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FOCUS AND TOPIC IN SOMALI

by

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## ABSTRACT

This study is a description of the syntax of focus and topic in Somali, a Cushitic language spoken in the Horn of Africa. The analysis is within the framework of transformational generative grammar; more particularly, in the Extended Standard Theory, or 'autonomous systems approach'. However the study seeks to be intelligible to linguists working within other frameworks since it is the first description of Somali syntax of any length in English, and only the second in any language.

The study is concerned with the syntactic structure marking certain roles noun phrases may fulfill in discourse. For example, NPs which are new information must in Somali be introduced into discourse by a focus structure involving either clefts or one containing the 'focus words' baa and ayaa. This and other uses of focus in discourse are briefly discussed and the importance of these structures to Somali syntax becomes clear in the analysis which, involving a rule of Focus Fronting, deals with important rules of the grammar including yes-no and WH-questions, and relativisation; in addition to those governing the differentiation of sentence types, and subject-verb concord.

Verbal focus is discussed, and it is concluded that no syntactic

structure of verb focus exists to parallel that of NP focus.

The role of topic structures in conversation is briefly discussed, and a syntactic derivation proposed. It is argued that these constructions, in which an NP precedes (and is outside) a sentence, must be directly generated by the phrase structure rules of the base, and that no movement rules are involved. It is a general conclusion of the study that there are no syntactic rules in Somali which move elements across a sentence boundary, although there are several rearrangement rules operating within root sentences.

It becomes clear that the grammaticalisation of pragmatic functions is at the core of Somali syntax.



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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

1.1. The central aim of this study is to provide a description of a particular area of Somali syntax, namely the structures of focus and topic. The use of these terms and the major characteristics of these structures are discussed in Chapter Two below. It will become clear there that these structures are the means by which pragmatic functions are grammaticalised. It seems reasonable to assume that in every language there are, at some level, means of arranging the presentation of information in discourse in ways that are relevant to the background provided by context, speaker and hearer assumptions etc. Some of these devices will allow parts of utterances to be identified as either old and assumed, or as new information. Similarly, elements may be given prominence by some choice of the speaker.

In Somali these devices are part of the basic structure of sentences. For example, the focusing of a particular NP, as shown in the sentences below,<sup>1</sup> has been described by Andrzejewski (1975 , 1979) as affecting such basic morphological operations as case marking, subject-verb concord, and person

differentiation in verbal paradigms:

- ( 1 )     Cali ninkii buu lacagtii siinayaa  
            Ali man+the FOCUS+he money+the give  
            'Ali, he will give THE MAN the money.'
- ( 2 )     Cali lacagtii buu ninkii siinayaa  
            Ali money+the FOCUS+he man+the give  
            'Ali, he will give the man THE MONEY.'
- ( 3 )     Cali baa ninkii lacagtii siinaya  
            Ali FOCUS man+the money+the give  
            'ALI will give the man the money.'

The analysis of the syntax of focus in this study will demonstrate that, for instance, such structures are part of the grammar of relative clauses; that they are basic to the derivation of WH-questions; and that no description of surface word order can be made without an analysis of them. They are, in short, at the centre of Somali syntax.

Similarly, as will be described in Chapter Two, topic structures are the syntactic reflection of roles fulfilled by NPs in particular discourse contexts, enabling certain types of assumptions or presuppositions to be read off sentence structure. That the grammatical description of topics occupies less of this

study than that of focus reflects their relative importance in Somali syntax. As will be seen, topic NPs, unlike focused NPs, occur outside the sentence proper and are thus far less affected by, and influence far less, the relationships which bind sentence elements together and the operations which apply to them.

In presenting the grammatical analyses of these syntactic structures this study rests on certain assumptions about the structure of language. The theoretical framework adopted here is that of transformational generative grammar. This framework is in its general terms widely known, and it is well covered in published sources. The reader is referred to Chomsky (1965, 1968, 1970b, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1981), Ross (1967), and Emonds (1976) for discussion and development of the particular form of this framework adopted here. Works like Akmajian & Heny (1975), Huddleston (1976), and Radford (1981) provide more general introductions.

In particular, this framework provides five distinct components for the description of language, each with its characteristic rules and forms of interaction with other components. These are the lexicon, the categorial or phrase structure (P.S.) component, the transformational component, the phonological component, and the semantic component. The first two are together referred to as the base, while the first three (although the lex-

icon is sometimes excluded) are known as the syntax.

This study will be concerned with the phrase structure and transformational rules necessary for the description of focus and topic, and in particular will have little to say of significance about semantic and phonological rules, although these will be referred to in passing.

The major departure from the type of framework of, for example, Chomsky (1977) is that the  $\bar{X}$  (X-bar) theory of P.S. rules is not employed.<sup>2</sup> This is not because of a principled objection to this theory, but is for pragmatic reasons of limiting the area of study. To correctly specify the P.S. categories in an  $\bar{X}$  approach, as outlined in Jackendoff (1977) for example, would lead the arguments too great a distance from the central topic of this study. Thus the question of the coherent application of the  $\bar{X}$  theory to Somali P.S. rules will be left to future work. It will become clear that this decision will not significantly affect the syntactic arguments and analysis in the area of the grammar under discussion.<sup>3</sup>

It is hoped that this study, though within a specific formal framework, will also be accessible to linguists working in other frameworks. Thus in each major section attempts have been made to initially phrase the argumentation in more general terms before providing argument in detail.



1.2        Some introduction to the language itself may be necessary. Somali (af soomaali) is spoken by more than four million people in the Horn of Africa. This includes all the citizens of the Somali Democratic Republic (Somalia), probably a majority of Djibouti citizens, and substantial minorities in Ethiopia and Kenya. It is the official language of Somalia and is the sole medium throughout Somali society, including schools, local and national administration. See Laitin (1977), Andrzejewski (1978), and Saeed (1982a) for description of the official adoption of Somali in the early seventies. This official use gives Somali, along with Kiswahili in Tanzania and Kenya, and Amharic in Ethiopia, great social and political importance among the languages of Africa.

Genetically, Somali is an East Cushitic language; East Cushitic being a subdivision of Cushitic, itself one of the coordinate sub-branches of Afroasiatic or Hamitico-Semitic. See Greenberg (1963), Dalby (1977), Palmer (1970) and Zaborski (1976) for description.

Somali has three basic dialect groups: Common (Northern), Central, and Benaadir (Coastal). The first, Common Somali, is the dialect upon which this study is based, although the analysis will also be valid for the Benaadir dialect, though not necessarily for Central dialects. Common Somali is the most widespread and prestigious of the dialects and was a lingua franca among other

dialects in earlier times. Now, with some minor influences from the Benaadir dialect of the capital Mogadishu, it has become the national standard in Somalia. Incidentally, nearly all Somali speakers outside Somalia's present borders belong to this dialect. See Saeed (1980, 1982b) for discussion of these dialects.

1.3       The outline of the work is as follows. Chapter Two is an introductory chapter which discusses the terminology of focus and topic, introduces the structures, and shows some of the ways they are used in discourse. It also contains discussion of the influence of focus and topic on word order.

Chapter Three presents an analysis of cleft structures, which constitute one of the two NP focus structures. A rule of Cleft Reduction is argued for to relate two forms of cleft structure.

Chapter Four provides a description of NP focus structures involving the morphemes baa and ayaa. A rule of Focus Fronting is argued for to move focused NPs from the position of cleft complement to the beginning of the sentence.

Chapter Five describes the rule of Focus Fronting in more detail. It is demonstrated that the rule is not a WH-movement rule, and that no rules with the characteristics of WH-move-

ment apply in Somali either in fronting focused NPs, or in the derivation of WH-questions.

Chapter Six discusses the problematical question of verb focus. It is argued that no syntactic structure of verb focus exists, and that the morpheme waa, previously identified as a focus particle, must in fact belong to the set of sentence identifying morphemes, termed classifiers.

Chapter Seven is concerned with the derivation of topic structures. It is argued that these structures must be base generated and that analyses using movement rules, like Left Dislocation, cannot be justified.

Chapter Eight is a general conclusion, summing up the analysis of focus and topic structures.

1.4      The transcription used for the Somali examples in the text is the official Somali orthography. In this orthography the Roman symbols have their familiar phonetic realisations, except for the following, whose most common realisations are given below:

<u>ɕ</u>	: voiced pharyngeal fricative
<u>dh</u>	: voiced retroflex plosive
<u>ɡ</u>	: voiced uvular plosive
<u>x</u>	: voiceless pharyngeal fricative
<u>l</u>	: glottal stop

Long vowels are represented by doubling: aa, ii, ee, oo, uu.

As in the standard orthography tone is not normally marked. It is, however, marked when relevant to the argument. Tone in Somali marks grammatical information, and only distinguishes lexical items in a very limited number of cases. Tone for example marks, in addition to segmental markers, case, gender, and number in nouns. See Andrzejewski (1955, 1964, 1968, 1979) for details. Andrzejewski recognizes four basic tones as follows:

high	marked	<u>á</u>
mid 1	"	<u>a</u> (i.e. unmarked)
mid 2	"	<u>ǎ</u>
high-mid fall	"	<u>aa</u>

The two mid tones differ in their behaviour in prepause position where mid 2 (ǎ) does not undergo a rule of lowering which, purely phonetic, affects all other tones. The present study simplifies this and recognizes only two tones, high, and another which though phonetically mid can be termed low. This simplification is done firstly recognizing that mid 2 tone (ǎ) is associated with particular items (certain lexical items and plural suffixes). Thus these can be marked as exceptions to the phonetic rule of prepause lowering. Secondly the high-mid falling tone (aa) is analysed as a sequence of high and mid tones. This can be done since the tone only occurs on long syllables, and is justified by

the simplification of the tonal rules it allows. For example, the tone pattern for singular masculine nouns with two short syllables is high-mid, e.g.

<u>fáras</u>	'horse'
<u>ínan</u>	'boy'
<u>qálab</u>	'instrument'
<u>sáhal</u>	'ease'

For masculine nouns which are monosyllables with a long vowel the pattern is the falling tone, e.g.

<u>bèer</u>	'liver'
<u>qliq</u>	'smoke'
<u>ròob</u>	'rain'
<u>gèed</u>	'tree'

Reanalysing this falling tone as a sequence of high-mid allows a single statement to cover both sets of nouns.

To summarize the transcription: the official orthography is used, and tone is only marked when relevant to the argument. Two tones are recognised: high, marked á, and low, which is unmarked, i.e. a.

## CHAPTER ONE:

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Where focused elements appear in capital letters.

<sup>2</sup>A second divergence from standard generative approaches is the abandonment of the phrasal category VP. This category seems to have no validity for Somali grammar i.e. there are no rules which treat a verb and object NP as a single constituent.

Firstly, as will become clear in the course of the study there are no rules which move such a constituent. Secondly, there are no deletions of VP or VP proforms in Somali. In examples like the sentence below where the verb and object are repeated while subjects appear focused, the verb and object may appear to be deletable:

ama Cali baa lacagtii keenaya ama Faarax (baa lacagtii keenaya)  
or Ali FOC money+the bring or Farah FOC money+the bring

'Either ALI will bring the money or FARAH (will bring the money).'

The material in parentheses is deletable. However, this material being deleted under identity is, as will be shown in Chapter 4, a relative clause baa lacagtii keenaya '(the one)who will bring the money' derived from waxa lacagtii keenaya 'the one who will bring the money'. Thus a true English parallel would be

'Either ALI is the one who will bring the money, or FARAH is (the one who will bring the money).'

(Note that there is no verb 'to be' in the Somali.)

In short, in examples like this an NP, a relative clause, is deleted not a VP.

Thirdly, there are no rules operating on other elements which in their structural descriptions need make reference to an object NP and a verb as a single constituent, i.e. no rules move items around a VP, or copy or delete across a VP.

In the light of this the basic expansion of S will be  
S → NP - NP - V rather than S → NP - VP . See Chapter 4: footnote 7 for a note on the effect of this on the statement of case relations.

<sup>3</sup>Similarly, the argumentation has not specifically considered the competing analyses which would be provided in a generalised phrase structure grammar (PSG), as described, for example, by Gazdar (forthcoming). As will be seen, the analysis of Somali focus structures demonstrates the necessity for transformational rules, and thus the study offers a challenge to proponents of PSG to demonstrate that its mechanisms can capture the relevant generalisations in a non-trivial way.

Introduction to Focus and Topic Structures

## 2.1 Introduction

This chapter will seek to set the background for the syntactic description in later chapters. It will briefly present the structures of focus and topic, and show some of the ways these structures are used in discourse.

Before this is done, however, it is worthwhile briefly setting the use of the terms 'topic' and 'focus' in this study against that in other writings. This is necessary because there has been some confusion and contradiction in the use of these and similar terms in the linguistic literature, especially in more descriptive works.

There is no doubt about the area of language with which these notions are associated; that is, the speaker's packaging or presentation of information in discourse in ways that will be suited to context and the speaker's intentions, what Kempson (1977) calls "thematic structure". There is however no standard set of descriptive terms to apply to this area. Dichotomies abound, including topic and comment, topic and focus, presupposition and focus, theme and rheme, given/old and new, in addition to such terms as emphasis and accent.

This is not the place for an essay sorting out the



equivalences, near-equivalences, and other relations between the uses of all these terms, even if such a thing were possible. What I will attempt to do here is to present some major approaches to the area covered in this study and then to explain the use of the terms adopted here.

## 2.2 Terminology

One important and influential approach to this area is that of Halliday's, as proposed in Halliday (1967). Within a systemic grammar framework, this distinguishes two independent systems relevant here. In the first, utterances are analysed in terms of information units, which are strings not necessarily co-terminous with sentences, i.e. a single sentence may contain more than one information unit. In this approach it is at this level that the notion 'focus' is relevant. The choice of an element to be focused "involves the selection, within each information unit, of a certain element or elements as points of prominence within the message " (p203). Basic to this choice of element to be focused is the distinction between new and given information. The latter is said to be available to the hearer from the discourse or situational context, while the former is not; it is new information that is made prominent

i.e given focus.

Halliday's second system, that of "thematization", operates at the sentence level and relates to the ordering of sentence elements relevantly to discourse context. Here the notions "theme" and "rheme" apply. Basically, the theme is what is being talked about and the rheme is what is being said about the theme. In English the theme occurs leftmost in the sentence, and the rheme is what follows. The normal (i.e. unmarked) choice of constituent as theme is said to be dependent on sentence type, e.g. in English WH-questions it is the question word, and in statements, the subject. Note that often writers in English use 'topic' and 'comment' as direct equivalents of Halliday's theme and rheme.

Very similar to Halliday's approach is that of the linguists of the Prague School, as demonstrated in works like Daneš (1970, 1974(ed.)) and Firbas (1964, 1974). Despite the similarities, there are differences between this approach and Halliday's: Daneš (1974), for example, applies the terms given and new to the theme-rheme distinction; he states that the rheme is always new information and that the theme is usually given.

Another important approach is that of Dik (1978, 1980) in a functional grammar framework. Here the area at which notions like topic and focus apply is that of "pragmatic functions",

where rules specify the roles parts of utterances fulfill in discourse. This approach differs from Halliday's in that all the notions we have discussed are specified at the same level. There is a tripartite division into the sentence proper ("the predication"), elements which may precede the sentence ("the theme"), and elements which may follow ("the tail"). The theme and tail are only minimally connected to the predication syntactically, and have the following pragmatic functions:

"Theme: the Theme specifies the universe of discourse with respect to which the subsequent predication is presented as relevant.

Tail: the Tail presents, as an 'afterthought' to the predication, information meant to clarify or modify it.(p16)"

It is within the predication, or sentence, that the notions 'topic' and 'focus' apply. These are then pragmatic roles which sentence elements can fulfill, and which govern the ordering of sentence elements. They are defined as follows:

"Topic: the Topic presents the entity 'about' which the predication predicates something in the given setting.

Focus: the Focus presents what is relatively the most important or salient information in the given setting. (p16)"

Once again the distinction between new and given information is seen as basic to the choice of focus, as is clear from the following:

" the Topic will usually belong to the information shared between S(peaker) and A(ddressee), whereas the Focus will usually mark information belonging to the information not shared. The Topic gives A a lead as to where to integrate the new information (i.e. where to effect a change in his pragmatic information), and the Focus presents the new information itself ( i.e contains the instructions as to what change to effect.) (p212)"

Despite differences in terminology, and some in content, the great deal that is shared in these approaches is clear: in a sentence an element or elements will be new (the rheme, comment, focus) while another element or elements will be given (the theme, topic). The given elements are what the sentence is about, the "point of departure" (Halliday 1967) or "starting point of the utterance" (Mathesius 1939, quoted in Daneš 1974:106), while the new elements are the reason for the sentence being uttered. This is at the level of pragmatics; these functions will be reflected by phonological means, e.g. stress, or by syntax, e.g. word order. Dik (1980) has added to this the notions of a contextualising "theme" which is structurally

specified by preceding the sentence, and an afterthought "tail" which follows it.

In the generative grammar literature the terms 'presupposition' and 'focus' have tended to be used for this area, following Chomsky (1970b) and Jackendoff (1972). See, for example, the definitions in Jackendoff (1972:230):

"As working definitions, we will use 'focus of a sentence to denote the information in the sentence that is assumed by the speaker not to be shared by him and the hearer, and 'presupposition of a sentence' to denote the information in the sentence that is assumed by the speaker to be shared by him and the hearer."

Given their concentration on syntax, works in generative grammar have tended to pursue the grammatical realisations of focus; especially in English, where intonation is the major factor. One main preoccupation of Chomsky (1970b) and Jackendoff (1972) is to characterise by syntactic rules the fact that the focus in English is realised as the surface phrase containing the main stress of the sentence. The assumptions about pragmatic functions quoted above, however, are clearly in line with the other approaches cited here, with the new term 'presupposition' corresponding closely to the use of the terms theme and topic earlier.

Structures corresponding to Dik's "theme" and "tail" have tended to be termed 'Left Dislocation' and 'Right Dislocation' in the generative grammar literature; see, for example, Ross (1967), Emonds (1976) and Chomsky (1977).

Given this background, we can clarify the use of terms in this study. The first observation to be made is that this study is concerned with the syntax of structures representing certain pragmatic functions. Fortunately it is not necessary to approach Somali grammar with an a priori characterisation of the pragmatic roles of these structures. The structures are clearly marked syntactically, as will be seen in the following sections, and thus any description of their pragmatic functions is subject to empirical verification.

This study is concerned with two types of structures. The first is termed focus. This is a label covering two surface syntactic constructions, described in 2.4 below. These can be characterised in purely syntactic terms as, firstly, clefts, and secondly, constructions involving the particles baa and ayaa. The term Focus is used for these structures because their role, as will be shown below, corresponds to that pragmatic function called focus in the sources above, i.e. introducing new information, marking constituents as prominent etc.

These structures are given the same label because, as will be demonstrated, they are related structures which, it will be argued, must be overtly related by rule. For details see 2.3 below and Chapters Four and Five.

The second structure which will be described is termed Topic. Again, this is a clearly marked syntactic structure, where an NP occurs to the left and outside a sentence. See 2.4 below for details. The structure corresponds to those termed Left Dislocation in generative grammar, and Theme by Dik (1980). The term Left Dislocation or Left Dislocated NP is not used here because it suggests a transformational derivation which, as will be seen in Chapter Seven, is rejected in favour of base generating these constructions by phrase structure rules. The term Theme is also avoided. This is because the theme-rheme distinction used by Halliday and the Prague School linguists seems to be in wide use, and to adopt the same term for this different use is felt to be undesirable. Of course, the term topic is not itself free from other interpretations: as we have already seen, it has also been used for a role filled by a sentence-internal constituent. However, the term topic has been used in the literature in the sense employed here, most notably in discussions of Chinese like Barry (1975), and in Chafe (1976) and Li & Thompson (1976). In the present work the term topic will be used in a strictly syntactic sense, and

only to refer to the structures mentioned here and described in 2.4 below and Chapter Seven.

Since this study is concerned with syntax, references to the pragmatic role of structures will be informal. This is unavoidable given that no pragmatic description of Somali discourse exists as yet. Thus terms like 'given' and 'new' will be assumed, without justification, to be part of the mechanism of pragmatic description and will be taken to have an interpretation roughly following Halliday (1967), Dik (1980) etc.

In particular the term 'presupposition' will be used informally; not however in the sense of Jackendoff (1972) to refer to the sentence minus the focus, but instead to refer to the assumptions which can be read off sentences. These may be informally described as the background assumptions against which the sentence is uttered, and which are necessary for the sentence to be seen as relevant. Thus the present study has nothing to say on the question of whether these assumptions are best described as presuppositions or as, for example, ordered entailments. For discussion of these and related points see Kempson (1975), and Wilson & Sperber (1979).

Having briefly discussed the terminology employed, the structures themselves can now be introduced.



### 2.3 Introduction to Focus Structures

There are often said to be grammatical structures of both NP and verb focus in Somali (see for example Andrzejewski 1975), but, as will be described later, there are serious problems with the analysis of verb focus and therefore discussion of this is postponed until Chapter Six below. This section will attempt to introduce those syntactic structures which unequivocally mark NPs as focused.

The first of these are clefts constructions like ( 1 ) below, where the focused NP occurs as the complement of a verbless sentence of the form given schematically in ( 2 ). In the glosses the NPs in focus are written in capitals.

- ( 1 ) a. wuxuu cunay hilib  
 waxa+uu  
 what+he ate meat

'What he ate was MEAT', 'It was MEAT he ate'

- b. waxaan doonayaa inaan tago  
 waxa+aan  
 what+I want that+I go

'What I want is THAT I GO', 'I want TO GO'

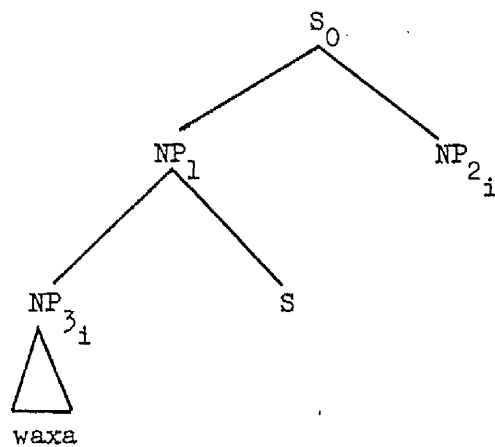
- c. waxay guursatay Cali  
 waxa+ay  
 who+she married Ali

'(The one) Who she married was ALI', 'It was ALI she married'

- d. waxa timi gabadh  
 who came girl

'(The one) Who came was A GIRL', 'It was A GIRL who came'

( 2 )



As described later, these cleft sentences are a subset of the common pattern of verbless copula sentences in Somali. In the cleft in ( 2 )  $NP_1$  consists of a relative clause on waxa 'the thing, what, the one' while  $NP_2$  is in focus. The status of waxa is discussed in Chapter Three below; basically it is morphologically and syntactically a full NP which, in clefts like ( 2 ), is always coreferential with the focus  $NP_2$ . The similarity of these waxa clefts to English pseudo-clefts is clear; this term is not adopted here, however, because there are no structures which parallel English clefts proper, and therefore the distinction is unnecessary.<sup>1</sup>

The second NP focus structure involves the lexically empty particles baa and ayaa. These, which seem to be optional variants (see Chapter Four below for discussion), follow the focused NP as shown in ( 3 ) below, which corresponds in focus to ( 1 ) above:

- ( 3 ) a. hilib  $\left\{ \begin{array}{c} \text{buu} \\ \text{ayuu} \end{array} \right\}$  cunay  
 meat FOC+he ate

'MEAT he ate!', 'It was MEAT he ate'

- b. inaan tago  $\left\{ \begin{array}{c} \text{baan} \\ \text{ayaan} \end{array} \right\}$  doonayaa  
 that+I go FOC+I want

'THAT I GO I want', 'I want TO GO'

- c. Cali  $\left\{ \begin{array}{c} \text{bay} \\ \text{ayay} \end{array} \right\}$  guursatay  
 Ali FOC+she married

'ALI she married', 'It was ALI she married'

- d. gabadh  $\left\{ \begin{array}{c} \text{baa} \\ \text{ayaa} \end{array} \right\}$  timi  
 girl FOC came

'A GIRL came', 'It was A GIRL who came'

The syntactic structure of these baa/ayaa sentences is described in Chapters Four and Five below. As will be shown, the sentences

do not behave simply as if a particle is attached to an NP with no further structural change; indeed, there are striking parallels between these focus structures and relative clauses. In simple terms, one cannot merely place a focus particle to the right of an NP with no effect being made on other processes of the grammar. On the contrary, these particles appear to affect very basic rules, including those governing case marking, verbal agreement, and word order.

At this stage however it is sufficient to note that an NP followed by baa or ayaa is in focus and that only one NP in a sentence may be so focused. Similarly, this structure and waxa clefts do not co-occur, as shown below:

- ( 4 )    \*waxaan doonayaa lacag baa  
           what+I want      money FOC  
           'What I want is MONEY.'

Two further characteristics of these structures may be mentioned here. Firstly NPs focused by baa or ayaa will occur leftmost within their sentence (see 2.5 below for discussion); and secondly, NPs focused by baa or ayaa do not occur in embedded sentences, i.e. in subordinate clauses. Both these facts will be taken up in Chapters Four and Five.

Having briefly introduced these focus structures we may go on to see some of the ways they are used in discourse.

Their first and most important function is to introduce new information. One of the clearest ways to demonstrate this involves WH-questions (or 'elicitative questions'). In these questions shared or given information is stated and then the question forms a request for new information to supplement what is known. So, for example, each of the questions 'How did John go?', 'Where did John go?', 'Why did John go?', 'When did John go?' assumes the proposition 'John went.', and seeks to elicit further information about this. In Somali the new information given in reply to such WH-questions must occur in one of the two focus structures described above. See, for example, the following: (where grammatical sentences which are inappropriate for a given context are marked \*\* to distinguish them from ungrammatical sentences marked \*.)

(.5) Q: kuma ayaad aragtay ?  
who FOC+you saw

'WHO did you see ?'

A: a. Amina ayaan arkay  
A. FOC+I saw

'AMINA I saw.' 'It was AMINA I saw.'

- ( 5 )    b.    waxaan arkay Amina  
                   who+I    saw A.

'(The one) Who I saw was Amina.', 'It was AMINA  
 I saw.'

- c.    \*\*Amina waan arkay  
           A. waa+I    saw

'Amina I saw.', 'I saw Amina.'

In reply (c) in ( 5 ) the NP Amina is not focused and this answer cannot be used to reply to the question in ( 5 ). For the status of waa in ( 5 c ) see Chapter Six, where the claim that it is a verb focus particle is discussed. For present purposes it is sufficient to note that there is no NP focus in ( 5 c ).

Note that the WH-word in the question is focused in ( 5 ) above; this is discussed in Chapter Five below.

The example above contains only one full NP. The sentences in ( 6 ) and ( 7 ) below show that only the new NP may be focused and that this NP must be focused:

- ( 6 )    Q:    kuma ayaa kalluunkii cunay ?  
                   who    FOC fish+the    ate

'WHO ate the fish ?'

( 6 ) A: a. Cali baa kalluunkii cunay  
A. FOC fish+the ate

'ALI ate the fish'

b. waxa kalluunkii cunay Cali  
who fish+the ate A.

'(The one) Who ate the fish was ALI.'

c. \*\*kalluunkii baa Cali cunay  
fish+the FOC A. ate

'Ali ate THE FISH.'

d. \*\*waxa Cali cunay kalluunkii  
what A. ate fish+the

'What Ali ate was THE FISH.'

e. \*\*kalluunkii Cali waa cunay  
fish+the A. waa ate

'Ali ate the fish.'

( 7 ) Q: Cali muxuu cunay ?  
A. what+he ate

'Ali, what did he eat ?'

A: a. \*\*Cali baa kalluunkii cunay  
A. FOC fish+the ate

'ALI ate the fish.'

- ( 7 )    b. \*\*waxa kalluunkii cunay Cali  
               who fish+the    ate    A.

'(The one) Who ate the fish was ALI.'

- c.    kalluunkii baa Cali cunay  
           fish+the    FOC A.    ate

'Ali ate THE FISH.'

- d.    waxa Cali cunay kalluunkii  
           what A.    ate    fish+the

'What Ali ate was THE FISH.'

- e. \*\* kalluunkii Cali waa cunay  
           fish+the    A.    waa ate

'Ali ate the fish.'

Note that the replies in ( 6 ) & ( 7 ) are the same grammatical sentences given in the same order. However, those of ( a-d ) which are appropriate replies to question ( 6 ) are inappropriate for ( 7 ) and vice versa. This is simply because the wrong NP is focused. Moreover, the reply ( e ) which focuses no NP is an impossible answer to either question.<sup>2</sup> The generalisation is that new NPs must be focused by baa or ayaa, or by occurring as the complement of a waxa cleft.

A second use of these focus structures is to give prominence to an NP even when it is not new information. This, which



is often termed 'emphasis' or 'contrast', can be shown in two slightly different forms. In both all the information represented by the sentence may be known or given but one NP is focused.

The first such context is exemplified by tag questions. In these a statement is followed by the question tag sow ma aha ? 'is it not so ?'. If this tag is appended to a sentence containing no NP in focus, the resulting question merely seeks confirmation of the whole proposition, e.g.

- ( 8 )    Q:    Cali lacagtii wuu keenay, sow ma aha ?  
              A.    money+the waa+he brought NEG Q be  
                  'Ali, he brought the money, didn't he ?'

A:    Haa, wuu keenay  
          yes waa+he(it)brought  
          'Yes, he brought it.'

However, an NP in such a tag question may be focused, and then the interpretation is different, namely that all but that NP is assumed to be true but confirmation of the identity of that NP is sought. This is shown in ( 9 ) below, where lacagtii 'the money' is focused: and in ( 10 ) where Cali 'Ali' is focused:

- ( 9 )      Cali lacagtii buu keenay, sow ma aha ?  
             A.    money+the FOC+he brought Q NEG be

'Ali, it was THE MONEY he brought, wasn't it ?'

- ( 10 )      Cali baa lacagtii keenay, sow ma aha ?  
             A.    FOC money+the brought Q NEG be

'It was ALI who brought the money, wasn't it ?'

In both ( 9 ) & ( 10 ) the focused NPs' referents are known, but the NPs are given focus for this confirmatory function. Note that, as with WH-questions, NP focus in the reply to such a tag-question must focus the same constituent, as ( 11 ) & ( 12 ) below show:

- ( 11 )      Q:      Cali lacagtii buu keenay, sow ma aha ?

'Ali, it was THE MONEY he brought, wasn't it ?'

- A:a.      Haa, lacagtii buu keenay

'Yes, he brought THE MONEY.'

- b.      Haa , wuxuu keenay lacagtii

'Yes, what he brought was THE MONEY.'

- c.      \*\*Haa, Cali baa lacagtii keenay

'Yes, ALI brought the money.'

d. \*\*Haa, waxa lacagtii keenay Cali

'Yes, (The one) Who brought the money was ALI.'

( 12 ) Q: Cali baa lacagtii keenay, sow ma aha ?

'It was ALI who brought the money, wasn't it ?'

A:a. \*\*Haa, lacagtii buu keenay

'Yes, he brought THE MONEY.'

b. \*\*Haa, wuxuu keenay lacagtii

'Yes, what he brought was THE MONEY.'

c. Haa, Cali baa lacagtii keenay

'Yes, ALI brought the money.'

d. Haa, waxa lacagtii keenay Cali

'Yes, (The one) Who brought the money was ALI.'

Once again, replies which focus an NP other than that focused in the question are inappropriate.

There is one significant difference, however, between this emphatic focusing of given information and the focusing of new information. A reply to the tag questions ( 11 ) & ( 12 )

which does not focus any NP will be appropriate, unlike a reply to a WH-question, as seen earlier. See (13) & (14) below:

(13) Q: Cali lacagtii buu keenay, sow ma aha ?

'Ali, it was THE MONEY he brought, wasn't it ?'

A: Haa, wuu keenay.

'Yes, he brought it.'

(14) Q: Cali baa lacagtii keenay, sow ma aha ?

'It was ALI who brought the money, wasn't it ?'

A: Haa, wuu keenay.

'Yes, he brought it.'

In both (13) & (14) above a reply which does not focus any NP is appropriate. This difference from replies to WH-questions reflects the fact that the NP focused in a reply to the latter is new information, while the NP focused in the tag questions above is given, or old.

A second example of an application of focus to given NPs concerns sentences like (15) below:

( 15 )    Cali ama cuntadii buu keeni doonaa ama sharabkii  
 A.        or food+the FOC+he bring will or drink+the

buu keeni doonaa  
 FOC+he bring will

'Ali, either he will bring THE FOOD or he will bring  
 THE DRINKS.'

In these sentences once again all the constituents may be given;  
 the focus is being used to 'contrast' two NPs in (15 ) above.

While it is intuitively clear what this contrastive function is,  
 the pragmatic description may prove less straightforward.

Chafe (1976: 33-38), for example, characterises the contrastive  
 interpretation of the English sentence 'Rónald made the hamburgers.'

(where "the acute accent mark indicates that the highest pitch  
 and stress are on the stressed syllable of Ronald." ) in the  
 following rather cumbersome manner:

"'I believe that you believe that someone made the  
 hamburgers, that you have a limited set of cand-  
 idates (perhaps one) in mind as that someone and  
 I am telling you that the someone is Ronald,  
 rather than one of those others.'"

In this approach sentence (15 ) above would presumably be isol-  
 ating two 'candidates' for 'what Ali will bring'.

One further feature of the use of these focus structures merits mention here. Their role of introducing new information involves interaction with the systems of definiteness and anaphora. Typically, an NP is introduced into the discourse as an indefinite NP in a focus structure; its second occurrence is as a definite NP without focus, and thereafter a pronoun is used. See as an example of this (16) below which is from the first few lines of the story Bakhaylkii Xeeladda Yiqiin 'The Artful Miser (lit. 'the miser who knew trickery')' (Galaal & Andrzejewski 1956:38):

- (16) "...waxa jiray nin. Ninku dadka wax na ma siiyo  
           what was man.   man+the people+the thing and NEG gave  
           u ma na dayrsho. Qof walba xeelad buu kaga baxaa iyo  
           to NEG and refused. person every trickery FOC+he with+from  
           khayaano  
           escapes and deceit

'....there was a man. The man gave people nothing yet  
 did not refuse them. Everybody he evaded by trickery  
 and deceit.'

The NP we are interested in here is 'a/the man'. This is introduced firstly as an indefinite NP in a focus structure -- a waxa cleft, i.e.

- (17) waxa jiray nin  
what existed man

'What existed was A MAN' i.e. 'There was A MAN.'

This man is next referred to by a definite NP in a sentence without NP focus, i.e.

- (18) ...ninkii...  
man+the

'...the man...'

The third reference is simply a pronoun in a sentence in which another NP is focused i.e.

- (19) qof walba xeelad buu kaga baxaa...  
person every trickery FOC+he with+from escapes

'Everybody he evaded by TRICKERY.'

where the NP is referred to as uu 'he'.

This is the usual strategy for introducing NPs into discourse, although the second stage may apparently be omitted. Further study may reveal what length of time or amount of intervening discourse will pass before the NP is felt to pass away from the discourse background and have to be reintroduced as a full definite NP or even as a definite NP with focus.

These then are some of the pragmatic uses to which these syntactic structures of focus may be put in discourse. The next section introduces topic structures.

## 2.4 Introduction to Topic Structures

Topic, as used in this study, covers syntactic structures like (20-22) below where an NP precedes and is structurally outside a sentence:

- (20) hooyadaa, way ku raadinaysaa  
mother+your waa+she you look-for

'Your mother, she is looking for you.'

- (21) shandadaha, kuwa birta ah baa ka culus kuwa santa ah  
suitcases+the those metal+the are FOC more heavy those  
leather are

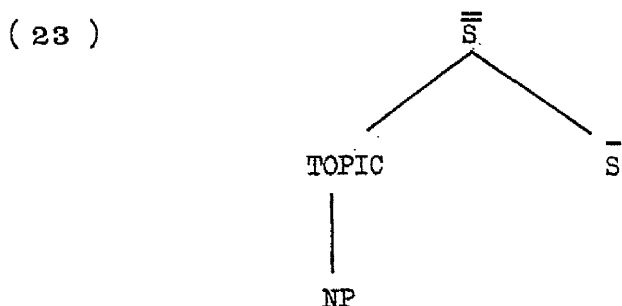
'Suitcases, those which are metal are heavier than those which are leather.'

- (22) suuqa, hilib geelku aad buu qaalisan yahay<sup>3</sup>  
market+the meat camel very FOC+it expensive is

'The market, camel's meat is very expensive.'



The most important feature of a topic, in this use of the term, is that the NP is not part of the grammatical relations of the sentence. It will be argued later, in Chapter Seven below, that not only is the topic NP outside the sentence boundaries (as discussed in 2.5. below) but that these structures cannot be derived by a syntactic rule which extracts the topic NP from the associated sentence. The structure assigned to sentences like (20-22) above is as in (23) below:



In the later discussion of topics the nature of the relationship between the NP and the sentence in (23) is examined. Here the three major types of relationship may be briefly described.

The first and most common is where the NP is coreferential with an element in the sentence, usually a pronoun as in (20) above and (24) & (25) below:

( 24 )    dhakhtarkaas, wuxuu doonayaa waa lacag  
           doctor+that    what+he want waa(be)money

'That doctor, what he wants is money.'

- ( 25 )    ninkii, shandaddii uu keenay waa tan  
              man+the suitcase+the he brought waa this

'The man, the suitcase which he brought is this one.'

The second type is where there is a set-subset relationship between the topic NP and an item in the sentence, as in ( 21 ) above and ( 26 ) below:

- ( 26 )    wiilalkaas, mid u yeedh !  
              boys+those    one to call

'Those boys, call one !'

Finally, the third type of topic structure involves structures where the topic NP is not identified with any single element of the sentence but instead forms a context against which the sentence is to be interpreted. Examples of this type are in ( 22 ) above and ( 27 ) below:

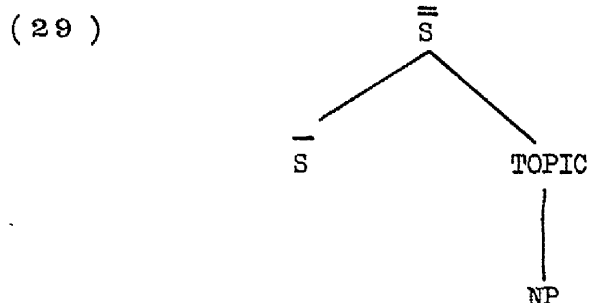
- ( 27 )    dabaasha, waxaan ahay curyaan oo kale  
              swimming+the what+I am cripple another

'(The) Swimming, what I am like is a cripple.'

As mentioned in ( 2.5 ) below, these topic structures are paralleled by one where an extra-sentential NP occurs to the right of the sentence, as in example ( 28 ) below shown schematically in ( 29 ):

(28) wuu helay ninku  
 waa+he(it)found man+the

'He found it, the man.'



These 'afterthought' topics are outside the scope of the present study but share many of the characteristics of topics proper. They may, for example, be separated by a pause from the sentence. They also play no grammatical role in the sentence; and thus like topics may always be deleted leaving a grammatical sentence. These afterthought topics correspond closely to English structures described as 'Right Dislocated NPs' (see for example Emonds 1976) and , as described above, 'tails' (Dik 1980). It will be assumed here that the phrase structure rule analysis argued for topics proper in this study will also be valid for these structures.

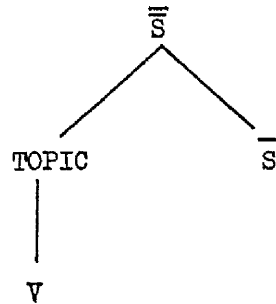
There are several features of topics which are worth pointing out here. The first is that only NPs may occur in the structure given in (23). As (30) & (31) below show, verbs and adjectives, for example, cannot occur as topics:

- ( 30 )  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{*tegayaa} \\ \text{*tegi} \end{array} \right\} \begin{array}{l} \text{waa u dhib badantahay} \\ \text{waa in difficulty much+be} \end{array}$
- $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{'Going,} \\ \text{'To go,} \end{array} \right\} \text{it is very difficult.}'$

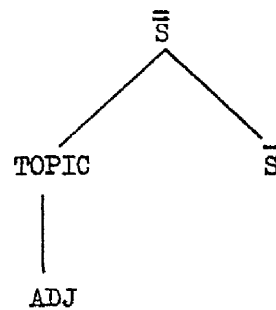
- ( 31 )  $\text{*dheer, sidaas baan u jecelahay}$   
 tall way+that FOC+I in like  
 'Tall, I like them like that.'

Thus the structures in ( 32 ) below are not possible:

( 32 )a.



b.



The major constraint on the use of topics in discourse is that the topic NP must be definite. Thus only proper names, pronouns, and NPs with one of the set of determiners (the latter will include generics) may occur as topics. Sentences (33) and (34) below are thus impossible; cf. those in (35) & (36):

(33)    \*nin, wuu yimi  
          man waa+he came  
          'A man, he came.'

(34)    \*lacag, waan helay  
          money waa+I(it)found  
          'Some money, I found it.'

(35)    ninkii, wuu yimi  
          'The man, he came.'

(36)    lacagtii, waan helay  
          'The money, I found it.'

Thus it appears that topics must be definite, in practice either known NPs or generics. Note that focusing such indefinite topics will not make a possible topic structure: (37) & (38) are for example also impossible:

- ( 37 )    \*nin buu yimi  
          man FOC+he came

'A MAN, he came.'

- ( 38 )    \*lacag bay sanduungan ku jirtay  
          money FOC+it box+this in was

'SOME MONEY, it was in this box.'

Thus topics cannot be used to introduce new information. Indeed, topic NPs may not be focused at all, even when definite: structures like ( 39 ) & ( 40 ) below are also impossible:

- ( 39 )    \*Cali buu yimi  
          A. FOC+he came

'ALI, he came.'

- ( 40 )    \*aniga baanan arkin  
          me FOC+NEG+I(it)saw

'ME, I didn't see it.'

In fact, as will emerge in the course of this study, this is entirely predictable since topics are an extra-sentential phenomenon, while focus is a syntactic structure within the sentence. Thus NPs cannot simultaneously occur in both structures.

These then are the structures of focus and topic briefly outlined. It is hoped that this section will have provided a background for the syntactic arguments to follow, particularly for the reader unfamiliar with Somali, or Cushitic languages. Before turning to these, however, this introductory chapter closes with a sketch of the influence of focus and topic on word order.

## 2.5 Focus, Topic and Word Order

Somali is usually said to have a word order of Subject-Object-Verb (S-O-V). There is indeed evidence that this word order is more basic than any other: for example, weak pronouns, which cannot be focused, or appear as topics, have a strict S-O-V order as shown in (41) below:

- |         |                                              |       |
|---------|----------------------------------------------|-------|
| (41) a. | <u>waan ku arkay</u><br>waa+aan<br>I you saw | S-O-V |
|         | 'I saw you.'                                 |       |
| b.      | * <u>waa ku aan arkay</u>                    | O-S-V |
| c.      | * <u>waan arkay ku</u>                       | S-V-O |
| d.      | * <u>waa ku arkay aan</u>                    | O-V-S |

- ( 41 )e. \*waa arkay aan ku V-S-O  
 f. \*waa arkay ku aan V-O-S

However, accepting this basic order of S-O-V, a survey of the examples given in this study will clearly reveal that in a great many cases this is not the surface word order; and this fact would be true of any corpus of Somali sentences. As will be shown briefly here, much of the divergence away from an S-O-V word order is caused by focus and topic structures.

Let us take first the claim that verbs occur sentence finally. In fact in many cases NPs occur to the right of the verb. However, the generalisation stands since it can be demonstrated that in every case the NPs play no part in the sentence relations, and are in fact the 'afterthought' topics mentioned above. Thus, for example, while sentence ( 42 ) below is grammatical, the structure in ( 43 ) is not:

- ( 42 ) alaabtii baa ninkii keenay  
 things+the FOC man+the brought  
 (lit. 'THE THINGS the man brought')  
 'The man brought THE THINGS.'

