Agreement and Antiagreement in Mandar *

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1. Introduction

The South Sulawesi languages (Austronesian; Indonesia) show an Anti-Agreement effect (Ouhalla 1993, Schneider-Zioga 1995). In vso clauses, these languages index the absolutive argument with an enclitic (I). When the absolutive argument extracts, this enclitic disappears (2). The following examples illustrate in Mandar, a language of the Northern Subgroup. 

(1) Pole=i iKaco’.
come=3B NAME ‘Kaco’ came.’
Sikki et al. 1987, 134

(2) iKaco’ memang pole=[□].
NAME indeed come ‘Kaco’ indeed came.’
Sikki et al. 1987, 572

This paper investigates two aspects of this effect. First, it addresses the status of the clitic in (1). In sections 2-3, I show that this element is agreement: it is not a doubled pronoun.

Second, this paper assesses the theoretical status of absolutive Anti-Agreement. In the South Sulawesi languages, all types of absolutive argument- including objects- trigger Anti-Agreement when extracted. This fact has been taken to suggest that Anti-Agreement cannot be linked to the extraction of the highest argument in the clause (Baier 2018, pace Ouhalla 1993). In sections 4-5, I show that this conclusion is unwarranted: in the South Sulawesi languages, absolutive arguments invariably move to the highest argument position in the clause. As such, the pattern in (2) can be analyzed as a byproduct of subject extraction.

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1 Data: this paper draws examples from two sources: (i) prior descriptive work and (ii) elicitation (2018-) with Jupri Talib and others, recently via video-calling platform. Elicitation is in Indonesian; Mandar examples are presented in a discourse context in both spoken and typed form. Orthography: <c> = [k], <’> = [l].


2. The Agreement System

Mandar shows an ergative agreement system. Finite clauses contain an enclitic which tracks the absolutive argument: the internal argument of a transitive verb (3), the external argument of an antipassive (4), and the single argument of an intransitive (1). Transitive verbs also take an ergative prefix (3). The ergative prefix is glossed $\alpha$ and the absolutive enclitic as $\beta$.

(3) Na-ita=i $\{_{\text{erg}} \text{iKaco}\} \{_{\text{abs}} \text{iAli}\} \quad$ (4) $\text{Ma'}$-uang=i $\{_{\text{abs}} \text{iKaco}\} \ldots$

\[ 3\text{A-see}=3\text{B} \quad \text{name} \quad \text{name} \quad \text{ANT-say}=3\text{B} \quad \text{name} \]

\begin{itemize}
  \item ‘Kaco’ saw Ali .’
  \item JT: 3.19.26
\end{itemize}

\textit{Sikki et al.} [1987], 1087

Both morphemes track nominal and pronominal arguments (5-6). As the language allows \textit{pro}-drop, these can be null (6). There is no parallel case-marking on nouns or pronouns (3).

(5) Mau=o i’o tas-sulo,

\begin{itemize}
  \item although=2 \text{B} you not-torch
  \item ‘Though you lack a torch,’
\end{itemize}

\textit{Muthalib and Sangi} [1991], 153

(6) Indang=i u-ulle yau.

\begin{itemize}
  \item not=3 \text{B} 1\text{A}-can.do \text{i}
  \item ‘I can’t do it.’
\end{itemize}

\textit{Pelenkahu et al.} [1983], 219

Previous work has established several generalizations about these two morphemes. First, the two show different phonological behavior. The ergative prefix sits at the left edge of the verb. It attaches inside the prosodic word and triggers word-level phonological processes (\textit{?}-deletion: 7; \textit{b}-lenition: 8). The absolutive enclitic, in contrast, sits in second position. It attaches outside the word-level domain of penultimate stress (7-8; \textit{Brodkin} 2021b).

