,-gée ay-aad jecésjajay buugga *(uu), pro, qoray?
writer-which FOC-2SG like book-the 3SGM wrote
‘Which author do you like the book he wrote?’

[Lecarme (1999) pg. 292]

(26) *Gabadhi,-ee ay-ayj walaalahayj akhristineen buuga *(ay), pro, keentay?
girl-which FOC-3PL brothers-my read book-the she brought
‘Which girl did my brothers read the book which she brought?’

[Svolacchia et al. (1995) pg. 88]

- If we assume that a DP in focus position binds a null resumptive pronoun in argument position, then based on the hypothesized relationship between clitics and pronouns, we might expect a clitic to be obligatory when a subject is focused.

(27) Agreement with a Resumptive Pronoun

\[
\text{DP}_i \quad \text{baa} \quad *(\text{-AGR}) \quad \text{pro}_i
\]

- In fact, we find the opposite. A clitic is categorically prohibited from appearing when the subject of the main clause is in focus.

- If we were to say that a resumptive is ruled out in that position for independent reasons (say, due to the Highest Subject Restriction (McCloskey 1990)), then we would expect a trace of movement to occur in the base-position of the extracted subject.

- In this case, we would expect the clitic to be optional—if a ClP is merged, then it will agree with the trace of movement. If it isn’t, then the focus particle will appear with no clitic.

(28) Agreement with trace

\[
\text{DP}_i \quad \text{baa} \quad (-\text{AGR}) \quad t_i
\]

- Thus, the observed agreement pattern in main clauses under focus movement doesn’t appear consistent with the predicted patterns for either type of gap, if we assume that all pronouns must be doubled by a clitic in the language.

- In embedded clauses, we find a similar (though likely more tractable) puzzle:

- Assuming resumptives and traces to be optional variants, we would then expect a subject pronoun to be optional in embedded clauses. In fact, it is required.

(29) *[Cali]_F b-aan sheegay [CP in-*(uu), buug qoray ]
Cali FOC-1SG say.PAST COMP-3SGM book write.PAST
‘I said that [Cali]_F wrote a book.’
• If, however, movement were somehow prevented out of an embedded clause—for instance, if C is a phase and Somali prohibits cross-clausal movement—then the behavior of clitics in embedded clauses would be expected.

• A ban on cross-clausal movement could also explain why resumption is forced under topicalization (assuming the topic position to be above CP), and thus could explain why a clitic is required under topicalization.

4 Anti-Agreement Accounts

4.1 Ouhalla 1993

• The account of anti-agreement in Ouhalla (1993) links AAE in Berber with the Highest Subject restriction.

• Ouhalla argues that a pronoun must be $\bar{A}$-free within some domain (which he claims is CP).

• In some languages with rich enough agreement to license pro, verbal agreement can be ‘suppressed’ in order to prevent a null pronoun from occurring within a domain in which it would not be $\bar{A}$-free.\(^1\)

Challenges for Somali:

i Unlike Berber, anti-agreement in Somali involves partial agreement on the verb, as opposed to a default form.

ii If we assume that clitics can agree with traces, then there is no reason that we wouldn’t expect a clitic to be optional, even if a resumptive was prevented from occurring in the highest subject position.

4.2 Richards 1997

• Richards (1997) argues that a chain that involves movement to check two ‘strong’ features is illicit—it sends conflicting instructions to PF.

• In languages where movement of the subject to Spec-TP is driven by a strong feature, further wh-movement would cause an illicit chain.

• He argues that some languages weaken the feature which triggers verbal agreement, which in turn allows wh-movement.

\(^1\)Baier (2014) notes that all the languages in his survey of AAE have rich enough agreement to license null subjects. Of course, languages with rich agreement patterns are precisely the type of language in which we would be able to see AAE, so the nature of the link between these facts is not completely clear.
Challenges for Somali:

i This analysis would predict that topicalization in Somali would display anti-agreement effects.

ii This account would likely predict anti-agreement effects within embedded clauses, assuming that embedded clause agreement is also driven by a strong feature.

4.3 Baier 2016

- Baier (2016) argues that anti-agreement effects are caused by morphological impoverishment rules that apply after syntactic agreement has taken place.

- When $\varphi$-features appear in the same bundle as a [wh] feature, this configuration triggers feature impoverishment.

- Based on typological evidence, he posits a feature impoverishment hierarchy, which describes the order in which features are impoverished.

(30) **Feature Impoverishment Hierarchy (FIH):**

PERSON $>>$ GENDER $>>$ NUMBER

[Baier (2016) pg. 3]

Challenges for Somali:

i Somali has two distinct anti-agreement effects which trigger varying degrees of ‘impoverishment’—presumably in order to adopt this analysis, one would have to propose two impoverishment rules: one which causes the partial verbal agreement pattern and one which causes the total deletion of a clitic.

ii While I believe one could write impoverishment rules to account for the Somali facts, I’m worried that it is to unconstrained and merely a more formal restatement of the facts.

5 Conclusion

- In addition to laying out the facts of Somali, today I have tried to establish two things:
  
  i Most previous accounts of Somali focus rely on an assumption that subject clitics are in an A-position—a claim that can be challenged based on the distribution of clitics in the language.

  ii While the pattern in Somali fits the broad tendencies of anti-agreement effects cross-linguistically, no current analysis of anti-agreement that I am aware of can completely explain the Somali data.

- While the analysis sketched here can explain some facts quite straightforwardly (e.g. the main/embedded clause distinction, the subject/object asymmetry, the optionality when the subject in its base-generated position) It cannot currently explain why a clitic is prohibited under focus, nor can it explain the mechanism by which partial agreement occurs.
References