- ( 43 ) \*alaabtii baa keenay ninkii  
 things+the FOC brought man+the  
 (lit. 'THE THINGS brought the man')  
 'The man brought THE THINGS.'





Moreover, as in all languages, word order is influenced by so many rules of the grammar that arguments for any order as basic and underlying as opposed to surface and derived cannot be kept brief, as desired here, and yet convincing. Nevertheless, it is possible to make a few generalisations here, and fill in the schema (45) somewhat, especially relating to the influence of focus and topic.

The first generalisation arising from this study will be that focused NPs occur leftmost in their sentence, regardless of their case role, i.e.

(46)  $\begin{array}{c} \boxed{\text{FOCUS} - X - V} \\ S \end{array}$

This would explain the word order of (42) above, which in terms of case is O-S-V. Focusing the subject of this sentence will allow a different order, e.g.

(47) ninkii baa alaabtii keenay  
 man+the FOC things+the brought  
 (lit. 'THE MAN the things brought.')

'THE MAN brought the things.'

which also agrees with the new schema (46).

The problem here is that NPs may occur to the left of



Thus (49) shows that an NP to the left of FOCUS cannot be interpreted as part of the sentence, i.e. cannot serve as subject of the verb, while (50) shows that such an NP may serve as TOPIC, as predicted by schema (48). In fact the rule for NPs to the left of the focus NP is the same as that for NPs to the right of the verb: they must be a topic and not an argument of the sentence for the structure to be grammatical.

This is further supported by the fact that while both topics and afterthought topics can always be deleted to leave a grammatical sentence, deleting a focused NP makes the sentence meaningless, and ungrammatical. So, for example, (52a) can have the topic deleted to form (52b); and (53a) can have the afterthought topic deleted to form (53b). On the other hand, deleting the focused NP from (52a) forms the ungrammatical (54a), and similarly deleting it from (53a) results in the ungrammatical (54b):

- (52) a. naagtu lacagtii bay keentay  
           woman+the money+the FOC+she brought

'The woman, she brought THE MONEY.'

- b. lacagtii bay keentay

'She brought THE MONEY.'

( 53 )a. lacagtii bay keentay naagtu

'She brought THE MONEY, the woman.'

b. lacagtii bay keentay

'She brought THE MONEY.'

( 54 )a. \*naagtu  $\left\{ \begin{array}{c} \text{bay} \\ \text{ay} \end{array} \right\}$  keentay

'The woman<sub>i</sub> she<sub>i</sub> brought'

b. \*  $\left\{ \begin{array}{c} \text{bay} \\ \text{ay} \end{array} \right\}$  keentay naagtu

'She<sub>i</sub> brought the woman<sub>i</sub>.'

Similarly, in ( 55 ) & ( 56 ) below the sentence is interpreted as having no subject despite the presence of the suitable candidate<sup>4</sup> naagtu 'the woman' before the focused NP and after the verb, respectively:

( 55 ) \*naagtu lacagtii baa keentay

'The woman, \_ brought THE MONEY.'

( 56 ) \*lacagtii baa keentay naagtu

'\_ brought THE MONEY, the woman.'

Compare these with (57) below:

- (57) lacagtii baa naagtu keentay  
 'The woman brought THE MONEY.'

It seems clear that FOCUS is the leftmost limit, and the verb the rightmost limit, of the sentence, verifying schema (58) below, repeated from (48) earlier:

- (58) TOPIC [<sub>S</sub> FOCUS - X - V] AFTER-TOPIC

This is as far as the surface order of NPs can be specified within the scope of this study. However, it should be pointed out that more than one NP can occur in the position marked X in schema (58). A question which naturally arises is what factors govern the choice of order within these position-X NPs. A typical pair of alternatives are shown below:

- (59) Cali baa ninkii lacagtii siiyey  
 A. FOC man+the money+the gave-to  
 'ALI gave the man the money.'

- (60) Cali baa lacagtii ninkii siiyey  
 A. FOC money+the man+the gave-to  
 'ALI gave the money the man.'

It seems possible that discourse factors may govern the choice of word order in cases like these, or in the choice of order of topic NPs where more than one occur, as in (61) below:

- (61) adiga bareheena wuu ku raadinayaa  
 you teacher+our waa+he you look-for  
 'You<sub>i</sub>, our teacher<sub>j</sub>, he<sub>j</sub> is looking for you<sub>i</sub>'

If this is so then it raises the question of possible 'foregrounding' or 'topicalisation' rules which would operate separately from, but within the framework fixed by the surface order of extra-sentential topics, focused NPs and the verb. As mentioned above, these phenomena are outside the scope of the present study and the question of such rules will be left open. One thing seems clear, however: such rearrangement rules will be of far less importance syntactically than the focus and topic structures described in this study, and would operate within the larger framework set by the latter.

To conclude this background sketch: the effect of focus and topic structures is to create from an assumed underlying S-O-V order a surface word order of

- (62) TOPIC [ FOCUS - X - V ] AFTER-TOPIC  
 S

This, as can be seen, is largely independent of the case relations of the NPs involved. It is hoped that the syntactic description which follows will provide the first steps towards an understanding of how all the relevant factors interact to produce the possible word orders of Somali sentences.



## CHAPTER TWO:

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>The glosses should not mislead the reader into relating these structures to headless relatives. Waxa is a full NP consisting of wax 'thing, one' plus -a 'the'. For discussion of the difficulty of glossing waxa see Chapters Three and Four. Throughout this study the glosses are for guidance only and have no formal status.

<sup>2</sup>But (e) would be an appropriate reply to

Cali muxuu ku sameeyey kalluunkii ?

A. what+he with did fish+the

'Ali, what did he do with the fish ?'

where (a-d) would be inappropriate. This is one of the motivations for the analysis of waa as a verb focus particle, discussed in Chapter Six.

<sup>3</sup>Compare this with the example below, where suuqa 'the market' is inside the S and is a locative NP governed by a pre-verbal locative particle:

hilibgeelku suuqa aad buu ugu qaalisan yahay

meat camel market+the much FOC+it in expensive is

'Camels' meat, it is very expensive in the market.'

(where the cluster ugu = u + ku; ku = 'in' and u is part of aad...u 'very much')

<sup>4</sup>By 'suitable' is meant an NP having the correct features of gender, number, case etc. and which is also semantically plausible.

Waxa-Clefts and Cleft Reduction

## 3.1 Introduction

As mentioned above ( 2.3 ) one of the two major NP focus structures in Somali involves the word waxa in sentences like the following:

- ( 1 ) waxa yimi tareen  
came train

'What came was a TRAIN, It was a TRAIN that came'

- ( 2 ) waxaan doonayaa lacag  
I want money

'What I want is some MONEY, It's MONEY that I want'

This chapter will discuss the structure of sentences like ( 1 ) & ( 2 ) and the status in them of waxa. The main point of contention is their relationship to the apparently very similar sentences below:

- ( 3 ) waxa yimi waa tareen  
thing came FOC train

'The thing which came was a TRAIN'

- ( 4 ) waxaan doonayaa waa lacag  
thing+I want FOC money

'The thing I want is MONEY'

In these latter sentences both the general structure, and the status of waxa is clear. The latter is the lexical item wax 'thing' plus the definite article -a; the sentences contain relative clauses on this

lexical item in verbless sentences of the form A waa B 'A is B', where waa, a lexically empty particle normally occurring in declaratives and said to focus the verb, occurs alone; see Bell (1953: 84) for description. The question of whether waa can indeed be analysed as a verb focus particle is discussed in Chapter Six; waa will be glossed as a verb focus particle until then. The structure of ( 3 ) & ( 4 ) is thus as below:

( 5 ) Sentence ( 3 )

[ S [ NP waxa<sub>i</sub> [ S  $\emptyset$ <sub>i</sub> yimi ] ] waa [ NP tareen ] ]

( 6 ) Sentence ( 4 )

[ S [ NP waxa<sub>i</sub> [ S  $\emptyset$ <sub>i</sub> aan doonayaa ] ] waa [ NP lacag ] ]

These verbless equational sentences are very common; further examples are given below:

( 7 ) waxani waa hub  
thing+this FOC weapon

'This thing is a weapon.'

( 8 ) taasu waa maxay ?  
that FOC what

'What is that ?'

( 9 ) qofkii dhintay waa walaalkay  
person+the died FOC brother+my

'The person who died was my brother.'

Sentences ( 3 ) & ( 4 ) above are regular examples of this type.

This chapter will argue that the similarities between sentences

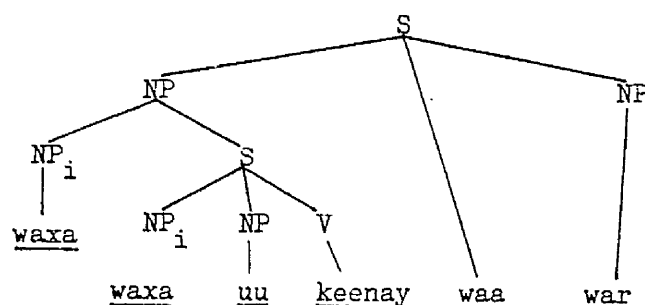
(1) & (3) and (2) & (4) are more than superficial and that such pairs should be related by a rule which deletes waa. Sentences, like (3) & (4), of the form 'what I want is...', 'the thing I want is...' will be termed waxa-cleft sentences, and the deletion rule which relates them to sentences like (1) & (2) will be called Cleft Reduction. In this approach waxa is a lexical item in both types of sentence.

There is another possible approach, however, in which waxa is seen as a lexically empty particle which marks as focused the NP immediately following the verb. In this analysis there is no relationship between the pairs (1) & (3) and (2) & (4), the waxa's being merely homophones. This is the analysis proposed by Andrzejewski (1975) following in part Zholkovsky (1971). To demonstrate the essential differences between the two approaches, the following are the underlying structures assigned in each to sentence (10) below:

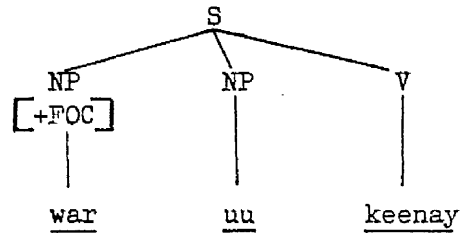
- (10) wuxuu keenay war  
waxa+he brought news

'What he brought was NEWS, It was NEWS he brought'

- (11) Waxa-Cleft Reduction Analysis<sup>1</sup>



(where waxa + uu → wuxuu by coalescence and vowel assimilation.)

(12) Waxa as focus particle analysis

In place of a deletion rule the second approach will postulate a rule which, triggered by a feature +FOCUS, will insert a particle waxa and move the focused NP to the right of the verb. The two derivations of (10) are then as follows:

## (13) Sentence (10) under Cleft Reduction

1. wuxuu keenay waa war
2. wuxuu keenay war

(14) Sentence (10) under Waxa-Insertion

1. \* war uu keenay
2. \* uu keenay war
3. wuxuu keenay war

Clearly the first account is simpler. Since however simplicity is so notoriously difficult an evaluation metric to apply to competing analyses, the preferred analysis will be justified on the grounds of adequacy and naturalness. The next section presents arguments to support the rule of Cleft Reduction.

### 3.2 Arguments for Cleft Reduction

#### 3.2.1 Subject Marking

The clearest demonstration that sentences like (15) and (16) below are very similar structures comes from subject marking.<sup>2</sup>

- (15) waxa bilaabay dagaalka  
waxa began war+the

'What began was the WAR, it was the WAR that began'

- (16) waxa bilaabay waa dagaalka  
thing+the began FOC war+the

'The thing that began was the WAR'

In (15) above the Cleft Reduction analysis claims that waxa is subject of bilaabay while the focus particle approach identifies dagaalka as such. The answer to the immediate question of which of these is supported by the subject marking is that neither is: both dagaalka and waxa (allowing it to be an NP for argument's sake) are in non-subject forms. Nevertheless there is in this strong support for the reduction rule for while this lack of an overt subject has no explanation in the focus particle approach, Cleft Reduction predicts it as a natural consequence of the way subject marking operates in relative clauses.

For an example of this note the following:

- (17) ninka lacagta tirinaya  
man+the money+the is-counting

'The man who is counting the money'

- (18) lacagta ninku tirinaya  
money+the man+the is-counting

'The money which the man is counting'

Ninka 'the man' is morphologically marked as subject in (18) but not in (17). In fact in this latter clause ninka would not be subject marked even if the clause were subject of a main sentence, e.g.

- (19) { ninka lacagta tirinayaa waa doqon  
\*ninku  
man+the money+the is-counting FOC fool

'The man who is counting the money is a fool'

There are two general rules of subject marking in operation here.

The first is that NPs are subject marked on their last or rightmost morpheme. Thus in the following (where ↑ highlights subject marking)

- (20) { ninku wuu shaqeynayaa  
↑  
\*ninka  
man+the FOC+he is-working

'The man is working'

the subject NP must be subject marked and this marking takes place on the suffixed determiner. Compare this with the following where co-ordinated NPs clearly display the positional character of this marking:

- (21) { ninka iyo gabadhdhu way shaqeynayaan  
↑  
\*ninku  
man+the and girl+the FOC+they are-working

'The man and the girl are working'

- (22) ninka iyo gabadha iyo wiilku way shaceynayaan  
man+the and girl+the and boy+the FOC+they work

\*ninka iyo gabadhu iyo wiilku way shaceynayaan

\*ninku iyo gabadhu iyo wiilku way shaceynayaan

'The man and the girl and the boy are working.'

Comparison of (20)-(22) shows that only the last morpheme of the highest NP may be subject marked; the marking moving rightwards, so to speak, from ninka to gabadha to wiilka. Subject marking on any constituent NP but the rightmost will result in an ungrammatical sentence. Thus where NPs are constituents of a larger NP all but the last are marked as non-subjects.

This rule applies to relative clauses as it does to all other NPs. Here however, the final constituent is a verb, and thus verb endings carry subject marking, as (23) & (24) below show:

- (23) ninka imaneya ma aragtay ?  
man+the come Q saw

'Have you seen the man who is coming ?'

- (24) ninka imaneyaa wuu keeni doonaa  
man+the come FOC+he bring will

'The man who is coming will bring it'

In both the above the relative clause head ninka 'the man' is marked as non-subject, but in (24) the verb ending marks the subject status of the clause 'the man who is coming' i.e. imaneyaa not \*imaneya.

The second subject marking rule relevant here concerns marking within a relative clause. Here marking is regular except where the subject of the lower sentence is co-referential with the head noun phrase. See, for example, the following:



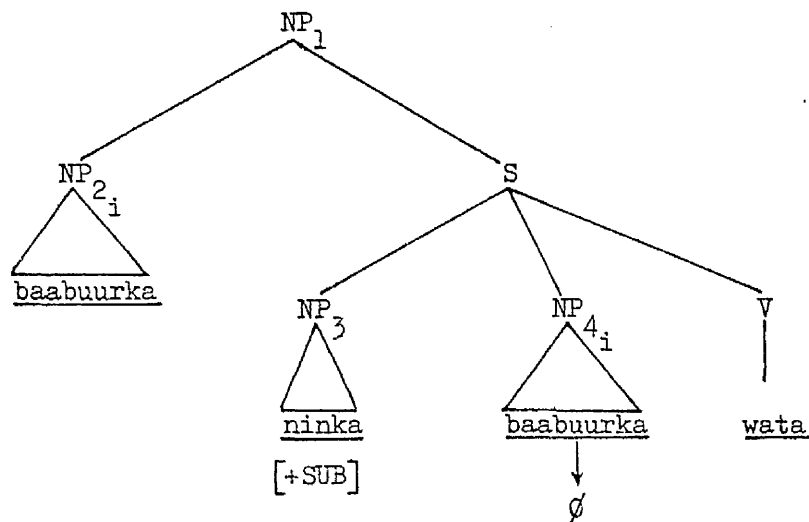
- (25) baabuurka (ninku wata  
                   {\*ninka  
                   truck+the man+the drives  
                   'The truck which the man drives'

- (26) (ninka baabuurka wata  
           {\*ninku  
           man+the truck+the drives  
           'The man who drives the truck'

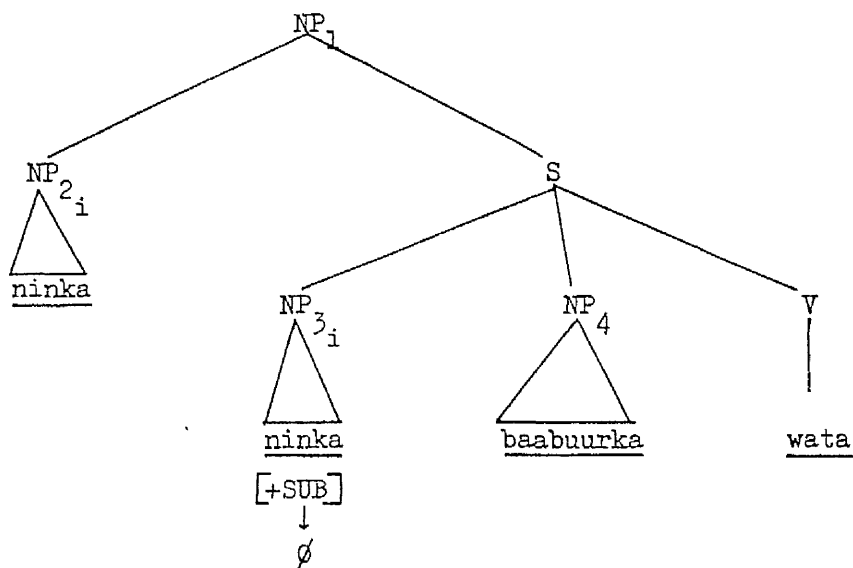
In (25) the subject of the clause verb is subject marked (ninku/\*ninka) as usual, but on the other hand in (26) ninka 'the man', contrary to what one might expect, cannot be subject marked. It is clear that the case relations in the embedded sentence are the same for (25) & (26) i.e. "the man drives the truck". What the marking is sensitive to is the sentence boundary between the head NP and the lower sentence.

underlying  
 The structures of (25) and (26) are as follows:

- (27) Structure of sentence (25)

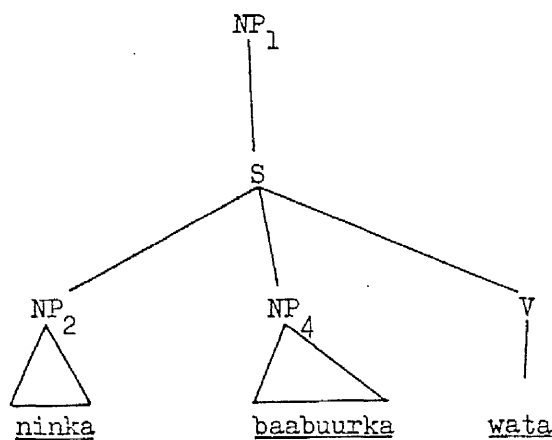


## (28) Structure of sentence (26)



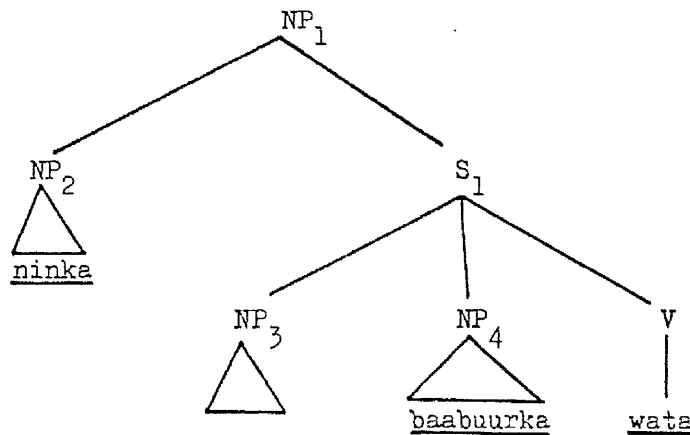
The most likely explanation of why there is an overt subject in (25) but not in (26) is that the structure shown in (27) and (28) above survives after relativization, which in Somali is simply a deletion rule; i.e. that pruning does not occur to produce the following type of structure:

## (29) Structure of sentence (26) as after pruning



Thus the rule of subject marking rather than applying to a structure like (29) above instead applies to one like the following:

(30) Structure of sentence (26) to which subject marking applies



Here the subject of  $S_1$  will be identified by the case marking rule as  $NP_3$ , to which subject marking should apply. Since, however,  $NP_3$  is not filled by any lexical material, the marking rule applies vacuously.

Note that the survival of structures like (30) above after relativization, and the consequent lack of subject marking in such clauses, is not a feature common to all Cushitic languages; Hayward (1981), for example, describes Dirayta, another Eastern Cushitic language, as having subject marking on the headword in similar relative clauses. It seems that pruning rules which would allow a headword to be reanalysed as the subject of the lower sentence are language specific.

From the cumulative effect of the two case marking rules just described one can correctly predict that in a structure like (30) above  $NP_2$  is never subject marked: subject marking in  $S_1$  does not

identify it as participating in the case relations of  $S_1$  while the subject marking of the larger NP ( $NP_1$ ) in some main sentence ( $S_0$ ) will apply to the verb in the lower sentence ( $S_1$ ). Thus in Somali headwords of relative clauses are never subject marked.

These facts about subject marking and relative clauses explain why in sentence (3) earlier, and repeated below, there is no NP marked as subject:

- (3)    waxa yimi waa tareen  
          thing came FOC train

'The thing which came was a TRAIN'

The NP tareen, as is normal for the second NP in these equating sentences, is marked non-subject, while waxa is so marked because it is head of the relative clause. If one derives sentences like (1) above, again repeated below, from those like (3) and thus maintain that waxa yimi is a relative clause, e.g. <sup>3</sup>

- (1)    waxa yimi tareen  
          what came train

'What came was a TRAIN, It was a TRAIN that came'

then it follows from the general marking rules described earlier that neither NP is subject marked. Thus the lack of subject is not a problem in a description which involves a rule of waxa-cleft reduction. On an analysis of waxa in (1) as a particle, however, and tareen as subject, there is no explanation of why tareen is not subject marked since this structure is in no way related to a relative clause.

In fact this approach has to leave this as an unexplained irregularity

of focus. Andrzejewski for example has written that subject marking is "blocked" by focus (Andrzejewski 1979: 37). In this case then neglecting Cleft Reduction, and thus disguising the relationship between the sentence types under discussion, "costs" an inexplicable constraint on subject marking. Furthermore the relative clause facts must also be accounted for, and separately.

### 3.2.2 Rule Relatedness

The previous section argued that the waxa-focus particle analysis was simply descriptively inadequate. The present section discusses certain phenomena which support the claim that, regardless of adequacy, the waxa-cleft reduction rule is a more plausible rule for Somali than a focus particle insertion.

This claim arises from a consideration of the relation of Cleft Reduction to other rules affecting waa and the copula. Note that sentences (31) and (32) below are expected focal counterparts:

- (31) askari buu yahay  
       baa+uu  
       soldier FOC+he is  
       'He is a SOLDIER'

- (32) askari wuu yahay  
       waa+uu  
       soldier FOC+he is  
       'He IS a soldier'

However (32) above is in fact rather uncommon, speakers generally

preferring a form in which the copula is reduced and suffixed onto waa, e.g.

- (33) a. askari waaye  
 b. askari weeye  
 'He IS a soldier'

Some dialects have, in addition to the copula reduction rule, a vowel assimilation rule which operates to form (33b) above. There is a further optional reduction which is possible in sentences like (33) but probably commoner in equational sentences with two full NPs. In these the copula is absent altogether, e.g.

- (34) Cali waa askari  
 Ali FOC soldier  
 'Ali IS a soldier'

These are Somali's "verbless" sentences described earlier (see also, for example, Bell 1953:84).

Given this attrition of the copula it seems plausible that in waxa-cleft structures this reduction process should be extended to delete the stranded verb focus particle waa. In this way Cleft Reduction can be seen as a natural, if restricted, extension of a series of rules which operate to delete the copula and its focus particle in the following way:

(35)

1. waa yahay
- $\Rightarrow$  2. waaye / weeye
- $\Rightarrow$  3. waa
- (Cleft Red.)  $\Rightarrow$  4.  $\emptyset$

The claim then is that Cleft Reduction is a natural rule for Somali since it closely resembles other rules operating in the same area of the grammar i.e. that it forms part of a homogenous class of rules. Informally it can be seen as one of a number of rules which are removing the copula in Somali.

As mentioned earlier, given the similarity between the structures related by Cleft Reduction the most convincing case for this rule is to be made negatively, by refuting the arguments which have been given for not relating the sentences and for identifying a lexically empty focus particle waxa. This is done in the following section.

### 3.3 Counter Arguments Considered

This section is concerned with the arguments which recent accounts of Somali grammar, such as Zholkovsky (1971) and Andrzejewski (1975), have presented in preferring the apparently more complicated analysis of two distinct sources for waxa to a rule<sup>of</sup>/Cleft Reduction. Several of the following arguments have been forwarded and the others are similar in approach and might be adduced in an attempt to defend the focus particle approach. In each case the argument is shown to be without foundation.

#### 3.3.1 Agreement 1

Andrzejewski (1975) uses noun-verb concord as a distinguishing factor between a particle waxa and a lexical item waxa. He points out that in sentences like (36a) below the concord is between the feminine noun gabadh 'girl' and the verb timi 'came', whereas if waxa timi were a relative clause, as the Cleft Reduction analysis would have it, one would expect concord between the masculine noun waxa 'the thing, what' and a verb form yimi 'came': (where <sup>as in (36b)</sup>  $\uparrow \rightarrow$  = concord)

- (36) a. waxa timi gabadh  
           waxa came girl  
                      $\uparrow \rightarrow$   
           'What came was a GIRL, It was a GIRL who came'

- b. \*waxa yimi gabadh  
       waxa came girl  
            $\uparrow \rightarrow$   
       'What came was a GIRL, It was a GIRL who came'



Thus, he argues, waxa timi is not a relative clause, nor waxa an NP, and the structure in (36) is particle-verb-subject. Importantly it is only feminine singular nouns which break the relative clause predictions, and the agreement behaviour of nouns and pronouns in other persons is in fact an argument for Cleft Reduction (see 3.3.2. below, Agreement 2). Nevertheless, on the face of it sentence (36a) seems to present a problem for the waxa-cleft reduction analysis.

The strength of this as a counter argument is however undermined by a closer examination of verbal concord in sentences which contain what are uncontroversially relative clauses on the lexical item waxa. Such a sentence is (37) below:

- (37) waxa dhacay waa malqacad  
       thing+the fell FOC spoon  
           ↑                  ↑

'The thing which fell was a SPOON'

Here the concord is, as expected, between the masculine noun waxa and the relative clause verb dhacay. This behaviour is the basis of Andrzejewski's counter argument: since concord obtains between waxa and dhacay in the clear case of a relative clause waxa dhacay in (37), the fact that concord does not obtain between waxa and timi in (36a) shows that waxa timi is not a relative clause.

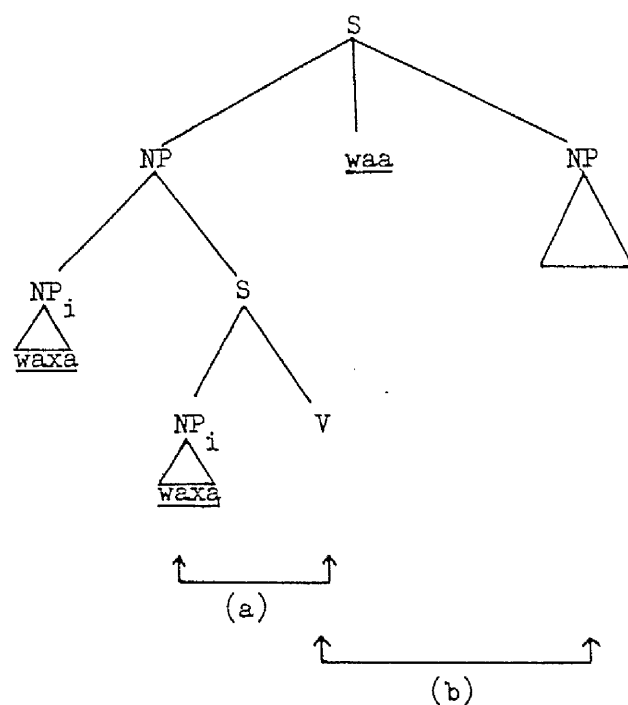
However, sentence (38) below is also grammatical:

- (38) waxa dhacday waa malqacad  
       thing+the fell FOC spoon  
           ↑                  ↑

'The thing which fell was a SPOON'

In fact sentences (37) and (38) are equally acceptable despite the fact that in (38) the relative clause verb is showing concord with the feminine complement NP malqacad 'spoon'. This optionality or fuzziness of concord is very restricted, only occurring in waxa-cleft sentences where like (38) where there is no overt main sentence verb and the two NPs which can govern concord are interpreted as coreferential though differing in grammatical gender. These two concord possibilities are shown diagrammatically below:

(39) structure allowing fuzzy concord



In (39) above either concord (a) or (b) is possible.<sup>4</sup>

The important point here is that this concord fuzziness invalidates the agreement argument against Cleft Reduction. Contrary to Andrzejewski (1975), concord with a feminine complement NP is not inconsistent with a relative clause, as witness (38) above. Thus the concord behaviour of the reduced cleft (36a) where precisely this happens, is not per se proof that it cannot be derived from a waxa-relative clause.

To summarize, it was claimed that waxa timi in (36a) could not be a relative clause since it has a masculine subject and a verb with feminine concord, and that thus derivation from a waxa-cleft was ruled out; this section has shown that in just those sentences which Cleft Reduction predicts as underlying those like (36a), relative clauses do occur with this concord pattern. Thus in (38) the relative clause waxa dhacday has a masculine subject and a verb with feminine concord.<sup>5</sup> In short, this concord pattern in reduced clefts merely reflects that of full waxa-clefts and is in no way a distinguishing feature between them.

### 3.3.2 Agreement 2

As this section will show, far from being an argument for separate sources for waxa in clefts and reduced clefts, verbal concord provides a clear demonstration of their relatedness. To recap, Cleft Reduction relates waxa-clefts of the form  $\left[ \begin{smallmatrix} \text{waxa...V} \\ \text{S} \end{smallmatrix} \text{ waa NP} \right]$  and reduced clefts of the form  $\left[ \begin{smallmatrix} \text{waxa...V NP} \\ \text{S} \end{smallmatrix} \right]$  while the waxa-focus particle approach holds that the structures are unrelated. In terms of verbal concord, in the former it is claimed that waxa...V is a relative clause in both structures

and shows the relevant concord pattern i.e. the behaviour with feminine complement nouns described above ( 3.3.1. Agreement 1 ) and elsewhere concord with waxa i.e. showing third person singular masculine concord. The focus particle analysis on the other hand should predict that the verb show concord with any <sup>subject</sup>/noun or pronoun in the focussed position in reduced clefts (which are not of course reduced clefts in this approach). This provides widely divergent predictions, for there are five person distinctions in Somali verbal concord, in the pattern shown below:

(40) Verbal concord possibilities

( <u>waan</u> ) keenay	'I brought it'
( <u>waad</u> ) keentay	'You(s) brought it'
( <u>wuu</u> ) keenay	'He brought it'
( <u>way</u> ) keentay	'She brought it'
( <u>waannu</u> ) keennay	'We brought it'
( <u>waydin</u> ) keenteen	'You(pl) brought it'
( <u>way</u> ) keeneen	'They brought it'

Since (independent) pronouns can be focussed, Cleft Reduction would claim two possible verbal concord patterns in reduced clefts while the focus particle analysis would predict five. In fact only two occur; compare (40) above with (41) below:

(41) Verbal concord possibilities in reduced clefts

<u>waxa keenay aniga</u>	'It was I who brought it',
	6
	'The one who brought it was ME'

<u>waxa (keenay adiga</u> {*keentay	'The one who brought it was YOU'
<u>waxa keenay isaga</u>	'The one who brought it was HIM'
<u>waxa keentay iyada</u>	'The one who brought it was HER'
<u>waxa (keenay annaga</u> {*keennay	'The ones who brought it were US'
<u>waxa (keenay idinka</u> {*keenteen	'The ones who brought it were YOU(pl)'
<u>waxa (keenay iyaga</u> {*keeneen	'The ones who brought it were THEM'

In all cases but 3rd feminine singular the verb shows the concord pattern of the third person masculine singular regardless of the person of the focussed pronoun. This is exactly what would be predicted by the cleft reduction analysis' identification of a relative clause. It is important that in only one instance does the present account differ from focus particle accounts in terms of data: Andrzejewski (1974) for example describes first person plural concord (i.e. 'we') as regular in reduced clefts where my informants also accepted third person concord, as in (42):

- (42) a. waxa yimi annaga      'The ones who came were US',  
          ↑                    ↑  
                                 'It was WE who came'
- b. waxa nimi annaga      'The ones who came were US',  
          ↑                    ↑  
                                 'It was WE who came'

Substantially however the descriptions of the facts concur. However, in order to preserve the waxa focus particle analysis its proponents have claimed that concord is "blocked" by focus particles i.e. that the focused NP in  $\left[ \begin{smallmatrix} \text{ } \\ \text{S} \end{smallmatrix} \text{ waxa} \dots \text{V NP} \right]$  is still the subject despite the

'apparent' concord between waxa and the verb. The only way that this can be done is to set up a massive disjunction in the verb agreement rules i.e. "all verbs take one sort of agreement except for sentences with NP focus particles where they take a different, much reduced, sort" Thus for example Andrzejewski identifies a reduced or "restrictive" paradigm for every normal or "extensive" one (see Andrzejewski 1968, 1975). Not only does this double the verbal paradigms but it pointedly fails to note that the "restrictiveness" of the former set consists of all persons except third feminine singular showing third masculine singular concord. There is no possible explanation for this in the focus particle approach and, as for subject marking earlier, the analysis has to resort to an unexplained constraint that focus interferes with verbal concord in a highly idiosyncratic way. Note that this feminine singular/masculine singular pattern <sup>in this analysis</sup> cannot be related to the way in which, in waxa-cleft sentences, the normal masculine singular concord can be "overridden" by feminine singular concord in the manner described earlier.

In contrast to this, a rule of Cleft Reduction correctly predicts the facts of verbal concord in these reduced clefts, without recourse to constraints.

## 3.3.3 Cooccurrence Restrictions

One possible objection to relating all occurrences of waxa to a single lexical item waxa 'the thing' might be that this would mean making this lexical item exempt from the usual restrictions on which nouns and verbs may co-occur. This is because in the present transformational approach waxa is identified as the subject of verbs whose arguments are elsewhere restricted to entities displaying animacy, humanness etc. For example, while the reduced cleft (43) below is grammatical:

- (43) waxay guursatay Cali  
waxa+she married Ali

'The one she married was ALI', 'It was ALI she married'

the question (44) below is decidedly strange: the normal question/being to prompt (43) sentence (45):

- (44) ? maxay guursatay ?  
 what+she married

'What did she marry ?'

- (45) yay guursatay ?  
 who+she married

'Who did she marry?'

The reason for the strangeness of (44) is that, as one might expect, the verb guurso 'marry' should have a human (or at least animate) object. Because of this, a cooccurrence restrictions objection would go, it is not possible to derive sentence (43) from an underlying cleft with

a relative clause on waxa 'the thing'.

This objection is however not a serious one, for on inspection of further examples one can see that the lexical item waxa has, in cases where clearly no focus is involved, a spread of meanings which include the following:

(46) Meanings of waxa

1. 'a concrete thing, an object'
2. more abstractly 'something, anything' e.g. event, matter
3. 'a person, people'

The question of whether this is a single lexical item or not is not important here, for the issue is to determine the lexical spread of the word waxa.<sup>7</sup> If a lexical item waxa can mean 3 above, for example, then there is no cooccurrence restrictions argument against the transformational derivation of reduced clefts whose verbs, like (45) above, must have human arguments.

The following sentences demonstrate this range of meanings for the lexical item waxa:

1. a concrete object

(47) waxani waa hub  
thing+this FOC weapon

'This thing is a weapon'



- (48) wixii baa jebay (wixii from waxii by vowel assimilation)  
 thing+the FOC broke

'The THING broke'

2. abstractly 'something, anything'

- (49) wax ma dheceen ?  
 anything Q happened

'Did anything happen ?'

- (50) wax waxa imminka jira ku saabsan  
 something thing(s)+the now are to related(be)

lit. 'something which relates to the things which exist now'

actually 'topical affairs'

3. 'a person, people'

- (51) waar wuxu dhega adakaa ! (wuxu from waxu by vowel assimilation)  
 oh person+the ears hard+are

lit. 'Oh how hard-eared this person is !'

actually 'Oh how disobedient this person is !'

- (52)a. wixii Berbera tegi lahaa yow berrito kaalaya !  
 people+the B. go would vocative tomorrow come

'Those people going to Berbera, come (here) tomorrow!'

- b. ...badmaaxyadii iyo wixii doonnida ku jiray...  
 sailors+the and the ones ship+the on were

'The sailors and the people on the ship..! (Faarax M.J.Cawl(1974:33))

Since examples (51) & (52) above show that a lexical item waxa can be treated as a +HUMAN item, there is no problem about deriving sentence (43) above from a waxa-cleft. In fact it would be impossible to forward any argument against Cleft Reduction on the grounds of cooccurrence restrictions because waxa can occur with any verb. In the examples above it occurs as subject of the verbs jab 'break', dhac 'happen', and tag 'go', verbs which have restrictions on the meanings of their subjects which are mutually exclusive. In an account using syntactic features for these restrictions, one way to account for waxa's flexibility here would be to leave it unspecified for any features. If such restrictions were marked negatively e.g. informally "dhac 'happen' cannot occur with a subject that is +CONCRETE", then this absence of features will mean that waxa is never ruled out by the restrictions. This of course assumes that waxa is a single lexical item; for further discussion see (3.3.5. Plural Formation) below.

Regardless of the actual mechanics involved here, it is clear that there is no valid objection to Cleft Reduction on the grounds of cooccurrence restrictions.

#### 2.3.4. Tone<sup>8</sup>

This and the next section (3.3.5.) deal with proposed morphological arguments against Cleft Reduction. Again these seek to demonstrate that there are features which distinguish two items, a lexical item waxa and a focus particle waxa.

It has been claimed that these two items are "formally differentiated" by tone patterns (see Andrzejewski 1975:135). According to this, in (53) and (54) below, the difference in tone distinguishes a relative clause in (54), and a focus particle plus verb in (53):

- (53) wáxay tidhí anígu garan máayó  
waxa+she said I understanding not+am

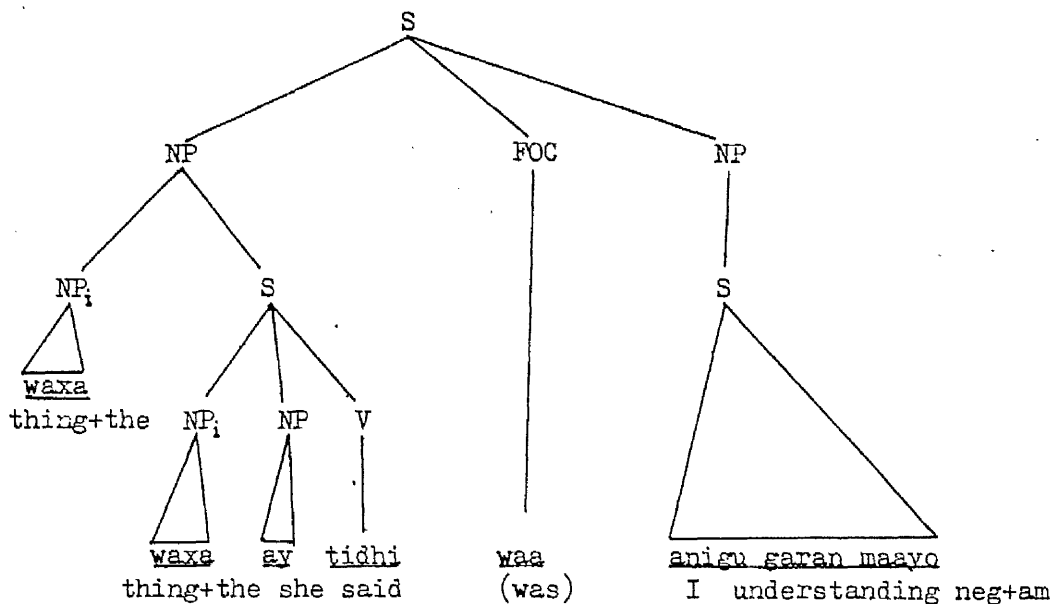
'What she said was "I DON'T UNDERSTAND"'

- (54) wáxay tidhí anígu garan máayó  
waxa+she said I understanding not+am

'I don't understand what she said'

The only difference between the sentences is high versus low tone on the last syllable of tidhi '(she) said'. This difference does reflect a difference in syntactic structure, preventing what would otherwise be structural ambiguity. The difference however is predicted by Cleft Reduction: sentence (53) is derived from the underlying structure (55):

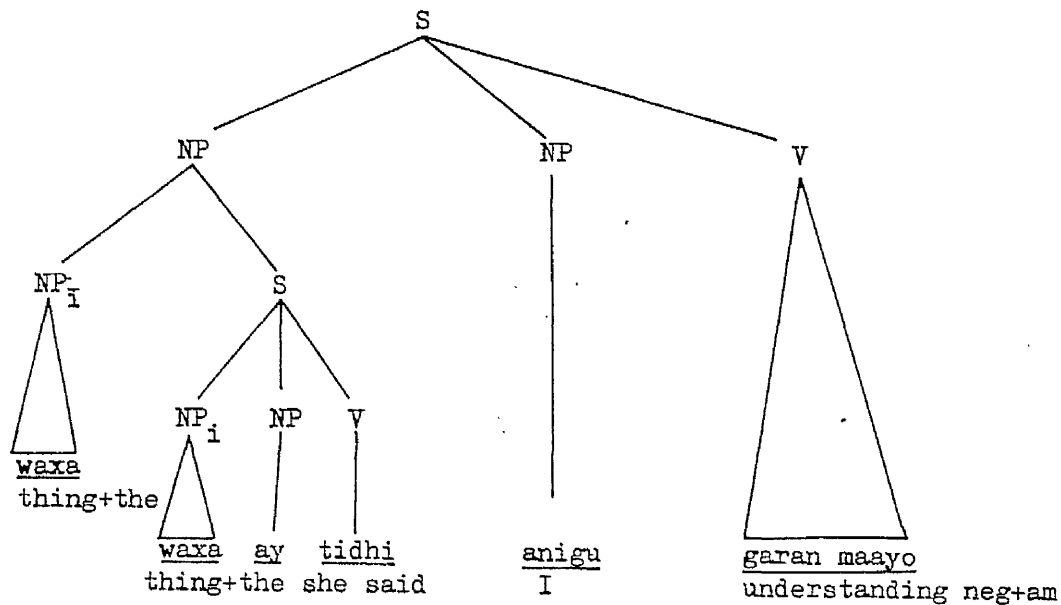
- (55) Underlying structure of sentence (53)



'The thing she said was "I DON'T UNDERSTAND"'

Sentence (54) on the other hand has the following structure:

## (56) Underlying structure of sentence (54)



'The thing she said, I don't understand' i.e. 'I don't understand what she said'

The structure shown in (55) is an "equational" sentence with a relative clause on the lexical item waxa as subject i.e. a waxa-cleft; the structure in (56) also has a waxa-relative clause but as the object of the verb 'understand'. The structural quasi-homonymy is caused by the deletion of waa in (55) by Cleft Reduction. The tonal difference reflects the fact that the waxa-relative clause is subject in (55) and object in (56). The general rule for case marking on relative clauses is that subjects are marked by low tone on the final syllable of the verb while non-subjects have high tone on the same syllable (sometimes also with segmental marking; see .2.2. above). Thus:

- (57) nínkíi tegáy ma aragtay ?  
man+the went Q (you)saw

'Did you see the man who went ?'