(7) Múa’ mélo’=i mu-íta,

\begin{itemize}
  \item / mua? melo?=i mu-?ita /
  \item if will=3 \text{B} 2\text{A-see}
  \item ‘If you will see it,’
\end{itemize}

\textit{Muthalib and Sangi} [1991], 27

(8) Púra=i na-walúang.

\begin{itemize}
  \item / pura=i na-balu?-aŋ /
  \item already=3 \text{B} 3\text{A}-sell-\text{appl}
  \item ‘He already sold it.’
\end{itemize}

\textit{Sikki et al.} [1987], 21

Second, the two occupy different syntactic positions. The ergative prefix sits in \textit{voice}$^0$: it appears in non-finite clauses, occurs only in the presence of an external argument (Harley 2013), and alternates with prefixes that suppress this argument (e.g. the passive \textit{voice}$^0$ \textit{di}-). The absolutive enclitic, in contrast, sits in \textit{τ}$^0$: it appears in all finite clauses, disappears in non-finite contexts, and tracks a High Absolutive argument in spec,\textit{TP} (\textit{Brodkin} 2021b).

\[ \text{Ergative Prefix: \textit{voice}$^0$} \]

\[ \begin{array}{c}
  \text{DP}_{\text{erg}} \\
  \text{\textit{voice}$^0$} \\
  \text{VP} \\
  \text{ERG} \\
\end{array} \]

\[ \text{Absolutive Enclitic: \textit{τ}$^0$} \]

\[ \begin{array}{c}
  \text{DP}_{\text{abs}} \\
  \text{T} \\
  \text{\textit{voice}$^0$} \\
  \text{=ABS} \\
\end{array} \]
3. Clitic Doubling and Agreement

Generative work on the South Sulawesi languages has generally taken the morphemes above to reflect agreement (Béjar 1999). This pattern has led to an analysis of the effect in (2) in terms of Anti-Agreement (Baier 2018). This assumption, however, requires justification: many putative cases of agreement may reflect clitic doubling instead (Woolford 2003).

The following section shows that the traditional position is correct: the absolutive enclitic and the ergative prefix are agreement morphemes, not doubled clitics. Eight patterns suggest this view: both morphemes are (i) obligatory, (ii) unique, (iii) sensitive to intervention, (iv) index only person features, and (v) target non-referential goals, and the absolutive enclitic (vi) shows default forms, (vii) appears in second position, and (viii) shows finiteness-based allomorphy. Doubled clitics typically lack these properties (Corbett 2006, Preminger 2009, Nevins 2011, Kramer 2014, Baker and Kramer 2018). This fact suggests the view in (11).

(11) The Agreement Analysis

Mandar, South Sulawesi

The ergative prefix and absolutive enclitic reflect agreement, not clitic doubling.

3.1 Obligatoriness

The first argument for (11) comes from obligatoriness. Both the ergative prefix and absolutive enclitic are obligatory. Every finite clause contains one absolutive enclitic and every transitive verb bears an ergative prefix. This pattern holds even when the external argument is indefinite or nonspecific. This reflects a typical property of agreement (Corbett 2006).

(12) Da *(mu)-ala=*(*i)!
    DON’T! 2A-take=3B
    ‘Don’t take it!’
    (Pelenkahu et al. 1983, 206)
(13) *(Na)-anu=*(*i) tau.
    3A-hit=3B person
    ‘People hit him.’
    (Sikki et al. 1987, 93)

3.2 Uniqueness

The second argument for (11) involves uniqueness. There is no context in which a transitive verb can take two ergative prefixes (e.g. in a causative construction: 14). In the same vein, there is no context where a matrix clause shows two absolutive enclitics (e.g. in a ditransitive construction: 15). This reflects another characteristic property of agreement (Corbett 2006).