- (58) ninkii tegay wuu qaatay  
man+the went FOC+he (it) took

'The man who went took it'

In (57) the clause ninkii tegay 'the man who went' is object and this is marked by high tone on the final syllable of tegay while in (58) the subject status of the clause means that the same syllable is low in tone.

Thus the tone marking on (53) and (54), far from distinguishing two waxa items, is entirely consistent with the analysis of a waxa relative clause in both cases. Under a cleft reduction analysis the tonal difference between (53) and (54) is in line with general rules of case marking.

### 3.3.5. Plural Formation

Another objection to the single lexical waxa proposed by the cleft reduction analysis, forwarded by Andrzejewski (1975:14), is that in reduced clefts waxa does not occur in the plural forms, waxyaalo/wax-yaabo 'things', found in simple sentences. This, he argues, is a distinguishing feature between the focus particle and the lexical item.

This argument does not however stand up to examination. It has been shown above (3.3.3 Cooccurrence Restrictions) that as well as meaning 'object', waxa can have the more indeterminate meaning 'what', and referring to people, 'who, the one(s)'. It will be shown here that, even when unrelated to NP focus structures, lexical waxa with these meanings cannot occur in the plural, being uncountable. Only in the

sense of 'material object' does waxa occur in plural forms.

This can be shown by attempting to use the plural forms where waxa has a human or abstract interpretation. In some cases the result is a different sentence where the interpretation of 'material objects' is forced; see for example the following:

- (59) a. wax yar sug !  
 something small wait-for  
 'Wait for a little while!'
- b. waxyaalo varyar sug !  
 things small(pl) wait-for  
 'Wait for some small things/objects!'

In (59a) wax in the singular, being indeterminate, has, in the context, the meaning 'time, while'. In the plural, however, in (59b) the only interpretation possible is the material one 'things, objects'.

Similarly, in (60a) below wax in another context is interpreted as referring to an amount of something consistent with 'eat', but again the plural has the same meaning of 'material things':

- (60) a. wax badan baan cunay  
 something much FOC+I ate  
 'I ate A LOT'
- b. waxyaalo badan baan cunay  
 things many FOC+I ate  
 'I ate MANY THINGS'

The adjective badan can mean either 'much' or 'many' depending on whether

the noun it modifies is countable. In (60a) above wax triggers the former while waxyaalo in (60b) gives the interpretation 'many'.

Where a sentence will not carry an interpretation of 'material things' the result of making waxa plural is to create an impossible sentence:

- (61) a. ma taqaan waxaan ahay ?  
                     waxa+aan  
                     Q (you)know what+I am  
                     'Do you know what/who I am ?'
- b. ma taqaan waxaanu nahay ?  
                     waxa+aanu  
                     Q (you)know what+we are  
                     'Do you know what/who we are ?'
- c. \*ma taqaan waxyaabaha aanu nahay ?  
                     Q (you)know things+the we are  
                     'Do you know what/who we are ?'

- (62) a. wixii Berbera tegi lahaa yow berrito kaalaya !  
                     the ones B.   go   would vocative tomorrow come  
                     'Those people going to Berbera, come (here) tomorrow !'
- b. \*waxyaalihii Berbera tegi lahaa yow berrito kaalaya !  
                     the things B.           go   would voc. tomorrow come  
                     'Those people going to Berbera, come (here) tomorrow !'

Sentences (61c) and (62b) above are unacceptable because the use of the plural form waxyaalo forces the interpretations '\*Do you know the

objects we are ?' and '\*The objects going to Berbera, come here tomorrow !' respectively. The difference between wax in (62a) and waxyaalo in (62b), a difference which renders the sentence unacceptable, is not simply of number but between items of different meaning. Wax-a, though homonymous with the singular form of waxyaalo-ha (i.e. with wax 'a thing, an object'), is semantically plural here as can be seen from the plural form of the imperative kaalaya 'Come(pl)!', which shares the same referent.

It seems then that there are two distinct lexical units here: one, a non-pluralizable<sup>9</sup> noun wax/\*waxyaalo 'something, what, who', and the other a countable noun wax/waxyaalo 'thing, object'. The interesting lexicographical problem of whether these are accidentally homonymous lexical items or, as seems more likely, constitute a case of polysemy is aside from the main point here. Andrzejewski's argument relies on an oversimple view of this lexical item which recognizes only the latter of the two meanings given above. The fact that waxa in clefts cannot be pluralized merely shows that it is to be interpreted as 'what, who' rather than 'the material thing, object'. It does not mean that waxa is not a lexical item since, as this section has attempted to show, occurring in a plural form is not an essential feature of this lexical item.



### 3.4 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter has been to justify a rule of Cleft Reduction to relate the sentence types exemplified below:

- (63) waxa yimi waa tareen  
thing+the came FOC train

'The thing that came was a TRAIN'

- (64) waxa yimi tareen  
what came train

'What came was a TRAIN', 'It was a TRAIN that came'

Such is the similarity in syntactic structure, meaning and focussing role between these sentences that earlier descriptions such as Moreno (1955) and Andrzejewski (1964) assumed the relationship which Cleft Reduction makes explicit. However, perhaps the first major study of Somali syntax rather than morphology, Zholkovsky (1971), argued against this and was supported by Andrzejewski (1975). These accounts forward several arguments for assigning radically different structures to (63) and (64). This chapter has been concerned with showing the unsoundness of these arguments.

In addition, this chapter has tried to underline how Zholkovsky's analysis of a focus particle waxa results in a notion of NP focus as a centre of morphological and syntactic irregularity. The analysis has to resort to a number of constraints which effectively admit that in this analysis focussed NPs must be assigned separate

and idiosyncratic rules for subject marking and verbal concord.

Having established that there is no justification for denying the relatedness of sentences (63) and (64) above, a transformational approach involving a deletion rule allows the morphological facts of reduced clefts like (64) to be predicted from those of clefts like (63), and more generally, allows them to be seen as part of the rules applying to relative clauses.

### 3.5 The Rules

#### 3.5.1 Subject Marking

I shall not attempt to give the morphological detail of case marking, and more specifically subject marking rules, here since these are adequately described elsewhere (viz Andrzejewski 1964, 1979) and are peripheral to the present topic. The rules are of considerable complexity and would constitute a lengthy digression. In general and simplified terms, however, it can be said that the rule of subject marking will apply to every sentence and mark a subject NP, if lexically filled, with the relevant morphological markers. In Somali, as in other Cushitic languages with case marking, non-subject is the unmarked case and therefore provides the base form upon which subject marking applies. This marking is always tonal and in some limited cases there is additional segmental marking. Compare, for example, the subject and non-subject marking on the NPs below:

(65)

	NON-SUBJ	SUBJ
nin 'a man'	<u>nín</u>	<u>nín</u>
ninkii 'the man'	<u>nínkíi</u>	<u>nínkíi</u>

Andrzejewski (1964, 1979) has divided nouns into declensions on the basis of their tonal patterns. In the majority of instances subject marking lowers the rightmost high tones in these patterns or attaches the relevant low tone suffix, if any. In the special case of the

determiner -ka (masc.), -ta (feminine) 'the(non-remote)', there is a vowel change a → u e.g.

(86)

	NON-SUBJ	SUBJ
'the meat'	<u>hílibká</u>	<u>hílibku</u>
'the fever'	<u>xummáddá</u>	<u>xummáddu</u>

As will be described in the sections of this study dealing with the rule of focus fronting and with topics, subjects can be characterized as the leftmost NP within S. The obvious, and common, exceptions to this will be explained in terms of the focus fronting rule, and the fact that topics stand outside the sentence boundary; as will be seen, there is good independent evidence that the basic word order in any S is Subject-Object-Verb.

I leave aside here questions of how subject case is assigned to an NP, rather than marked on it. Early work by generativist syntacticians proposed that the relation subject-of-S, like other relations, were defined on the basis of phrase-structure configurations (see Chomsky 1965:69-74) i.e. that the NP dominated by S would be the subject, as formulated in the expression "Subject of: [NP,S] ". In more recent work by Chomsky(1981:52ff.) rules of case assignment are proposed wherein subject case is assigned to an NP by an element, INFL, in the sentence, which carries the features of person, gender, and number (as well as, for English, #TENSE). The choice of case assignment mechanism is not important for the present discussion, providing no important evidence either way for the derivation of reduced clefts.

## 3.5.2 Concord Rules

The rules of subject-verb concord, and especially the phenomenon of 'fuzzy' concord will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter, where they are important for the arguments for a rule of focus fronting.

Note that in Somali, unlike some African languages, there is no agreement between verb and direct object marked on the verb. However, a discussion of concord in the verbal piece has to take account of the fact that locative particles occur in a preverbal cluster bound to the verb and not near the NPs whose case relations they mark. These particles correspond to case suffixes or postpositions in most other Cushitic languages (see Appleyard 1980 for a comparative view). The particles are described in detail in Andrzejewski (1960) and are four in number; they are given with their major meanings below:

(67)	<u>u</u>	'to; for, on behalf of; in(manner)'	[DATIVE, BENEFACTIVE]
	<u>ku</u>	'to, in, on; with(instrument)'	[LOCATIVE, INSTRUMENTAL]
	<u>ka</u>	'from, off, across'	[ABLATIVE]
	<u>la</u>	'(in company) with'	[COMATATIVE]

See, for example:

- (68) ninkii waan la hadlay  
man+the I+FOC with spoke  
 'I SPOKE with the man'

- (69) dagaalka ayuu Cali ka tegay  
fighting+the FOC+he Ali from went

'Ali went away from THE FIGHTING'

- (70) halkaa dad badan ma ku noolyahay ?  
place+that people many Q in live  
 'Do many people live in that place ?'

- (71) si wanaagsan bay u sameyneysaa  
way good FOC+she in is-doing  
 'She is doing it in A GOOD WAY(i.e. WELL)'

In principle the particle attached to the verb may be separated by any amount of material from the NP to which it refers.

Note that this is not strictly a concord phenomenon between verb and noun, for the NP is not similarly case marked, always occurring in the non-subject case regardless of the particle on the verb. To treat these items as 'prepositions' generated by the base, which would govern and assign case to their NP complements (on the model of Chomsky's proposals for English in Chomsky 1981:49ff.) leads to serious problems for the phrase structure rules since, of the proposed PP, the NP can be separated from the Preposition by an unspecifiable number of constituents.

It seems preferable to treat the sequence of Particle-Verb as a derived verb which assigns non-subject case to all its complements as is usual with direct objects. Thus in addition to the system of verbal suffixed extensions such as transitivizers, and autobenefactives described in Andrzejewski (1968) and Bell (1953), I would propose rules of verbal derivation whereby u, ku, ka, la are attached to a basic verb

to modify its meaning in a predictable way. Of course, combinations with unpredictable meanings will have to be listed in the lexicon.

I will not provide the arguments to defend this analysis here, for the issue, though an important one, is not crucial to the concerns of the present study. It is clear, however, that these particles do not fall within the domain of the concord rules.

### 3.5.3 Copula Reduction

As described earlier, this is in fact a complex of reduction rules which, depending on context, reduce or delete the copula yahay 'to be'. The rules break down into two parts: the first deletes the root of the copula, leaving the inflectional affixes to be cliticized onto neighbouring elements; the second deletes these affixes, leaving just the verb focus particle waa, where this accompanied the copula.

#### Part 1: Root Deletion

As has been generally recognized by analysts, the root of the copula is -ah-, with person markers prefixed or suffixed depending on the paradigm, and with the root undergoing vowel change according to tense. The morphological patterns are described in Bell(1953) and Andrzejewski(1969, 1975).

There are two environments for copula root deletion. The first, described in Saeed(1979), is with adjective complements.<sup>10</sup> Here the reduction is an optional stylistic rule in present tense forms in main sentence and full embedded sentence verbs,<sup>11</sup> e.g.

- (72) a. wuu wanaagsan yahay  
FOC+he good is

'He is good'

- b. wuu wanaagsanyay

'He is good'

- (73) a. way wanaagsan tahay  
FOC+she good is

'She is good'

- b. way wanaagsantay

'She is good'

This rule is obligatory for all other forms, e.g.

- (74) a. \*wuu wanaagsan ahaa

FOC+he good was

'He was good'

- b. wuu wanaagsanaa

'He was good'

- (75) a. \*nin wanaagsan ah  
man good be

'a man who is good'

- b. nin wanaagsan

'a man who is good'



Note that since the predicted form of the copula in (75) above is the reduced ah, i.e. simply the root, the result of the rule here is deletion of the whole verb.

That the rule is restricted to adjective complements can be seen by comparing (75) above with (76) below, where the copula has an NP complement:

- (76) a. nin askari ah  
man soldier be  
'a man who is a soldier'
- b. \*nin askari  
'a man who is a soldier'

The second environment for copula root deletion is following the verb focus particle waa when the copula is third person. Thus the following are optional variants, with the reduced form being commoner:

- (77) a. bare wuu yahay  
waa+uu  
teacher FOC+he is  
'He is a teacher'
- b. bare waayey (from waayay by vowel assimilation)  
'He is a teacher'

As can be seen, the root -ah- has again been deleted. Note that (77b) is the Benaadir dialect form; Common Somali has a further vowel assimilation

rule which produces (78) below:

- (78) bare weeyey<sup>12</sup>  
'He is a teacher'

It is difficult to collapse these two environments for the root deletion and they are given as separate deletion rules below:

- (79) Copula Root Deletion 1

(P = Prefix, R = Root, S = Suffix)

	X	<u>waa</u>	[P + R + S] COP	Y	
S.D.	1	2	3 4 5	6	OPTIONAL $\Rightarrow$
S.C.	1	2	3 $\emptyset$ 5	6	

- (80) Copula Root Deletion 2

	X	ADJ	[P + R + S] COP	Y	
S.D.	1	2	3 4 5	6	OPTIONAL $\Rightarrow$
S.C.	1	2	3 $\emptyset$ 5	6	

condition: obligatory a) if tense  $\neq$  present

b) if verb is reduced by subject deletion

An interesting question is whether a single associated encliticization rule is responsible for attaching the surviving inflectional elements after to both the preceding adjective and waa /the above rules. Such a

rule relies on the assumption that when, say, adjectives occur with a full form of the copula they are separated from it by a word boundary, i.e. ## ADJ ## yahay ## and that after Copula Root Deletion, an encliticization rule attaches the undeleted items onto the adjective, i.e. ## ADJ # mm ## (where mm = the remaining morphemes of the copula).

In fact there is some evidence that ADJ-yahay may not be separated by a word boundary even before Copula Root Deletion. This evidence comes from the phonological rules affecting nasals. Word finally the segment m cannot occur and is realised as n, neutralizing the phonological opposition holding between these sounds elsewhere. The addition of another syllable by any process of the grammar, e.g. plural formation, restores the phonological opposition, as can be seen by the following examples:

- (81)        nin 'man' (← \*nim)    cf.    san 'nose'  
              niman 'men'                      sanən 'noses'

Or similarly, in verb imperatives:

- (82)        xukun 'rule!(sing.)' (← \*xukum)    cf.    keen 'bring!(sing.)'  
              xukuma 'rule!(pl.)'                      keena 'bring!'(pl.)

This m → n rule occurs even when the following word begins with a vowel, e.g.

- (83) a.    nin xun ayaan la hadlay  
              man evil FOC+I with spoke  
              'I spoke with an EVIL MAN'

- (83) b. \*nin xum ayaan la hadlay -  
'I spoke with an EVIL MAN'

This suggests that the rule is crucially sensitive to word boundaries and must be something like the phonological rule below:

- (84)  $m \longrightarrow n / \_ \# \#$

In sequences of ADJ-yahay, however, wherever the form of yahay begins with a vowel, final m in the adjective does not undergo the rule (84) above, as can be seen in the following:

- (85) waan xum ahay  
FOC+I evil am  
'I am EVIL'

This suggests that the boundaries in (85) above are as follows:

- (86) \*\* waan \*\* xum # ahay \*\*

rather than below:

- (87) \*\* waan \*\* xum \*\* ahay \*\*

If, as seems likely, this is so, then the rule cliticizing the copula onto a preceding ADJECTIVE, (and probably waa though the evidence here is slight) is independent of, and precedes the rules which delete yahay's root.

## Part 2: Copula Affix Deletion

This is an optional rule which, operating on the output of Copula Root Deletion 1, completely deletes the remaining elements of the copula.

It is more than a simple reduction, however, since there is an accompanying change in word order. The following pairs, for example, are optional variants:

- (88) a. Cali askari weeye(y)  
       b. Cali waa askari  
           'Ali is a soldier'
- (89) a. hadalkaas khatar weeye(y)  
           talk+that danger waa+be  
       b. hadalkaas waa khatar  
           'That talk is dangerous'
- (90) a. nabad weeye(y)  
           peace waa+be  
       b. waa nabad  
           'It is peace' (a greeting)

This rule then strips the surviving affixes of yahay from waa and changes the S-O-V order to S-waa-O. One can postulate, informally, that the loss of the copula weakens the identification of relations, (originally marked both by subject marking on the noun, which survives, and concord on the verb) and that the fixing of the unusual S-waa-O order is a compensatory device. The rule is as follows:

## (91) Copula Affix Deletion

	X	NP	<u>waa</u>	INFL	Y	(where INFL = surviving affixes of <u>yahay</u> )
S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	OPTIONAL $\Rightarrow$
S.C.	1	<u>waa</u>	2	$\emptyset$	5	

This is clearly a 'local transformation' in the sense of Emonds (1976) since it affects adjacent constituents, one of which, waa, is a nonphrase node.

An example of the application of these reduction rules is (92) below, where the effects of Copula Root Deletion 1, and Copula Affix Deletion are shown:

- (92) a. askari waa yahay  
           CRD1  $\Rightarrow$   
       b. askari weeye(y)  
           CAD  $\Rightarrow$   
       c. waa askari

'He's a soldier'

Each rule is optional since each of the above sentences is grammatical. The rules presented here assume successive stages of reduction with each rule operating on the output of the previous rule. Since each of the sentences produced is grammatical, it is a simple matter to rewrite the rules so that there is no order between them; so that, for example,

(92c) above may be directly derived from (92a) without the intervening (92b), which would be derived by a separate rule. To do this Copula Affix Deletion is replaced by the rule Copula Deletion below:

(93) Copula Deletion

	X	NP	<u>waa</u>	COPULA	Y	
S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	OPTIONAL $\Rightarrow$
S.C.	1	<u>waa</u>	NP	$\emptyset$	5	

conditions: Copula = 3rd person

Tense = Present

The Copula Root Deletion rules are unaffected. I would suggest that this latter approach is to be preferred since it allows the rules to be unordered. Note that the two approaches are equivalent in terms of descriptive adequacy.

3.5.4 Waxa Cleft Reduction

This is the rule for which the whole of this chapter has argued. It relates structures like (94) & (95) below:

- (94) waxaan akhrinayaa waa buug dalka Gambiya ku saabsan  
 thing+the+I read FOC(be)book country+the G. to relate  
 'The thing which I am reading is a book about the Gambia'

- (95) waxaan akhrinayaa buug dalka Gambiya ku saabsan  
 'What I am reading is a book about the Gambia'

The rule is as follows:

- (96) Waxa Cleft Reduction

	X	<u>waxa</u> NP	S	<u>waa</u>	NP	Z	
S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	OPTIONAL	⇒
S.C.	1	2	∅	4	5		

This is a local transformation: it simply states that an equational sentence NP waa NP 'NP is NP' may become NP-NP if the first NP is a relative clause on waxa 'the thing, the one, etc.'. For the moment the rule will be said to be without conditions; as will be seen in the discussion of Wh-questions in Chapter 5, speakers tend to apply the rule when the second NP is questioned, though the result of not applying it still seems grammatical.



## CHAPTER THREE:

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>The schema here portrays a full NP in the embedded sentence co-referential with the head NP. As will be discussed in Chapter Four, where a rule of relativization is proposed, it seems rather that a pronoun occurs in the restricting sentence. However, since this does not affect the present discussion, a full NP is shown for the moment.

<sup>2</sup>See Andrzejewski (1964, 1979) for description of the morphology of case marking and of the cases themselves. In the present section the two major cases are described: subject, and a general oblique case which includes direct, indirect objects, and locatives. This latter case is known as non-subject case and is the unmarked case in Somali. Subjects are tonally differentiated from non-subjects (for relative clause exceptions see the rest of this section) and in addition, in some cases are marked by segmental changes. Since the latter, involving suffixes, are clearer in print, they are used in examples wherever possible.

<sup>3</sup>Note that waxa relative clauses are genuinely free relatives, and are not limited to equational sentences. In the following, for example, such clauses occur as complements of full verbs:

wuxuu yidhi waan ka baqay  
 waxa+uu      waa+aan  
 thing+the+he said FOC+I at feared  
 'I was afraid of the thing/what he said.'

wuxuu sheegayaa wuu iga yaabinayaa  
 waxa+uu      waa+uu  
 thing+the+he reports FOC+it me surprises  
 'The thing/what he reports surprises me.'

<sup>4</sup>This fuzzy concord only occurs when the difference between the NPs is one of gender: number differences do not trigger it, e.g.

(1) waxa yimi waa niman  
 what came FOC men

(2) \*waxa yimaadeen waa niman  
 what came(pl.) FOC men

'What came was SOME MEN.', 'It was MEN who came.'

Sentence (2) is impossible because in it concord holds between the relative clause verb and a (masculine) plural NP outside the sentence. Since plural verb concord does not differentiate gender (see table (4Q) below, 'Verbal Concord Possibilities'), only feminine singular complement NPs can trigger this fuzzy concord. See Chapter Four below for further discussion.

- <sup>5</sup>Remembering that the headword waxa is not itself the subject but coreferential with it. The true subject, deleted by relativization, must of course be grammatically masculine like the headword (see also footnote 1 above).
- <sup>6</sup>The translation of the lexical item wax-a (where -a is the definite article 'the') into English presents difficulties since its range of meaning corresponds to no one English word (see 3.3.3 for discussion of this range). The closest approximation is 'who, what', but while 'What brought it was a train.' is possible, 'Who brought it was me.' is a little strange. For this reason two translations are usually given: waxa as 'the one(s)' in 'The one(s) who VP be NP'; and a cleft version 'It be NP who VP.' (where the underlined NP is in focus). Note that these are therefore informal translations, not meant to reflect the syntactic structure of the Somali originals.
- <sup>7</sup>See the entry for wax-a (transcribed wah-a) in Abraham's dictionary (Abraham 1964), where it is treated as a single lexical item with this large spread of meanings.
- <sup>8</sup>See the note on tone in the general introduction, Chapter One, above.
- <sup>9</sup>Perhaps this noun is better described as semantically neutral for number.
- <sup>10</sup>Note that Andrzejewski (1969) has reanalysed adjectives as 'hybrid verbs' since in certain contexts they display person and tense markers. Saeed (1979) argued that this is the result of the Copula Reduction rules discussed here. It is pointed out there that the 'hybrid verbs' do not behave like verbs in any other way than carrying these elements where there is no verb 'to be', and that where this verb occurs with adjectives, the former carries the inflectional affixes. Since the Copula Reduction rules are independently motivated and neatly explain the aberrant adjective

behaviour, the second analysis is preferred here, and the category ADJECTIVE assumed.

<sup>11</sup>As described in the next chapter, when relativization rules delete a subject in the restricting sentence, subject marking and, more relevantly, concord rules are affected. See 4.2.1 below for discussion.

<sup>12</sup>Note that a further phonological rule allows the reduction of weeyey to the preferred weeye, or the equally possible weeyi.

NP Focus Structures with baa and ayaa

## 4.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the syntactic structure of noun phrase focus involving the words baa and ayaa. As described above in the introductory Chapter Two ( 2.3 ) , these words follow NPs and mark them as focused, as in the following:

- (1 )     Cali ayaa ninkii lacagtii siiyey  
           Ali    FOCUS man+the money+the gave  
           'ALI gave the money to the man'
- (2 )     Cali ninkii ayuu lacagtii siiyey  
           Ali man+the ayaa+uu money+the gave  
                                                  FOC+he  
           'Ali gave the money to THE MAN'
- (3 )     Cali ninkii lacagtii ayuu siiyey  
           Ali man+the money+the ayaa+uu gave  
                                                  FOC+he  
           'Ali gave THE MONEY to the man'

The words baa and ayaa seem to be exactly equivalent in this role and are indeed treated as optional variants by Bell(1953), Abraham (1964), and Andrzejewski (1975). One possible motivation for individual choices between them may be their different sensitivity to phonological rules: baa undergoes leftward coalescence rules when the preceding word ends in a short vowel e.g.

- (4) (\*) mindi baa → mindaa 'knife' + FOCUS  
 \* ninka baa → ninkaa 'the man' + FOCUS  
 \* gabdho baa → gabdhaa 'girls' + FOCUS

In addition baa, like ayaa, undergoes rightward coalescence rules with certain morphemes including bound subject pronouns and certain negative particles. As a result of both sets of coalescence rules considerably compressed clusters occur e.g.

- (5) ninkuu dilayaa  
       is beating

'He is beating THE MAN'

where ninkuu = ninka + baa + uu  
                   man+the FOC he

- (6) meeshaanad tegin  
       went(NEG)

'You did not go to THE PLACE'

where meeshaanad = meesha + baa + aan + aad  
                           place+the FOC not you

The word ayaa on the other hand does not undergo leftward coalescence rules, as shown in the following (compared to (4) above):

- (7) mindi ayaa 'knife' + FOCUS  
ninka ayaa 'the man' + FOCUS  
gabdho ayaa 'girls' + FOCUS

Given this difference one might speculate that the choice of, say, ayaa

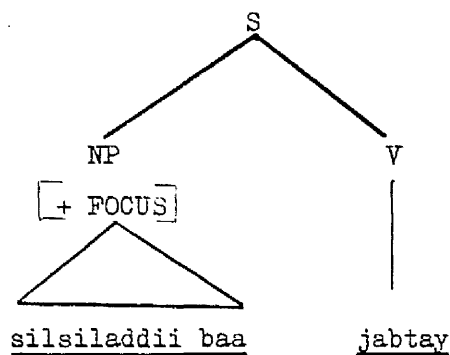
over baa may reflect either a desire on the part of the speaker to preserve a more transparent morphological structure, avoiding the degree of segmental collapsing involved with baa or perhaps be part of the manipulation of stressed and unstressed syllables in the organisation of sentence rhythms. There is as yet no evidence to support or refute either of these hypotheses and in the present study baa and ayaa will continue to be treated as optional variants.

The orthodox view of these elements baa and ayaa is that they are particles simply attached to NPs and having little effect on syntactic structure. Thus for example sentence (8) below is seen as a simple sentence of the structure shown in (9) below:

- (8) silsiladdii baa jabtay  
chain+the FOC broke

'THE CHAIN broke', 'It was THE CHAIN that broke'

- (9) Structure of sentence (8)



Two syntactic derivations for a sentence like (8) might be suggested. The first would involve the marking of a syntactic feature +FOCUS on noun phrases which would trigger a rule inserting baa or ayaa to

the right of the noun phrase. Alternatively one might argue for the insertion of these elements by the phrase structure rules i.e. by a rule like (10) below:

$$(10) \quad NP \longrightarrow NP \begin{Bmatrix} \text{ayaa} \\ \text{baa} \end{Bmatrix}$$

The present study follows neither of these approaches; instead it will argue that they are based on a mistaken analysis of the basic structure of these baa/ayaa sentences. As will be shown in this chapter, viewing these particles simply <sup>elements</sup> as/attached to NPs in simple sentences like (9) above necessitates a series of constraints to explain why these sentences show so many irregularities compared to other simple sentences. Our examination of these irregularities will reveal that there is a consistency to them, namely that these baa structures being analysed as simple main clauses display numerous features characteristic of relative clauses. In this chapter I argue for an analysis of baa structures in which they are derived from underlying clefts. As will be seen, this correctly predicts the relative clause characteristics of baa structures.

Given the similar focusing role of clefts and baa structures it is not surprising that it has been suggested previously that they be related by rule. Andrzejewski (1975:136) noted that he

"came to conclusions which are entirely in favour of regarding waxa as comparable with baa. All heralding sentences [i.e. reduced waxa clefts - J.S.] can be derived from statement sentences...containing baa and a main verb, by the application of a very simple rule: 'Replace baa by waxa and transpose the noun or its equivalent which immediately precedes baa to the end

of the sentence, e.g. -

Dhar bay doonaysaa

Waxay doonaysaa dhar

Both sentences have the same meaning: 'She wants clothes'.

The only difference between them is that the emphasis

on dhar 'clothes' is indicated in the first sentence

by baa (as bay = baa+ay) and in the second sentence by

waxa (as waxay = waxa+ay). "

Essentially Andrzejewski is proposing a rightward movement rule which shifts an NP focused by baa to the right of the verb, replacing baa by waxa. This proposed rule is shown below:

(11) baa → waxa rule

SD:	X	NP	{ <u>ayaa</u> <u>baa</u> }	Y	V	
	1	2	3	4	5	⇒
SC:	1	∅	<u>waxa</u>	4	5+2	

This rightward movement rule has been accepted in recent work by Antinucci & Puglieselli (1980). While the present account agrees with this recognition of the relatedness of these structures, I will argue that a leftward movement, or fronting, rule is preferable to the above rule. Deriving waxa from baa as in (11) destroys the recognition of the relatedness of reduced and unreduced clefts argued for in the last chapter. We are back to the analysis of two waxa elements, one a lexical item and the other a transformationally introduced dummy item. More importantly, while a rightward movement approach allows for a single statement of the 'irregular' features shared by waxa and baa focus structures, it cannot say anything insightful about them.



This is understandably so since these 'irregularities' are relative clause features, as will be seen, and there is no link between baa and relative clauses in an approach with this rightward movement rule. The rule argued for in this chapter is (12) below:

(12) focus fronting rule

$$\begin{array}{lcl}
 \text{SD:} & X \left[ \begin{array}{c} \left[ \begin{array}{c} \text{S} \\ \text{NP} \end{array} \right] & \text{waxa} & Y & V \end{array} \right] & \text{NP} \end{array} \\
 & 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 5 & \Rightarrow \\
 \text{SC:} & 1 & 5 & \left\{ \begin{array}{c} \text{ayaa} \\ \text{baa} \end{array} \right\} & 3 & 4 & \emptyset
 \end{array}$$

There are no conditions to this optional rule and as will be seen in the discussion of topics later, the result is to move the focused NP to the front of the sentence. The first element in the structural description of (12) above, X, is an optional topic. In this analysis sentence (8) above is optionally derived from (13) below:

(13) waxa jabtay silsiladdii  
 'What broke was THE CHAIN'

As will be seen, this correctly predicts that baa focus will be part of the domain of the grammar of relative clauses.

#### 4.2 Arguments for baa focus fronting

In this section a number of arguments arising from various areas of the grammar are forwarded in support of a rule shifting focused NPs to the front of the sentence. In each case the grammatical behaviour described is correctly predicted by an analysis containing such a rule, while for other approaches, in particular those including a rightward waxa→baa rule, these are areas of difficulty and centres of grammatical irregularity.

##### 4.2.1, Reduced Person Differentiation in Verbs

The first argument concerns verbal morphology, and in particular the number of persons differentiated in verbal paradigms. Andrzejewski (1968, 1969) provided the first accurate description of the systematic variations in this number and his terminology is now standard. The system is more briefly described in Andrzejewski (1979) and mentioned in Hetzron (1975). Normally in Somali verbs eight persons are differentiated by a combination of subject pronouns and verb forms, as shown below:

#### (14) Past tense of keen 'bring' (a)

( <u>aan</u> ) <u>keenay</u>	(I) brought
( <u>aad</u> ) <u>keentay</u>	(you(sing,)) brought
( <u>uu</u> ) <u>keenay</u>	(he) brought
( <u>ay</u> ) <u>keentay</u>	(she) brought

( <u>aynu</u> ) <u>keennay</u>	(we(incl.)) brought
( <u>aannu</u> ) <u>keennay</u>	(we(excl.)) brought
( <u>aydin</u> ) <u>keenteen</u>	(you(pl.)) brought
( <u>ay</u> ) <u>keeneen</u>	(they) brought

It can be seen from the above that the verb form alone displays a five way distinction.

In certain conditions however, this five-way distinction is reduced to three, a pattern shown below:

(15) Past tense of keen 'bring' (b)

	<u>full</u>	<u>reduced</u>
1	<u>keennay</u>	<u>keenáy</u>
2s	<u>keentay</u>	<u>keenáy</u>
3m	<u>keennay</u>	<u>keenáy</u>
3f	<u>keentay</u>	<u>keentáy</u>
1pl	<u>keennay</u>	<u>keennáy</u>
2pl	<u>keenteen</u>	<u>keenáy</u>
3pl	<u>keeneen</u>	<u>keenáy</u>

As shown above there is a tonal difference between the full and reduced paradigms, the latter having high tone on the last syllable.

This reduction occurs in two situations. The first is associated with NP focus, and is traditionally described thus: if a subject is focused then an agreeing verb occurs in the reduced paradigms, unlike

unfocused subjects which take the full paradigm. In this context Andrzejewski has termed the fuller paradigms "extensive" and the reduced forms "restrictive". See, as examples, sentences (16) & (17) below:

- (16) baabuurradii aniga ayay i dhaafeen  
       cars+the       me    FOC+they me passed  
       'The cars passed ME', 'It was ME the cars passed'

- (17) baabuurradii ayaa i dhaafay  
       cars+the       FOC   me passed  
       'THE CARS passed me', 'It was THE CARS that passed me'

In both sentences the subject is 'the cars' but the form of the verb dhaaf 'pass' differs, being part of the "extensive" set in (16) but the "restrictive" in (17), reflecting the location of focus.

The second situation where this reduction occurs is in relative clauses and more specifically, again in traditional terms, when the headword is subject of the clause. Compare for example the following:

- (18) ninka baabuurka wata  
       man+the car+the drives  
       'The man who drives the car'

- (19) a. nimanka baabuurka wata  
       men+the car+the drive  
       'The men who drive the car'

- b. \*nimanka baabuurka wataan  
       'The men who drive the car'

- (20) a. nimanku baabuurka ayay wataan  
 men+the car+the FOC+they drive

'The men drive THE CAR', 'It is THE CAR that the men drive'

- b. \*nimanku baabuurka ayay wata

'The men drive THE CAR', 'It is THE CAR that the men drive'

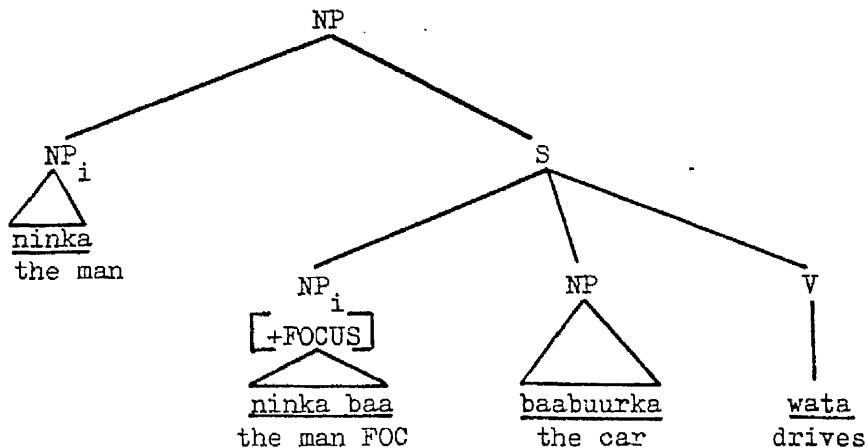
The main sentence (20) shows that the plural verb form wataan must be used with a 3p plural subject. In the relative clause (19), however, the verb must be in the singular form found in clause (18), even though the headword is plural in the former and singular in the latter. These relative clauses show the reduced person differentiation pattern shown earlier in (15). In this context Andrzejewski has termed the fuller paradigm "divergent" and the reduced paradigm "convergent".

In this approach then each verbal paradigm is said to have four forms: main extensive, main restrictive, subordinate divergent, and subordinate convergent. Clearly this is done because there is no way in Andrzejewski's framework to relate the two environments in which this system reduction occurs i.e. subject focus triggering restrictive paradigms, and headwords coreferential with lower subjects triggering convergent forms. In fact "main restrictive" and "subordinate convergent", the reduced paradigms, are identical and it is clear that an account that can dispense with this distinction is to be preferred.

Recently Antinucci & Puglielli (1980) have attempted to do just this by postulating that every NP deleted by relativization is assigned an

underlying focus particle bàa. Thus the underlying structure of (18) above is as follows:

(21) Underlying structure of (18) following Antinucci & Puglielli



The rule of relativization will then delete the string ninka bàa.

This seems rather an ad hoc solution since there is no independent evidence for the presence of a focus particle in this position.

Further, this solution's explanatory power for the reduction phenomenon is limited: it merely brings all the data under a single constraint (roughly 'focused subjects trigger a reduced paradigm'). It sheds no light on the constraint itself.

There are further problems with this placing of bàa in relatives. The first concerns the status of the deleted NP. As will be described below, there are good reasons for analysing Somali relativization as a rule which deletes a pronoun in the lower sentence bound to the headword by an indexing process. The justification for

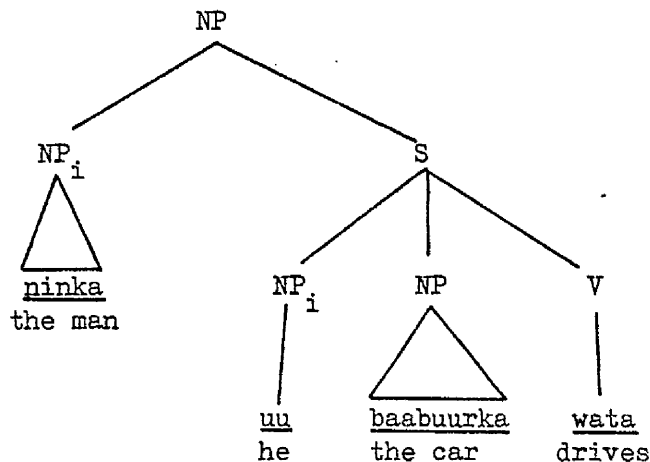
postulating the deletion of a pronoun rather than an identical NP comes from an examination of complex relative clauses. If the lower sentence is complex, i.e. contains a that-clause, then the deletion rule which applies in simple relative clauses cannot apply. In the following examples  $\emptyset$  marks the place of a deleted NP:

- (22) a. \*ninkii ay sheegaan in  $\emptyset$  naagta caayey  
 man+the they report that\_woman+the insulted  
 'the man<sup>who</sup>/they say insulted the woman'
- b. ninkii ay sheegaan inuu naagta caayey  
 man+the they report that+he woman+the insulted  
 'the man who they say he insulted the woman'
- (23) a. \*ninkii ay sheegaan inaad moodday in  $\emptyset$  naagta caayey  
 man+the they report that+you thought that\_woman+the insulted  
 'the man who they say you thought insulted the woman'
- b. ninkii ay sheegaan inaad moodday inuu naagta caayey  
 man+the they report that+you thought that+he woman+the insulted  
 'the man who they say you thought he insulted the woman'

The above examples show that in these complex relatives there must be a resumptive pronoun. To allow a single rule to apply to both sets of relative clauses, simple and complex, it seems reasonable to view relativization in simple clauses as deleting this resumptive pronoun, a process which is blocked in complex relatives.

Thus the underlying structure of relative clause (18) is as below:

(24) Underlying structure of (18):



In the above, relativization will delete the pronoun uu 'he' in simple clauses, but such deletion will be blocked in complex clauses. The problem for Antinucci's approach to relatives is that this pronoun is usually a weak pronoun, and a basic rule of the grammar of pronouns is the weak pronouns may not be focused (see 4.2.2 below for references), unlike independent pronouns. Wherever focus would fall on a pronoun, an independent pronoun must be used. Thus, regardless of context, the following are ungrammatical:

- ( 25 )
- |                      |               |
|----------------------|---------------|
| <u>*aan ayaa/baa</u> | 'I' + FOCUS   |
| <u>*aad ayaa/baa</u> | 'you' + FOCUS |
| <u>*uu ayaa/baa</u>  | 'he' + FOCUS  |
| <u>*ay ayaa/baa</u>  | 'she' + FOCUS |
| etc.                 |               |



whereas the following, containing independent pronouns, are grammatical:

- (26)
- |                       |               |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| <u>aniga ayaa/baa</u> | 'I' + FOCUS   |
| <u>adiga ayaa/baa</u> | 'you' + FOCUS |
| <u>isaga ayaa/baa</u> | 'he' + FOCUS  |
| <u>iyada ayaa/baa</u> | 'she' + FOCUS |
- etc.

To postulate that the pronoun deleted by relativisation occurs focused by baa or ayaa would mean predicting the strings in (25) and make pronoun behaviour in relative clauses run exactly counter to that everywhere else in the grammar.

It is true nevertheless that this resumptive pronoun may, less commonly, be an independent pronoun and thus capable of occurring with baa as in (26) above. Such a case is (27) below:

- (27)
- |                                                  |
|--------------------------------------------------|
| <u>ninkii ay sheegaan in isagu naagta caayey</u> |
| man+the they report that he woman+the insulted   |
- 'the man who they say he insulted the woman'

However, rather than providing some support for an analysis of baa in relative clauses, sentences like (27) merely provide further problems for it. If the deletion involved in relativisation has been blocked in (27) by the complex structure of the clause, as seems likely, why does baa not occur with the NP isagu as it is said to in simple clauses, i.e. why is (28) below ungrammatical ?

- (28)        \*ninkii ay sheegaan in isaga baa naagta caayey  
              'the man who they say HE insulted the woman'

In order to save the analysis one might argue that there is only a partial blocking of deletion in complex relative clauses i.e. that the string isaga baa 'he+FOCUS' is deleted in simple relatives but that only baa is deleted in complex relative clauses, thus producing (27) but not (28).

This however works no better. As described in 3.2.1 above and 4.2.2 below, the Andrzejewski-Antinucci approach to NP focus involves a constraint that focused NPs are not subject marked (see for example Andrzejewski 1979:37). In sentence (27) however, the pronoun isagu is subject marked; sentence (29) below which has this pronoun in a non-subject form is not grammatical:

- (29)        \*ninkii ay sheegaan in isaga naagta caayey  
              'the man who they say he insulted the woman'

On the one hand then this analysis states that isagu is focused despite not having a focus particle (and therefore needs an obligatory deletion rule), and yet on the other hand states that unlike all other focused NPs it can be subject marked. Remembering that the only gain in postulating this deleted baa is to bring relative clauses into the scope of an unenlightening constraint, the attempt raises more problems than it solves.

A second problem is that this analysis violates the general rule that focus is limited to main sentences in Somali. If baa can be affixed to NPs in the lower sentence of a relative clause then why not in other subordinate sentences? There is no obvious explanation in this analysis although, as we shall see, a rule of focus fronting allows a natural explanation of this general rule.

Thirdly, the analysis suggested by Antinucci makes relativization deletion run counter to all other deletion processes in the grammar. Elsewhere the general rule is that deletion rules apply to non-focused elements. So for example, deletion in (30) below can apply to a verb to produce (31) because NPs are focused:

- (30) ama Cali ayaa soo qaadi ama Faarax ayaa soo qaadi  
or Ali FOCUS (it)bring or Farah FOCUS (it)bring

'Either ALI will bring it or FARAH will bring it'

- (31) ama Cali ayaa soo qaadi ama Faarax  
or Ali FOCUS (it) bring or Farah

'Either ALI will bring it or FARAH(will)'

On the other hand NP deletion is possible in (32) below to produce (33) because verbs are focused:

- (32) Cali ama wuu soo qaadi ama Cali wuu diri  
Ali or FOC+he(it) bring or Ali FOC+he(it)send

'Either Ali will BRING it or Ali will SEND it'

- (33) Cali ama wuu soo qaadi ama wuu diri  
 Ali or FOC+he(it)bring or FOC+he(it)send

'Ali will either BRING it or SEND it'

In general the material that is focused has been selected as the most important element in the communication and is thus most resistant to approach deletion. Antinucci's necessarily involves a deletion rule which takes out a focused NP and therefore goes against this generalisation.

The analysis proposed in the present study, that of deriving baa structures from reduced clefts, relates the two instances of verbal paradigm reduction without these problems and is the only approach which comes near to providing some explanation for the phenomenon of paradigm reduction itself. In this analysis the verb in (34) below is in a reduced paradigm (Andrzejewski's "restrictive") because the sentence derives from (35) in which the verb is also reduced (Andrzejewski's "convergent"):

- (34) a. baabuurradii baa dhaafay  
 cars+the FOCUS passed

'THE CARS passed', 'It was THE CARS that passed'

- b. \*baabuurradii baa dhaafeen  
 passed(3p pl)

'THE CARS passed', 'It was THE CARS that passed'

- (35) a. waxa dhaafay baabuurradii  
 what passed (was) cars+the

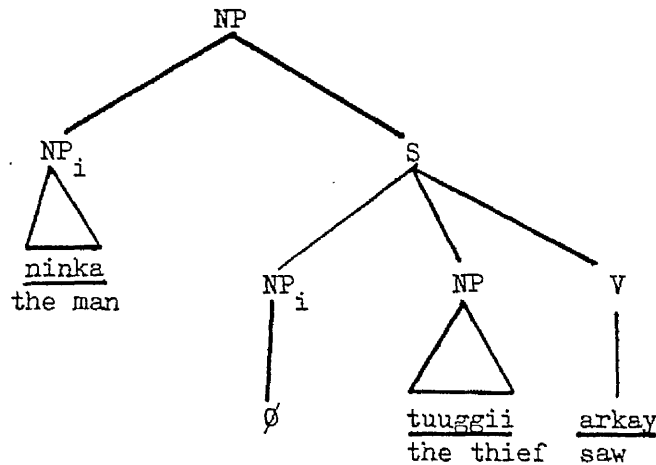
'What passed was THE CARS'

The verb in (35) above, dhaafay, will be said to be in its reduced paradigm because waxa dhaafay is a relative clause with a deleted subject, a structure to be discussed a little later. This approach reduces Andrzejewski's four paradigm types to three: main sentence forms, normal subordinate clause forms, and reduced relative clause forms, a subset of <sup>subordinate</sup> / clause forms. This approach is superior to Antinucci's efforts at simplification because it avoids the problems associated with obligatorily deleting baa elements from relative clauses, in which they are never found on the surface. Further, and more importantly, this approach shifts the burden of explaining this paradigm reduction phenomenon from the area of NP focus, where it must simply be accepted as an irregularity, to the phenomena associated with the deletion of subjects in relative clauses, an area where as we have already seen ( Chapt.3:2.1) subject-verb concord shows signs of weakening.

It will be claimed that the deletion of a subject from a relative clause's restricting sentence interferes with the rule of verbal concord. I described earlier (3.2.1) how subject marking applying to a relative clause is sensitive to the sentence boundaries existing before relativization i.e. that the structure to which subject marking applies (vacuously) in (36) below is as shown in (37) below:

- (36)        pinka tuuggii arkay  
              man+the thief+the saw  
              'the man who saw the thief'

## (37) Structure of (36) at Subject Marking



Subject marking applies to the lower sentence and since there is no available subject NP to be marked, the result is that the whole clause has no subject marked NP. Compare this with other Cushitic languages like Dirayta (Hayward 1981) where the head NP is subject marked in structures like (36) above.

I will claim that in a similar way the paradigm reduction under discussion here is a result of the concord rules, which copy features from a subject noun onto its verb, being prevented from applying properly. Given the breakdown in subject marking, this seems plausible enough, and since in most cases the verb form associated with third person masculine singular nouns occurs in these reduced contexts, one might postulate that this is the base form upon which concord rules normally apply but in this case do not.

However, there is a problem for this explanation since this basic form does not occur in all cases. As seen in table (15) earlier

the five person distinction in verbs collapses into a three person distinction, not into a single form. In other words, apparently some features are copied from a deleted subject but not others. In fact this is not such a problem as it first appears, for this strange phenomenon of partial concord where none might be expected has parallels elsewhere in the grammar. In describing this it is helpful to distinguish between pronouns and non-pronominal headwords in these relative clauses. For the latter the failure of the concord rules means that the singular versus plural distinction is lost. This is shown in the following:

- (38) a. ninkii keenay  
man+the(it)brought  
  
'the man who brought it'
- b. nimankii keenay /\*keeneen  
men+the(it)brought brought  
sing. pl.  
  
'the men who brought it'

However, as the following example shows, the gender distinction between masculine and feminine singular is maintained:

- (39) naagtii keentay /\*keenay  
woman+the(it)brought brought  
fem. masc.  
  
'the woman who brought it'

Interestingly, this parallels the concord phenomenon in waxa clefts discussed earlier (3.3.1. "Agreement 1"). In the relative clause one

would, if concord is prevented, expect a masculine singular verb form, yet feminine nouns still trigger feminine concord. In waxa clefts like (40) below one has to predict a masculine singular verb form in the waxa relative clause:

- (40)     [waxa dhacay] waa malqacad  
           thing+the fell (be) spoon  
                               masc.sing.  
           'What fell was a spoon'

This is because if concord is supposed to have occurred despite relative subject deletion, the subject is the masculine pronoun governed by the masculine noun waxa, and if concord is prevented (as suggested here), the base form is still masculine singular. Either way the verb form should show masculine singular concord, as it does in (40) above.

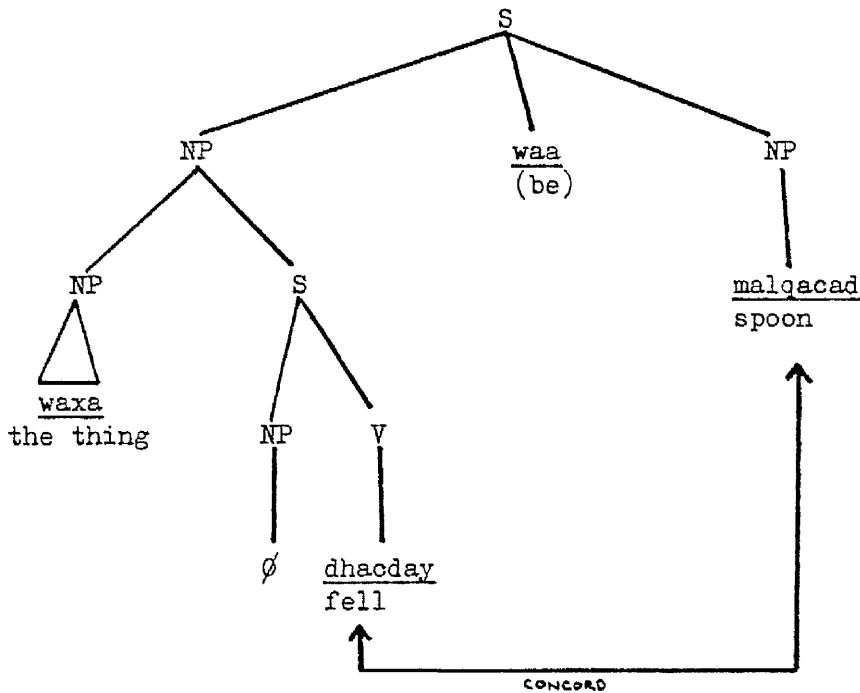
However, as was described, feminine singular concord is equally possible in this sentence, as (41) below shows:

- (41)     [waxa dhacday] waa malqacad  
           thing+the fell (be) spoon  
                               femsing.  
           'What fell was a spoon'

In this sentence the relative clause verb dhacday is showing feminine concord even though, as shown below, there is a sentence boundary between it and the feminine noun malqacad:



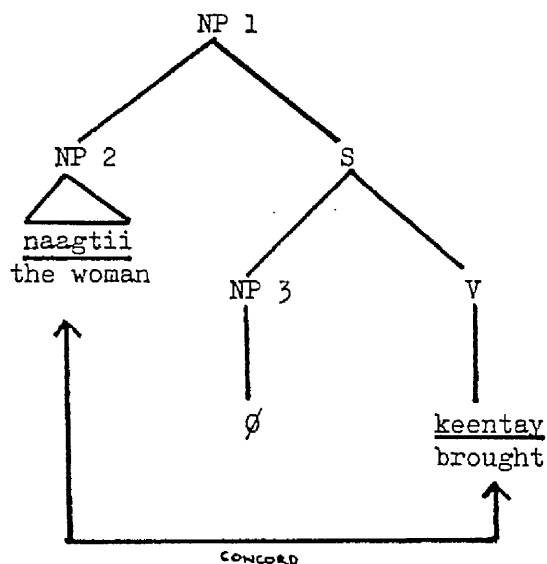
## (42) Structure of (41) after Relativization



In this structure, where the verb has no subject in its own clause and where the NPs outside its sentence are coreferential with the deleted subject, the verb can display concord with malqacad despite the predictions of the syntactic structure, as shown by the arrows above. Putting aside for the moment the question of how one describes this formally, the parallel with the present examples of unexpected feminine concord in relative clauses is clear. The structure of clause (39), repeated below, is as in (43):

- (39) naagtii keentay  
 woman+the(it)brought  
 'the woman who brought it'

## (43) Structure of (39) after Relativization



Here as in the cleft example there is a sentence boundary between the verb and the feminine noun, here naagtii, and again there is coreference between that noun and the verb's deleted subject, this time the strict identity which allows relativization. Here again the feminine noun triggers verbal concord across a sentence boundary (shown by arrows in (43) above), preventing an expected masculine form. It seems clear that these are instances of the same phenomenon and that the presence of feminine forms in sentences like (39) earlier is not evidence against the hypothesis that relative subject deletion prevents the normal application of concord rules. In short the features responsible for the feminine form of the verb in (43) are copied not from NP3 in the normal way but from NP2.

The clearest evidence that this is an extra-sentential concord

comes from relative clauses with pronoun heads like example (44) below:

- (44) adiga oo halkan keenay  
 you and place+this(it)brought  
 'you, who brought it here,'

Here, as correctly predicted in the present analysis, the verb shows masculine singular concord even though the headword is second person singular. However, there are at least some speakers who use and accept the following version of this relative clause:

- (45) adiga oo halkan keentay, Sahara  
 you and place+this brought, S.  
 'you, who brought it here, Sahara'

Here the clause verb shows feminine concord under the influence of the feminine name Sahara. This noun is in apposition to the head and, whatever structure one gives to appositional NPs within sentences, it is clear that here the noun is outside the relative clause, occurring as it does after the verb. The concord rule copying features from Sahara onto the clause verb is operating across a sentence boundary.

Note that only nouns with feminine singular and first person features can trigger this type of concord; for example, in (44) above adiga 'you(pl.)' does not have its features copied onto the verb. In each of the following, regardless of the features on the head noun, the relative verb is in the base form of third person masculine singular:

- (46) a. adiga oo halkan yimi 'you(sg.), who came here,'  
 b. idinka oo halkan yimi 'you(pl.), who came here,'  
 c. iyaga oo halkan yimi 'they, who came here,'  
 d. nimankii oo halkan yimi 'the men, who came here,'

On the other hand, the following show the effect of cross-sentential concord, involving as they do feminine and first person headwords:

- (47) a. iyada oo halkan timi 'she, who came here,'  
b. annaga oo halkan nimi 'we, who came here,'

Perhaps the clearest evidence that it is the deletion involved in relativization which is responsible for this reduction of concord comes from complex relative clauses. As described earlier, in these clauses the pronoun coreferential with the head NP is not deleted. If, as is claimed here, deletion of relative clause subjects causes the concord reduction then there should be no reduction in these complex relative clauses. Indeed, as the following examples show, this is so:

- (48) a. aniga oo ay sheegaan inaan shaqadii bilaabay  
I and they report that+I work+the began  
'I, who they say started the work,'  
b. adiga oo ay sheegaan inaad shaqadii bilawday  
you you  
'you, who they say started the work,'  
c. isaga oo ay sheegaan inuu shaqadii bilaabay  
he he  
'he, who they say started the work,'  
d. iyada oo ay sheegaan inay shaqadii bilawday  
she she  
'she, who they say started the work,'  
e. annaga oo ay sheegaan inaannu shaqadii bilawnay  
we we  
'we, who they say started the work'

- (48) f. idinka oo ay sheegaan inaydin shaqadii bilawdeen  
you(pl.) (you(pl.)  
  
'you(pl.), who they say started the work,'  
  
g. iyaga oo ay sheegaan inay shaqadii bilaabeen  
they they  
  
'they, who they say started the work.'

The above examples show the full pattern of person differentiation. The blocking of deletion in the relative clauses above has allowed the concord rules to operate normally. In short, reduced concord is a result of the deletion of a relative clause subject; when the deletion occurs/<sup>as</sup>in the simple relative (49a) below, person differentiation decreases but when deletion is blocked,as in the complex relative (49b) below, the full set of concord forms occur:

- (49) a. nimankii lacagtii xaday  
 men+the money+the stole  
 3 sg.  
 'the men who stole the money'
- b. nimankii aennu ognahay inay lacagtii xadeen  
 men+the we know that+they money+the stole  
 3 pl.  
 'the men who we know stole the money'

To summarize, the grammar predicts that in relative clauses with a deleted subject NP the concord rules cannot apply, and that the relative verb will appear with a masculine singular form. However, feminine nouns and first person pronouns can from outside the sentence trigger concord on the subjectless verb. Discussion of the rules necessary to describe this phenomenon is in section 4 below.

Note that an alternative approach to this concord phenomenon involving rule ordering, i.e. one rule copying feminine gender and first person features before relativization and another rule copying other features afterwards, would fail to relate this behaviour to the cleft phenomenon in (40) where it would wrongly be predicted that the feminine verb form there is impossible.

Exactly the same pattern of concord as we have seen in relative clauses occurs with baa and ayaa focus structures. In the following examples only feminine singular and first person forms break the pattern of third person singular masculine forms occurring with all 'focused subjects':

- (50)
- a. aniga ayaa keenay 'I brought it', 'It was ME who brought it'
  - b. adiga ayaa keenay 'YOU brought it' etc.
  - c. isaga ayaa keenay 'HE brought it' etc.
  - d. iyada ayaa keenay 'SHE brought it' etc.
  - e. annaga ayaa keennay 'WE brought it' etc.
  - f. idinka ayaa keenay 'YOU(pl.) brought it' etc.
  - g. iyaga ayaa keenay 'THEY brought it' etc.

Note that even the variability shown in examples (44) & (45) above is reflected here: sentence (51a) below shows the expected result of concord blocking but the addition of a feminine name in (51b) produces unpredicted feminine concord on the verb:

- (51) a. adiga ayàa yimi /\*timi  
           you    FOC   came    came  
                   masc.   2 per./fem.sing.

'YOU came', 'It was YOU who came'

- b. adiga ayàa timi, Sahara  
       you    FOC   came    S.  
                   fem.sing.

'YOU came, Sahara', 'It was YOU who came, Sahara'

In current analyses this paradigm reduction in focus structures has no explanation: baa is simply said to block concord rules. Further, similar interference with concord rules in relative clauses is unfortunately brought under this constraint and not given the structural explanation that would allow it to be related to other agreement failure in relative clauses. Lastly, exceptions to the blocking of concord in focus and relative clauses are not linked to similar cases of exceptional concord in clefts like (45).

By contrast a rule of Focus Fronting predicts the concord failure in baa focus structures from the effect on concord rules of deleting subjects from relative clauses. In addition it is possible in this approach to give a unified account of the examples of extra-sentential concord.

## 4.2.2 Weak Subject Pronouns

Weak subject pronouns are described in Bell (1953: 30-35), Abraham (1964: 305-312), and Andrzejewski (1960 & 1961). They differ from independent, or 'strong', pronouns in a great number of ways, as described in these works. Weak pronouns cannot, for example, be focused or occur in isolation as one word utterances (see 7.4.2 below for further discussion of this); in addition, unlike independent pronouns they are usually suffixed as clitics to certain preceding elements. Here we are concerned with subject rather than object pronouns<sup>1</sup>, and these are as below:

( 52 )	<u>aan</u>	'I'
	<u>aad</u>	'you(sg.)'
	<u>uu</u>	'he'
	<u>ay</u>	'she'
	<u>aannu</u>	'we(exclusive of addressee)'
	<u>aynu</u>	'we(inclusive " )'
	<u>ay</u>	'they'

As described in the discussion of topics in Chapter Seven below, these commonly occur in 'double subject' sentences like (52 - 54) below, anaphorically with a preceding topic NP:



- (53) ninkii wuu yimi  
man+the FOC+he came  
  
'The man, he CAME'
- (54) Amina way aragtay  
A. FOC+she(it)saw  
  
'Amina, she SAW it'
- (55) naagihii way keeneen  
women+the FOC+they(it)brought  
  
'The women, they BROUGHT it'

The above are of the structure TOPIC-S where, as discussed earlier (Chapter 2), there is evidence that the topic is outside the sentence while the weak pronoun is the subject within the sentence.

Descriptions of Somali grammar, like Bell (1953), Abraham (1964), and Andrzejewski's works, have not usually identified topic elements (being for the most part concerned with morphology). It will be claimed here that this, when added to a failure to derive baa focus from waxa clefts, leads to a very unsatisfactory statement of the occurrence of these weak subject pronouns. On the other hand, as will be shown, deriving baa focus from underlying clefts neatly predicts their distribution.

Analysing sentences (56)-(58) below as equivalent structures, as one must do in an analysis which ignores the role of topics, leads to the adoption of a constraint that subject NPs focused by baa cannot occur with a coreferential weak subject pronoun:

- (56) ninkii wuu dhintay  
man+the FOC+he died

'The man, he DIED'

- (57) ninkii baa dhintay  
man+the FOC died

'THE MAN died'

- (58) \*ninkii buu dhintay  
man+the FOC+he died

'THE MAN died'

In such accounts the structural difference between (56) and (57) is often disguised by glossing (56) as 'The man DIED' i.e. as simply the focal opposite of (57) - 'THE MAN died'. Unfortunately, assigning these the same structure allows no explanation of why subject pronouns can occur with one but not the other. The solution is usually the constraint mentioned above: see for example this constraint as proposed by Antinucci and Puglielli:

"When baa marks the subject NP, it can never combine with the subject pronoun" (1980:94)

In a similar way it might appear from an examination of examples like (59)-(62) below that a similar phenomenon occurs in relative clauses:

- (59) lacastii uu keenayaa  
money+the he bring

'the money which he is bringing'

- (60) lacagtii ninku keenayaa  
money+the man+the bring  
'the money which the man is bringing'
- (61) lacagtii uu ninku keenayaa  
money+the he man+the bring  
'the money which he, the man, is bringing'
- (62) a. \*ninka lacagtii uu keenayaa  
man+the money+the he bring  
b. \*ninka uu lacagtii keenayaa  
man+the he money+the bring  
'the man who, he, is bringing the money'

In pairs like (61) and (62) 'double subjects' can occur in the former but not the latter; the difference being that in the latter the subject of the relative clause has been deleted by relativization. Hence one might extend the constraint to something like 'Weak subject pronouns cannot occur coreferentially with NPs+baa or relative clause headwords'. This is what essentially Antinucci and Puglielli (1980) have done, following Andrzejewski (1975), attempting to relate the two parts of the constraint by postulating baa being attached to NPs deleted by relativization. Thus only the first part of the constraint need be stated. In fact, as described earlier, there are serious problems with this approach. It will be claimed here that obligatorily deleting baa from relative clauses, though an admirably simple device, has little explanatory value and is in fact based on an overly superficial analysis of examples with 'double

subjects' like (56) & (61) above. In fact there is good evidence for attributing radically different structures to these two examples. As mentioned above, sentence (56) is an example of a topic structure where the topic occurs leftmost and outside the sentence. The relative clause (61) however is different: the full NP, the possible topic candidate, occurs within the sentence. This is demonstrably so since the weak pronoun uu 'he' which occurs to the left of this NP must be within the lower sentence. It is the case that these pronouns cannot occur outside a sentence, or as is usually said 'without a verb'. Hence they cannot occur as topics. See sentences (63) and (64) below where the behaviour of independent pronouns (Andrzejewski's 'substantive pronouns') and weak pronouns contrast in this area:

(63)     isagu wuu dhintay  
         he FOC+he died

'Him, he DIED'

(64)     \*uu wuu dhintay  
         he FOC+he died

'Him, he DIED'

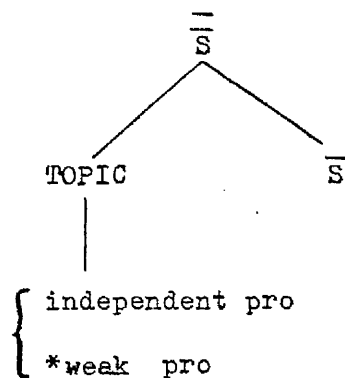
Sentence (64) is ungrammatical because a weak pronoun occurs outside the sentence as a topic, whereas (63) with an independent pronoun in this position is grammatical. In a similar way, weak pronouns cannot occur left of and outside a sentence as relative clause heads. See below for an example of this:

- (65) isaga yimi  
       he came  
       'he who came'

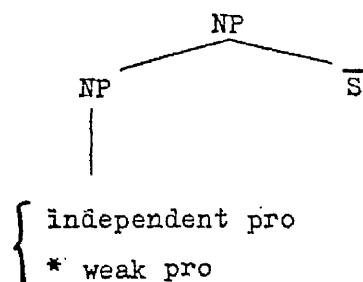
- (66) \*uu yimi  
       he came  
       'he who came'

Relative clause (66) is ungrammatical because a weak pronoun occurs as a relative clause head, while (67) shows that independent pronouns can occur in this position. Thus weak pronouns cannot occur in either of the structures below:

- (67) Topic Structure

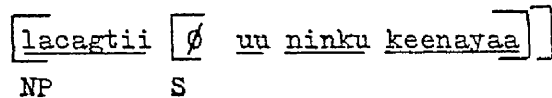


- (68) Relative Clause Structure



The generalization is that weak pronouns must occur within the boundaries of a sentence. The sentence boundaries in example (61) earlier are as shown in (69) below:

(69) Structure of (61)



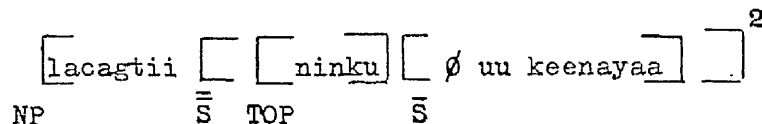
where  $\emptyset$  marks the position of the pronoun deleted by relativization. It is clear then that the NP ninku, unlike a topic, occurs within the sentence. Clearer evidence still for a distinction between this NP's role in (61) and a topic is that the former cannot occur in the left-most position characteristic of topics, e.g.

(70) \*lacagtii ninku uu keenayaa  
money+the man+the he bring

'the money which the man, he, is bringing'

whose structure is as follows:

(71) Structure of (70)



It will be claimed here that structures like (61) are examples, not of topic structures, but of sentences containing appositional NPs. The latter, whose behaviour differs in other ways from that of topics will

be discussed in the section of this study which deals in more detail with topics.<sup>3</sup> Here it is sufficient to distinguish between the two 'double subject' structures: the example of apposition in (61) and the topic structure in (56). Recognition of this distinction reduces the mystery of why one structure allows a weak subject pronoun while the other does not.

To summarize, in order to explain why sentences like those below in (72) and relative clauses like those in (73) are ungrammatical, Antinucci and Puglielli (1980) have attempted to collapse Andrzejewski's two constraints ('subjects + baa and weak subject pronouns cannot co-occur' & 'relative clause heads and weak subject pronouns cannot co-occur') into one, the former. To do this they assign baa to relative clauses then obligatorily delete all occurrences of it.

- (72) a. \*ninkii buu yimi  
man+the FOC+he came

'THE MAN came', 'It was THE MAN who came'

- b. \*Cali buu diyaariyey  
Ali<sub>1</sub> FOC+he<sub>1</sub>(it)prepared

'ALI prepared it', 'It was ALI who prepared it'

- c. \*dhakhtarkii buu dawwada diyaariyey  
doctor+the FOC+he medicine+the prepared

'THE DOCTOR prepared the medicine', 'It was THE DOCTOR who prepared the medicine'

- (73) a. \*ninkii uu yimi  
man+the he came  
  
'the man who came'
- b. \*dhakhtarkii uu dawwada diyaariyey  
doctor+the he medicine+the prepared  
  
'the doctor who prepared the medicine'

By contrast the present analysis accounts for this weak subject pronoun distribution automatically. Examples like those in (73) above are ungrammatical simply because while the structural description for relativization is met, this obligatory rule has not applied. The relativization rule argued for earlier is as follows:

(74) Interim Relativization Rule

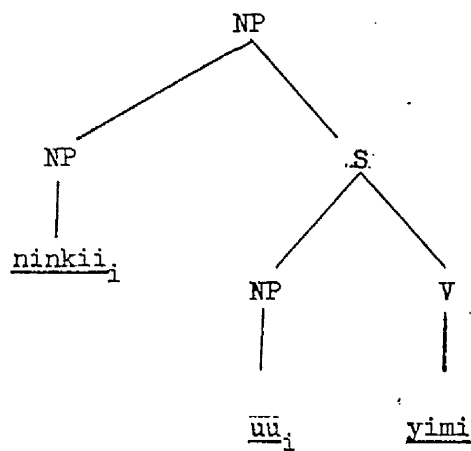
	X	[	NP <sub>i</sub>	[	Y PRO <sub>j</sub> Z	]	]	W	
		NP		S					
S.D.	1		2		3	4	5	6	OBLIG. ⇒
S.C.	1		2		3	∅	5	6	

condition: i=j

This rule will be accepted in following arguments. The underlying structure of (73a), for example, is as shown below:



(75) Structure of (73a)



This fits the structural description for the rule of relativization which, since the NP above is not a complex NP, is not blocked and should therefore delete the pronoun in the lower sentence. If it does then the grammatical clause (76) below is produced; if the rule is not applied then the ungrammatical clause (73a) earlier is produced:

(76) ninkii yimi  
 man+the came  
 'the man who came'

Thus there is no need for a special constraint to block relative clauses like (73a): they are the result of relativization failing to operate correctly.

More importantly, because of the rule of baa focus fronting this account automatically predicts the behaviour of weak subject pronouns in baa and ayaa focus structures. Note the following examples:

- (77)      tareen baa yimi  
            train FOCUS came

'A TRAIN came', 'It was A TRAIN that came'

- (78)      \*tareen buu yimi  
            train FOC+he came

'A TRAIN came', 'It was A TRAIN that came'

The ungrammaticality of (78) above has no explanation in current analyses: it must simply be accepted that subjects with baa cannot have a weak pronoun (see Antinucci and Puglielli's constraint earlier). In the present study, however, (78) is predicted as ungrammatical in exactly the same way as the relative clause in (73a). Baa structures, being derived from waxa clefts, are within the domain of the grammar of relative clauses. See the derivation below of example (78), and compare it with the derivation of the grammatical example (77) shown in (80):

- (79)      Ungrammatical derivation of (78)

1.      \*waxa uu yimi waa tareen

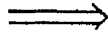
'The thing which it came was a train'

CLEFT REDUCTION       $\implies$

2. \*waxa uu yimi tareen

'What it came was a train'

BAA FOCUS FRONTING



3. \*tareen baa uu yimi

'A TRAIN it came', 'It was A TRAIN that it came'

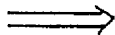
in each case the pronoun uu would be suffixed to the preceding item, giving wuxuu and buu.

(80) Grammatical derivation of (77)

1. waxa yimi waa tareen

'The thing which came was a train'

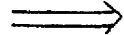
CLEFT REDUCTION



2. waxa yimi tareen

'What came was a train'

BAA FOCUS FRONTING



3. tareen baa yimi

'A TRAIN came', 'It was A TRAIN that came'

It can be seen that (78, is ungrammatical because relativization has failed to apply to the waxa relative clause in the underlying cleft: the

ungrammaticality of the full waxa cleft, the reduced cleft, and the baa focus structure all follow automatically from the ungrammaticality of the relative clause \*waxa uu(→ wuxuu)yimi 'the thing which it came', to which relativization has failed to apply as it should. There is no need in this account for two constraints to explain weak subject pronoun behaviour, nor for extra mechanisms to collapse the two constraints into one. The facts are predicted automatically: if an obligatory rule like relativization does not apply then the resulting structure is ungrammatical and all derived structures are correspondingly ungrammatical.

#### 4.2.3 Subject Marking

An argument based on subject marking on nouns, an extension of that used to justify Cleft Reduction earlier (3.2.1.), may be used as further support for the rule of baa/ayaa Focus Fronting. This is based on the fact that NPs focused by baa or ayaa are not subject marked when apparently subject. Compare, for example, the following:

(81) a. dukaankii nimanku doonayaan  
shop+the men+the look for  
[+subj]

b. \*dukaankii nimanka doonayaan  
shop+the men+the look for  
[-subj]

'the shop which the men are looking for'

(82) a. nimanku ma doonin  
men+the NEG look for  
[+subj]

b. \*nimanka ma doonin  
men+the NEG look for  
[-subj]

'The men did not look for it/did not want it'

(83) a. nimanka ayaa yimi  
men+the FOCUS came  
[+subj]

b. \*nimanku ayaa yimi  
men+the FOCUS came  
[-subj]

'THE MEN came', 'It was THE MEN who came'

In (81) & (82) the subject NP must be morphologically marked as such, while in (83) this rule is apparently reversed with the NP unable to be subject marked. As described earlier of clefts, this is usually accounted for in terms of a constraint; here, of baa and ayaa 'blocking' subject marking - see Andrzejewski (1979:37) for example.

As shown earlier, NPs focused in reduced waxa clefts behave in exactly the same way; in Chapter 3 earlier it was argued that (84) below be derived from (85) by a rule of Cleft Reduction.

- (84) waxa bilaabay dagaalka /\*dagaalku  
 thing+the began war+the war+the  
                                   [-subj]    [+subj]

'What began was THE WAR'

- (85) waxa bilaabay waa dagaalka /\*dagaalku  
                                   FOC(be)

'The thing which began was the war'

Thus the NP dagaalka 'the war' is not analysed as the subject of the verb bilaabay 'began' in (84), unlike other current analyses, but as the complement of the underlying cleft (85) and therefore understandably marked as non-subject. Now if baa focus structures are not related to waxa clefts like these then there is no explanation of the case phenomenon in (83): one must simply accept the idiosyncratic constraint that focus particles block subject marking. In the present analysis, on the other hand, the case phenomenon in baa structures is predicted by their derivation. Given the pair of sentences (84) and (85) above related by Cleft Reduction, one can predict that if the rule of Focus Fronting is applied to (84) the result will be sentence (86) below:

- (86) \*dagaalku/dagaalka ayaa bilaabay  
 'THE WAR began', 'It was THE WAR that began'

Here as in the structures from which this sentence derives, the NP dagaalka cannot be subject marked, not being the underlying subject of bilaabay 'began'. In short, the Focus Fronting rule predicts that no focused NP will be subject marked.

Note that it is not necessary to order subject marking rules before Cleft Reduction and Focus Fronting to account for the fact that in examples like (83) the focused NP does not become case marked as a derived subject. Earlier it was shown how headwords do not become the derived subjects of relative clauses after the deletion of a coreferent subject; this is assumed to be because the sentence boundary survives until subject marking. In a similar way the structure of (84) to which subject marking applies must be as shown below:

(87) Structure of (84) at subject marking

$$\left[ \begin{array}{c} \left[ \begin{array}{c} \text{waxa} \\ \text{S} \end{array} \left[ \begin{array}{c} \emptyset \\ \text{NP} \end{array} \right] \begin{array}{c} \text{bilaabay} \\ \text{S} \end{array} \end{array} \right] \left[ \begin{array}{c} \text{dagaalka} \\ \text{NP} \end{array} \right] \end{array} \right]$$

In other words, reduced clefts, like full waxa clefts, have no main verb, (the copula having been deleted). As described earlier, subject marking applies vacuously in the lower S of (84); and it does not apply at all in the main sentence because there is no verb.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, the structure of (86) to which subject marking applies is as below:

(88) Structure of (86) at subject marking

$$\left[ \begin{array}{c} \left[ \begin{array}{c} \text{dagaalka} \\ \text{S} \end{array} \left[ \begin{array}{c} \text{ayaa} \\ \text{NP} \end{array} \left[ \begin{array}{c} \emptyset \\ \text{S} \end{array} \right] \begin{array}{c} \text{bilaabay} \\ \text{NP} \end{array} \end{array} \right] \end{array} \right]$$

Here again there is no main sentence verb, and ayaa, replacing waxa, is not subject marked, being outside the relative clause's lower sentence.

It is worth noting that the constituent structure shown in (88) differs radically from that implicit in the work of Andrzejewski. There it is generally assumed (though never actually argued for) that baa and ayaa are part of the focused NP or at least form a unit with that NP; in (88) the focus particle, ayaa, forms a unit with the verb and is in fact a proform of waxa in the relative clause. To put it simply, Andrzejewski's implicit constituent structure is as in (89) below, while that suggested here is in (90):

(89)        [dagaalka ayaa] [bilaabay]

(90)        [dagaalka] [ayaa bilaabay]

One argument which supports the second of the above concerns deletion under identity. As described earlier, in a disjunction the second of repeated non-focused elements, either NPs or verbs, are generally deletable. Thus in (91) below, where verbs are focused and the same NP repeated, it is the second occurrence of the NP which may be deleted:

(91) a.     ama Amina way soo iibsan doontaa ama Amina way soo kiraysan  
              or A. Foc+she(it)buy will                      or A. Foc+she(it)hire  
              doontaa  
              will

'Either Amina will buy it or Amina will hire it'



- (91) b. ama Amina way soo iibsan doontaa ama  $\emptyset$  way soo kiraysan doontaa  
 or A. Foc+she (it)buy will or Foc+she(it) hire will  
 'Either Amina will buy it or will hire it'

If, on the other hand, NPs are focused and an unfocused verb repeated, the second verb will tend to be deleted. The interesting question is - what happens to the focus particle? If it is part of the undeletable focused NP, one would expect it to remain; if, as suggested here, it forms a unit with the verb, one might expect it to be deleted with that verb. As (92) below shows, the latter is true, tending to support the present constituent structure analysis:<sup>5</sup>

- (92) a. ma Maxamed baa tegay mise Cabdi baa tegay ?  
 Q M. FOC went or+Q A. FOC went  
 'Was it MOHAMMED who went or was it ABDI who went ?'
- b. ma Maxamed baa tegay mise Cabdi  $\emptyset$  ?  
 'Was it MOHAMMED who went or ABDI ?'
- c. \* ma Maxamed baa tegay mise Cabdi baa  $\emptyset$  ?  
 'Was it MOHAMMED who went or ABDI ?'

It might appear strange that such structure as shown in (88) survives i.e. that Somali should not have pruning rules to 'tidy up' the structure after the deletion involved in relativization and cleft reduction. Note however that the morphological evidence is strong: in a language with clear morphologically marked cases (see Andrzejewski 1979)

we find sentences like (84) & (86) which have no subjects. As far as the grammatical rules are concerned, there is no subject NP in sentences like (84) & (86); the derivation provided here and the resultant structure shown in (87) & (88) provides an explanation for this.

The central point of this argument remains that the case phenomenon discussed here is automatically accounted for in an analysis containing a rule of Focus Fronting, while other accounts must introduce another constraint - that baa and ayaa in some inexplicable way block subject marking - which wrongly emphasizes the irregularity of focus structures.

#### 4.2.4 Negative Particle

So far I have shown how the Focus Fronting rule simplifies the description of verbal inflection, subject pronouns, and subject marking; this section will demonstrate how this rule simplifies the account of negation.

In main sentences one negates a proposition in Somali by using the word ma 'not' and a negative verbal form. Thus in each of the following pairs the second sentence negates the first:

- (93) a. qof waliba wuxuu u yimi inuu qaato shahaadadiisii  
 person each what+he for came that+he pick up degree+his  
 'Everybody came to pick up his degree'

- (93) b. qofna u muu iman inuu qaato shahaadadiisii<sup>6</sup>  
 person+no for ma+uu that+he pick up degree+his  
 not+he came  
 'Nobody came to pick up his degree'

- (94) a. wargad baa maanta timi  
letter FOC today came  
  
'A LETTER came today'

- b. wargadi ma iman maanta  
letter not came today
- 'A letter did not arrive today'

In embedded sentences a proposition is negated by a different negative word, aan 'not', and a negative verb form. Note the following examples of in 'that' clauses in (95-96) and of relative clauses in (97):

- (95) a. wuxuu ii sheegay inuu tegay  
what+he to+me told that+he went  
  
'He told me that he went'
- b. wuxuu ii sheegay inaanu tegin  
in+aan+uu  
what+he to+me told that+not+he went  
  
'He told me that he did not go'
- (96) a. inay i aragtay waa hubaal  
that+he me saw FOC(be)certainty  
  
'It is certain that she saw me'

- (96) a. inay i aragtay waa hubaal  
that+he me saw FOC(be)certainty  
'It is certain that she saw me'

- (96) b. inaanay i arkin waa hubaal -  
in+aan+ay  
 that+not+she me saw FOC(be)certainty  
 'It is certain that she did not see me'

- (97) a. meeshaad tagtay waa Marka  
place+the+you went FOC(be)Merca  
 'The place you went to is Merca'

- b. meeshaanad tegin waa Marka  
meel+ta+aan+aad  
 place+the+not+you went FOC(be)Merca  
 'The place you did not go to is Merca'

The interaction between focus and negation is such that both the sentence with NP focus in (98a) below and that with verb focus in (98b) may both be negated by (98c):

- (98) a. wargaddii baa timi  
 letter+the FOC came  
 'THE LETTER came'
- b. wargaddii way timi  
 letter+the FOC+she came  
 'The letter, it CAME'
- c. wargaddii ma iman  
 letter+the not came  
 'The letter did not come'

Sentence (98c) merely contradicts the proposition that both (98a) & (98b) share i.e. 'the letter came'. However, the NP warqaddii may be focused in a negative reply as in (99) below:

- (99)      warqaddii baan iman  
                  baa+aan  
          letter+the FOC+not came  
          'THE LETTER did not come', 'It was not THE LETTER which came'

In (99) above the interpretation is that something might have come but it was not the letter. It seems that (99) is the negative counterpart of the baa focus sentence (98a) where the speaker assumes that something came and asserts that it was the letter. The important point here is that it is the embedded sentence negative word aan which is used in these negative baa sentences. In the present analysis this is regular, being predicted by the following derivation of (99):

- (100)      Derivation of sentence (99)
- a.    waxaan iman waa warqaddii  
          waxa+aan  
          thing+the+not came FOC(be)letter+the  
          'The thing which did not come was the letter'
- CLEFT REDUCTION     $\Rightarrow$
- b.    waxaan iman warqaddii  
          what+not came letter+the  
          'What did not come was THE LETTER'
- FOCUS FRONTING       $\Rightarrow$

- c. warqaddii baan iman  
           baa+aan  
 letter+the FOC+not came

'THE LETTER did not come', 'It was THE LETTER which did not come'

The relative clause in the underlying cleft(100a), waxa+aan iman 'the thing which did not come', is a regular negative relative clause and via the above derivation automatically produces the negative baa sentence (99).

If however, one does not assume the existence of the rules in (100) above, then one is forced simply to observe that the negative word aan occurs instead of ma in all embedded sentences and in main sentences with a baa focused NP. Since these two types of structure are not related in such an analysis, the presence of aan in both is purely coincidental. In short, NP focus structures are irregular in their choice of negative word.

Note that Antinucci's solution for other similarities between relative clauses and baa structures, namely postulating a deleted occurrence of baa on the relative deleted NP, will not work here. In that approach baa would be said to trigger the word aan both in main sentences and in relative clauses. However, the negative word aan also occurs in non-relative embedded sentences, e.g. the that-clauses in (95) & (96) above. In these other clauses, as in relative clauses, baa never occurs but in them, unlike relatives, there is no deletion in the derivation which can be said to obligatorily involve the deletion of baa. In an analysis without Focus Fronting there is no way to relate the occurrences of aan 'not' and a generalization about negative words is missed.

### 4.3 Conclusion

This chapter has provided arguments for a rule of Focus Fronting, whereby baa and ayaa focus structures are derived from underlying waxa clefts. It was shown how there is strong morphological and syntactic evidence for this rule; and how a great part of this evidence concerns the relatedness of baa and ayaa focus to the grammar of relative clauses. The derivation suggested here predicts this relatedness while other accounts have to resort to inexplicable constraints to disguise these shared characteristics. Most importantly, the present account helps to dispel the notion that NP focus is an area of extreme morphological and syntactic irregularity: in each area of the grammar discussed, the irregularity is a result of failing to recognize this important relation between NP focus and relative clauses.

It must be noted that these arguments about Somali NP focus recall similar arguments about English focus in, for example, Chomsky (1970b), G. Lakoff (1971), and as summarised in Jackendoff (1972). There Jackendoff prefers the second (Chomsky's) of two analyses of English focus: the first identifies focused elements as predicates of underlying clefts; the second has focus assignment at the level of surface structure where a feature F on an element triggers the relevant phonological and semantic rules without affecting syntactic structure.

The results of this debate have less relevance to Somali than might at first appear, for while the reasons for postulating underlying clefts for English focus, as in G. Lakoff (1971), were largely semantic, Somali, as has been shown, has a wealth of morphological and syntactic evidence to link NP focus with an underlying structure involving clefts.

Nevertheless, it may be worthwhile showing briefly that Jackendoff's major objections to an analysis of underlying clefts are invalid for Somali. Firstly, there is his argument that English elements which cannot occur as predicates of a clefts - prepositions, verbs, etc. - may still be focused. This is not relevant for Somali since it is only NP focus which it is suggested be derived from clefts. As will be seen in the next chapter, verb focus in Somali is radically different in structure, as has always been recognised.

Secondly, as mentioned earlier, NP focus does not occur in subordinate clauses in Somali. Thus Jackendoff's claim that deriving focus within relative clauses from underlying clefts would mean violating complex NP constraint (Ross 1967) is not valid for Somali.

Similarly, since it is only NPs that may be focused by baa and ayaa, and hence derived from clefts, the argument that elements focusable in English are not deep structure constituents is weakened. It would only apply in Somali, and suggest focus to be a surface phenomenon, if surface focused noun phrases could be found which were not noun phrases in underlying structure. I know of no such structures.

Lastly, Jackendoff forwards an argument, following Chomsky (1970b), based on the assumption that there is a relationship between certain yes-no questions and corresponding negative replies such that the focus of a possible negative reply identifies the focus of the original question. Thus, it is argued, sentence (101) below would have, in a cleft analysis, the underlying structure in (102), which correctly predicts the possible reply (103). However, since (104) & (105) are also possible replies, a cleft analysis is impossible since the focus



is not equivalent to the cleft predicate:

- (101) Was it a man with a red SHIRT he saw ?  
 (102) the one [ he saw wh-someone ] was a man with a red shirt  
 (103) No, it was a WOMAN  
 (104) No, it was a man with a GREEN shirt  
 (105) No, it was a man with a red TIE

In (103) the whole of the cleft predicate is negated and, according to Jackendoff, thus identified as the focus by (103). In (104) & (105) however, parts of the cleft predicate are negated and thus only parts of it are identified as the focus: if the cleft predicate is equal to the surface focus then (102) cannot underlie the statement corresponding to (101).