(14) Na-p-ande=i bau posanna.
    3A-caus-eat=3B fish the.cat
    ‘He made the cat eat fish.’
    (Sikki et al. 1987, 117)
(15) U-be-ngan=o doi’.
    1A-give-APPL=2B money
    ‘I’ll give you money.’
    (Sikki et al. 1987, 139)

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*Mandar does not allow indefinite arguments to occupy the absolutive (subject) position. As such, there is no context where the absolutive enclitic indexes an indefinite argument. Previous work has taken similar patterns to suggest that absolutive agreement is sensitive to the definiteness of its goal elsewhere (Yuan 2021). In Mandar, however, it is clear that this pattern does not reflect a property of the absolutive enclitic itself.*
3.3 Locality

The third argument for (11) comes from intervention. In contexts where the ergative prefix or absolutive enclitic could index one of two arguments, they target the higher. In causatives, the ergative prefix tracks the causer, not the agent (16). In ditransitives, the absolutive enclitic tracks the goal, not the theme (17). This sensitivity to intervention reflects another property of agreement which is not shared by clitic doubling (Anagnostopoulou 2003, Corbett 2006).

(16) *Na-p-ande=i posanna yau. 3a-caus-eat=3b the.cat i
  im: ‘I made the cat eat fish.’
  JT: 4.1.78
(17) *U-bengan=i i’o. 1a-give=3b you i
  im: ‘I’ll give it to you.’
  JT: 4.1.79

3.4 Granularity

The fourth argument for (11) comes from the lack of number distinctions. In Mandar, the ergative prefix and absolutive enclitic track only the person features of their goals. They do not track number. The 2a prefix mu- and the 2b enclitic =o, for instance, are used with both the second-person singular pronoun i’o (18, 20) and the plural pronoun mie’ (19, 21).

(18) Apa i’o mu-pecawai? what you 2a-laugh.at
    Mangapa=o i’o?
    do.what=2b you
(19) Apa mie’ mu-pecawai? what you.guys 2a-laugh.at
  ‘What are you (guys) laughing at?’
  JT: 11.5.363, 11.5.364
(20) Mangapa=o i’o?
    do.what=2b you
(21) Mangapa=o mie’?
    do.what=2b you.guys
  ‘What are you (guys) doing?’
  JT: 7.7.411, 11.5.357

This pattern reflects a characteristic property of agreement: the ability to index only a subpart of the features on a given goal (Béjar and Rezac 2003). Doubled pronominal clitics do not show the same behavior: rather, they typically index all features of their associates (Preminger 2011). This pattern thus suggests that both morphemes reflect agreement.

3.5 Non-Referentiality

The fifth argument for (11) comes from the fact that both morphemes track non-referential arguments. Both the ergative prefix and absolutive enclitic can track bound and quantified arguments (22). In the same vein, the absolutive enclitic can track a bound anaphor (23).

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5The South Sulawesi languages vary in this respect: some retain number and clusitvity distinctions in either paradigm for the first or second person. Two politeness shifts have leveled these distinctions in Mandar. Many languages recruit separate clitics to mark plurality of both arguments (Matti 1992, Stromme 1992).

6This pattern also holds of indefinites. It cannot be checked with wh-words, as independent constraints rule out agreement with λ*-moved elements. The anaphor pattern is general to the subfamily (Inkelas 2006).
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(22) Na-ita=nasang=i sola-nna, ana’.
3A-see=every=3B pal-her kid
‘Her friend saw every kid.’
JT: 3.11.90

(23) U-issang=i alawe-u.
1A-know=3B self-my
‘I know myself.’
JT: 11.20.746

This pattern reflects a second property of agreement: its insensitivity to the referentiality of its target. Clitic doubling differs in this respect: in many languages, non-referential arguments resist clitic doubling (Suñer 1988, Baker and Kramer 2018). The patterns above, then, suggests that both the ergative prefix and absolutive enclitic represent agreement.

3.6 Defaults

Three additional arguments support (11) for the absolutive enclitic. The first concerns the existence of a morphological default form in contexts where agreement ‘fails.’ There are clauses where agreement lacks a referential goal: those with cps or expletives in argument positions. In these cases, the absolutive enclitic surfaces in a default third-person form.

(24) Pura=i na-pipissang [cp mua’...]
Once=3B 3A-reveal that
‘Once he had revealed that...’
Sikki et al. [1987], 291

(25) Tongang, urang=i.
true rain=3B
‘True, it’s raining.
Friberg and Jerniati [2000], 47

This pattern reflects another typical property of agreement: the tendency to surface in a default form when agreement fails. Doubled clitics do not do the same (Preminger 2009).