The corresponding Somali set is given below:

- (106) ma nin shaadh cas leh buu arkay ?  
 Q man shirt red had FOC+he saw  
 'Was it A MAN WITH A RED SHIRT he saw ?'  
 (107) maya, naag buu arkay  
 no woman FOC+he saw  
 'No, he saw A WOMAN  
 (108) maya, nin shaadh cagaaran leh buu arkay  
 no man shirt green had FOC+he saw  
 'No, he saw A MAN WITH A GREEN SHIRT'  
 (109) maya, nin taay cas leh buu arkay  
 no man tie red had FOC+he saw  
 'No, he saw A MAN WITH A RED TIE'

These examples show that Somali NP focus applies at the level of the highest NP and does not pick out subordinate NPs in, for these examples, a relative clause. In these sentences the focus in the reply will always correspond to the predicate of the cleft. As shown below, it cannot apply to a subpart:

- (110)     \*maya, nin shaadh cagaaran baa leh uu arkay  
           'No, he saw a man with A GREEN SHIRT'

- (111)     \*maya, nin taay cas baa leh uu arkay  
           'No he saw a man with A RED TIE'

In fact, in order to focus such elements a Somali speaker must restructure the sentence so that the smaller NP to be focused such as 'a green shirt' occurs as the whole of the cleft predicate and so is the highest NP. Thus the true parallel to the English (104) is (112) below:

- (112)     maya, ninkii uu arkay shaadh cagaaran buu leh  
           no    man+the he saw shirt   green    FOC+he had  
           No, the man he saw had A GREEN SHIRT

Even here the focused element must be an NP, 'a green shirt', and cannot be simply the adjective 'green'. Since the focus always corresponds to the cleft predicate, the Chomsky-Jackendoff objection to a cleft derivation is invalid for Somali. In fact, this can be turned into an argument for the cleft analysis in Somali, since this derivation correctly

predicts the facts discussed here i.e. that the focus always corresponds to the predicate of the underlying waxa cleft.

In conclusion then, the objections to a cleft analysis of focus in English are invalid in Somali, and do not undercut the weight of grammatical evidence for a rule of Focus Fronting.

#### 4.4 The Rules

##### 4.4.1. Focus Fronting

This is the rule that has been argued for in most of this chapter. It takes the NP focused by being complement of a reduced waxa cleft and shifts it to the beginning of the sentence. The rule also substitutes baa or ayaa for waxa. The rule is formulated as follows:

##### (113) Focus Fronting

	X	S	[	[	NP	<u>waxa</u>	Y	V	]	NP	]	Z	
S.D.	1				2	3	4	5	6				OPT. ⇒
S.C.	1	5			<u>baa</u>	3	4	∅	6				

Elements X and Z in the structural description are topic and 'after-thought' topic respectively, as discussed later, and these are outside the sentence and unaffected by this rule.

The rule is optional. What seems to be a conditioning factor in its application is the length of the focused NP: the longer the NP the less likely the fronting rule will be applied. The extreme case is long lists, which are not usually fronted. This will be assumed here to be a pragmatic factor and outside the domain of syntactic rules. Fronting a long list would mean forcing the listener to memorize a series of items not knowing what <sup>was</sup> / going to be said of them. I will assume that there are conversational constraints that will influence a speaker towards structure (114) below rather than (115):

(114) what I don't like are A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J.

(115) A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J I don't like.

The rule cannot apply to clefts which have not undergone Cleft Reduction (see Chapt.3); the structural description prevents it operating incorrectly on (116) below to produce (117):

(116) waxaan doonayaa waa lacag  
thing+the+I want FOC(be)money

'The thing I want is money'

(117) \*lacag baan doonayaa waa

'I want MONEY', 'It's MONEY that I want'

Nor can the rule apply to embedded clefts: as described in the next chapter, the particle waa is restricted to main sentences, preventing [ NP waa NP ] equational structures occurring in embedded sentences.

Thus the clefts which are the input to the fronting rule are also limited to main sentences. The structural description of the rule does not allow it to apply to embedded clefts like (118) below to produce the ungrammatical (119):

- (118) wuu ogyahay in waxaan doonayaa lacag ah  
 FOC+he knows that thing+the+I want money is  
 'he KNOWS that the thing I want is money'

- (119) \*wuu ogyahay in lacag baan doonayaa ah  
 'he KNOWS that I want MONEY'

The sentence in the structural description of the rule is the verbless [NP NP] structure while the embedded sentence in (118) above is of the structure [NP NP V] .

#### 4.4.2 Relativization

The rule suggested in this chapter for relativization is as follows:

#### (120) Relativization

$$X \left[ \begin{array}{c} \text{NP}_a \\ \text{NP} \end{array} \right. Y \left[ \begin{array}{c} \text{NP} \\ +\text{PRO}_b \\ \text{S} \end{array} \right. Z \quad V \left. \right] W$$

S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	OBLIG. →
S.C.	1	2	3	∅	5	6	7	

A condition on this rule is that items 2 and 4 must be coreferential for the clause to be well-formed. The rule must be obligatory to block ungrammatical structures like (121)-(123) below:

(121)    \*gabadhii ay timi  
          girl+the she came  
          'the girl who she came'

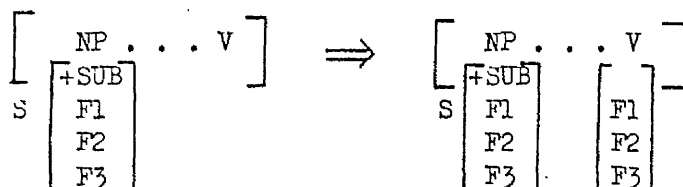
(122)    \*libaaxii uu dhintay  
          lion+the it died  
          'the lion which it died'

(123)    nimankii ay cuntadii keenay  
          men+the they food+the brought  
          'the men who they brought the food'

#### 4.4.3      Concord Rules

##### 1      Normal Concord

I will assume here that subject-verb concord is produced by a rule copying grammatical features from a subject NP onto its verb, as is shown schematically below:<sup>7</sup>



I will also assume the inclusion of special rules to ensure that in conjoined subjects the higher NP has the correct features to trigger plural concord; see the discussion of feature computation and raising rules in Vanek (1977).<sup>8</sup>

The set of concord distinctions marked on verbs in Somali is seven and these are as follows:

1st	person	singular
2nd	"	"
3rd	"	" masculine
3rd	"	" feminine
1st	"	plural
2nd	"	plural
3rd	"	plural

These can be described with five binary grammatical features: third person  $[\pm 3]$ , second person  $[\pm 2]$ , masculine  $[\pm \text{MASC}]$ , feminine  $[\pm \text{FEM}]$ , plural  $[\pm \text{PLUR}]$ . Given the redundancy rules in (124) below, the concord possibilities can be given the feature classification shown in (125):

(125)

$[+\text{PLUR}]$	$\longrightarrow$	$\begin{bmatrix} -\text{MASC} \\ -\text{FEM} \end{bmatrix}$
$[-3]$	$\longrightarrow$	$\begin{bmatrix} -\text{MASC} \\ -\text{FEM} \end{bmatrix}$
$[\alpha \text{MASC}]$	$\longrightarrow$	$[-\alpha \text{FEM}]$
$[+3]$	$\longrightarrow$	$[-2]$

(125)	$\begin{bmatrix} -3 \\ -2 \\ -\text{PLUR} \end{bmatrix}$	=	1st person singular
	$\begin{bmatrix} -3 \\ +2 \\ -\text{PLUR} \end{bmatrix}$	=	2nd " "
	$\begin{bmatrix} +3 \\ +\text{MASC} \\ -\text{PLUR} \end{bmatrix}$	=	3rd " " maculine
	$\begin{bmatrix} +3 \\ -\text{MASC} \\ -\text{PLUR} \end{bmatrix}$	=	3rd " " feminine
	$\begin{bmatrix} -3 \\ -2 \\ +\text{PLUR} \end{bmatrix}$	=	1st person plural
	$\begin{bmatrix} -3 \\ +2 \\ +\text{PLUR} \end{bmatrix}$	=	2nd " "
	$\begin{bmatrix} +3 \\ +\text{PLUR} \end{bmatrix}$	=	3rd " "

Given these, the rule of subject-verb concord is as shown below:

(126) Subject-Verb Concord

X	$\begin{bmatrix} \text{NP} & \text{Y} & \text{V} \end{bmatrix}$	Z
S	$\begin{bmatrix} +\text{SUB} \\ \alpha 3 \\ \alpha 2 \\ \alpha \text{PLUR} \\ \alpha \text{MASC} \end{bmatrix}$	

S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	OBLIG. $\Rightarrow$
S.C.	1	2	3	4	5	
				$\begin{bmatrix} \alpha 3 \\ \alpha 2 \\ \alpha \text{PLUR} \\ \alpha \text{MASC} \end{bmatrix}$		



This rule describes concord in sentences with a single positive verb; I will avoid going into the details of agreement with negative verbs and auxiliaries since these are exhaustively described in Andrzejewski (1968, 1969). In both cases modifications to the above rule would be necessary, involving areas which are outside the present area of study.

## 2 Extra-Sentential Concord

The above concord rule needs to be augmented by the convention that if the subject NP has been deleted, by relativization, for example, so that the sentence has the structure

$$\begin{bmatrix} S \\ \begin{bmatrix} \text{NP} \\ +\text{SUB} \end{bmatrix} \end{bmatrix} \quad X \quad V$$

then the verb will have the features  $[+3, +\text{MASC}, -\text{PLUR}]$  i.e. will show third person masculine singular concord.

Further, the rules have to cope with those cases of extra-sentential concord described earlier. To recap, first person and feminine nouns and pronouns which are coreferential with a deleted subject can, from outside the sentence, trigger concord on the verb. To describe this one needs something like the two optional rules given below:

## (127) Extra-Sentential Concord (1)

$$\begin{array}{ccccc}
 X & \left\{ \begin{array}{c} \text{NP} \\ [+3] \\ [-\text{MASC}] \\ [-3] \\ [-2] \\ \alpha\text{PLUR} \end{array} \right\} & Y & \left[ \begin{array}{c} [\emptyset] \\ \text{NP} \\ [+SUB] \end{array} \right] & Z \quad V \quad W
 \end{array}$$

S.D.      1          2          3          4          5      6      7

S.C.      1          2          3          4          5      6      7

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{c} \alpha 3 \\ \alpha\text{MASC} \\ \alpha 3 \\ \alpha 2 \\ \alpha\text{PLUR} \end{array} \right\}$$

OPT.  $\Rightarrow$

Condition: 2 = 4

## (128) Extra-Sentential Concord (2)

$$\begin{array}{ccccc}
 X & \left[ \begin{array}{c} [\emptyset] \\ \text{NP} \\ [+SUB] \end{array} \right] & Y & V & Z \quad \left\{ \begin{array}{c} \text{NP} \\ [+3] \\ [-\text{MASC}] \\ [-3] \\ [-2] \\ \alpha\text{PLUR} \end{array} \right\} W
 \end{array}$$

S.D.      1          2          3          4          5      6      7

S.C.      1          2          3          4          5      6      7

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{c} \alpha 3 \\ \alpha\text{MASC} \\ \alpha 3 \\ \alpha 2 \\ \alpha\text{PLUR} \end{array} \right\}$$

OPT.  $\Rightarrow$

Condition: 2 = 6

The condition for both rules is that the NP governing concord must be coreferential with the deleted subject i.e. for (127)  $2 = 4$ , and for (128)  $2 = 6$ .

The rules will apply whenever their structural descriptions are met; in practice this means that either (127) or (128) will apply, but there seems no need for an extra mechanism to formalize this disjunction.

Both rules are given as optional; this is true of (128) always, but rule (127) is obligatory when terms 2-6 constitute a relative clause, as shown below:

(129) ~~\*annaga oo vimi~~  
~~we and came~~  
 [+3 masc.sing.]  
 'we, who came'

(130) annaga oo nimi  
~~came~~  
 [+1st per.pl.]  
 'we, who came'

This must then be a condition on rule (127).

## CHAPTER FOUR:

FOOTNOTES.

<sup>1</sup>See Chapter 5, section 4.2 (footnote 5) for presentation of these pronouns. As described there Somali weak pronouns, as in other East Cushitic languages, have zero realisations of third person weak object pronouns. Therefore it is clearer for the reader if subject pronouns are chosen to exemplify arguments, as here. However, such arguments will hold for both subject and object pronouns.

<sup>2</sup>The impossibility of structures like ( 71 ) will be taken as proof that the phrase structure rule  $NP \rightarrow NP - \bar{S}$  is not a rule of Somali grammar, unlike the rule  $NP \rightarrow NP - S$ , i.e. that topic structures cannot occur as restricting sentences under NP.

<sup>3</sup>See Chapter 7, section 3.5 for further examples of the distinction between topic structure and apposition.

<sup>4</sup>This needs qualification: note that subject marking applies if the copula has been deleted but waa remains. Thus in both of the following there is a subject marked NP:

ninki askari wuu yahay  
man+the soldier waa+he is  
+SUB  
'The man is a soldier.'

ninku waa askari  
+SUB  
'The man is a soldier.'

although the verb 'to be' has been deleted in the second sentence. In structures like ( 87 ) though, Cleft Reduction has applied to also delete waa, and rules of subject marking in this case cannot apply. Since waa always occurs with the full verb 'to be', it would prove simplest to make subject marking conditional on the presence of waa in main sentences.

<sup>5</sup> Similarly, in replies to WH-questions often just the focused NP occurs. So in reply to (1) below both (2) and (3) are possible but not (4):

- |     |                                          |                 |
|-----|------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| (1) | <u>yaa yeelay</u><br>who(it)did          | 'WHO did it ?'  |
| (2) | <u>Axmed baa yeelay</u><br>A. FOC(it)did | 'AHMED did it.' |
| (3) | <u>Axmed</u>                             | 'AHMED.'        |
| (4) | * <u>Axmed baa</u>                       | 'AHMED.'        |

If the verb does not appear, then neither can baa or ayaa.

<sup>6</sup> Note that NPs are negated by suffixing -na, as shown by qofna in this example. Thus we have for example

<u>qof</u>	'person'	<u>qofna</u>	'nobody'
<u>cid</u>	"	<u>cidna</u>	"

This does not affect sentence negation, i.e. it occurs in addition to sentence negation.

<sup>7</sup> Since, as described in Chapter 1, this study does not employ the category VP, 'subject' will be syntactically defined, not as that NP directly dominated by S, but as the leftmost NP within the sentence at underlying structure. This involves making the claim that in underlying structure word order is linked to functional status, and that basically Somali is an S-O-V language; as discussed in Chapter 2. It is worth noting here that there are no derived subjects in Somali i.e. that the underlying subject always corresponds to the surface subject, with no structures similar, for example, to Passive in other languages. The closest Somali comes to derived subjects is the output of Focus Fronting in examples like (1) below:

- |     |                                               |                                               |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| (1) | <u>nimankii ayaa yimi</u><br>men+the FOC came | 'THE MEN came,' 'It was THE MEN<br>who came.' |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|

but as described in this chapter, the NP nimankii is not subject marked nor governs concord with the verb.

<sup>8</sup>It would also simplify the statement of concord if similar rules ensured that the NP dominating a relative clause displays the features of the head NP. The concord rule presented here assumes such a feature raising rule.

## Chapter 5

Focus Fronting and WH-Movement

## 5.1. Introduction

The previous chapter presented arguments for the rule of Focus Fronting by which, as described there, an NP may be moved to the beginning of its sentence. This chapter discusses the relevance of the rule to current attempts to formulate a general cross-linguistic rule of NP movement. In particular this involves relating Focus Fronting to the rule of WH-movement or 'move- $\alpha$ ' described by Chomsky (1977, 1981).

This chapter therefore discusses the major characteristics of WH-movement and describes how the Focus Fronting rule differs in nearly every respect. The conclusion reached is that if WH-movement is a general rule type, i.e. consists of similar rules in several languages, Focus Fronting does not belong to this rule type.

Moreover, it will be demonstrated that a WH-movement rule cannot be said to apply in the derivation of WH-questions -- an area where such a rule might be expected to apply if present in the grammar of Somali. The general conclusion reached is that WH-movement does not exist in Somali syntax.

## 5.2 WH-Movement Rules

In order to demonstrate that Focus Fronting is not related to WH-movement rules it is necessary to give a brief outline of the characteristics of the latter. This background will also clarify the later discussion about the relationship between Focus Fronting and WH-question formation in Somali.

Since the discussion of WH-movement has been so central to the development of transformational-generative syntax over recent years, the whole area is well covered in the literature, most notably in Chomsky's 'On Wh-Movement' (Chomsky 1977). Given this, the present description can profitably kept brief with only the most salient features picked out.

In what follows firstly the motivation for a rule of WH-movement will be very briefly discussed and then the major characteristics of the rule itself. The description will concentrate, for clarity, on WH-question formation, a principal application of the WH-movement rule. The discussion is at first in terms of English since it was in the description of English syntax that the rule was developed.



### 5.2.1 Motivation for WH-Movement

Given an example like ( 1 ) below:

( 1 ) Which teacher did you meet \_ yesterday ?

the arguments for a rule of WH-movement (or WH-fronting) are based on the fact that the WH-item, 'which teacher' in ( 1 ) above, seems to belong syntactically to the position marked \_ , despite occurring at the beginning of the sentence. The arguments are standard in the generative grammar literature; Radford (1981:146-179), for example, provides a useful description. For our purposes here they may be summarised briefly. It is usually argued that to generate WH-questions directly in the base by phrase structure rules would complicate, and in some cases make impossible, the statement of verb subcategorisation, case marking, verb agreement, reflexivisation, and other grammatical processes. For example, note the following sentences:

( 2 ) She will bring the report to the hotel.

( 3 ) \*She will bring to the hotel.

( 4 ) She will sleep at the hotel.

( 5 ) \*She will sleep a nap at the hotel.

( 6 ) What will she bring \_ to the hotel?

( 7 ) \*What will she sleep \_ at the hotel ?

The subcategorisation rules for transitive and intransitive verbs will state that 'bring' must be followed by an NP, hence ( 3 ) is ungrammatical, while 'sleep' must not, and hence ( 5 ) is ungrammatical. However, the question ( 6 ) above, despite not being followed by an NP, is grammatical. Similarly question ( 7 ) is ungrammatical even though the verb 'sleep' does not have an NP following it. In other words, both verbs are understood to have an object NP even though there is no NP following the verb.

In ( 6 ) and ( 7 ) for the purposes of subcategorisation the WH-item at the beginning of the sentence behaves as if it were in the position marked \_ . Given the potential distance of the WH-item from this position, it is not possible to modify the statement of subcategorisation for each verb in order to capture this fact. In any case, listing the possibility of the influence of a preceding WH-item for each verb would be a cumbersome and unenlightening mechanism for capturing the facts of ( 2 ) - ( 7 ) above. A transformational rule moving the WH-item from the position marked \_ to the beginning of the sentence, it is argued, can correctly predict the facts while preserving neat subcategorisation rules.

Similar arguments can be forwarded on the basis of sentences like ( 8 ) to ( 10 ) below:

( 8 ) Which teacher do you think \_ teaches best ?

- ( 9 ) Who-did he say \_ killed himself ?
- ( 10 ) How much advantage did they take \_ of her absence ?

In ( 8 ) the rules of verb agreement, responsible for assuring that the inflectional form 'teaches' rather than '\*teach' occurs, operate as if the WH-item were in the position \_ . Similarly, the rule governing reflexivisation in ( 9 ), and the description of idiom chunks like 'take advantage of', as in ( 10 ), are simplified if the WH-item is assumed to occur in the position marked \_ then subsequently moved. See Radford (1981) for details of these and related arguments.

The motivation for WH-movement emerging from these arguments is that such a rule allows a unified description of a phenomenon whose description would otherwise be scattered as a list of exceptions and complications to different rules. For the examples given here one might informally state this by saying that the WH-NP at the beginning of the question seems to 'belong' grammatically to an empty position later in the sentence.

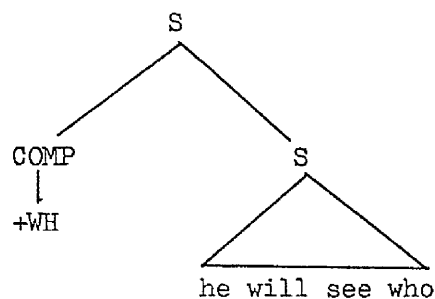
### 5.2.2 The Rule of WH-Movement

In Chomsky's work the WH-movement rule moves the WH-item leftwards out of the sentence and Chomsky-adjoins it to the COMP constituent. Thus sentence ( 11 ) below has the structures ( 12 )

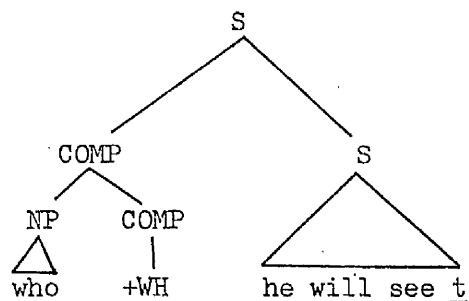
and ( 13 ) before and after WH-movement (ignoring for reasons of exposition subject-auxiliary inversion and other details):

( 11 ) Who will he see ?

( 12 )



( 13 )



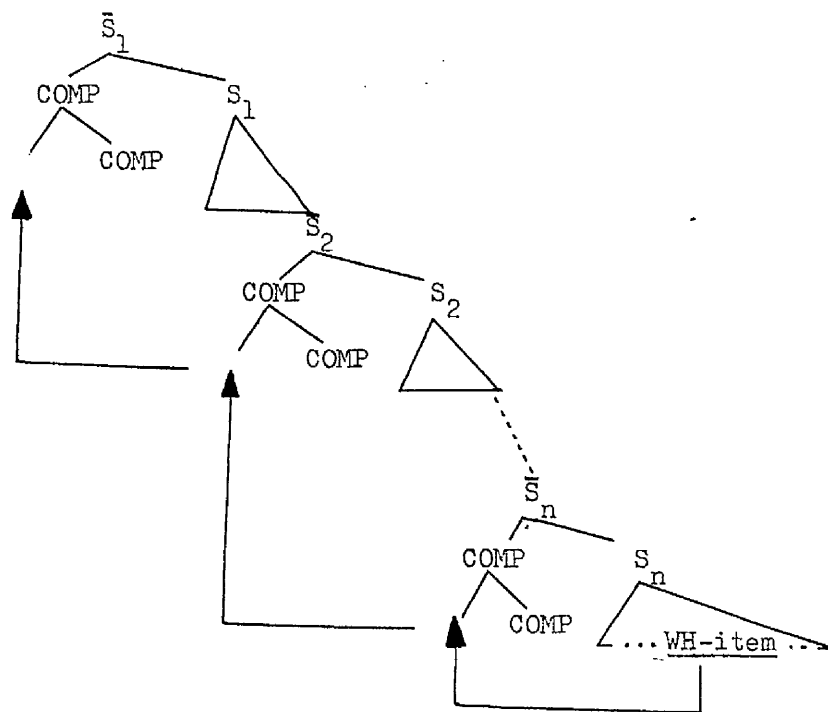
(where t is the trace, i.e. the coindexed empty node of the same category and features, left by the WH-word)

This rule will operate in both main and embedded sentences in the same way with the COMP node being filled by a complementiser or not, as in ( 11 ) above, depending on the type of sentence involved.

Since in English the WH-item may be moved to the beginning

of a sentence across a great many, and in principle potentially infinite, number of clause boundaries, the rule is said to operate successive cyclically as shown below:

( 14 )



The controversy between this successively cyclic application of WH-movement and the analysis of it as a single unbounded movement rule fronting a WH-item across an unlimited number of clause boundaries ( see for example Bresnan 1976), is not crucial for the present discussion; here, a cyclic application will be assumed.

To these features of the rule may be added Chomsky's own list of the general characteristics of WH-movement (Chomsky 1977:86). This list, which concentrates on how the operation

of the rule relates to postulated conditions on the operation of transformational rules, is as follows:

( 15 ) Characteristics of WH-Movement

1. The rule leaves a gap.
2. Where there is a bridge (i.e. a matrix VP containing one of a specific subclass of verbs), NPs can
  - a) be extracted out of tensed clauses; thereby apparently violating the Propositional Island Condition (PIC).
  - b) be extracted across specified subjects; thereby apparently violating the Specified Subject Condition (SSC).
  - c) be extracted across several cyclic nodes; thereby apparently violating the Subjacency Condition.
3. The rule observes the Complex Noun Phrase Constraint (CNPC) (see Ross 1967).
4. The rule observes the WH-island constraints (see Chomsky 1973).

The conditions referred to are discussed in the sources given above and in Chomsky (1977), Bach and Horn (1976), and Bach (1977).

These conditions are worth listing again here since they are essential

to a discussion of WH-movement:

(16 ) Complex NP Constraint (following Ross 1967)

No rule can move an element out of a complex noun phrase,  
i.e. an item X cannot be moved out of S in

$[_{NP} \dots N - [_S \dots X \dots] \dots]$

(17 ) WH-Island Constraint

No rule can move an element from a clause introduced by  
a WH-phrase e.g. who, what, whether.

(18 ) Propositional Island Condition (following Chomsky 1977)

No rule can involve X and Y in the following, where  
is a finite clause (tensed-S):

$\dots X \dots [_\alpha \dots Y \dots] \dots X \dots$

In terms of movement rules: no rule can move an element  
Y to a position X or vice versa.

(19 ) Specified Subject Condition (following Chomsky 1977)

No rule can involve X and Y in the following, where  
is an S or NP containing a specified subject i.e. a  
subject not containing Y and not controlled by X:

$\dots X \dots [_\alpha \dots Y \dots] \dots X \dots$

Again in terms of movement rules: only the subject may be  
moved in or out of  $\alpha$ .

## ( 20 ) Subjacency Condition (following Chomsky 1977)

In the following a cyclic rule cannot move a phrase from position Y to position X, or conversely:

...X... [ $\alpha$  ... [ $\beta$  ...Y... ] ... ] ...X...

where  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  are cyclic nodes (i.e. at least S and NP<sup>1</sup>).

In other words a constituent cannot be moved across more than one NP or S boundary in any rule application.<sup>2</sup>

This then is the general form of the WH-movement rule. In earlier work it was described as applying in the formation of, for example, WH-questions and relative clauses in English. In more recent work the emphasis has been on generalising the rule so that its scope is widened both within English grammar, and as a cross linguistic syntactic rule. Chomsky, for example, has forwarded the hypothesis that a WH-movement type of rule applies in the formation of English structures including comparatives, topicalisations, clefts, infinitival relatives, and object deletion in complements of adjectives like easy (see Chomsky 1977). In arguing for a widening of the scope of this rule Chomsky proposed the use of the list of WH-movement features in ( 15 ) above as a diagnostic for the inclusion of an analysis within the scope of a WH-movement type of rule. Further, since a generalised WH-movement rule thus constitutes the major part of the transformational component of the core grammar of English,<sup>3</sup> the



suggestion is that such a rule may be a significant cross linguistic rule type. The relevance of this to focus rules in Somali is discussed in the following section.

### 5.3. Focus Fronting

### 5.3.1 Extraction from a clause

Given then the importance of WH-movement to current work in generative grammar, it is necessary for any analysis postulating an apparent leftward NP movement rule to examine its possible inclusion as a WH-movement rule. Focus Fronting has the effect, in however restricted a context, of moving an NP to the front of its sentence and therefore the present section examines whether the rule has any of the characteristics of WH-movement given earlier.

To recap, Focus Fronting optionally moves the focused complement of a waxa cleft, and replaces waxa by baa/ayaa. This may be shown schematically as follows:

( 21 ) Focus Fronting

- a. [S [NP waxa ay galeen] [NP sarta]]  
 what they entered building+the ⇒
- b. [S [NP sarta] [NP ayaa ay galeen]]

If the rule does not apply, ( 21a ) becomes ( 22 ) below:

( 22 ) waxay galeen sarta

'What they entered was THE BUILDING'

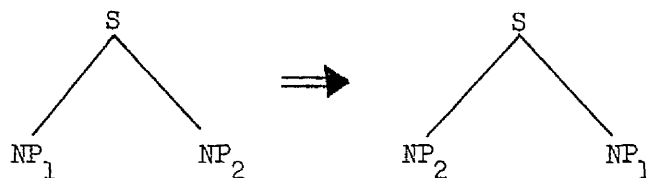
If the rule applies then ( 21b ) becomes ( 23 ) below:

( 23 ) sarta ayay galeen

'THE BUILDING they entered,' 'They entered THE BUILDING'

The rule, then, transposes two NPs thus:

( 24 )



and substitutes baa/ayaa for the waxa head of the relative clause  $NP_1$ , replacing one anaphoric element with another.

The rule is very restricted in that  $NP_1$  must be a waxa relative clause, and the S must be a verbless equational sentence derived by the deletion of waa. Given this restriction, it is clear that the rule may only apply in root sentences: (in the sense of Emonds 1976) since as mentioned earlier these waa equational sentences only occur as main clauses. In other words,

the focused NP is never extracted from a lower clause. For example, the sentences in (25) and (26) below are ungrammatical because they contain embedded waxa cleft structures (both before and after waa deletion):

- (25) a. \*wuu sheegay in waxay galeen waa sarta  
 waa+he reprot that what+they enter building+the  
 'He reported that the thing they entered was the the building'
- b. \*waa hubaal in wuxuu keenayaa waa xisaabta  
 certain that what+he bring accounts+the  
 'It is certain that the thing he is bringing is the accounts'
- c. \*ma ogtahay in waxaan karinayaa waa hilibgeel  
 Q know that what+I cook meat camel  
 'Do you know that the thing I am cooking is camel's meat ?'
- (26) a. \*wuu sheegay in waxay galeen waa sarta  
 'He reported that what they entered was THE BUILDING'
- b. \*waa hubaal in wuxuu keenayaa xisaabta  
 'It is certain that what he is bringing is THE ACCOUNTS'

( 26 ) c.    \*ma ogtahay in waxaan karinayaa hilib geel ?

'Do you know that what I am cooking is CAMEL'S MEAT ?'

Note that these ungrammatical structures would be the inputs necessary to allow Focus Fronting to apply within an embedded sentence; the result of applying the rule to them is similarly ungrammatical, as shown in ( 27 ) below:

( 27 ) a.    \*wuü sheegay in sarta ayay galeen

'He reported that THE BUILDING they entered'

b.    \*waa hubaal in xisaabta ayuu keenayaa

'It is certain that THE ACCOUNTS he is bringing'

c.    \*ma ogtahay in hilib geel ayaan karinayaa?

'Do you know that CAMEL'S MEAT I am cooking ?'

Thus, since clefts cannot occur as embedded sentences then the rule fronting cleft complements (Focus Fronting) similarly cannot apply in embedded sentences.

Note also that to allow FOCUS Fronting to extract the NP from the clause and move it to the front of the whole sentence in the manner of WH-movement also produces an ungrammatical sentence, as ( 28 ) below shows:

- ( 28 ) a.    \*sarta wuu sheegay in ayay galeen  
               'THE BUILDING he reported that they entered'
- b.            \*xisaabta waa hubaal in ayuu keenayaa  
               'THE ACCOUNTS it is certain that he is bringing'
- c.            \*hilib geel ma ogtahay in ayaan karinayaa ?  
               'CAMEL'S MEAT do you know I am cooking ?'

It is clear that Focus Fronting is restricted to root sentences.

#### 5.3.2. Gaps

The second major feature of this rule of Focus Fronting is that it cannot be said to leave a gap. This was Chomsky's first diagnostic feature for WH-movement in ( 15 ) above, and as we have seen was part of the basic motivation for such a rule. Focus Fronting, as will be seen, is in fact an inversion or NP transposing rule applying within the sentence.

Justification for this analysis comes from an examination of related verbless cleft sentences. As described earlier a rule of Cleft Reduction relates pairs of clefts like the following:

( 29 ) waxaan doonayaa waa lacag  
           want                  money

'The thing I want is MONEY'

( 30 ) waxaan doonayaa lacag

'What I want is MONEY'

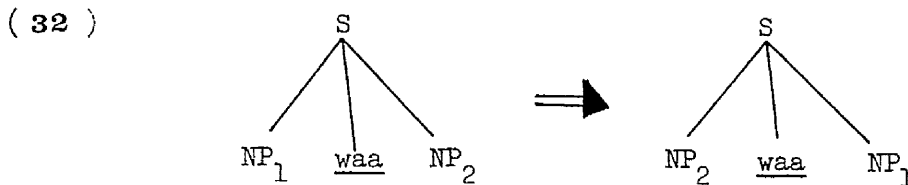
These are, as described earlier, both verbless equational sentences.

If we take ( 29 ) as an example, which is not a possible input to Focus Fronting, we find that there is a parallel switching rule which may apply to produce ( 31 ) below:

( 31 ) lacag waa waxaan doonayaa

'MONEY is what I want'

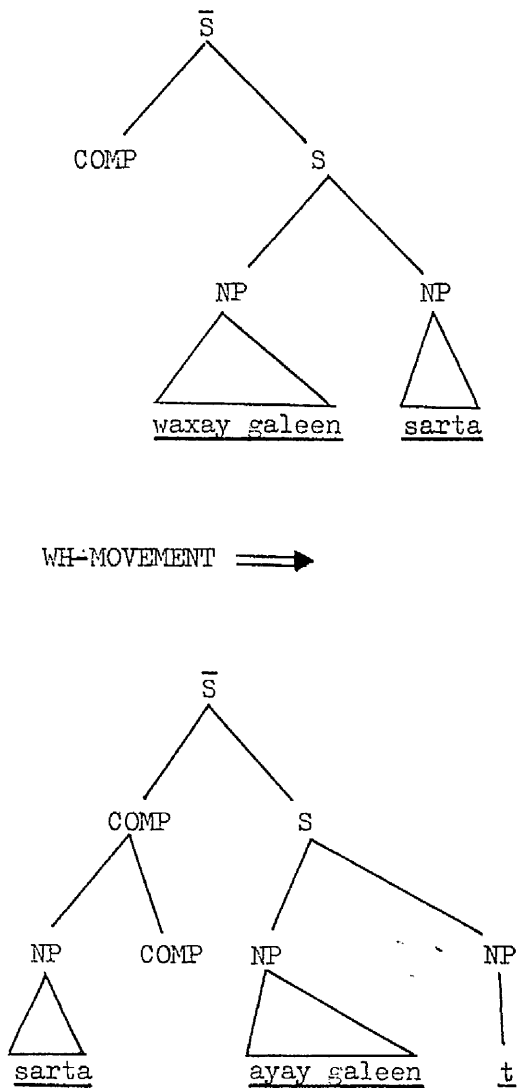
This rule transposes two NPs as shown schematically in ( 32 ) below:



with no gap being left by the fronting of NP<sub>2</sub>. It will be argued here that Focus Fronting is an exactly parallel rule to this, except that it applies to reduced rather than full waxa clefts.

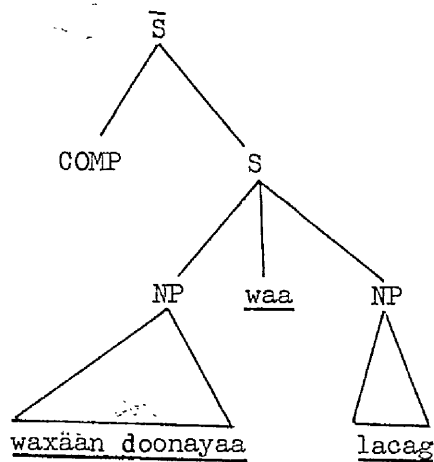
It would of course be possible to analyse Focus Fronting in sentences like ( 23 ) earlier as applying like WH-movement in English. Schematically this would mean postulating the structures in ( 34 ) below before and after the rule:

( 34 ) Focus Fronting as WH-movement

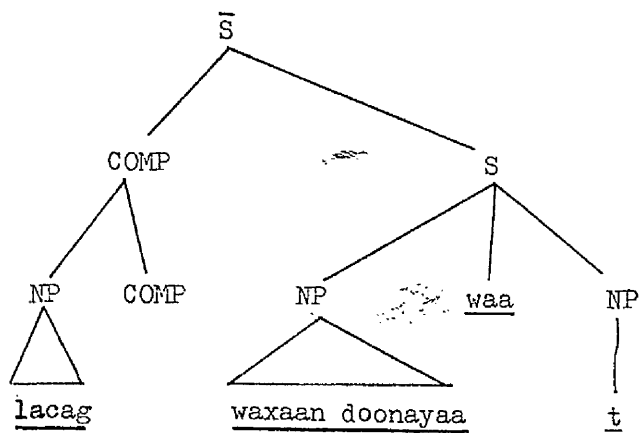


Leaving aside the fact that there is no independent evidence that the focused NP leaves the sentence, such an approach runs into problems with the parallel rule in unreduced clefts. The result of applying a similar WH-movement rule there is shown schematically below:

( 35 ) Full Cleft Fronting as WH-movement



WH-MOVEMENT  $\Rightarrow$





The resulting sentence, ( 36 ) below, is ungrammatical:

- ( 36 )    \*lacag waxaan doonayaa waa  
           'MONEY what I want is.'

In short, a WH-movement rule cannot be said to apply in this full cleft fronting rule, due to the revealing presence of waa. Since waa is deleted to form reduced clefts, the arguments against a WH-movement analysis of fronting in them is less clear. However, to adopt an analysis of WH-movement in these while adopting a different rule for the obviously parallel full clefts seems to unnecessarily disguise their affinity, especially since there is no evidence that the focused NP leaves the S in Focus Fronting. This argument that no gap is left will be strengthened by similar arguments in the derivation of WH-questions below (5.4.2).

It seems clear then that Focus Fronting displays little similarity to WH-movement as characterised earlier. The former is highly restricted, applying only to clefts. It applies only in root sentences, never extracting material from clauses. Finally, there is evidence that the rule is one which transposes NPs within a sentence rather than extracting them, leaving a gap. The importance of this lack of a gap, as well as a clear demonstration that no gap occurs, will be shown in the next section where arguments based on WH-questions will be forwarded.

#### 5.4 WH-Questions

In this section we examine the syntax of WH-questions and discuss how far their derivation corresponds to the features of WH-movement described earlier. The conclusion will be reached that WH-questions in Somali are not derived by this type of rule. In this section the effect of the Focus Fronting rule on WH-questions will also be described.

##### 5.4.1 Indirect Questions

We may begin by considering WH-questions in embedded sentences. As mentioned earlier, WH-movement in English is said to obligatorily move the WH-item to the beginning of an embedded clause to form indirect questions, as shown in the examples given below:



Later on in this section it will be argued that there is no rule in Somali WH-questions which moves an element out from a lower clause into a main clause. Here, however, it can be demonstrated that WH-question words simply do not occur in lower clauses, i.e. that, syntactically, indirect questions do not exist in Somali.

In English, allowing for the difference of subject-auxiliary inversion, there is a clear parallel between direct and indirect questions, e.g.

( 40 ) a. Who is he looking for ?

b. I don't know who he is looking for.

( 41 ) a. Where is he going ?

b. Ask him where he is going.

As will be seen, however, such a parallel does not exist in the corresponding Somali sentences. Here direct questions are paralleled in embedded sentences by relative clauses on a non-interrogative noun phrase. See the following for example:

- ( 42 ) a. kuma ayuu raadinayaa ?  
 who FOC+he look-for

'Who is he looking for ?'

- b. ma garanayo cidda uu raadinayo  
 NEG know person+the he look-for

'I don't know who he is looking for.'

- c. \*ma garanayo kuma uu raadinayo  
 NEG know who he look-for

'I don't know who he is looking for.'

- ( 43 ) a. halkee buu tegayaa ?  
 place+which FOC+he go

'Where is he going ?'

- b. weydii halka uu tegayo  
 ask(him)place+the he go

'Ask him where he is going.'

- c. \*weydii halkee uu tegayo  
 ask(him)place+which he go

'Ask him where he is going.'

The literal translation of ( 42b) above is 'I don't know the person who he is looking for'. That the clause 'the person who

he is looking for' is a regular relative clause can be seen from  
( 44 ) below:

- ( 44 )      Caḥ waa cidda uu raadinayo  
              'Ali is the person who he is looking for'

As can be seen from ( 42 c ), the use of the interrogative NP  
kuma 'who ?' in an embedded sentence results in an ungrammatical  
structure. Similarly in ( 43 b ) the literal translation is  
'Ask him the place which he is going to' and the interrogative  
NP halkee 'which place, where ?' of the direct question ( 43 a )  
is replaced by the definite NP halka 'the place' in the embedded  
clause. Use of a WH-word in this clause results in an un-  
grammatical sentence ( 43 c ). Note that again the clause, here  
halka uu tegayo (usually elided to halkuu tegayo), is a  
regular relative clause, as can be seen from the following:

- ( 45 )      Soomaaliya waa halka uu tegayo  
              'Somalia is the place which he is going to'

For each interrogative word in direct questions  
there is found a corresponding non-interrogative word in what  
would be indirect questions in English, as the following  
examples show:

- (46) a. muxuu iibsanayaa ?  
maxay+baa+uu  
what+FOC+he buy

'What is he buying ?'

- b. wuu goostay { \*muxuu  
                    wuxuu iibsanayo  
                    waxa+uu  
            he decide    thing+the+he buy

'He decided what to buy' (lit. the thing which he is buying)

- (47) a. maxay u guursatay?  
maxay+baa+ay  
what+FOC+she (him)for marry

'Why did she marry him ?'

- b. waxaan la yaaban ahay <sup>{\*maxay</sup> sababta ay u guursatay  
 what+I at wondering am reason+the she(him) for marry

'I wonder why she married him' (lit. the reason for which she married him)

- (48) a. sidee buu halkan u,yimi?  
manner+which FOC+he place+this in came-to

'How did he come here ?

- b. ma sheegay <sup>{\*sidee}</sup> sidii uu halkan u yimi ?  
Q report manner+the he place+this came

'Did he say how he came here ?' (lit. the manner in which  
he came here)

- ( 49 )a. diyaaraddu goorma ayay kacaysaa ?  
plane+the time+which FOC+it take off

'The aeroplane, when is it leaving ?'

- b. ma ogatay { \*goorma  
                  } goorta ay diyaaraddu kacayso ?  
Q find-out time+the it plane take off

'Did you find out when the aeroplane is leaving ?'  
(lit. the time which it is leaving)

- ( 50 )a. intee nin halkaa ku dhimatay ?  
amount+which men place+that in died

'How many men died there ?'

- b. ma garanayo { \*intee  
                  } inta nin halkaa ku dhimatay  
NEG know amount+the men place+that in died

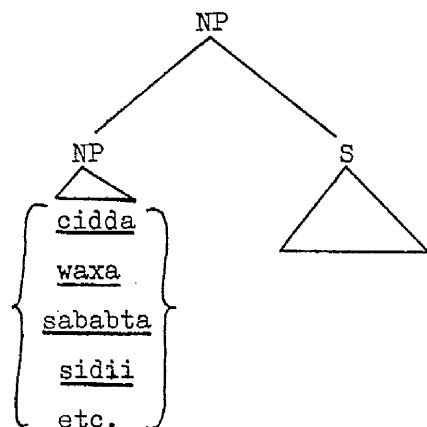
'I don't know how many men died there'  
(lit. the amount of men who died there)

In each of the above the use of a WH-word in the embedded sentence would render the whole sentence ungrammatical, as can be seen.

In each of these examples the clause is a perfectly regular restrictive relative clause which can be found in non-interrogative contexts, i.e. of the structure below:



( 51 )



Note that although WH-movement does apply to relative clauses in English, it cannot be said to have moved the NPs 'cidda' 'the person', waxa 'the thing' etc. to the front of the clause. This is because they are the heads of their relative clauses and must be introduced in situ by the phrase structure rules of the base. There is no relative pronoun in Somali but the question of the possible movement and deletion of such a pronoun in relative clauses is not relevant here since this would not affect the position of the head NP.<sup>4</sup>

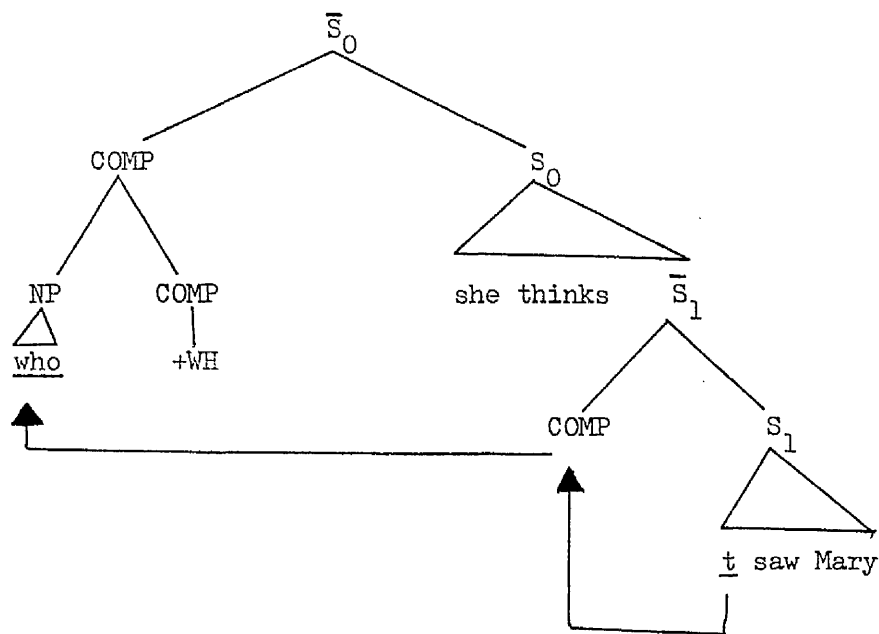
The fact is that there are no WH-question words in embedded sentences in Somali, and that the structure of constructions corresponding to English indirect questions precludes a movement rule analysis of them.

## 5.4.2 Complex Questions: Gaps

As described earlier, one of the basic characteristics of WH-movement in complex questions is that the WH-item leaves a gap in the embedded sentence when moved to the front of the matrix sentence, for example the English sentence ( 52 ) below would be given the structure ( 53 ) below (again simplified for clarity).

( 52 ) Who does she think \_ saw Mary ?

( 53 ) Structure of ( 52 )



It is worth repeating that this gap was the first of Chomsky's

diagnostic features for WH-movement (Chomsky 1977:86) given in (15) above.

The important fact here is that although WH-words do occur at the front of corresponding complex questions in Somali there is no gap in the lower sentence as in English. As can be seen, in each of the following examples there is a pronoun in the embedded sentence coreferential with the WH-item beginning the matrix sentence:

- (54) a. kumay u maleynaysaa inuu Amina arkay ?  
 who+she think that+he A. see

'Who does she think saw Amina ?'  
 (lit. 'Who does she think that he saw Amina?')

- b. \*kumay u maleynaysaa in Amina arkay?

'Who does she think saw Amina ?'

- (55) a. maxaad doonaysaa inay dhacaan ?  
 what+FOC+you want that+it happen

'What do you want to happen ?'  
 (lit. 'What do you want that it happen ?')

- b. \*maxaad doonaysaa in dhacaan ?

'What do you want to happen ?'

- ( 56 )a. ninkee baad sheegtay inuu ku caayey ?  
 man+which FOC+you report that+he you insult  
 'Which man did you say insulted you ?'  
 (lit. 'Which man did you say that he insulted you ?')
- b. \*ninkee baad sheegtay in ku caayay ?  
 'Which man did you say insulted you ?'
- ( 57 )a. gaadhigii kuma ayuu sheegay inuu islaantii jiiray ?  
 car+the who FOC+he report that+it woman+the hit  
 'Whose car did he say hit the woman ?'  
 (lit. 'Whose car did he say that it hit the woman ?')
- b. \*gaadhigii kuma ayuu sheegay in islaantii jiiray ?  
 'Whose car did he say hit the woman ?'

In each of the above a gap in the lower sentence results in an ungrammatical structure, as sentences (54 b -57b ) show.

The pronouns found in the lower sentences cannot be introduced by transformational rules since they can freely occur without a coreferential full NP in the same sentence or immediately preceding sentences. For example, the following are grammatical in single sentence utterances, and appropriate in contexts where the referents can be assumed "to be in the consciousness of the addressee at the time of the utterance" (Chafe 1976:30):

- ( 58 )    ma'uu tegin  
           NEG he went

'He did not go.'

- ( 59 )    inay imanayaan waa hubaal  
           that+they come(be)certainty

'That they are coming is a certainty.'

In the above the pronouns uu 'he' and 'ay 'they' are the same as occur in the embedded sentences in (54 - 57) earlier.

Thus if one were to try to maintain a WH-movement analysis by claiming that the pronouns in (54 - 57) were reflexes of traces, then there would be a clear lack of economy in the description. The same pronouns will be base generated in (58 - 59) (when discourse anaphoric) and transformationally created in (54 ) - ( 57 ) (when coreferential with the WH-NPs). Given that it is independently recognised that pronouns are base generated (see for example Chomsky 1977: 81 ), it will be assumed here that these are the same pronouns in both types of structure and are base generated. There will have to be a rule of semantic interpretation that in WH-questions the pronoun will be interpreted as coreferential with the preceding WH-NP (see Lasnik

1976:4 (footnote) for a similar suggestion). This will presumably be handled within the 'government and binding' framework of Chomsky (1981). Further evidence that these pronouns are not 'filled traces' or trace reflexes will be given in the next section.

Thus sentences like (54 -57 ) do not have a gap in the lower sentences which can be said to be a source for the WH-NP. Since there is no source for this NP to be extracted, a rule of WH-movement cannot be said to have applied.

The fact that all the above examples involve subject pronouns is not significant in this context. Somali, as is common in East Cushitic languages, has zero third person object pronouns.<sup>5</sup> Thus it is clearer to use examples with subject rather than object pronouns. It can be demonstrated, however, that the same facts are indeed true with object pronouns since in these contexts weak pronouns can be replaced by independent pronouns,<sup>6</sup> which have overt third person forms. Thus sentence (60 ) below has an independent object pronoun in the lower sentence, paralleling (54-57 ):

( 60 )     kuma ayay jecelyihiin in Cali iyada guurayo ?  
              who FOC+they like     that Ali her marries

'Who do they prefer that Ali marries ?'

(lit. 'Who do they prefer that Ali marries her ?')

The pronoun iyada 'her' is, like all independent pronouns, syntactically and morphologically a full NP and must, like the weak pronouns above, be independently base generated. Thus the same argument given above for subject pronouns applies to object pronouns: there is no source for kuma 'who' in the lower sentence in (60 ).

To summarise: Chomsky's first diagnostic feature for WH-movement -- that it leaves a gap -- is not met in Somali WH-questions. In the complex WH-questions discussed above WH-movement cannot have extracted the WH-item from the lower sentence since there is no source for it, there being instead of a gap a pronoun. It has been suggested that to treat this pronoun as a kind of a trace will lead to complicating the grammar; the next section will furnish stronger counter-evidence to this hypothetical approach.

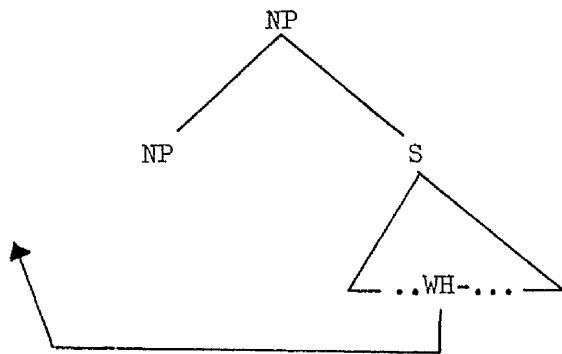
#### 5.4.3 Complex Questions: the Complex NP Constraint

In the last section it was argued that WH-movement cannot be said to apply in WH-questions because there is no gap in the lower sentence. In this section it will be argued that

even if this were ignored and WH-movement said to apply, such a movement rule would break another of the diagnostic features of WH-movement in (15) earlier, namely that it obeys the Complex Noun Phrase Constraint (given in (16) earlier).

One prediction which follows from this constraint is that WH-movement cannot extract NPs from within a relative clause. Thus, schematically, the following is not possible:

(61)



In fact, if WH-movement is said to apply in the derivation of Somali WH-questions then the unwanted movement in (61) must be said to be a regular occurrence. Note, for example, the relative clause (62) below:

(62) buugga gabadhu keentay  
book+the girl+the brought

'the book which the girl brought'

which is a regular restrictive relative clause. This clause is



shown in a declarative sentence in (63) below:

- (63) walaalahay way akhristeen buugga gabadhu keentay  
 brothers+my waa+they read book+the girl+the brought

'My brothers read the book which the girl brought'

If WH-movement is to apply to (63) to produce a question, it is predicted that the rule cannot extract, for example, the NP gabadhu 'the girl' from the relative clause. However, the rules governing WH-question formation in Somali allow this NP to be questioned and to occur at the beginning of the matrix question, e.g.

- (64) a. gabadhee ayay walaalahay akhristeen buugga ay keentay ?

'Which girl did my brothers read the book which she brought ?'

- b. \*gabadhee ayay walaalahay akhristeen buugga keentay ?

'Which book did my brothers read the book (she) brought ?'

As (64b) shows there must be a pronoun in the relative clause. It is clear that, even leaving aside the problems caused by this pronoun, WH-movement cannot have applied to (64a) since this would violate the Complex NP Constraint which the rule is said to obey.

A similar example is given below, where the relative clause ( 65 ) is shown first in a declarative sentence ( 66 ), and then in a WH-question ( 67 ) with what would be a violation of the CNPC if WH-movement were involved:

- ( 65 )     buug ninku qoray  
book man+the wrote

'a book which the man wrote'

- ( 66 )     waad akhriday buug ninku qoray  
waa+you read book man+the wrote

'You read a book which the man wrote'

- ( 67 )a.   ninkee ayaad akhriday buug uu qoray ?

'Which man did you read a book which he wrote ?'

- b.     \*ninkee ayaad akhriday buug qoray ?

'Which man did you read a book which (he) wrote?'

and similarly in ( 68 ) below, the CNPC would clearly be violated by a WH-movement analysis:

- ( 68 )     kumaad rumaysantahay hadalka ah inuu imaankii la kulmay ?  
who+FOC+you believe talk+the be that+he imam+the with met

'Who do you believe the claim that he met the imam?'  
(lit. 'Who do you believe the claim which is that he met the imam ?')

In addition, the following are similar examples where a WH-movement rule would have to be said to extract non-subject NPs from a relative clause (again independent pronouns are used to clarify the structure):

- ( 69 )     ninkee ayaad akhriday buug isaga ku saabsan ?  
              man+which FOC+you read book him to relevant(be)

'Which man did you read a book which is about him ?'

- ( 70 )     gabadhee ayuu        la kulmay askarigii iyada toogtay ?  
              girl+which FOC+he    with met soldier+the her shot

'Which girl did Ali meet the soldier who shot her ?'

- ( 71 )     barehee ayay garanaysaa ardayga isaga la shageynaya ?  
              teacher+which FOC+she know student+the him with work

'Which teacher does she know the student who is  
                                          working with him ?'

It is clear that examples such as the above cannot be derived by WH-movement, without jettisoning the Complex NP Constraint. Given the previous argument, based on the lack of a gap, this seems to be unjustified. The correct conclusion seems to be that WH-movement is not involved in the derivation of WH-questions in Somali.

#### 5.4.4 Complex Questions: Case

If, despite the violation of CNPC described above, one wished to preserve a WH-movement analysis of these questions, the approach would have to be something like the following. Firstly one might say that WH-movement in Somali leaves a pronoun instead of a trace. Then one might modify the CNPC to allow a violation just in those cases where a pronoun rather than a trace is involved. In such an analysis some rule would be necessary to copy features of the moved NP onto the pronoun; a rule reminiscent of that suggested for Left Dislocation by Ross (1967), and for a subset of Italian Left Dislocations by Cinque (1977).

This copying relationship between the WH-item and the pronoun would of course constitute syntactic binding. The fact, discussed earlier, that the pronouns involved may occur independently of an antecedent is a counter-argument to this analysis. A second counter-argument concerns the features which would be copied from the WH-NP to the pronoun.

In arguing that such a parallel between WH-NP + pronoun and WH-NP + trace as I have described, exists for Swedish, Zaenen, Engdahl and Maling (1981) state:

"We take the defining characteristic of syntactic binding to be the fact that the WH-element can exhibit features such as case marking or reflexivization which it can acquire only through association with the position which the trace occurs."  
(p679)

The relexivization phenomenon they discuss is not relevant here since it relies on a reflexive possessive morpheme 'his(own)' which does not exist in Somali. It can be demonstrated, however, that in Somali the WH-NP and its supposedly bound pronoun do not necessarily occur in the same case.

The fact is that while the pronoun may be subject or non-subject in its clause, the WH-NP is always non-subject. See, for example, the following:

- (72)  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{nínkée} \\ *nínkee \end{array} \right\} \text{ayaad akhriday buug} \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{isagu} \\ \text{uu} \end{array} \right\} \text{qoray ?}$   
man+which FOC+you read book he wrote

'Which man did you read a book which he wrote ?'

- (73)  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{nínkée} \\ *nínkee \end{array} \right\} \text{ayaad akhriday buug} \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{isaga} \\ \emptyset \end{array} \right\} \text{ku saabsan ?}$   
man+which FOC+you read book him about concerns

'Which man did you read a book which is about him ?'

In the above both weak and independent pronouns are given to show that their behaviour is the same here. In the clause

the pronoun is subject marked in ( 72 ) and non-subject in ( 73 ) as predictable from the meaning of the clauses; compare the independent pronouns isagu 'he(subj)' in ( 72 ) and isaga 'him' in ( 73 ); and the weak pronouns uu 'he(subj)' in ( 72 ) with the zero object pronoun in ( 73 ). The WH-NP however is tonally marked as non-subject in both sentences, i.e. HIGH-HIGH rather than the subject marking HIGH-LOW (see Andrzejewski 1980 and 3.2.1, 3.2.3 earlier for discussion of subject marking). Thus nínkéé rather than nínkee appears in ( 72 ) and the WH-NP and the pronoun are not in the same case.

This difference in case would cause serious problems for any copying rule analysis attempting to transfer exactly such features as those of case from the WH-NP to the pronoun.

Importantly, the case of the WH-NP is automatically predicted by the derivation involving Focus Fronting to be argued below, since the shifted WH-NP is underlyingly the complement of a waxa cleft and therefore always non-subject. See the following section for further discussion of this derivation.

It seems clear that an attempt to circumvent the CNPC violation involved in a WH-movement analysis by positing a movement rule and a feature copying rule would not be successful.

#### 5.4.5 WH-Questions and Focus Fronting

If, as the previous arguments show, WH-movement does not apply in the derivation of Somali WH-questions, then we must ask what rule is responsible for positioning WH-items which occur at the beginning of their sentences, as in the simple WH-questions below:

- ( 74 )     maxay ayaa Axmed xiisagelinaya ?  
               what FOC A.        interest

'What will interest Ahmed ?'

- ( 75 )     maxay ayaa Amina ku dhici doona ?  
               what FOC A.        to happen will

'What will happen to Amina ?'

- ( 76 )     kuma ayay la kulmi doonaa ?  
               who FOC+she with meet will

'Who will she meet ?'

- ( 77 )     tartanke ayay kooxda ku adkaan doontaa ?  
               competition+which FOC+it team+the in win will

'Which competition will the team win ?'

The answer to this question lies in the fact that when WH-items

occur at the beginning of the sentence they are always focused.

Note that a focus particle ayaa follows each WH-item in (74 - 77 ) above.

It is true that in colloquial speech the focus particle after WH-NPs ending in -kee/-tee 'which' may be dropped, as in (78 b ) below:

(78 )a. xaggee baad tegaysaa ?  
place+which FOC+you go

'Where are you going ?'

b. xaggee tegaysaa ?

'Where are you going ?'

But in these cases the form with the focus particle is always possible and is felt by speakers to be more formal and correct. In fact all the morphological facts described as features of baa and ayaa structures in Chapter 3 are true of structures like (78b). It is therefore very straightforward, but unnecessarily repetitive here to demonstrate that in (78b ) an optional deletion rule has applied to remove the focus particle from a structure like (78a ).

However one brief argument which does not repeat earlier points may be given. This concerns those WH-words



which do not allow deletion of the focus particle. WH-NPs not ending in a long vowel generally allow a phonological coalescence rule to combine the focus particle baa (and any pronoun) with the NP, e.g.

( 79 ) a. maxay baad sameynaysaa ?      →  
               what FOC+you do

'What are you doing ?'

b. maxaad sameynaysaa ?

'What are you doing ?'

( 80 ) a. kuma baad raadinaysaa ?      →  
               who FOC+you look+for

'Who are you looking for ?'

b. kumaad raadinaysaa ?

'Who are you looking for ?'

In these cases it is not possible to drop the focus particle, as ( 81 ) and ( 82 ) below show:

( 81 )      \*maxay sameynaysaa ?

'What are you doing ?'

( 82 )      \*kuma raadinaysaa ?

'Who are you looking for ?'

The fact is that those WH-words which allow a phonological rule to suffix the focus particle do not allow the rule which deletes it, and vice versa. It seems clear that these phonologically governed reduction rules of colloquial speech do not affect the underlying syntactic structure. To summarise: if the WH-NP ends in a long vowel (and therefore does not undergo coalescence) then the focus word may optionally be deleted. The fact that only a phonologically restricted subset of WH-words undergo this deletion and that even then it is optional seems good evidence for postulating an underlying focus particle in examples like (78 b ), even leaving aside the morphological evidence of case marking, verb agreement etc..

The generalisation stands that fronted WH-question words are always focused. Given this, the rule of NP Focus Fronting will automatically ensure that WH-words, like any focused NP, may be moved to the front of the sentence. This means that there is no special rule of WH-question formation in Somali: questions involving initial WH-items are merely subject to a general NP focus rule.

Such an analysis involves a prediction that WH-items should occur as the complements of waxa clefts i.e. focused but

not fronted. This is in fact true: the WH-questions in (74-77) above are paralleled by the waxa clefts below:

(83) waxa Axmed xiisagelinaya (waa) maxay ?

<sup>7</sup>  
'That which will interest Ahmed is what ?'

(84) waxa Amina ku dhici doona (waa) maxay ?

'That which will happen to Amina is what ?'

(85) waxay la kulmi doonaa (waa) kuma ?

'The one who she will meet is who?'

(86) waxay kooxdu ku adkaan doontaa (waa) tartankee ?

'The one which the team will win is which competition ?'

The clefts in (83-86) would be the input to Focus Fronting and they are grammatical sentences, as are the output, sentences (74-77).

These cleft questions do, however, provide a problem of style. Earlier (see Chapter 3:3.3) it was shown how waxa has, in addition to its (original) meaning of 'thing', a wide range of possible interpretations, especially when coreferential with another NP. Informally one can see this as a delexicalisation of waxa into what is basically an anaphoric element which

retains the morphological and syntactic role of a full NP.

This is clearly fully developed in reduced clefts in declarative sentences , as in ( 87 ) below:

- ( 87 )     waxa keenay Cali  
              w.(it)brought A.  
              '(The one) Who brought it was ALI'

Here waxa is coreferential with Cali and must therefore be translated by 'who' or 'the one' rather than 'what'. However, this is less true when the complement of the waxa cleft is a WH-NP. Comparing ( 87 ) with ( 88 ) below, for example,

- ( 88 )     waxa keenay ayo ?  
              w.(it)brought who  
              '(The one) Who brought it was WHO ?'

we find that while ( 88 ) is grammatical, it has a perjorative interpretation. One may speculate that this is a surviving reflection of the original (and still possible) non-animate meaning of waxa. Whatever the cause, ( 88 ) is considered perjorative, and a more polite version uses a circumlocution having a fully anaphoric pronominal use of the definite article as clause head in place of waxa, as in ( 89 ) below:

( 8 9 )    kii keenay waa ayo ?  
             the one(it)brought(be)who

'The one who brought is who ?'

This perjorative interpretation also affects ( 8 5 ) above.

Despite this stylistic complication it is clear that Focus Fronting may optionally apply to sentences (83 - 86) to produce (74 - 77), fronting the focused WH-NP as it would a non-WH NP.

Thus it appears that not only is there no justification for a rule of WH-movement applying in WH-questions, but that there is no specific WH-question formation rule in Somali. WH-NPs undergo Focus Fronting as do other focused NPs. The only constraint governs the choice of NP focus and is that in WH-questions it is the WH-items which are usually focused. This will be taken to be not a syntactic constraint but a pragmatic one. The pragmatic rules of Somali which govern which NPs are focused in a given discourse will have to state that, in addition to new information being focused, in a request for new information (a WH-question) the 'slot' which the new

information is to fill will also be focused.

Similar arguments are forwarded by Dik (1980:213) who proposes that a universal fact of the pragmatics of questioning and answering is that the interrogative terms will be focused:

"...the interrogative term, as representing the crucial point at which the pragmatic information of S (so S believes) differs from that of A, will necessarily have Focus function."

(where S = speaker, A = addressee)

It is worth emphasising that what is being discussed here is the interaction of WH-elements and the pragmatic rules of choice of focus; once this 'choice' has been made at the pragmatic level, the syntax treats WH-NPs exactly like other NPs. To repeat: there is no syntactic rule specifically for WH-question formation.

With reference to the complex WH-questions discussed in 5.4.2. earlier, note that a derivation of WH-questions simply

by Focus Fronting from waxa clefts correctly predicts the presence of the pronoun in the lower clause. Sentence (55a) above, repeated as (90a) below for convenience, will, for example, be derived firstly from an underlying structure like (91a) to one like (92a) by Cleft Reduction, and then from (92a) by Focus Fronting :

(90)a. maxay ayaad doonaysaa inay dhacaan ?

'What do you want to happen ?' (lit.'that it/they happen')

b. \*maxay ayaad doonaysaa in dhacaan ?

'What do you want to happen ?'

(91)a. waxaad doonaysaa inay dhacaan waa maxay ?

'The thing which you want that it happens is what ?'

b. \*waxaad doonaysaa in dhacaan waa maxay ?

'The thing which you want that it happens is what ?'

(92)a. waxaad doonaysaa inay dhacaan maxay ?

'That which you want that it happens is what ?'

b. \*waxaad doonaysaa in dhacaan maxay ?

'That which you want that it happens is what ?'

Note that the omission of the pronoun ay from the clefts result in the ungrammatical sentences (91 b ) and (92 b ). An analysis using Focus Fronting therefore automatically and correctly predicts that (90 a ) will also be ungrammatical if ay is omitted, i.e. (90b ). Therefore the pronouns which would be a problem for a WH-movement analysis are correctly predicted by a derivation of these WH-questions by Focus Fronting. It is also clear that since, as argued above, Focus Fronting is a form of NP inversion rule not involving extraction from a clause, this derivation will not violate the Complex NP Constraint.



## 5.5 Conclusion

This chapter has been concerned with the relationship of the rule Focus Fronting to the WH-movement rule commonly described in the generative grammar literature (especially Chomsky 1977), and the relation of both to the derivation of WH-questions in Somali.

By comparison of Focus Fronting with the canonical features of WH-movement it was demonstrated that the two differ fundamentally, and that WH-movement is not responsible for the movement of a focus NP in Somali.

The subsequent discussion of WH-questions demonstrated that a WH-movement rule cannot be said to apply in question formation either. Although this is not the place for establishing similar claims for relativisation, it seems safe to conclude that WH-movement is not a rule of Somali grammar. Indeed, it appears that Somali has no rules which move an NP (or any other constituent) across a sentence boundary, or to put it another way, that sentences are 'islands' with respect to movement rules. See the discussion of topics

in Chapter 7 below for further confirmation of this.

We have also seen that there is no specific movement rule for WH-question formation. The rule of Focus Fronting, however, does apply to questions, and shifts WH-NPs in exactly the same way as it does non-WH-NPs.

## CHAPTER FIVE:

FOOTNOTES

1

Chomsky has argued that S is also a bounding node for sub-jacency; in which case the apparent violation of this by WH-movement needs explanation. See Chomsky (1980:305).

2

Note that the apparent violation of PIC and SSC by WH-movement means that both need to be modified by something like 'where Y is not in COMP'.

3

See Chomsky (1980:1-15) for discussion of this notion of 'core grammar'.

4

As described earlier (Chapter 3.2.1), a simple deletion analysis of relativisation is probably most justified. A WH-movement analysis would be faced with similar problems as with WH-questions, e.g. violation of CNPC and what would presumably be in such an approach WH-islands. This and the lack of a relative pronoun would seem to preclude WH-movement in relatives as well, though this is not the place for detailed arguments in support of this.

5

The verbal pronouns in Somali (see footnote 6 below) are

	<u>subject</u>	<u>object</u>
I	<u>aan</u>	<u>i</u>
you	<u>aad</u>	<u>ku</u>
he	<u>uu</u>	-
she	<u>ay</u>	-
we(incl)	<u>aynu</u>	<u>ina</u>
we(excl)	<u>annu</u>	<u>na</u>
you(pl)	<u>aydin</u>	<u>idin</u>
they	<u>ay</u>	-

As shown above, there are no third person object pronouns: absence of any other pronouns with a transitive verb will cause a third person pronoun to be understood. Thus wuu arkay means, according to context, 'He saw him', 'He saw her', 'He saw them', or 'He saw it'. Note that it cannot mean 'He saw'; to translate this one must use an indefinite noun: wax buu arkay 'He saw something'.

<sup>6</sup> See Bell (1953:30-35), Abraham (1964:305-312), Andrzejewski (1960 & 1961), and 3.2.2. above for discussion of the distinction between 'weak' (or 'verbal') pronouns and 'independent' (or 'strong') pronouns. This is not important here since the distinction is based on the ability to form a one word utterance i.e. to occur, as full NPs can, without a verb. Both types of pronoun can occur without a binding NP i.e. deictically.

<sup>7</sup> Waxa in reduced clefts has been variously glossed in this study as 'what', 'who', 'the one' etc. since in English no one word has a similar range of meaning (see 2.3.3 earlier for discussion). In this section given the fact that English 'what' may be both interrogative and non-interrogative, 'what' as a gloss for waxa will be replaced by 'that which' wherever necessary, to avoid sentences like 'What will interest Ahmed is what ?' In Somali, of course, the first 'what' in this sentence is waxa, and the second maxay so this effect does not occur.

## Chapter 6

Waa and the Problem of Verb Focus

## 6.1 Introduction

The previous chapters have been concerned with various aspects of noun phrase focus; this present chapter deals with the lexically empty particle waa which is usually said to focus verbs (see for example Andrzejewski 1975, Bell 1953). In moving from the area of NP focus to that of verb focus, one enters a very problematical area. Although grammatical analyses of NP focus may differ, there can be no doubt about the morphological and syntactic existence of the phenomenon. As will be seen, however, there is evidence that verb focus (or 'verbal accent') may have no grammatical reality in Somali, i.e. that waa structures have been incorrectly identified to date.

This chapter begins by briefly describing the standard 'focus particle' approach to waa structures, and then moves on to a discussion of the problems raised by this approach. In the second part of the chapter a new analysis of waa is forwarded which, it will be argued, avoids these problems.

The fullest description of waa structures to date is Andrzejewski (1975). This identifies waa as a verb focus particle (or 'indicator particle' in Andrzejewski's terminology)

which basically performs for verbs the same function as the NP focus particles baa and ayaa discussed earlier perform for NPs. The basic assumption in this approach is that the relevant focus particle must be attached to either an NP or a verb (but not both) in every main sentence. Thus for verbs the string shown schematically in ( 1 ) below would be realised as in ( 2 ):

- ( 1 )                      NP - NP - V  
                                             +FOCUS
- ( 2 )                      NP ~ NP - waa - V

Thus in sentences ( 3 ) below waa, which has no lexical content, is said to mark the verb as focused, as shown in the glosses:

- ( 3 ) a. Cali wuu tiriye  
waa +uu  
Ali waa he(it)counted  
'Ali COUNTED it'
- b. haa, Cabdi waan aqaan  
waa+aan  
yes Abdi waa I know  
'Yes, I KNOW Abdi'

Basic to this approach are the three following claims:

- ( 4 ) Only one consituent may be focused in any sentence.
- ( 5 ) One constituent must be focused.
- ( 6 ) Verbs may be focused by a particle waa in the same way as NPs are focused by baa and ayaa.

The problem for this analysis is the shortage of candidates for a verb focus particle. The particle waa does not have a spread across sentence types like the NP focus particles: it does not occur in yes-no questions or imperatives, for example. In fact, as will be seen, there are good reasons for saying that it is restricted to one sentence type. The problems caused for a verb focus particle analysis by this restricted distribution are discussed in the next section.

## 6.2 Problems with a Verb Focus Particle

The first set of problems raised by an analysis of waa as a verb focus particle concerns yes-no questions.

### 6.2.1 Yes-No Questions

Miyaa.

As stated above, waa does not occur in yes-no questions.

Since there is no spare particle in these, Andrzejewski (1975) has to say that the question word ma, as in ( 7 ) below, also focuses the verb:

- ( 7 )     Cali ma yimi ?  
            Ali Q came  
            'Did Ali come ?'

It seems rather that ma merely questions the whole sentence, but if we, for arguments sake, let this pass, we face the problem that when an NP is focused, in such a question the form is as in ( 8 ) below:

- ( 8 )     ma Cali baa yimi ?  
            Q    Ali FOC came  
            'Did ALI come ?'

In ( 8 ) above the NP Cali is focused. Now if ma is a waa-type verb focus particle, as is claimed for sentence ( 7 ) earlier, then sentences like ( 8 ) break claim ( 4 ) above, since two constituents are simultaneously focused. If this analysis relaxes ( 4 ) then it no longer adequately describes the facts of declarative sentences, where waa cannot occur with baa as ( 9 ) below shows:



( 9 ) a. \*waa Cali baa yimi

'ALI came.'

b. \*Cali baa waa yimi

'Ali came.'

One could of course state that a verb particle in sentences like ( 7 ) is obligatorily deleted, but in the light of other problems to be discussed this will prove very shaky.

This same problem occurs in all yes-no questions but is disguised in Andrzejewski (1975) because the author identifies a second question word miyaa. In fact it seems better to regard this as merely a phonological word, derived from two separate sources: firstly a combination of the question word ma and a pronoun, and secondly a combination of the question word ma and the NP focus particle ayaa. It is worth demonstrating the incorrectness of identifying a single question word miyaa since the discussion will underline the problems of verb focus in yes-no questions, and since it is per se an important issue in the description of yes-no questions.

In sentence ( 10 ) below miyaa is said to be, in addition to a question morpheme, an NP focus particle:

- ( 10 )     Cali miyaa yimi ?  
              Ali                came

'Did ALI come ?', 'Was it ALI who came ?'

This seems to be true: speakers associate ( 10 ) with ( 8 ) above rather than ( 7 ). Furthermore ( 10 ) shows the morphological features -- subject marking, verb agreement, pronoun behaviour, etc. -- characteristic of baa and ayaa structures as described in Chapter Four earlier. In fact, sentences ( 8 ) & ( 10 ) are interchangeable in discourse, and this, given the plausibility of a phonological rule ( 11 ) below, suggests that the immediately underlying structure of both ( 8 ) & ( 10 ) is ( 12 ) below:

- ( 11 )             ma + ayaa → miyaa

- ( 12 )             Q - Cali - FOCUS PTCL - yimi

where Q can be realised in situ as ma, giving sentence ( 8 ), or can be attached to ayaa, giving sentence ( 10 ); See 6.5 below.

Without this derivation one has to state that miyaa is the same as ayaa in all the relevant morphological and syntactic features, except that miyaa has a questioning function as well. However, even worse problems for this latter approach emerge on examination of the very common sentence type exemplified in ( 13 ) below:

( 13 )    Cali miyuu yimi ?

'Did Ali come ?'

In this type of sentence Andrzejewski (1975) also identifies a particle miyaa, here combining with the subject pronoun uu 'he' (i.e. miyaa + uu → miyuu). Unfortunately for such an analysis none of the morphological features associated with baa and ayaa show up here: the verb has the full agreement pattern, the NP is marked as subject etc.. In fact all these facts are predictable from the fact that this type of sentence are interchangeable in discourse with ma questions like ( 7' ), and are used when a pronoun is needed to disambiguate the reference, as in ( 14 ) below:

( 14 )a.    lacagtii ma keentay ?  
             money+the Q brought

'Did you/she bring the money ?'

b.    lacagtii miyaad keentay ?  
             you

'Did you bring it ?'

c.    lacagtii miyay keentay ?  
             she

'Did she bring it ?'

The fact is that sentence ( 13 ) is interchangeable with sentence ( 7 ) (said to have verb focus) while sentence ( 10 ) is interchangeable with sentence ( 8 ) (clearly having NP focus).

If we are dealing with one particle, miyaa, then sometimes it has the same function as ayaa/baa, and at other times the same as ma. In other words, in this approach, sometimes it is a verb focus particle, and at others an NP focus particle, in the same structures. This is the situation in Andrzejewski (1975).

The important point here, though, is that this second 'verb focus' type of miyaa never occurs without a pronoun; that is, it never occurs as miyaa but always as miyaad, miyuu, etc.. If one includes in the grammar the rules ma + uu → miyuu, ma + aad → miyaad etc. one can neatly predict the differences in behaviour between these two types of yes-no questions without the difficulties caused by an unpredictably ambiguous miyaa particle. In simple terms what such rules are explicitly recognising is that, for example, miyaad behaves morphologically, syntactically, and in discourse function as if it were ma + aad, and not miyaa + aad.

Given this, it is clear that sentences like (15 b ) and (16 b ) below are as much of a problem for a verb focus particle approach as (15 a ) and (16 a ) below:

- ( 15 ) a. ma askari baad tahay ?  
Q soldier FOC+you are ?

'Are you a SOLDIER ?'

- b. askari miyaa yimi ?  
soldier Q+FOC came

'Did a SOLDIER come ?'

- ( 16 ) a. ma askari baa ?<sup>1</sup>  
Q soldier FOC

'Is he a SOLDIER ?'

- b. askari miyaa ?  
soldier Q+FOC

'Is he a SOLDIER ?'

In each of the above the verb focus approach either has to state that there are two focus particles in a single sentence (ma focusing the verb while ayaa/baa focuses the NP), which breaks claim ( 4 ) earlier, or equally undesirably, state that ma is in fact simply a question word and that in sentences like ( 17 ) below there applies an obligatory rule which deletes some focus particle:

- ( 17 ) hooyadaa ma arkay ?  
mother+your Q saw

'Dis I/he see your mother ?'

In fact it is clear that when an NP is focused in Somali the verb is always known or presupposed ( as discussed in Chapter Two earlier ) and cannot be focused. Thus breaking claim ( 4 ) does not merely provide problems of consistency for this particular approach, but is impossible for any approach.

The conclusion one is driven to is that there is no verb focus particle in yes-no questions: the only non-lexical item in these sentences, ma, does not behave like a focus particle and must be considered as just a question morpheme. This by itself does not automatically invalidate the verb focus particle approach since one could posit an obligatory deletion rule but this lack of particle will prove to be very significant in the light of other arguments.

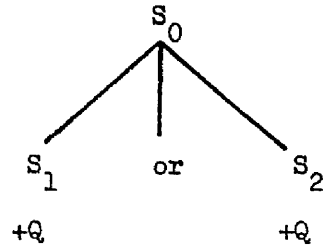
#### Disjunction.

In Somali, as in English, two yes-no questions can be joined by ama(se) 'or' as in example ( 18 ) below, shown (simplified) schematically in ( 19 ):

( 18 )    ma aragtay tuuggii amase ma maqashay ?  
           Q    saw     thief+the    or    Q (him) heard

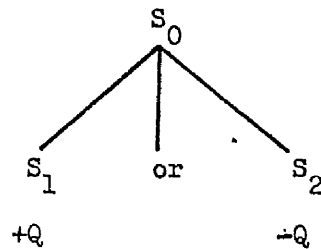
'Did you see the thief or did you hear him ?'

( 19 )



In Somali, however, it is also possible to join in this way a question and a declarative, the overall interpretation being similar to the disjunction in ( 18 ). This can be shown schematically as in ( 20 ) below:

( 20 )



In these structures  $S_1$  has the normal yes-no question form, but there is a different word for 'or', mise, and  $S_2$  has the form of a normal declarative, not a yes-no question. This can be seen from the following examples:

( 21 )    ma tegaysaa ?  
           Q    are-going

'Are you going ?'

- ( 22 )    ma joogaysaa ?  
           Q are-staying

'Are you staying ?'

- ( 23 )    waad joogaysaa  
           waa+you are-staying

'You are staying'

- ( 24 )    \*ma tegaysaa mise ma joogaysaa ?

'Are you going or are you staying ?'

- ( 25 )    ma tegaysaa mise waad joogaysaa ?

'Are you going or you are staying ?'

Sentences ( 24 ) & ( 25 ) show that with mise 'or' the second disjunct must have the grammatical form of a declarative sentence. Note that since ( 26 ) below is also ungrammatical, we cannot adequately explain the phenomenon by merely postulating ma as part of mise:

- ( 26 )    \*ma waad tegaysaa ?

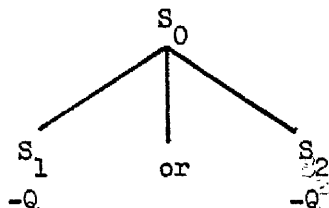
'Are you going ?'

This phenomenon is introduced here because it provides a clear testing area for the hypothesis that verb focus exists



and operates in the same way as NP focus. One can make several generalisations about how focus operates in declarative disjunctions, i.e. in structures shown schematically below:

( 27 )



One such generalisation is ( 28 ) below:

( 28 )a. If the shared material in  $S_1$  and  $S_2$  is an NP

and the 'contrast' is between two verbs then the second occurrence of the NP will be deleted, leaving just a pronoun<sup>2</sup>, and the verbs will be accompanied by waa.

b. If the shared material in  $S_1$  and  $S_2$  is a verb and

the contrast is between NPs then the second verb is usually deleted and the NPs will occur in focus (i.e. followed by baa or ayaa, or as complement of a cleft).

This behaviour, and what I have loosely termed 'contrast', can be seen in the following examples, where deleted material



seen from the following examples, however, this prediction is false: it accounts for the facts of ( 31 ) below but not of ( 32 ):

- ( 31 )    Cali ma arkay ninkii mise (Cali) wuu maqlayuun ?  
           Ali    Q    saw    man+the or                    waa+he (him)heard-just  
           'Did Ali see the man or he just heard him ?'

In ( 31 ), as in its declarative counterpart ( 29 ), the second occurrence of Cali is usually deleted and the verbs can be said, in this analysis, to be accompanied by verb focus particles; but note ( 32 ) below:

- ( 32 )    Cali ma arkay ninkii mise walaashii (buu arkay )?  
           Ali    Q    saw man+the    or    sister+his    FOC+he saw  
           'Did Ali see the man or his sister ?'

Here things go wrong for a verb focus analysis: although the second disjunct's verb can be deleted and its NP is accompanied by an NP focus particle, the first disjunct merely contains ma with no NP focus particle.

How can this approach cope with the fact that ma (supposedly a verb focus particle in questions) turns up paralleling both NP and verb focus in declaratives ? It seems pragmatically improbable that in ( 32 ) the verb is

accented in the first disjunct while the NP is accented in the second, i.e.

( 33 ) Did Ali SEE the man or HIS SISTER ?

In fact there is syntactic evidence to support this doubt:

note the ungrammaticality of ( 34 ) below:

( 34 ) \*Cali ma arkay mise walaashii (buu arkay)  
 Ali Q(him)saw or sister+his FOC+he saw

'Did Ali see him or his sister ?'

The only difference between ( 34 ) and the grammatical ( 32 ) is that the object of the first disjunct, ninkii 'the man', shows up as a pronoun.<sup>4</sup> Yet this 'pronominalisation' of NPs in a sentence with 'verb focus' is found everywhere else in the grammar; see for example ( 29 ) & ( 31 ) above with subject pronouns. The conclusion seems inescapable: the first disjunct of ( 32 ) does not contain verbal focus despite containing ma and no NP focus particle. This is not, of course, possible in the verb focus analysis where lack of NP focus automatically involves verb focus.

Further, if the first disjunct of ( 32 ) does not contain verb focus, then surely we must say the same of the

identical first disjunct of ( 31 ) :

It seems that in these question-declarative disjuncts disjuncts with just ma are consistent both with NP focus, where the second S contains baa or ayaa, and with 'verb focus', where it contains waa. In short, these ma structures are structurally unspecified for focus and can, depending on context, bear interpretations of both NP and verb focus.

The crucial imbalance between NP and verb focus in these yes-no questions is that the former can be grammatically specified by the use of an NP focus particle as in ( 35 ) below:

( 35 ) Cali ma ninkii buu arkay mise walaashii (buu arkay) ?

'Did Ali see THE MAN or HIS SISTER ?'

On the other hand, there is no extra grammatical device to specify verb focus.

To summarise: yes-no questions contain the question word ma, and with just ma are neutral with respect to focus. NPS within these questions may be focused, as in all sentences, by baa or ayaa, but there is no corresponding structural device for marking verb focus.

### New Information

Further evidence that there is no mechanism for marking verb focus in yes-no questions concerns the relationship between focus and new information. In declaratives a basic fact about baa and ayaa sentences versus waa sentences is that new NPs must be introduced by the former. As described in Chapter Two this usage intersects with that of the definite article with common nouns i.e. these are introduced, with focus, as indefinite NP, but thereafter must occur with a definite determiner. Since baa and ayaa never occur with waa, this means that waa does not occur with indefinite NPs.<sup>5</sup>

This fact explains the non-occurrence, and otherwise, of the following sentences:

- ( 36 )a. baabuur baa i dhaafay  
truck FOC me passed

'A TRUCK passed me'

- b. \*baabuur wuu i dhaafay  
waa+it

'A truck PASSED me'

- ( 37 )a. baabuurkii baa i dhaafay  
truck+the FOC me passed

'THE TRUCK passed me'

- ( 37 )b. baabuurkii wuu i dhaafay  
truck+the

'The truck PASSED me'

The glosses above assume a verb focus analysis. Sentence ( 36b ) is not possible because it contains waa and an undefined common noun.

Now if ma (or ma +  $\emptyset$  by an obligatory verb focus particle deletion rule) were, as is claimed by Andrzejewski (1975), the direct equivalent of waa then one would expect this major feature of waa usage to extend to it.<sup>6</sup> In fact, as can be seen from the following examples, it does not:

- ( 38 )a. ma baabuur baa ku dhaafay ?  
Q truck FOC you passed

'Did A TRUCK pass you ?'

- b. baabuur ma ku dhaafay ?

'Did a truck pass you ?'

Comparing ( 38 ) with ( 36 ) one can see that ma is not behaving like a +Q version of waa. Clearly baabuur 'a truck' is not known or presupposed yet ma can acceptably occur with it. The fact is that the question ( 38b ) needs no presuppositions to be

appropriate while statements with waa have to have presupposed NPs; so, for example, something like 'a truck did something to you' is the necessary background information for the waa sentence ( 37b ) to be appropriate.

This ability of ma yes-no questions to occur with NPs which carry no such presupposition, i.e. new information, seems to support the claim that they do not involve verb focus and are in fact neutral with respect to focus.

To conclude this discussion of yes-no questions: there is clear evidence that there is no grammatical device in these sentences for marking verb focus. The question word ma is clearly not a verb focus particle, and to avoid this by obligatorily deleting some other particle would incorrectly disguise the fact that questions with ma alone are neutral in focus.

#### 6.2.2 Negatives

There are similar problems in negative declarative sentences for an account identifying verb focus at the level of syntax. In fact these provide an even bigger hurdle than yes-no questions for an approach which stresses a ubiquitous NP focus-verb focus dichotomy since most negative declaratives occur simply with a negative word. That is, not only as in



yes-no questions is there no verbal focus particle, but the NP focus particles, though possible are not commonly found.

To take up the first point, negative sentences are characterised by a negative morpheme in addition to a set of verbal paradigms distinct from positive forms. See for example the following:

- ( 39 )    baabuurkii waa yimi  
          truck+the       came

'The truck came'

- ( 40 )    baabuurkii ma iman<sup>7</sup>  
          truck+the       NEG came

'The truck did not come'

Here I follow accepted practice and view negative ma as a homonym of the question morpheme ma rather than the same item.<sup>8</sup>

Leaving aside for the moment the question of the restricted use of NP focus in negatives, the problem for verb focus as a grammatical phenomenon here concerns once more the status of lexically empty particles.