3.7 Second Position

The second argument concerns the position of the absolutive enclitic. It sits in second position (7–8). It has been claimed, however, that doubled clitics are always verb-adjacent (Franks and King 2000). If true, this pattern suggests that this morpheme reflects agreement.

3.8 Allomorphy

The final argument involves finiteness-based allomorphy. In Mandar, the absolutive enclitic disappears in most non-finite contexts. The absolutive argument cannot be indexed by an absolutive enclitic in the complement clauses of control verbs (26) or in non-finite temporal nominalizations (27). The ergative prefix remains in both of these contexts (Brodkin 2021a).

(26) Melo’=ad=i [ umm-ande=–].
want=may=3B ANT-eat
‘Maybe he wants to eat.’
Sikki et al. [1987], 37

(27) [ Ururu u-ita-mmu=–],
first 1A-see-your
‘At my first seeing you,’
Muthalib and Sangi [1991], 3
Brodkin

Nevertheless, there is one non-finite construction where absolutive agreement takes on a distinct form. Mandar has a subordinator *anna’* which can embed irrealis clauses. These clauses index the absolutive argument not with an enclitic but with a suffix on this c\(^0\) (29).

(28) Mamba=mo=’o!
    go=already=2b
    ‘Go!’
    Muthalib and Sangi [1991], 400

(29) ... *Anna’-mu* mamba.
    so.that-2b.IRR go
    ‘So that you might go.’
    Muthalib and Sangi [1991], 31

The same agreement pattern holds with all types of absolutive argument. Beneath *anna’*, the irrealis suffix tracks the antipassive external argument (30), transitive object, and ditransitive goal (31). The resultant clauses systematically lack the absolutive enclitic.

(30) Bulang, indoi=a’ mai *anna’-’u* mala ma’-issang alawe-u.
    Moon, shine!=1b to.me so.that-1b.IRR can ANT-know self-my
    ‘Moon, shine on me so that I might know myself.’
    Song Lyric: Bulang (Sulkep Liaco; 2008)

(31) Mua’ diang pole pa’balu’ do’ayu *anna’-mu* mamanya u-alli-ang,
    if exist come seller vegetable so.that-2b.IRR currently 1A-buy-Appl
    ‘If there is a vegetable seller come by and I am out buying things for you,’
    JT: 4.2.229

The irrealis suffix shows a surface similarity with genitive morphology in some of the South Sulawesi languages (Valkama [1995], Friberg [1996]). However, the resultant clauses are not nominalized. As such, I take this suffix to be an irrealis allomorph of absolutive agreement.

This conclusion provides a final argument for (11). The absolutive enclitic shows tam-based allomorphy: a regular property of agreement which is not shared by clitic doubling (Nevins [2011]; cf. Yuan [2021]). This pattern suggests that this morpheme reflects agreement.

3.9 Section Summary: Agreement

The eight diagnostics above suggest a common conclusion: both the ergative prefix and absolutive agreement reflect agreement. The following table summarizes these results.

(32) Summary: Agreement, not Clitic Doubling

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<tr>
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</table>
4. **TheAnti-Agreement effect**

These conclusions open up the following investigation. Like its relatives, Mandar does not allow the absolutive enclitic to target extracted absolutive arguments. Focused nominals, for instance, sit in a left-peripheral position. They cannot be indexed by agreement (33)-(34).

(33)   **iKaco’ mas-saka=\[\_\] manu’.**  
**NAME ant-catch chicken**  
‘Kaco’ is catching chickens.’  

**Sikki et al. [1987], 52**

(34)   **I'o u-salili=\[\_\].**  
2sg 1a-miss  
‘I miss you.’  

**Muthalib and Sangi [1991], 13**

This pattern holds across the Ā-system. Fronted wh-words sit in the same position and cannot trigger agreement (35). The heads of relative clauses behave in the same way (36).

(35)   **Innai lao ma’-issang=\[\_\]?**  
who will ant-know  
‘Who will know?’  