The problem here is similar to that in yes-no questions: the negative morpheme must be said to focus verbs. One way to

demonstrate that this is not so concerns the scope of negation in negative sentences. In order to specify the scope of negation in a sentence one may use the technique of adding qualifying pieces. Since what was termed 'contrast' in positive declaratives was shown to be a trigger for constituent focus, contrastive constituent negation seems a likely candidate to trigger focus in negative declaratives. See for example the following sentences which parallel the structure of the positive declaratives (29-30) earlier:

- ( 41 )    Cali ma keenin cuntadii ee Caasha baa keentay  
           Ali NEG brought food+the but Asha FOC(it)brought  
           'Ali didn't bring the food, ASHA did'
- ( 42 )    Cali ma keenin cuntadii ee sharabkii buu keenay  
           Ali NEG brought food+the but drinks+theFOC+he brought  
           'Ali didn't bring the food, he brought THE DRINKS'
- ( 43 )    Cali ma keenin cuntadii ee wuu soo dhiibay  
           Ali NEG brought food+the but waa+he(it)sent  
           'Ali didn't bring the food, he SENT it'

If the focus rules operated in negatives as in declaratives, we would expect baa or ayaa to show up in the negative parts of ( 41 ) & ( 42 ), and ma (NEG +VERB FOCUS) in ( 43 ). This

estimation is confirmed by the fact that the positive additions show this spread of NP versus postulated verb focus: baa in ( 41 ) & ( 42 ), and waa in ( 43 ). However, as can be seen from these examples this spread is not reflected in the negative clauses, where ma alone occurs in all three, both when the scope of negation is on NPs and on verbs. Again it seems that the form claimed to be verbal focus is in fact structurally neutral for focus. Further examples are ( 44 ) & ( 45 ) below:

- ( 44 )a. anigu ma arag shilkii dayaaradda ee walalkay baa arkay  
I NEG saw crash+the plane+the but brother+my FOC saw

'I didn't see the plane crash but MY BROTHER did.'

- b. anigu ma arag shilkii dayaaradda ee burburkeedii  
wreckage+the  
baan arkay  
FOC+I saw

'I didn't see the plane crash but I saw ITS WRECKAGE.'

- c. anigu ma arag shilkii dayaaradda ee waan maqlay  
waa+I(it)heard

'I didn't see the plane crash but I HEARD it.'

- ( 45 ) a. Axmed Dahabo ma guursan ee Canab buu guursaday  
Ahmed D. NEG married but A. FOC+he married

'Ahmed didn't marry Dahabo, he married ANAB.'

- ( 45 )b. Axmed Dahabo ma guursan ee Faarax baa guursaday  
 A. D. NEG married but F. FOC(her)married

'Ahmed didn't marry Dahabo, FARAH did.'

- c. Axmed Dahabo ma guursan ee way wada noolyihiin  
 A. D. NEG married but waa+they together live

'Ahmed didn't marry Dahabo, they just LIVE TOGETHER.'

Importantly, it is again true that NP focus can be specified structurally. For example versions of ( 41 ) and ( 42 ) with specific NP focus in the negative clause are possible, as follows:

- ( 46 ) Cali baan keenin cuntadii ee Caasha baa keentay  
 A. FOC+NEG brought food+the but A.FOC(it)brought

'ALI didn't bring the food, ASHA did.'

- ( 47 ) Cali cuntadii baanu keenin ee sharabkii buu keenay  
 drink+the FOC+he brought

'Ali didn't bring THE FOOD, he brought THE DRINKS.'

The fact is that in discourse ( 46 ) can be used instead of ( 41 ), and ( 47 ) for ( 42 ), confirming that ma-only clauses are compatible with an NP focus interpretation.

It seems clear that this situation parallels that in holding in yes-no questions: the basic structure is neutral with respect to focus. Once again, there is no independent

structural mechanism for verb focus in negative declaratives.

However, "NP focus" may apply and when it does it is regular, i.e. it applies as in other sentence types.<sup>9</sup>

### 6.2.3 Positive Declarative Sentences

We have seen examples of the difficulties involved in trying to analyse yes-no questions and negative declaratives on the basis of positive declaratives. The latter are usually described with an analysis of NP focus versus verb focus which the former cannot reasonably bear.

This is the problem of verb focus referred to in the title of this chapter, and two solutions seem obvious. Either one can restrict verb focus as a grammatical structure to one type of sentence, or one can reassess waa's role in its own sentence type. In this situation it seems reasonable to make a closer scrutiny of waa, and indeed there is evidence to counter the basic premise of the verb focus approach i.e. that waa is a marker of verb focus just as baa and ayaa are markers of NP focus.

### Verbless Sentences

In earlier chapters we have seen examples of verbless equational sentences of the form A waa B 'A is B', as in examples ( 51 ) & ( 52 ) below:

( 51 )    kari waa miis  
          this        table  
  
          'This is a table.'

( 52 )    Cali waa askari  
          Ali         soldier  
  
          'Ali is a soldier.'

Compare these with ( 53 ) & ( 54 ) below:

( 53 )    askari baan ahay  
          soldier FOC+I am  
  
          'I am a SOLDIER.'

( 54 )    Cali askari buu yahay  
          Ali    soldier FOC+he is  
  
          'Ali is a SOLDIER.'

With third person subjects and NP complements waa occurs without the verb yahay 'to be', which shows up for example in the baa structures ( 53 ) & ( 54 ) above. This fact poses a great

problem for an analysis of waa as a verb focus particle.

It was argued earlier that in these verbless sentences the verb yahay 'to be' has been deleted. However, this is not crucial here. If one were to adopt the opposite analysis and introduce the copula by a transformation in those cases where it does occur, the copula insertion rule would not apply in sentences like ( 51 ) & ( 52 ). If waa is triggered by a +FOCUS verb, as implied in the verb focus approach, then how can it be said to get into sentences like ( 51 ) & ( 52 ) above, where there is no verb ?

If, on the other hand, we accept the more plausible derivation of copula deletion in verbless sentences, the problem for verb focus is just as bad. Here the rule is deleting a verb from a sentence which has 'verb focus'. This seems a very unlikely thing to happen, and in fact runs counter to the facts of NP focus which, as we saw earlier, does not even allow pronominalisation of the focused NP, much less deletion.

This seems an insurmountable problem for a waa verb focus analysis and unfortunately for it these verbless sentences are not a marginal or unusual phenomenon. In fact in the closely related Benaadir dialect of Somali the copula deletion rule applies still more generally, seeming to extend to adjectival complements of yahay 'to be'. Thus colloquially in Benaadir Somali ( 55 ) below occurs instead of the expected





Presumably the focused V would trigger waa even though it is realised as an NP. This seems very dubious since there is no independent evidence that the NP askari 'a soldier' in ( 52 ) ever behaves like a verb. The only point of this  $V \rightarrow NP$  phrase structure rule is to allow waa to remain a verb focus particle even though there is clearly no verb.

The fact remains that this very common sentence type runs counter to the analysis of waa as a verb focus particle.

#### Appropriateness of Reply

The claim that waa is a parallel constituent focusing device to baa and ayaa is further weakened by the fact that the two structures do not operate in parallel ways in discourse. To demonstrate this it is necessary to go outside the single sentence and examine the context provided by previous sentences. One useful technique is to set up a context with a question and to test which replies are appropriate answers to that question. In what follows, all the replies are grammatical in the language generally; their appropriateness or otherwise depends solely on the choice of focus particle. To distinguish such grammatical but inappropriate sentences from ungrammatical sentences the former are marked \*\* rather than \*. The schemas accompanying each example show which constituents are said to be focused.

With NP focus it seems that there are strong constraints on the relative positioning of focus in question and reply. For example, ( 59a ) is an appropriate reply to ( 58a ) while ( 60a ) is not:

- ( 58 )a. Cali lacagtii buu keenay, sow ma aha ?  
Ali money+the FOC+he brought Q NEG is

'Ali brought THE MONEY, didn't he ?'

- b.  $NP_1 - NP_2 - V...$   
+FOC

- ( 59 )a. haa, Cali lacagtii buu keenay  
yes Ali money+the FOC+he brought

'Yes, Ali brought THE MONEY.'

- b.  $...NP_1 - NP_2 - V$   
+FOC

- ( 60 )a. \*\*haa, Cali baa lacagtii keenay  
yes Ali FOC money+the brought

'Yes, ALI brought the money.'

- b.  $...NP_1 - NP_2 - V$   
+FOC

In fact, whichever NP is focused in the question the result is

the same: only a reply which focuses the same NP is appropriate. This is true of replies to all types of questions, though tag-questioned sentences show it most clearly.

In similar discourse contexts, however, waa behaves differently. On the assumption that waa is the verbal equivalent of baa and ayaa, we might expect that ( 61a ) below would be an inappropriate reply to ( 58a ) above since a different constituent is focused:

- ( 61 )a. haa, Cali lacagtii wuu keenay  
yes Ali money+the waa+he brought

'Yes, Ali BROUGHT the money.'

- b. ...NP<sub>1</sub> - NP<sub>2</sub> - V  
+FOC

In fact ( 61a ) is an appropriate reply to ( 58a ) earlier, and interestingly is also an appropriate reply to (62a ) below:

- ( 62 )a. Cali lacagtii wuu keenay, sow ma aha ?  
Ali money+the waa+he brought Q NEG is

'Ali BROUGHT the money, didn't he ?'

- b. NP<sub>1</sub> - NP<sub>2</sub> - V ...  
+FOC

It is important to note that, as predicted for NP focus, neither (59a) or (60a) are appropriate replies to (62a).

Thus we have a major constraint on focus usage -- that it must remain on the same constituent from question to answer -- that applies to NP focus particles baa and ayaa but not to 'verb focus' waa. To save the analysis of verbal focus, one could state that baa/ayaa and waa simply do not behave alike in this respect, waa being exempt from the constraint. This, however, would provide no explanation for the fact that reply (61a) is always an appropriate reply, whatever the position of the original focus, or type of constituent focused. On the other hand, an analysis of waa sentences like (61a) as focally neutral would naturally explain this adaptability.

#### 6.2.4 Summary

We have seen then evidence from verbless sentences that waa cannot always be a verb accent particle, even in a verb focus approach like Andrzejewski (1975), and evidence from discourse that it can be neutral with respect to focus. Earlier we saw that in yes-no questions and negative declaratives there is no verb focus particle and that the basic structure is neutral in focus.

All the problems discussed in this chapter arise

from the assumption that there is a grammatical structure of 'verb focus' which parallels NP focus. There is no doubt that at a pragmatic level verbs can be contrasted nor that waa sentences are compatible with verbs being introduced as new information. The problems arise when waa is seen as a syntactic device reflecting this.

One solution would be to state that waa, like ma in yes-no questions for example, is not a verb focus particle but, again as in yes-no questions, that waa structures are neutral in focus. If waa structures are neutral focally then the problems in declarative sentences disappear and declaratives fall into line with yes-no questions, and positive declaratives with negative declaratives.

As mentioned several times, waa is lexically empty. If it is not a verb focus particle then the question which must be faced is: what is the function of waa? One possible answer to this is discussed in the next section.

### 6.3 Waa and the Identification of Sentence Types

As can be seen from examples in the text so far, Somali marks different sentence types by means of specific morphemes. For example a negative yes-no question like ( 63 ) below:

( 63 )    sow ma tegin ?  
           Q    NEG went  
           'Did he not go ?'

has a question word sow, a negative word ma and a negative verb form. This multiple marking by means of an identifying morpheme, a negative morpheme if relevant, and verbal forms is the basic pattern of sentence type differentiation.

As will be seen, however, while the combination of markers uniquely specifies a sentence type, there is some overlap in the occurrence of specific morphemes. See table ( 64 ) below for a list of the combinations of these markers in some major sentence types. To avoid weighing down the argument with morphological detail well described elsewhere (see Andrzejewski 1968, 1975b for example), the verbal inflection types are coded VF1, VF2 etc. for Verb Form 1, Verb Form 2 etc.

( 64 ) Sentence Type Identification

	MAIN SENTENCE TYPE	CLASS	NEG. MORPHEME	VERB FORM
1.	positive yes-no question	<u>ma</u>	-	VF 1
2.	negative "	<u>sow</u>	<u>ma</u>	VF 2
3.	positive imperative	$\emptyset$	-	VF 3
4.	negative "	<u>ha</u>	$\emptyset$	VF 2
5.	positive declarative	<u>waa</u>	-	VF 1
6.	negative : "	$\emptyset$	<u>ma</u>	VF 2

## Examples:

- |    |                       |                   |
|----|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 1: | <u>ma tegay</u> ?     | 'Did he go ?'     |
| 2: | <u>sow ma tegin</u> ? | 'Did he not go ?' |
| 3: | <u>tag</u> !          | 'Go !'            |
| 4: | <u>ha tegin</u> !     | 'Do not go !'     |
| 5: | <u>waa tegay</u>      | 'He went.'        |
| 6: | <u>ma tegin</u>       | 'He did not go.'  |

As is shown in the chart, it is proposed here that waa be considered an identifier morpheme, or classifier, for declarative sentences. This analysis of the role of waa will avoid all the problems associated with trying to view this morpheme as a verb focus particle. In this analysis waa will characterise positive declarative sentences. Note that this excludes negative declaratives. This is not as unlikely as it might at first seem: for example, both yes-no questions and imperatives have a different classifier in positive and negative counterparts, ma (-NEG) and sow (+NEG) in questions, and  $\emptyset$  (-NEG) and ha (+NEG) in imperatives. Note that in both cases the morpheme which occurs in negatives cannot be considered a negative morpheme.<sup>10</sup>

There are, however, a couple of objections which might be raised against this approach and these merit discussion.

The first objection that might be raised is that there are in fact positive declarative sentences without waa. These are sentences with NP focus like ( 65-67 ) below:

( 65 )     lacagtii buu keenay  
             money+the FOC+he brought

'He brought THE MONEY.'



- ( 66 )     warag ayaa maanta timi  
letter FOC today came

'A LETTER arrived today.'

- ( 67 )     waxaan doonayaa koob shaah ah  
what+I want (is)cup tea    is

'What I want is a cup of tea.'

In fact this is only a superficial problem, since for the various quite independent reasons outlined in Chapters Three and Four earlier each of the above sentences has had an occurrence of waa deleted in undergoing the rule of Cleft Reduction. Sentence ( 67 ) for example is derived from ( 68 ) below by Cleft Reduction:

- ( 68 )     waxaan doonayaa waa koob shaah ah

'What I want is a cup of tea,' 'The thing I want is  
a cup of tea.'

Similarly the baa and ayaa structures in ( 65 ) & ( 66 ) are derived by Focus Fronting from reduced clefts similar to ( 67 ), shown in ( 68 ) & ( 70 ) below:

- ( 69 )     wuxuu keenay lacagtii  
what+he brought(is)money+the

'What he brought was the money.'

- ( 70 )    waxa maanta timi waraq  
           what today came(is)letter

'What came today was a letter.'

These, like ( 67 ), are derived by Cleft Reduction from the full waxa-clefts shown in ( 71 ) & ( 72 ) below:

- ( 71 )    wuxuu keenay waa lacagtii  
           what+he brought (is) money+the

'What he brought was the money;', 'The thing he brought  
   was money.'

- ( 72 )    waxa maanta timi waa waraq<sup>11</sup>  
           what today came (is) letter

'What came today was a letter', 'The thing that came  
   today was a letter.'

Thus waa deletion is an integral part of the derivation of NP focus structures and it is entirely predictable that in the surface form of such structures waa should be absent. The particle would be introduced into the underlying structure of sentences like ( 65 - 67 ) as in all other positive declaratives.

A second possible objection to this analysis of waa as a classifier concerns WH-questions. These sentences

as examples ( 75 ) & ( 74 ) below show, may also contain waa:

- ( 73 )    dukaankii waa xaggee ?  
           shop+the            place+which

'Where is the shop ?'

- ( 74 )    waa sidee ?  
           way+which

'How is it ?'

It is a fact that analysing waa as a sentence type identifier involves viewing declaratives and WH-questions as a single class of sentences, as opposed to yes-no questions, imperatives etc.. While this might be a controversial claim in the description of some languages, the grammatical facts of Somali seem to favour this classification .

Note firstly that the question word ma never occurs in WH-questions, e.g.

- ( 75 ) a.    \*xaggee ma tegaysaa ?  
               place+which Q are-going

'Where are you going ?'

- b.    xaggee baad tegaysaa ?  
        place+which FOC+you are-going

'Where are you going ?'

In fact WH- questions are omitted from table (64) earlier simply because they are never distinguished from declaratives by any of the sentence identifying mechanisms. They differ only in containing an NP with an interrogative determiner rather than any other determiner. Compare ( 76 ) & ( 77 ) below:

- ( 76 )    xaggaa ayaad tegaysaa :  
           place+that FOC+you are-going  
           'You are going THERE.' (lit. 'THAT PLACE you are going.')
- ( 77 )    xaggee ayaad tegaysaa ?  
           place+which FOC+you are-going  
           'WHERE are you going ?' (lit. 'WHICH PLACE you are going?')

Secondly, as was demonstrated in Chapter Five, there is no independent rule of WH-question formation. On the contrary, WH-items undergo the rule of Focus Fronting in exactly the same way as non-WH items in declarative sentences, as seen in ( 76 ) & ( 77 ) above where both types of focused NP have been fronted by Focus Fronting. In fact there are no syntactic rules which apply to WH-questions and not to corresponding declaratives, and vice-versa.

It will be claimed here that recognising that both declaratives and WH-questions share the same classifier waa explicitly reflects these grammatical facts. At the level of

syntax there is no distinction between declaratives and WH-questions.

A distinction will be drawn here between the set of classifiers (the morphemes described above) and complementisers. The latter will be said to be  $\emptyset$  (zero) for main sentences and the subordinating particle in 'that' for embedded sentences. The distinction between classifiers and, for example, in 'that' is clearly reflected in the grammar. The latter occurs to the left of the sentence, as with complementisers in other languages, while the same is not true of classifiers: as will be seen in 6.5 below, these usually occur before the verb but in some cases may be positioned elsewhere. Secondly, in 'that' unlike the classifiers does not display a completely different form in negative sentences, i.e. as ( 78 ) below shows, it is not sensitive to the abstract NEG node which will be assumed in this study:

- ( 78 )a. inaan tegay  
in+aan  
 that+I went

'That I went...'

- b. inaanan tegin  
in+aan+aan  
 that+NEG+I went

'That I did not go...'

These two major differences will be taken to reflect a distinction between complementiser and classifier. The former will be introduced under a COMP node outside S i.e. as in ( 79 ) below:

$$( 79 ) \quad \bar{S} \longrightarrow \text{COMP} - S$$

following Bresnan (1970), and subsequent work in generative syntax. The rules for introducing classifiers are discussed in 6.5 below.

#### 6.4 Conclusion

This chapter has been concerned with the problems that arise from the attempt to identify verb focus as a syntactic structure. As has been demonstrated, there are no grounds for analysing such a structure in yes-no questions and negatives. Further, to identify the particle waa in positive declaratives and WH-questions as a verb focus particle also leads to serious problems. I have argued that to view waa rather as one of the set of sentence identifying morphemes (classifiers) eliminates these problems, allowing a more general description of focus across sentence types, and avoiding obligatory deletion rules. The conclusion is that verb focus does not exist at the level of syntactic structure in the way that NP focus does.

## 6.5 The Rules

The classifier system of the major types of Somali sentences can be described in terms of two binary features,  $^+Q$  and  $^+IMP$ . These can only be combined to form the following three combinations:

( 80 )	$\begin{bmatrix} +Q \\ -IMP \end{bmatrix}$	=	yes-no questions
	$\begin{bmatrix} -Q \\ -IMP \end{bmatrix}$	=	declaratives & WH-questions
	$\begin{bmatrix} -Q \\ +IMP \end{bmatrix}$	=	imperatives

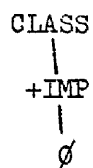
It will be assumed here that these morphemes will be introduced by P.S. rules generating a CLASS node under which they can be inserted. Thus the combinations of features above can be abbreviated in diagrams as follows, where the actual morphemes are shown:

( 81 )	<div style="text-align: center;">           CLASS                         +Q               <u>ma</u> </div>
--------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

( 82 )



( 83 )



Each of the above will have to be sensitive to a NEG node, as follows:

( 84 )    CLASS  $\longrightarrow$  sow /    \_ NEG  
           +Q

( 85 )    CLASS  $\longrightarrow$      $\emptyset$  /    \_ NEG  
           -Q

( 86 )    CLASS  $\longrightarrow$     ha /    \_ NEG  
           +IMP

Given that these morphemes will be introduced under a CLASS node, the question arises of where in the sentence the CLASS node is to be generated by the P.S. rules. Note that, as (87-89) below show, the normal position for these morphemes is before the verb:



- ( 87 )a. ninku ma tegay ?  
man+the Q went

'Did the man go ?'

- b. \*ma ninku tegay  
Q man+the went

'Did the man go ?'

- ( 88 )a. ninku waa tegay  
man+the DECL.went

'The man went.'

- b. \*waa ninku tegay  
DECL.man+the went

The man went.'

- ( 89 )a. albaabka ha furin !  
door+the IMP close  
(Neg)

'Don't close the door !'

- b. \*ha albaabka furin !  
IMP door+the close  
(Neg)

'Don't close the door !'

This suggests a phrase structure rule like ( 90 ) below:<sup>12</sup>

( 90 )     $S \longrightarrow (NP) - (NP) - CLASS - (NEG) - V$

This seems to be basically correct. There are, however, some variations in the positioning of classifiers. These principally concern sentences where no main verb occurs. The first instance concerns waa. As described in Chapters Three and Four, deletion of the verb yahay 'to be' to form verbless equational sentences results in the positioning of waa before the complement NP, i.e.

( 91 )a.    Cali askari waa yahay  
              A. soldier DECL. is

'Ali is a soldier.'

b.    Cali waa askari Ø  
       A. DECL. soldier

'Ali is a soldier.'

In 3.5.3 earlier this repositioning of waa was incorporated into the Copula Affix Deletion rule, the second of two rules which apply to first reduce, then delete the copula. This will be maintained here. If verbless equational sentences are base generated, one would need a rule like ( 92 ) below:

( 92 )    S  $\longrightarrow$  NP - waa - NP<sup>13</sup>

The second variation in classifier position concerns ma. In sentences with baa/ayaa NP focus (derived by Focus Fronting from verbless clefts) ma can either occur after the focus NP, i.e. between the fronted focused NP and relative clause headed by baa/ayaa as in ( 93 ) below, or before the focused NP, i.e. at the front of the sentence, as in ( 94 ). As described earlier, the former seems to occur with the particle ayaa, and the latter with baa.

( 93 )     $\left[ \begin{array}{c} \text{Cali} \\ \text{NP} \end{array} \right] \text{ma} \quad \left[ \begin{array}{c} \text{ayaa tegay} \\ \text{NP} \end{array} \right] ? \quad (\text{ma} + \text{ayaa} \rightarrow \text{miyaa})$   
           Ali    Q            (the one)went  
           'Was it ALI who went ?'

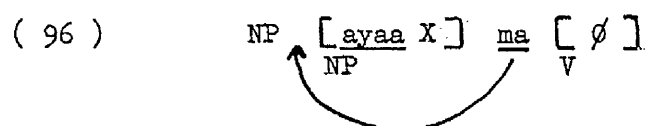
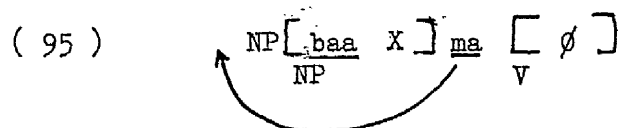
( 94 )    ma  $\left[ \begin{array}{c} \text{Cali} \\ \text{NP} \end{array} \right] \left[ \begin{array}{c} \text{baa tegay} \\ \text{NP} \end{array} \right] ?$   
           Q        Ali            (the one)went  
           'Was it ALI who went ?'

As described earlier, these two structures seem to be equivalent optional variants.

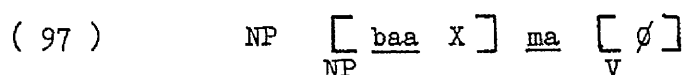
The most economical description of the facts of ( 93 )

seems to be to generate ma in the usual CLASS preverbal position by P.S. rule ( 90 ) earlier and then to have late rules which move ma before the focused NP with baa or after the focused NP with ayaa, as shown schematically below:

## Classifier Movements



These rules can be formulated as follows:



S.D.	1	2	3	4	→
S.C	3+1	2	$\emptyset$	4	



S.D.	1	2	3	4	→
S.C	1	3+2	$\emptyset$	4	

These are local rules, in the sense of Emonds (1976).

To summarise: classifiers are introduced under a node CLASS which is generated by the P.S. rules in a preverbal position.

In copula sentences without a verb 'to be' on the surface (including focus structures) the classifiers ma and waa occur in different surface positions, being associated with NPs rather than the (nonexistent) verb. In an approach, like the present one, where these verbless copula sentences are derived by deletion of the verb 'to be', these different positions will be accounted for by rules which move the classifier.

## CHAPTER SIX:

## FOOTNOTES

- <sup>1</sup>Note that the choice between ( 15a ) & ( 15b ) is free, i.e. ma...baa and miyaa seem to be optional variants, as do baa and ayaa. Of course, the derivation of miyaa from ma + ayaa predicts this second optionality from the first.
- <sup>2</sup>This is stated very informally here. I do not mean to suggest that a pronoun is transformationally created. As will be seen in Chapter 7, it will be argued that pronouns are always base generated.
- <sup>3</sup>The fact that the second NP focus particle is deleted is discussed in 4.2.3 earlier.
- <sup>4</sup>Remembering that the 3rd person masculine singular pronouns are uu (subject) and  $\emptyset$  (object).
- <sup>5</sup>But see Bell (1953:26) for an example of a rare occurrence of waa and an indefinite noun. This is however a special case where the indefinite noun is a subdivision a previous definite noun.
- <sup>6</sup>Note that this behaviour of waa is not an argument that it is a verb focus particle. In the analysis of waa suggested later in this chapter this non-occurrence of indefinite NPs with waa will be automatically predicted. It will follow from the structural impossibility of waa occurring with baa/ayaa, which must accompany new information. See 6.3 for details.
- <sup>7</sup>The difference between positive and negative verb forms are not always as marked as in this example with the strong verb yimi 'come'. Compare for example the weak verb forms wuu keenay 'He brought it' and ma'uu keenin 'He did not bring it'.
- <sup>8</sup>See table ( 64 ) below for details of the interaction of these morphemes.
- <sup>9</sup>One question which remains for these negatives is what significance

the choice of, for example, (41) over (46) has. This is one aspect of the more general question of why NP focus is less common in negatives than in affirmatives. This question is not crucial to the present argument since it concerns NP focus rather than verb focus, and because it probably belongs to the area of semantics and pragmatics rather than syntax. Nevertheless the problem is of great interest and will merit future investigation. What can be suggested here is that the explanation might concern the role of presupposition in focus. It seems to this writer that the difference between (1) & (2) below, for example, is that the simple ma form (1) has only the presupposition of the truck's existence:

- (1)     baabuurkii ma iman             'The truck did not come.'  
          truck+the NEG came
- (2)     baabuurkii baan iman             THE TRUCK did not come.'  
                  baa+aan  
          truck+the FOC+NEG came  
          (remembering that aan is the embedded S neg.morpheme)

Sentence (2) with NP focus, however, has, in addition to the presupposition of the truck's existence, the structurally induced presupposition that 'something(s) came' and identifies the truck as one thing that did not come. This reflects the syntactic derivation of (2), which, as described in Chapter 4, is derived from

- (3)     waxaan iman (waa) baabuurkii  
          waxa+aan  
          what+NEG came             truck+the  
          'What did not come was THE TRUCK.'

This difference in presupposition may then be a factor in the different frequency of occurrence, though whether a sentence without structurally induced presuppositions is more frequent because it is less marked situationally is open to question.

<sup>10</sup> For example, as well as turning up in negative 2nd person imperatives, ha also occurs in 3rd person commands like ha keeno ! 'Let him bring it!', justifying its recognition as a marker of command sentences rather than a negative morpheme.

<sup>11</sup> Example (72) is not grammatical as it stands since wax has the non-remote definite article -a 'the' rather than the remote article -ii used with past tense. (Note that -a and -ii are derived from -ka and -kii by phonological rule). Thus the surface form of the sentence should be wixii (← wax+ii) maanta timi waa waraq. For clarity, I have ignored this question of the choice of determiners in text examples. In fact, once clefts are reduced the

distinction between remote and non-remote definite articles disappears: only -a is found in reduced clefts. For description of these definite articles see Abraham (1964:262-263). Basically, the distinction is as follows: the non-remote article -(k)a is used in sentences with a present tense verb, and where the referent is near, or generic; the remote article -(k)ii is used with past tense or remote referents.

- <sup>12</sup> Note that the position of weak pronouns, unlike full NPs, is between NEG and V. For example:

ma'uu tegin                      'He did not go.'  
NEG he went  
(where the glottal stop is a junction feature)

ha i sheegin !                      'Don't tell me!'  
IMP me tell(neg.form))

ma ku raadinayo                      'He is not looking for you.'  
NEG you look-for

This suggests a different P.S.rule for pronouns, i.e.

S → CLASS - (NEG) - PRO - PRO - V

- <sup>13</sup> Note that this rule cannot make reference to CLASS because, even ignoring imperatives, ma (Q) does not occur in this structure:

\*Cali ma askari ?                      'Is Ali a soldier ?'

The only verbless sentences ma occurs in are the focus structures discussed a little later in this chapter.



## Chapter 7

The Derivation of Topic Structures

## 7.1 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the syntactic description of topic structures. Examples of these structures were given in Chapter Two, where they were introduced. Given the concentration on morphology in existing descriptions of Somali, it is perhaps not surprising that topic structures have not yet been identified as such. They have, of course, been noticed: Andrzejewski (1975:41), for example, states:

"It is a puzzling characteristic of Somali that in a sentence which contains a subj.pron. as the subject of the verb another item can occur to which that subj.pronoun refers. Both the subj.pronoun and the additional item stand in concord with the same verb, e.g.

ninkani awr buu keenay

'This man brought (!) a he-camel (!)'

In this sentence both ninkani 'this man' and uu (in buu which = baa + uu) 'he' stand in concord with the verbal form keenay 'brought' so that the literal translation could be 'This man he brought (!) a he-camel (!)."

As we shall see, Andrzejewski is here referring to the commonest, but not the only, type of topic structure. This chapter will

attempt to provide the first syntactic description of these structures in Somali. The type of construction described by Andrzejewski above is very common; some examples from published texts are given below:

- ( 1 ) goroyadu inta orodka badan bay ka mid tahay  
ostrich+the group+the running +the much FOC+it one of is

'The ostrich, one of the great runners it is.'

(Guddiga Af Soomaaliga 1972a:48)

- ( 2 ) wiilka iyo ninku maxay ku wada hadleen ?  
boy+the and man+the what of together talked

'The boy and the man, what did they discuss ?'

(Guddiga Af Soomaaliga 1972a:59)

- ( 3 ) dadkii jidka marayey, kolka arkeen Heeco bay ku qosleen  
people+the road+the passed when+they saw H.FOC+they at  
(him)laugh

'The people who passed by the road, when they saw He'o  
they laughed at him.'

(Guddiga Af Soomaaliga 1972a:51)

Two possible analyses of these sentences seem possible. The first is a movement analysis on the lines of the rule called Left Dislocation in Ross (1967). This is a transformation like

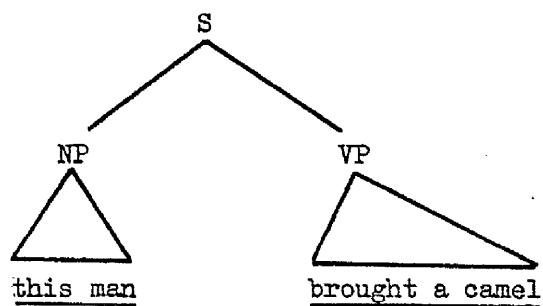
that in ( 4 ) below:

( 4 ) Left Dislocation

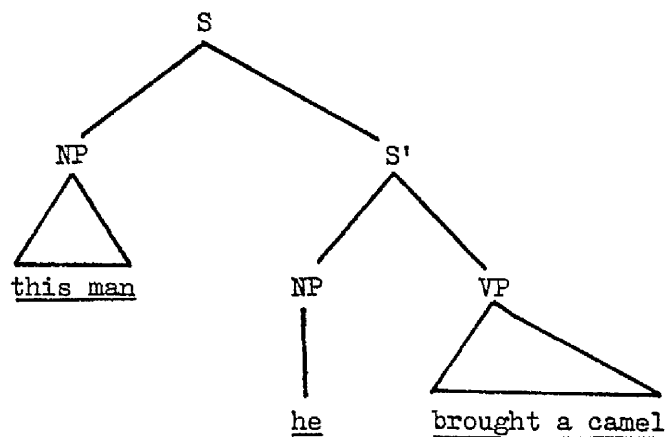
	X	-	NP	-	Y	
S.D.	1		2		3	⇒
S.C.	2+1		2		3	
			+PRO			

This rule will take a structure like ( 5 ) below and transform it into one like ( 6 ):

( 5 )



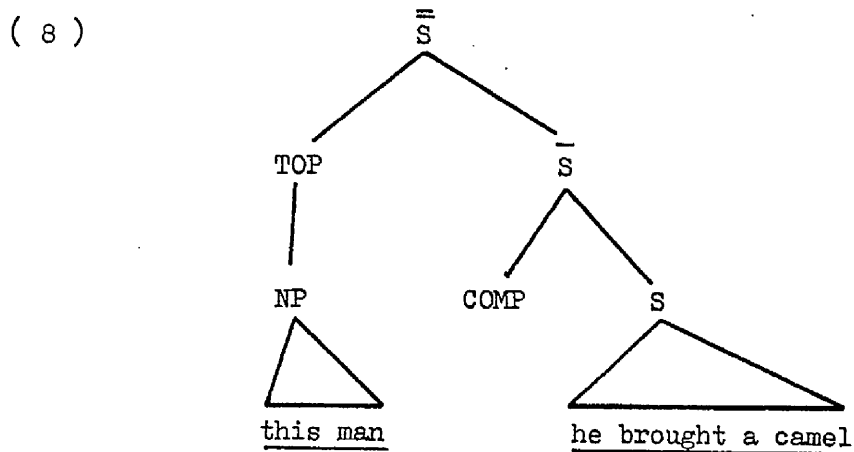
( 6 )



The schema above are given in terms of English but the rule would operate in exactly the same way in Somali. The creation of the pronoun in ( 6 ) necessitates a rule of feature copying to give the features of the dislocated NP to the coreferential pronoun in the sentence.

An alternative analysis is to generate structures like (86) directly in the base. Following Chomsky (1977) this would be done by the P.S. rules in ( 7 ) below producing the structure in ( 8 ). Note that ( 7 c ) would be necessary for Somali since, as described in Chapter Two, only NPs may occur as topics:

- ( 7 )      a.       $\bar{\bar{S}} \longrightarrow (\text{TOPIC}) - \bar{S}$   
               b.       $\bar{S} \longrightarrow \text{COMP} - S$   
               c.       $\text{TOPIC} \longrightarrow \text{NP}$



This analysis will need a condition at some level on the relation

between the topic NP and the sentence which follows it. This condition will be discussed later.

There have been arguments for each of these analyses in the literature: apart from Ross (1967) arguing for the movement analysis, Hirschbühler (1975) has argued that left dislocated NPs must be base generated in French, and Gundel (1975) has argued similarly for English. Cinque (1977) has argued that there are two forms of left dislocation in Italian and French: one requiring a movement rule and the other needing to be base generated (the former he terms left dislocation and the latter "hanging topic"). Chomsky (1977) has suggested a similar distinction for English between topicalisation, which is a WH-movement rule leaving a gap, and TOPIC - S structures, which are base generated, containing a pronoun.

In this chapter I will argue that topic structures in Somali must be base generated by something like P.S. rule ( 7 a ) above, and cannot be derived by a movement rule.

It might appear that to argue against a movement analysis would involve arguing against both Topicalisation and Left Dislocation. It is clear, however, that only Left Dislocation is a reasonable candidate for a movement rule in these cases and it is against this rule that the arguments are forwarded. In the course of these arguments the inapplicability of Topicalisation will also become clear, but it is worth noting here the major evidence

against it applying rather than Left Dislocation. It is clear that if these sentences are derived by a movement rule, the following facts are true:

1. The rule does not leave a gap; see examples (1-3) above.

2. The rule violates the Complex NP Constraint, as the following examples show:

- (9) Cali wuxuu doonayaa waa lacag  
A. thing+the+he wants (be) money

'Ali, the thing which he wants is money.'

- (10) ninkii shandadii uu keenay waa tan  
man+the case+the he brought (be) this

'The man, the suitcase which he brought is this one.'

3. The rule violates the Co-ordinate Structure Constraint (Ross 1967), as the following shows:

- (11) Cali, isaga iyo Marian way tageen  
A. he and M. they went

'Ali, he and Marian have gone.'

These features seem to exclude Topicalisation since, according to Chomsky (1977) for example, the rule, as a WH-movement rule both

leaves a gap and obeys the CNPC. Similarly, most analyses since Ross (1967) have seen Topicalisation as subject to the Co-ordinate Structure Constraint. Ross' rule of Left Dislocation, however, does not leave a gap, nor is subject to these constraints, (see Ross 1967: 232-244). Other arguments must be presented to show the inapplicability of this rule.

## 7.2 Arguments Against a Movement Analysis

### 7.2.1 Pronouns

The first argument against Left Dislocation is that the pronouns which must be transformationally created can also occur as discourse anaphora i.e. without a binding antecedent, as described earlier in the discussion of WH-questions. See the following examples:

- (12)            wuu arkay  
                  waa+he(him)saw  
                  'He<sub>i</sub> saw him<sub>j</sub>.'

- (13)            nínkii wuu arkay  
                  'The man<sub>i</sub>, he<sub>i</sub> saw him<sub>j</sub>.'

- ( 14 )            ninkii wuu arkay  
                   'The man<sub>i</sub>, he<sub>j</sub> saw him.'

In ( 12 ) the pronoun uu 'he' occurs without a dislocated NP from which to copy it features, i.e. is discourse anaphoric. In ( 13 ) the topic NP is coreferential with uu 'he' and in a Left Dislocation approach would provide the pronoun with its features. In ( 14 ) however, the topic ninkii is coreferential with the object not with the subject pronoun; uu still occurs.

Thus ( 13 ) & ( 14 ) show that uu can be coreferential with the topic NP or not, and still occur in the same form in the same structure. To adopt an analysis of Left Dislocation would mean giving uu in ( 12 ) & ( 14 ) a radically different analysis from uu in ( 13 ): the former would be base generated and the latter transformationally inserted. Given the obvious parallel between structures ( 12-14 ) this seems to needlessly overcomplicate the description.

### 7.2.2      Right Dislocation

In Chapter Two the parallel between topics and afterthought topics was briefly discussed. Such a parallel is clear from examples like ( 15 ) & ( 16 ) below:



- ( 15 )    ninkaasu wuu keenay  
           man+that was+he(it)brought

'That man, he brought it.'

- ( 16 )    wuu keenay ninkaasu

'He brought it, that man.'

In a movement analysis like Ross (1967) this is captured by including a rule of Right Dislocation which parallels Left Dislocation but moves the NP to the right of the sentence. Such a rule would be like ( 17 ) below:

- ( 17 )    Right Dislocation

$$\begin{array}{rclcl}
 & X & - & NP & - & Y \\
 \text{S.D.} & 1 & & 2 & & 3 & \implies \\
 \text{S.C.} & 1 & & 2 & & 3 + 2 \\
 & & & +\text{PRO} & & 
 \end{array}$$

This rule, like all rightward movement rules, must be upward bounded, in the sense of Ross (1967:185) whose characterisation of this constraint is ( 18 ):

- ( 18 )    "In all rules whose structural index is of the form  
           ...A Y, and whose structural change specifies A is  
           to be adjoined to the right of Y, A must command Y."

However it is clear for Somali afterthought topics that if they are derived by a movement rule then such a rule cannot be upward bounded in this way. Ross (1967:238) for example, in such a movement analysis, predicts that NPs cannot be right dislocated out of relative clauses. As the examples in ( 19 ) below show, this prediction is false for Somali:

- ( 19 )a. ma aragtay buuggii uu keenay ninkaasu ?  
           Q   saw     book+the he brought man+that

'Have you seen the book which he brought, that man ?'

- b. waxaan raadinayaa lacagtii ay dirtay Amina  
      what+I trace         money+the she sent A.

'What I'm looking for is the money she sent, Amina.'

The unbounded nature of such a rightward movement rule makes Right Dislocation a problematic approach for Somali. Thus a movement analysis' ability to capture the parallel between topic and afterthought topic in ( 15 ) & ( 16 ) is in doubt.

Note that a phrase structure approach will be able to capture this parallel by using the two phrase structure rules below:

- ( 20 )a.  $\bar{\bar{S}} \rightarrow \text{TOP} - \bar{S}$

- b.  $\bar{\bar{S}} \rightarrow \bar{S} - \text{TOP}$

## 7.2.3 Partitive Topic Structures

Another major problem for a Left Dislocation approach is that the item in the sentence need not simply be a personal pronoun. See, for example, the following where the numeral mid 'one' occurs:

- ( 21 ) xubnaha dadka, mid waliba waxay leedahay hawl u gaar ah  
organs+the people+the one each what has function special is

'The human organs, what each one has is a special function.'

- ( 22 ) midhahaas, mid iiga door !  
fruits+those one me+for+out choose

'Those fruits, choose one out for me !'

- ( 23 ) labada gabdhood, midee faan badnayd ?  
two+the girls one+which boast much

'The two girls, which one boasted a lot ?'

It is clear that these sentences cannot be derived by Left Dislocation for the element in the sentence is not coreferential with the topic NP but is a part of the set defined by the topic NP. Thus there is no sense in which mid 'one' in ( 22 ) is coreferential with midhahaas 'those fruits'.

In purely syntactic terms there are at least two problems here. The first is the same as discussed earlier of personal

pronouns: mid must be independently base generatable since it can occur without an antecedent, as in ( 24 ) below:

- ( 24 )    mid i sii !  
           one me give  
           'Give me one !'

Secondly, the features of the topic NP are not shared by the 'anaphor' in the sentence: for example in ( 21 ) xubnaha dadka 'the human organs' is a plural NP and definite, while mid is singular and indefinite (cf. midka 'the one'). It is not possible therefore for mid to be created by Left Dislocation by means of the grammatical features of xubnaha dadka.

The only solution in a movement analysis would be to postulate a separate movement rule, let us call it Partitive NP Movement, which would derive ( 21 - 23 ) above from something like ( 25 - 27 ) below:

- ( 25 )    mid waliba xubnaha dadka waxay leedahay hawl u gaar ah  
           one each organs+the people+the what has funct.special is  
           'Each one of the human organs has a special function.'
- ( 26 )    mid midhahaas iiga door !  
           one fruits+those me+for+out choose  
           'Choose out one of those fruits for me !'

- ( 27 )    midde labada gabdhoodfaan badnayd ?  
           one+which two+the girls boast much

'Which one of the two girls boasted a lot ?'

Before discussing this rule it is worth noting that base generating topic structures would allow a unified description of both the sentences under discussion here and the similar structures with pronouns discussed earlier. So, for example, ( 23 ) above and ( 28 ) below would be given the same analysis:

- ( 28 )    labada gabdhood way faan badnaayeen.  
           two+the girls waa+they boast much

'The two girls, they boasted a lot.'