**Muthalib and Sangi [1991], 247**

(36)   **Tau mu-pa-pa’jama=\[\_].**  
person 2a-caus-work  
‘The people you employ’  

**Sikki et al. [1987], 691**

This pattern is restated in (37). The same effect holds across the South Sulawesi subgroup and in several other Austronesian subgroups nearby (Martens 1988, Finer 1997, Mead 1998).

(37)   **The Absolutive Anti-Agreement Effect Mandar; South Sulawesi**

Extracted absolutive arguments cannot trigger absolutive agreement.

5. **Absolutive Anti-Agreement is Subject Anti-Agreement**

At first blush, the pattern in (37) appears to contradict the typological tendency in (38):

(38)   **The Highest-Argument Generalization**  
**Ouhalla [1993]**  
Anti-Agreement effects arise exclusively as the result of extraction of the highest argument in the clause. They strictly implicate agreement with this argument.

This generalization has motivated an approach which links Anti-Agreement to constraints on extraction from subject positions. On this view, the effect arises as a byproduct of the syntactic manipulations required to extract the highest argument in the clause, on a par with the *that-trace* effect (Brandi and Cordin 1989, Schneider-Zioga 2007, Erlewine 2016).

The literature has taken the pattern in (37) as evidence against the generalization in (38). Bauer (2018) suggests that the absolutive argument does not occupy the highest argument position in Selayarese, another language of the South Sulawesi subgroup. On this analysis, the Anti-Agreement effect above would run against (38): absolutive agreement would disappear with the extraction of an object from a low position. As such, Bauer (2018) takes this pattern of Anti-Agreement- common to the subfamily- as evidence for a theory of Anti-Agreement that makes no reference to extraction from the highest argument position.
This analysis, however, falls short in the following respect. Mandar and its relatives show High Absolutive syntax: the absolutive argument raises to the highest argument position in the clause (Bittner and Hale 1996, Coon et al. 2014). The same view has been advanced for related Philippine-type languages across the region (Keenan 1976, Guilfoyle et al. 1992).

In South Sulawesi, four patterns provide evidence for this view. First, the absolutive argument triggers agreement on \( t^0 \) (Béjar 1999, Finer and Basri 2020, Brodkin 2021b). Second, the ergative argument typically cannot undergo Ā-extraction (Friberg 1996, Jukes 2006). Third, quantified absolutive arguments can bind variables in the ergative (22; 39). Fourth, the absolutive argument can trigger condition-c violations over the ergative (40).

\[
\text{(39) Na-allai=} \text{nashang}_i=i [ \text{ERG guru-nna}_i ] [ \text{ABS passikola}_i ]
\]

3A-scold=every=3B teacher-his student

‘His\(_i\) teacher scolded every\(_i\) student.’

JT: 3.11, 90

\[
\text{(40) *Na-ita=} \text{i} [ \text{ERG kindo’na} \text{i Nina}_i \text{anna’ iKaco’} ] [ \text{ABS pro}_i ].
\]

3A-see=3B mom NAME and NAME her

(‘Nina\(_i\) and Kaco’s mom saw her\(_i\).’)  
JT: 4.16, 127

These patterns suggest that the absolutive argument moves to the highest argument position in this clause. The precise path of an absolutive object is illustrated below (Brodkin 2021a).

\[
\text{(41) High Absolutive Syntax}
\]

This conclusion suggests that the Anti-Agreement effect in (37) does not counterexample the generalization in (38). As the absolutive argument moves to a high position, the absolutive Anti-Agreement effect does implicate the highest argument position.

6. Conclusion

The South Sulawesi languages show an ergative-absolutive agreement system and an absolutive Anti-Agreement effect. In Mandar, the morphemes which track ergative and absolutive arguments spell out agreement. The Anti-Agreement effect, moreover, strictly implicates extraction of the highest argument in the clause. This conclusion provides support for- not evidence against- a theory which links Anti-Agreement to the syntax of subject extraction.
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References


Keenan, Edward L. 1976. Towards a Universal Definition of "Subject".