Returning to this postulated Partitive NP Movement rule, there are immediate problems for it in the existence of topic structures like the following:

- ( 29 )    labadaas gabdhood, nin mid guursaday ayaan aqaan  
           two+those girls        man one married FOC+I know

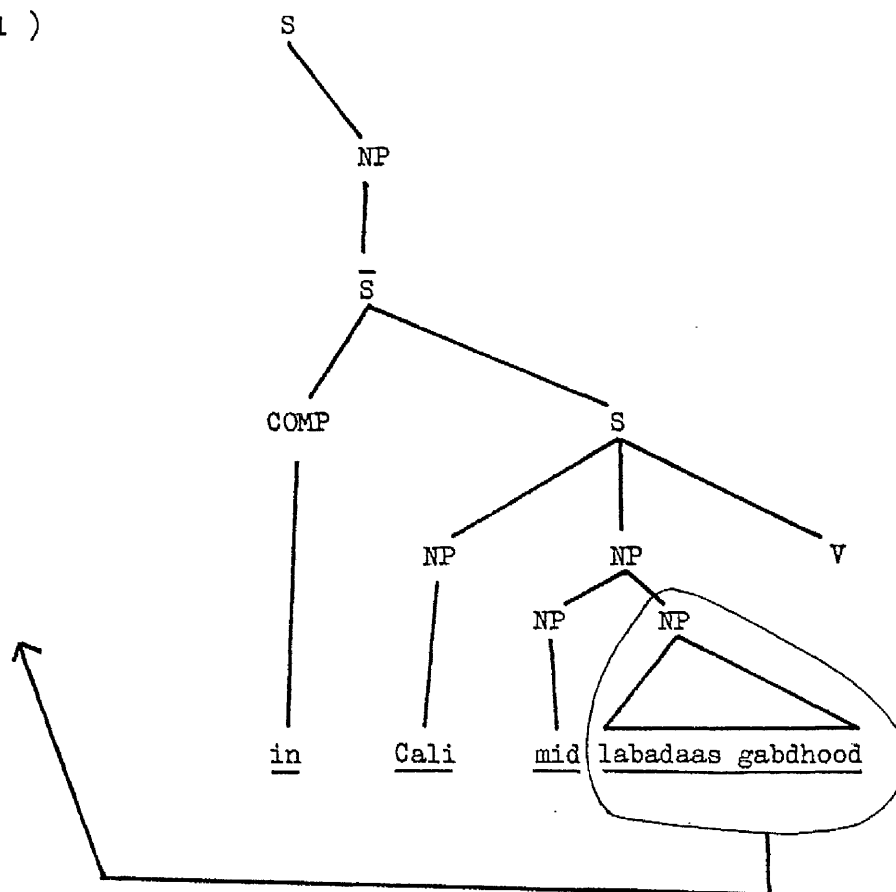
'Those two girls, I know a man who married one.'

- ( 30 )    labadaas gabdhood, in Cali mid jecelyahay miyaad sheegtay ?

'Those two girls, did you say that Ali likes one ?'

To understand the problems it must be remembered that Partitive NP Movement would not be a copying rule like Left Dislocation but a 'chopping rule' in the sense of Ross (1967). Thus it is predicted that it would be subject to certain constraints on movement rules. These include the Propositional Island Condition (PIC) and the Specified Subject Condition (SSC), both of which were described in Chapter Five earlier. Note that the movement rule that would have to be said to have extracted the topic in ( 30 ) above would violate both of these constraints, as shown below:

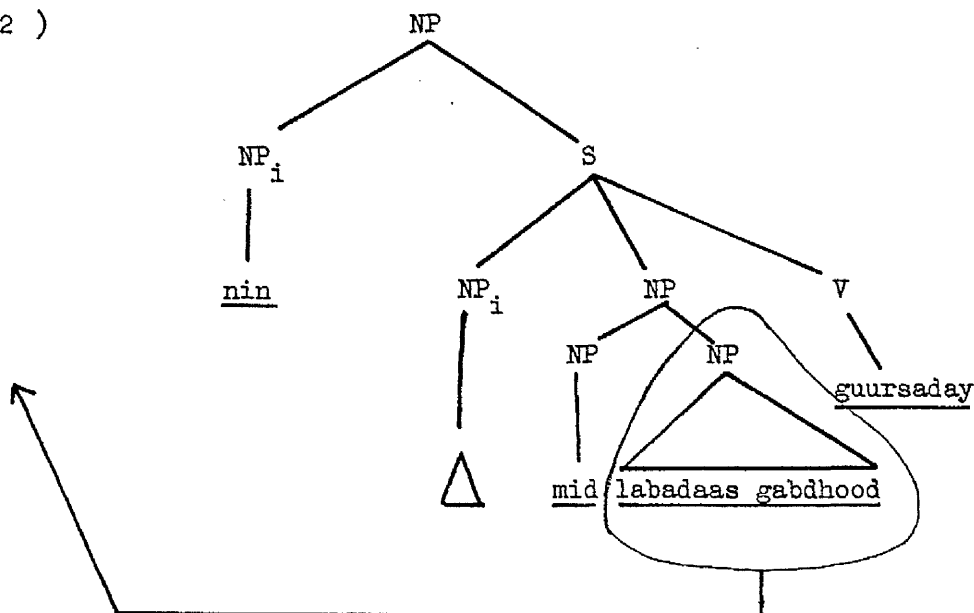
( 31 )



In ( 30 ) the rule is extracting an NP from a tensed clause across a specified subject, Cali.

It is true, however, that WH-movement rules are analysed as apparently violating PIC and SSC (see Chomsky 1977:86). Thus an analysis of Partitive NP Movement as WH-movement might account for the above facts. In fact this will not work, in addition to any other reasons, because of the regular occurrence of topic structures like ( 29 ) above. Though apparently violating PIC and SSC, WH-movement rules are subject to the Complex NP Constraint, as discussed earlier. As described then (in Chapter Five), this rules out extraction of NPs from within relative clauses. If ( 29 ) were derived by a rule like Partitive NP Movement, then the CNPC will be violated, as ( 32 ) below shows:

( 32 )



In short, 'those two girls' will have to be said to be extracted from the relative clause 'a man who married one of those two girls'.

Such power, or freedom from constraints, makes this rule seem a suspicious candidate for a movement rule. This is especially so given the fact, as described in Chapter Five earlier, that Somali has no WH-movement rules or any movement rules which cross a sentence boundary. It is quite clear that Left Dislocation cannot derive these partitive topic structures; it seems equally clear that to sustain a movement rule analysis by this over-powerful Partitive NP Movement rule is an unsatisfactory alternative, especially given the comparative simplicity and unity of a P.S. rule account of these structures.

#### 7.2.4 Full NPs

A further problem for a Left Dislocation analysis of topic structures is that even when there is a relationship of coreference between the topic and an element in the sentence, as with the pronoun structures earlier, this element may be a full NP. See for example ( 33 ) & ( 34 ) below:



- ( 33 )    inuu kugu dhuftay, arrintaas baanu necebnaahay  
           that+he you hit      affair+that FOC+we deplore

'That he struck you, we deplore that affair.'

- ( 34 )    sirta militeri ah, bad baan gelayaa haddaan wax  
           secrets+the mil.are trouble FOC+I enter if+I thing

sidaas daabaco  
           sort+that print

'Military secrets, I'll get into trouble if I publish  
   anything of that sort.'

In ( 33 ) the topic is a sentence embedded under NP, i.e. a 'that'-  
 clause. It is clear that inuu kugu dhuftay 'that he struck you'  
 and arrintaas 'that affair' are referentially related; it is im-  
 possible however to derive this structure by Left Dislocation ex-  
 tracting the topic from the sentence because arrintaas is a full  
 lexical NP and which therefore cannot be introduced by a transform-  
 ational rule. Sentence ( 34 ) provides similar problems.

Yet more problems are caused by examples where the topic  
 has no relationship with any one constituent of the sentence.

See ( 35 ) below for example:

- ( 35 )    halkaa, ninka nooloshiisu qiima ma leh  
           place+that man+the life+his value NEG has

'That place, a man's life has no value.'

In this example the topic is not coreferential with any NP in the sentence, nor is there a set-subset relationship between it and a sentence constituent. It simply sets the context for the following proposition.

Note that ( 35 ) above cannot be analysed simply as a topicalisation of a 'prepositional phrase' i.e. a locative NP. The topic NP is not governed by any of the pre-verbal locative particles which in Somali correspond to English prepositions (see Andrzejewski 1960 for details). Note however that if the NP which is topic in ( 36 ) occurs within the sentence (i.e. as a locative NP) it must be governed by such a locative particle:

- ( 36 )a. ninka nooloshiisu qiima ku ma leh halkaa  
man+the life+his value in NEG has place+that

'A man's life has no value in that place.'

- b. \*ninka nooloshiisu qiima ma leh halkaa

'A man's life has no value in that place.'

Omission of the locative particle ku 'in' results in ( 36 b ) being ungrammatical. That the corresponding topic structure ( 35 ) is grammatical without the locative particle shows that halkaa has not simply been reordered within its sentence by a topicalisation rule.

It is clear once again that Left Dislocation cannot account for such structures as these. To use some other movement rule to extract the topic from within the sentence in examples like (35) would need a completely ad hoc rule to delete the locative particle.

#### 7.2.5 Summary

We have seen three types of topic structure, and for each a movement analysis is unsatisfactory. The first, with a pronoun in the sentence, can be derived by Left Dislocation only at the cost of complicating the statement of pronoun derivation, and by disguising significant structural parallels between topics and afterthought topics. The second, partitive topics, cannot be derived by Left Dislocation and would require an ad hoc movement rule subject to no constraints and unique in the grammar. The third type, with no relation between the topic and any single constituent in the sentence, simply cannot have a source for the topic NP in the sentence, and no movement rule is possible.

If one abandons the attempt to employ a movement analysis, however, it is possible to provide a simple, unified description of all these topic structures by generating them via the P.S. rules in the base. The topic NPs will be generated

alongside the sentence by the P.S. rules described earlier.

The only problem that arises in a P.S. rule analysis concerns case. It has been shown how the topic NP and its anaphor may differ in features of definiteness and number. Counter to this however is the fact that when the topic can be interpreted as coreferential with the subject of the sentence, it is subject marked.

This can be seen in Andrzejewski's quotation in 7.2.1 above, and in the example below:

(37) ninka askariga ahi wuu bilaabi doonaa  
man+the soldier+the is waa+he(it)begin will

'The man who is a soldier, he will begin it.'

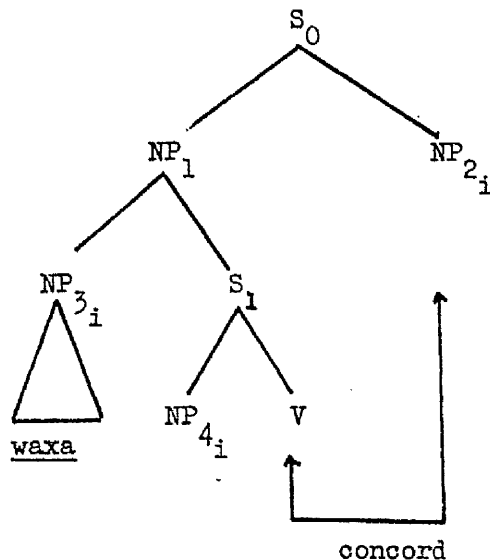
In (37) the topic NP ninka askariga ahi is subject marked by the suffix -i even though it is outside the sentence. The problem for a P.S. analysis is how this marking can be said to occur.

This is a genuine problem but there are two factors which undercut its strength as a counterargument to a P.S. rule analysis.

The first and most important is that we have already seen examples of morphological agreement rules being overruled by semantic factors, in particular, making reference to an NP outside a sentence when it is coreferential with an item within the sentence, even though there is no possible source for the NP

within that sentence. In 3.2.1 earlier it was shown how in a verbless sentence structure like (38) below there can be concord between  $NP_2$  and the relative clause verb when  $NP_2$  and  $NP_4$  are coreferential:

( 38 )



This is as in ( 39 ) below:

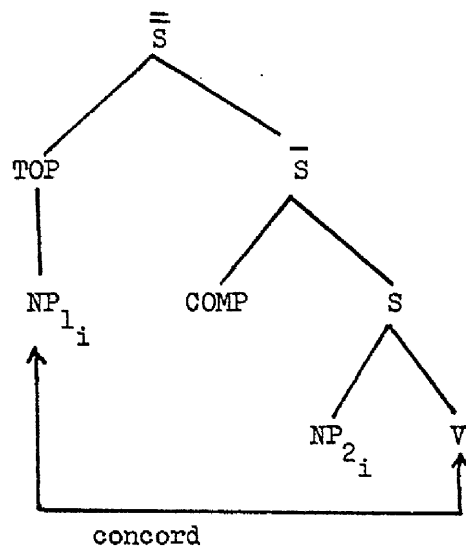
( 39 )    waxa dhacday waa malqacad  
           thing+the fell waa(be)spoon

'The thing which fell was a spoon.'

In ( 39 ) the relative clause verb dhacday 'fell' shows feminine concord with malqacad 'spoon' although the headword waxa 'the thing' is grammatically masculine. Note that there is no possible source for the cleft complement  $NP_2$  in the relative clause.

Now, in the topic structures under discussion we find, as in ( 40 ) below, that morphological rules identify  $NP_1$  as subject of the S verb when  $NP_1$  is coreferential with  $NP_2$ :

( 40 )



Again, I would argue, there is no possible source for  $NP_1$  in the sentence.

It appears that the topic case phenomenon in ( 40 ) may be, like the 'fuzzy concord' in ( 38 ), an instance of semantic coreference interfering with, or perhaps better, overriding the grammatical agreement rules.

The second factor is that this topic case marking is, at least in part, optional. The longer a topic NP is, the less likely it is to be subject marked in these circumstances. See for example ( 41 ) below which is an equally grammatical and acceptable version of ( 37 ) earlier:

- ( 41 )    ninka askariga ah wuu bilaabi doonaa  
           man+the soldier+the is waa+he begin will

'The man who is a soldier, he will begin it.'

Here the topic NP is not subject marked: there is no -i suffix. Remembering that optionality was a feature of 'fuzzy concord' earlier, this can be seen as confirming the parallel between the two forms of semantically motivated extra-sentential concord.

Thus although this case phenomenon must cause some problems for the analysis, these are not sufficient to counter-balance the other arguments against a movement analysis of topic structures. A phrase structure analysis will be accepted here.

Before discussing this phrase structure analysis, it is necessary to consider another analysis of these topic structures which differs from both a Left Dislocation approach and the P.S. rule approach argued for in this study. This is discussed in the next section.

### 7.3 Arguments Against a 'Double NP' Approach

#### 7.3.1 Introduction

The approach to some of these topic structures implicit in traditional grammars of Somali and in Andrzejewski's quotation in 7.2.1 above is that Somali allows a pronominal copy of any full NP to occur in the same sentence as that full NP. This I will term the 'Double NP' approach. There are no overt expositions of this analysis but clearly, if the pronoun is inserted by rule this is a variant of Left Dislocation, and if introduced by P.S. rules, a variant of the approach argued for here. The main difference from both is that this 'Double NP' approach will identify the topic NP and the pronoun as being within the same sentence.

Firstly, it is clear that this analysis could only be forwarded for topic + pronoun structures since it would otherwise predict that any NP could be duplicated by another full NP in the same sentence<sup>1</sup>-- a claim that could not be upheld in any analysis, and which would generate large numbers of deviant sentences like ( 42 ) below:

( 42 ) \* ninkii<sub>i</sub> dhakhtarkii<sub>i</sub> naagta<sub>j</sub> Amina<sub>j</sub> ma arkin<sub>i</sub>  
                     i          i          j          j          i  
           man+the doctor+the woman+the A. NEG saw

'The man<sub>i</sub> the doctor<sub>i</sub> did not see the woman<sub>j</sub> Amina<sub>j</sub>.'



Thus this approach will still need the phrase structure rules described earlier to generate topic structures with non-pronominal anaphors, and for partitive and 'background' topics. It will be argued here that even in topic structures where there is a coreferential pronoun in the sentence, there are common sentences which cannot be derived by assuming the topic and the pronoun are in the same sentence. It will be assumed that a same sentence copying rule is the most likely formal realisation of this approach.

### 7.3.2 Topics and Reduced Clefts

Among those topic structures not derivable in this double NP approach are the following:

- (43) duqsigu wuxuu ka mid yahay cayayaanka yaryar oo duula  
fly+the what+it of one is insects+the small and flying  
'The fly, what it is is one of the small flying insects.'
- (44) dadka reer miyiga ah, waxay ku sheekaysan jireen  
people+the countryside be what+they of tell used  
wax la yiraahdo lixda lixaad  
thing one calls six+the sixths  
'The people of the countryside, what they used to tell  
of was something called the six sixths.'

- ( 45 )     guryaha magaaladu waxay leeyihiin qolal badan  
                  houses+the town+the what+they have rooms many

'Town houses, what they have is many rooms.'

In each of the above the pronoun and the topic NP cannot be seen as in the same immediate sentence since the former is in a relative clause while the latter occurs left of the waxa head, i.e.

- ( 46 )      $\boxed{\text{TOP}} \quad \boxed{\text{NP}} \quad \dots \quad \boxed{\text{NP}} \quad \underline{\text{waxa}} \quad \boxed{\dots \text{PRO} \dots} \boxed{\text{S}}$

Since the NP and the PRO are not in the same lower sentence, even if we ignore the question of the sentence boundary between the topic NP and the relative clause head, the pronoun cannot be derived from the topic NP by a copying rule applying in the same clause.

Note also that the CNPC rules out an attempt to circumvent this by having the topic within the relative clause at one stage in the derivation to produce the pronominal copy, and then being moved out left of the relative clause head.

### 7.3.3     Topic and Full Clefts

It is worth noting that the approach to waxa reduced

clefts in Andrzejewski (1975) might enable the above examples to be discounted in a double NP approach. As discussed in Chapter Three, this article distinguishes a particle waxa from the NP waxa. This was argued against in Chapter Three. If, however, one accepts this analysis then the structures in (43-45) above are not relative clauses and their value as examples undermined.

However, it is very easy to find examples of topic structures which contain full waxa clefts and which therefore must be analysed as containing relative clauses on a lexical head in any analysis, including that of Andrzejewski (1975). See, for example, the following:

- ( 47 )    Cali wuxuu doonayaa waa shaah  
           A.    thing+the+he wants waa tea

'Ali, the thing he wants is tea.'

- ( 48 )    Marian waxay cunaysaa waa hilib  
           M.    thing+the+she eat waa meat

'Marian, the thing she is eating is meat'

In these examples the argument given in the last section could not be rejected on the grounds of a different analysis of waxa reduced clefts.

## 7.3.4 Topics and Other Relative Clauses

This argument is further supported by examples where the relative clause head intervening between the topic NP and the pronoun is a lexical item other than waxa. See for example the following:

- ( 49 ) nimankii meeshay ku dhinteen ma aqaan  
men+the place+the+they in died NEG know

'The men, I do not know the place in which they died.'

- ( 50 ) Maxamed lacagtii uu keenay way badnayd  
M. money+the he brought waa+it much+is

'Mohamed, the money which he brought is a lot.'

The sentences above contain regular relative clauses on the heads meesha 'the place' and lacagtii 'the money'. In both the topic NP occurs to the left of and outside the relative clause while the pronoun is part of the relative clause. It is clear that there is at least one sentence boundary between the topic and the pronoun and thus any copying rule applying in the same immediate sentence cannot derive the pronouns in these topic structures.

Note that weakening the analysis from 'pronoun copies are possible within the same S' to '...within the same topmost S' will not work any better for structures like these.

This modification would mean claiming that, for example, ay 'they' in ( 49 ) is copied from nimankii 'the men' despite the sentence boundary between them, because both could be analysed as within the same larger sentence. This, while possibly saving the double NP approach, would mean generating all forms of embedded sentence, ('that'-clauses, relative clauses etc.) without subjects although Somali does not allow such subjectless embedded sentences. Given the possible distance of topics and afterthought topics from a coreferential pronoun, and the different structures that can intervene, it would not be possible to create rules to generate subjectless embedded sentences only where topic NPs are involved. The grammar would have to freely generate subjectless embedded sentences and then filter out all cases where the subject position was not filled by a pronoun copied from a topic. Of course embedded sentences with pronouns would still have to be independently base generated for cases like ( 51 ) below:

( 51 )    ma aragtay gaadhigii uu soo iibsaday ?  
           Q    saw            car+the    he bought

'Have you seen the car which he bought ?'

This approach seems very clumsy and ad hoc and, in addition, disguises the parallels between these and other topic structures. An analysis which includes a same sentence pronoun copying rule

(i.e. the double NP analysis) will therefore be rejected here.

It could only provide a description of a subset of topic structures, and that at great cost in terms of economy of description.

### 7.3.5 Appositive NPs

In fact the only phenomenon for which this double NP analysis may be valid is that of NP apposition. See, for example, ( 52- 55) below:

- ( 52 ) inuu dhakhtarku yimi waa run  
that+he doctor+the came waa truth

'That he, the doctor, came is true.'

- ( 53 ) ma aragtay buuggii ay Amina keentay ?  
Q saw book+the she A. brought

'Have you seen the book which she, Amina, brought ?'

- ( 54 ) lacagtuu ninku xadayaa ma badna  
money+the+he man+the steal NEG much+is

'The money which he, the man, is stealing is not much.'

- ( 55 ) Cali buu askarigu siiyey  
A. FOC+he soldier+the gave

'He, the soldier, gave it to Ali.'

That both the pronoun and the coreferential NP are in the same sentence in the above examples can be seen from the fact that in the relative clauses in ( 53 ) & ( 54 ) both items occur to the right of the head NP and to the left of the verb i.e. within the restricting S.

Here I will not go into whether this copying analysis is a suitable approach to these appositional NPs, although it seems unlikely. I will assume instead that the latter are of a different structure from the topic constructions under discussion. The difference in constituent order viz a viz the relative clauses in ( 53 ) & ( 54 ) above is one indication of their different status. Another, and clearer, is the fact that in pronominal topic structures the topic occurs leftmost in the construction and therefore left of the pronoun. In these appositive structures, however, the NP must occur to the right of the pronoun, not to the left, as the following examples, corresponding to ( 52 - 55 ) above, show:

( 56 ) \*in dhakhtarku uu yimi waa run

'That the doctor he came is true.'

( 57 ) \*ma aragtay buuggii Amina ay keentay ?

'Have you seen the book which Amina she brought ?'

( 58 )    \*lacagtii ninku uu xadayaa ma badna

'The money which the man he is stealing is not much.'

( 59 )    \*Cali baa askarigu uu siiyey

'The soldier he gave it to Ali'

In each case putting the appositional NP and the pronoun into the order characteristic of topic structures results in an ungrammatical structure. This will be taken as reflecting the difference in syntactic status between topic structures and appositional NPs.

#### 7.3.6      Summary

It is clear that a double NP analysis of topic structures is not a feasible approach. It cannot derive any constructions other than those with a topic and a pronoun, and in these it would either wrongly predict as ungrammatical what is in fact a very common topic structure, or lead to vast overgeneration of ungrammatical structures. I leave open the question of whether such an approach would have any validity for appositional NPs.



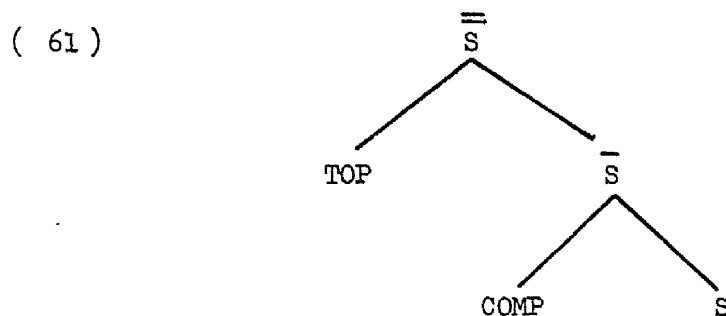
## 7.4 The Phrase Structure Analysis

### 7.4.1 Introduction

Given the inadequacies of competing approaches, a phrase structure rule analysis of topic structures will be accepted in this study. As we have seen, generating topics directly by P.S. rules of the sort in ( 60 ) below allows a unified description of all the topic structures exemplified:

- ( 60 ) a.  $\overline{\overline{S}} \rightarrow \text{TOP} - \overline{S}$   
           b.  $\text{TOP} \rightarrow \text{NP}$   
           c.  $\overline{S} \rightarrow \text{COMP} - S$

These will generate structures like ( 61 ) below:



The question arises: what extra syntactic rules are necessary to generate well-formed topic structures ? As this section will show, perhaps the strongest argument for this phrase structure approach is that no extra syntactic rules at all are involved. The topic NP may be any NP allowed in such a structure as ( 61 ) above i.e. any NP which can occur outside a sentence, as for example in one word utterances. Similarly there are no restrictions on the type of S involved or on its contents. Finally, there are no syntactic rules governing the relationship of the topic NP with S or any of its constituents. It will be argued in this section that the grammar must freely generate structures as in ( 61 ) above and that certain combinations of topic and sentence will be ruled out, in certain contexts, by pragmatic rules.

#### 7.4.2 The Topic NP

As mentioned above any NP which can occur in isolation can occur as topic. In the examples so far we have seen common nouns, proper names, genitive constructions, co-ordinate NPs, relative clauses and 'that'-clauses as topics. Example ( 62 ) below shows independent pronouns as topics:

- ( 62 ) a. isagu wuu heli doonaa  
 he waa+he find will

'Him, he will find it.'

- b. iyadu cunto badan bay keenaysaa  
 she food much FOC+she bring

'Her, she is bringing lots of food.'

To complete the full range of NPs, example ( 63 ), like ( 33 ) earlier, is an instance of an embedded sentence occurring as a topic:

- ( 63 ) in dhakhtarkii yimi, warkaas waa run  
 that doctor+the came news+that waa truth

'That the doctor came, that news is true.'

Note that the complementiser in 'that' distinguishes the example above from a quotation structure.

In fact the only NPs which cannot occur as topics are the weak pronouns aan 'I', aad 'you', uu 'he' etc. (subject pronouns) and i 'me', ku 'you' etc. (object pronouns). This can be seen by comparing ( 62 ) above with ( 64 ) below:

- ( 64 ) a. \*uu, wuu heli doonaa

'Him, he will find it.'

( 64 )b. \*ay cunto badan bay keenaysaa

'Her, she is bringing lots of food.'

Since these pronouns cannot occur as one word utterances, see ( 65 ) below, or as heads of relative clauses, see ( 66 ) below, it is clear that this behaviour is not specific to topic structures and therefore will not need a special qualification to the P.S. rules governing topics:

( 65 ) Q: kumuu raadinayaa ?  
who+FOC+he look-for

Who is he looking for ?'

A: a. adiga

'You'

b. \*ku

'You'

( 66 )  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{isaga} \\ \text{*uu} \end{array} \right\}$  oo halkan joogay...  
he and place+this stayed

'He, who stayed here,...'

There is, however, one constraint on the topic NP.

As described in Chapter Two, the rules of discourse hold that topics must not be new information, but instead accessible to the hearer. This then includes NPs which are situation and discourse anaphoric, and generics. Since the latter always occur with a determiner, it is in practice easy to recognise the constraint that topic NPs must be definite. This however will be taken to be a pragmatic rather than syntactic constraint. Making a topic indefinite would mean using new information as the assumed (old) background to a proposition. To do so will be taken to violate Gricean-type laws of cooperation in conversation, which the present study assumes to exist (see Grice 1975). Li & Thompson (1976:464) reach a similar conclusion:

"The functional role of the topic as setting the framework within which the predication holds precludes the possibility of an indefinite topic."

To sum up: there are no restrictions at the syntactic level on the type of NP which can occur in structures like (61) which are specific to topic structures.

### 7.4.3 The Sentence

It can clearly be demonstrated simply by examples that there are no constraints on the type of sentence which can be generated alongside a topic NP. In the examples so far there have been declaratives (e.g. 1, 3, 15), including verbless clefts (e.g. 47, 48); imperatives (e.g. 22) ; WH-questions (e.g. 2, 23); and yes-no questions (e.g. 30, 26). There are in fact no sentence types which cannot occur in topic structures. The question of constraints governing the specific constituents of any such S is discussed below.

### 7.4.4 Relations Between the Topic and the Sentence

This section considers whether there are any syntactic rules governing the relationship between the topic NP and its following sentence.

As is clear from the discussion thus far the topic NP plays no part in the grammatical relations of the sentence. This may not, however, necessarily exclude other constraints operating on the relation.

The first such relation which must be considered is coreference. In English Left Dislocated NPs, for example, it may

be necessary to state that the topic NP must be coreferential with an element on the sentence. A similar constraint has been suggested for French in Hirschbühler (1975) and for Spanish by Rivero (1980). The first problem for such a constraint in Somali concerns the partitive structures described earlier, and exemplified by ( 67 ) below:

- ( 67 )    saddexda dibi, mid waa caddaa, midna waa guduudnaa,  
           three+the oxen one waa white+be one+and waa brown+be  
  
           midna waa madoobaa  
           one+and waa black+be  
  
           'The three oxen, one was white, and one was brown, and  
           one was black.'

Remembering that the topic NP saddexda dibi 'the three oxen' cannot be derived by a movement rule from within the sentence (see 7.2.2 above), these structures cause a problem for the statement of coreference. No one of the three occurrences of mid 'one' in the sentence is strictly coreferential with the topic NP, each being coreferential with a subpart of the set of referents defined by the topic NP. Similar problems are caused by examples like sentences ( 68 ) below:

- ( 68 )a. cuntada xaaranta ah, waxaanan weli cunin hilib doofar  
 food+the unclean be what+NEG+I yet ate meat pig

'Ritually unclean food, what I have never eaten is  
 pig's meat.'

- b. cuntada xaaranta ah, hilib doofar weli ma cunin  
 food+the unclean be meat pig yet NEG ate

'Ritually unclean food, I have never eaten pig meat.'

In ( 68 ) cuntada xaaranta ah 'ritually unclean food' is a generic NP and it is therefore not in any strict sense coreferential with hibib doofar 'pig('s) meat'. Again the NP in the sentence refers to a subpart of the set of the topic NP.

It is not clear to me how a system of marking coreference by indices, as used, for example, by Hirschbühler (1975), would cope with these set-subset relationships. However, if this were the only problem for a coreference constraint governing topic structures, then it would be worthwhile expending some effort in attempting a solution. In fact, as we have already seen, topic structures occur in which no obvious relation of either coreference or set membership holds between the topic and an element in the sentence. See for example ( 69 ) below which purposely parallels a Mandarin Chinese example given by Li & Thompson (1976:462):



- ( 69 )    dabkaas, nasiib wanaag waxa yimi kuwii dabka la  
              fire+that luck good    what came those f+the with  
              dagaalami jiray  
              fight used

'That fire, luckily the fire fighters arrived.

As in similar examples earlier, the relationship is between the topic NP and the whole of the following sentence rather than a single constituent, and the relationship is vaguer than coreference or set membership. In fact this relationship conforms well to the role of topics described by Chafe (1976:50):

"What the topics appear to do is to limit the applicability of the main predication to a certain restricted domain.... Typically, it would seem, the topic sets a spatial, temporal, or individual framework within which the main predication holds."

In determining the level of analysis at which the constraints governing such relations should be described, it is significant that such topic structures are heavily context dependent. Indeed they are often difficult to interpret outside their discourse context. For example, in the discourse context where ( 69 ) above is appropriate, let us say a conversation about house fires in Mogadishu, the following topic structure would be infelicitous:

( 70 ) \*\*arooskaas, nasiib wanaag waxa yimi kuwii dabka la  
wedding+that luck good what came those fire+the with

dagaalami jiray  
fight used

'That wedding, luckily the fire fighters arrived.'

Note however that a conversational context where ( 70 ) would be appropriate can easily be imagined.

This dependency on contextual features of discourse and situation is a clear sign that the constraints on the co-occurrence of NP and S in a topic structure must be pragmatic rather than syntactic. Given any NP and any S, there are no syntactic features of either which will rule out their participation in a topic structure. The only cases of topic constructions which would be ruled out per se are those for which no situation exists in which a relationship of relevance could be deduced between the NP and the S. On the other hand, for a given context an infinite number of topic structures will be inappropriate. This clearly takes the co-occurrence constraints on topic and sentence out of the domain of syntax.

Thus it seems possible, at the syntactic level, to allow the rules to freely generate pairs of NP and S in topic structures. Pairings inappropriate to particular discourse contexts will then be ruled out by the pragmatic rules of co-operation in conversation. In particular, it seems that topic

structures will be governed by a pragmatic principle of relevance on the lines of ( 71 ) below:

- ( 71 )     If the hearer cannot be assumed to be able to deduce or recognise the relevance of the topic to the sentence or vice-versa, the topic structure is ill-formed.

This can of course be seen a special case of Grice's maxim of "Relation" (Grice 1975:46), governing all discourse.

This government of the interpretation of topic structures by pragmatic rules will correctly cope with all three cases of topic - S relationships we have discussed: coreference, set-subset, and general background. The first two will be merely special, very strict, cases of this relevance relation.

Whatever the actual details of the pragmatic rules, the phrase structure rules will need no extra syntactic rules specifically to derive topic structures.<sup>2</sup>

## 7.5 Conclusion

This chapter has argued that topic structures in Somali be derived by phrase structure rules like the following:

( 72 )a.  $\bar{S} \rightarrow (TOP) - \bar{S}$

b.  $TOP \rightarrow NP$

c.  $NS \rightarrow COMP - S$

Three types of topic structure were described: the first, topics with a coreferential item in the following sentence; the second, topics with a set-subset relation with an item in the sentence; and finally, topics with no relationship with any individual item in the sentence but which provide a context for the following proposition. For each type it was demonstrated that a movement rule analysis, involving Left Dislocation or an ad hoc Partitive NP Movement rule, was not feasible.

It was also shown that to analyse some of these topic structures, i.e. topic + pronoun constructions, as examples of double NPs in the same sentence leads to an analysis that is either descriptively inadequate, or if modified, drastically overgenerates structures.

By contrast, generating topic structures directly by the phrase structure rules of the base allow a simple, unified description of all topic structures. It was suggested that the pragmatic rules of conversational cooperation will dictate what combinations of topic and sentence are appropriate in any given context, leaving the syntax to freely generate such pairs.

## 7.6 The Rules

The phrase structure rules given earlier and repeated below:

( 73 ) a.  $\bar{\bar{S}} \rightarrow (\text{TOP}) - \bar{S}$

b.  $\text{TOP} \rightarrow \text{NP}$

will need to be modified in the light of examples like ( 77 ):

( 77 ) adiga, bareheena wuu ku raadinayaa  
 you teacher+our waa+he you look-for

'You<sub>i</sub>, our teacher<sub>k</sub>, he<sub>k</sub> is looking for you<sub>i</sub>.'

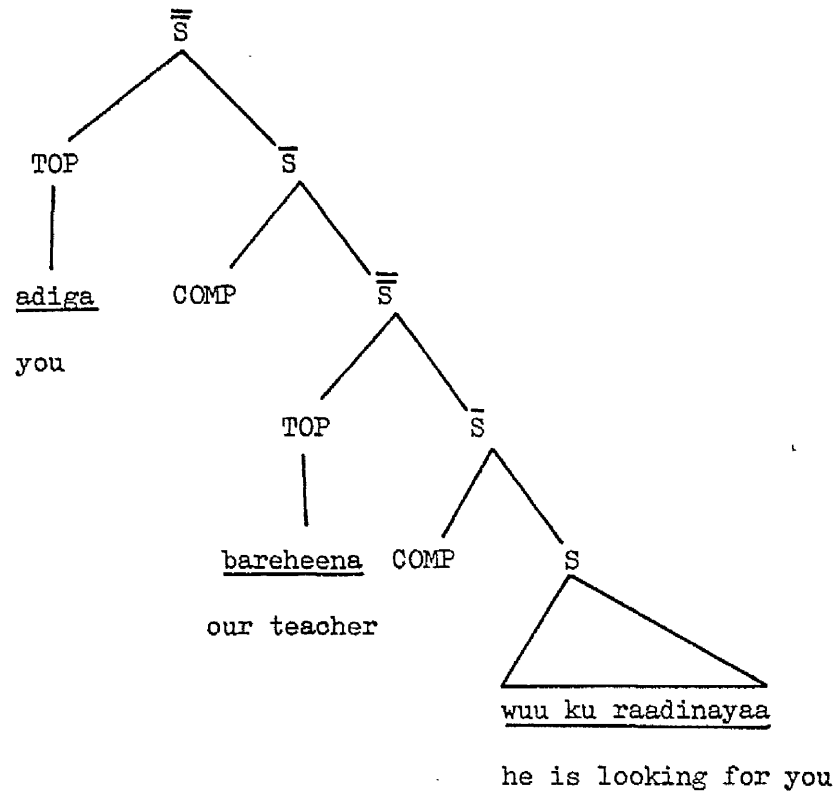
In this example there are two topics: 'you' and 'our teacher'; and a full sentence 'he is looking for you.'

There are at least two possible ways of modifying the phrase structure rules to allow this recursion. The first, as suggested by Chomsky 1977:91), is to include the extra rule ( 78 ):

( 78 )  $\bar{S} \rightarrow \text{COMP} - \left\{ \begin{array}{c} \bar{\bar{S}} \\ S \end{array} \right\}$

This will generate structures like ( 79 ) below:

( 79 )

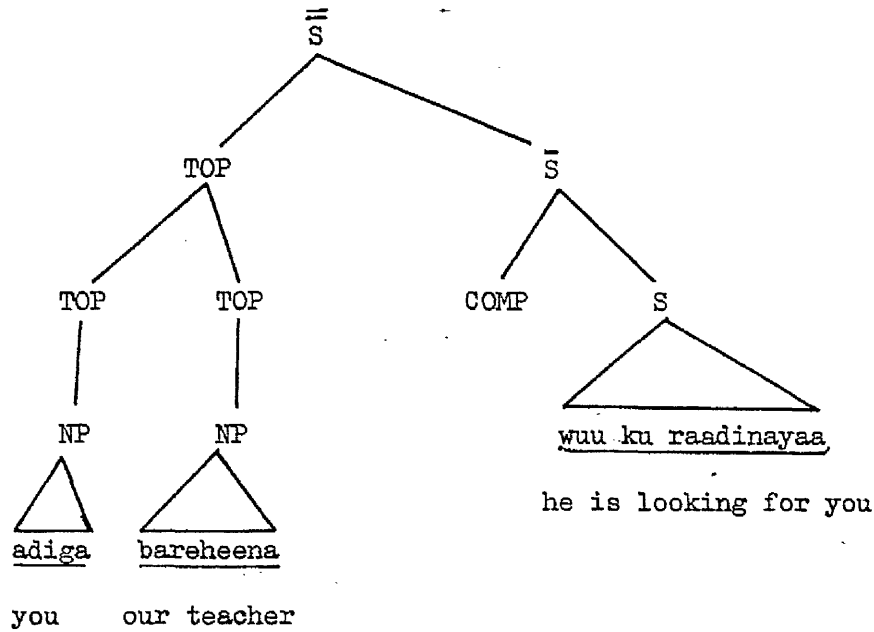


A second approach would be to include instead the rule ( 80 ):

( 80 )  $TOP \longrightarrow TOP - (TOP)$

This would generate structures like ( 81 ) below:

( 81 )



The difference between the two structures lies in the relative positions of the second topic and a COMP node. Chomsky claims that the P.S. rule in ( 78 ) will also allow embedding of topics as in the English example below:

( 82 ) As for John, as far as this book is concerned, he will definitely have to read it.

The prediction of rule ( 78 ) is that in cases of embedding and in double topics, a topic NP will occur to the right of a COMP node.

In Somali this does not seem to be the case. See, for example, the following sentences:



- ( 83 )      waxaan aqaan inuu imanayo  
                  what+I know    that+he come

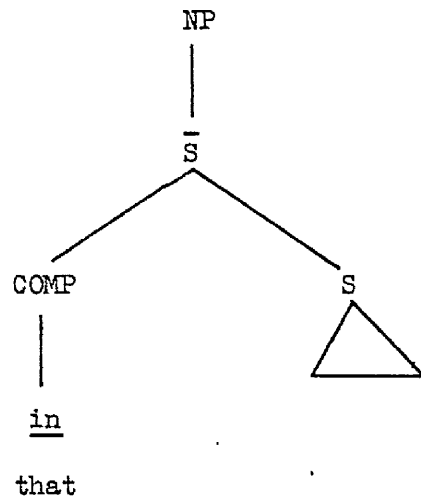
'What I know is that he is coming.'

- ( 84 )      waxaan doonayaa inay tagto  
what+I want      that+she goes

'What I want is that she goes.'

In each of the above there is an embedded sentence of the form ( 85 ):

- ( 85 )



It is possible to attach a topic to these embedded sentences, as ( 86 ) & ( '87) below show. What these also show is that the topic must occur to the left of the COMP in 'that'.

- ( 86 ) a. waxaan aqaan Cali inuu imanayo  
 'What I know is Ali that he is coming.'

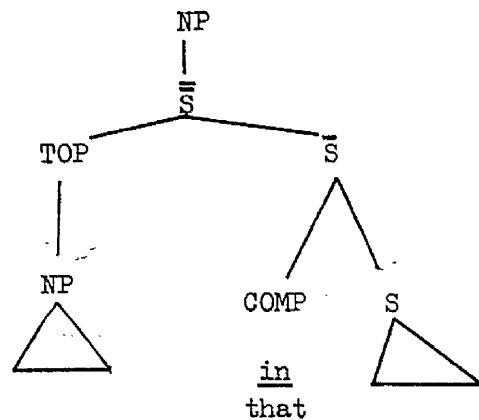
- b. \*waxaan aqaan in Cali uu imanayo  
 'What I know is that Ali he is coming.'

- ( 87 ) a. waxaan doonayaa Marian inay tagto  
 'What I want is Marian that she goes.'

- b. \*waxaan doonayaa in Marian ay tagto  
 'What I want is that Marian she goes.'

As the above show, the sequence COMP - TOPIC is not possible; and therefore rule ( 78 ) which generates this sequence is incorrect. Clearly the structure of the embedded topic structures in ( 86 ) & ( 87 ) are as in ( 88 ) below:

( 88 )



What is needed is a rule which allows recursion of topics but which will predict that the topic NP always precedes  $\bar{S}$ . Such a rule is ( 80 ), repeated as ( 89 ) below:

( 89 )     $TOP \longrightarrow TOP - (TOP)$

This rule will therefore be accepted here, giving the following set of P.S. rules for the derivation of topic structures:

- ( 90 ) a.  $\bar{S} \longrightarrow (TOP) - \bar{S}$   
           b.  $TOP \longrightarrow TOP - (TOP)$   
           c.  $\bar{S} \longrightarrow COMP - S$   
           d.  $TOP \longrightarrow NP$

## CHAPTER SEVEN:

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>In other words this 'double NP' approach would generate a string of NPs, and then produce, by some rule, pronoun copies of each. Alternatively pairs of NP and coreferential pronoun would be base generated.

<sup>2</sup>However, it is true that certain constraints on anaphora will extend to topic structures, excluding such structures as

? iyada<sub>i</sub>, gabadha<sub>i</sub> ayuu jecelyahay  
her girl+the FOC+he loves

? 'Her<sub>i</sub>, he saw the girl<sub>i</sub>.'

See Dougherty (1968), Langacker (1969), and Lasnik (1976) for discussion of such conditions on anaphora. What is clear, however, is that these will not be particular to topic structures, and thus the generalisation that topic structures need no specific constraints stands.

## Chapter 8

Conclusion

This concluding section will attempt to draw together the various analyses made in this study, and thereby give a general picture of the syntax of focus and topic in Somali.

The first NP focus structures are waxa clefts. These will be base generated like all other copula or 'equational' sentences. As with other copula sentences, the verb yahay is deleted, leaving the classifier waa between the NPs. In the special case of clefts, however, this too can be deleted to form reduced clefts.

The second set of NP focus structures, those containing the words baa and ayaa, are derived from reduced clefts by a rule which moves the focused NP to the front of the sentence, and replaces the delexicalised anaphoric NP waxa with the empty anaphors baa or ayaa. This rule, Focus Fronting, is not however a WH-movement rule since it applies within the sentence and ~~does not extract~~ NPs across a sentence boundary. It is therefore a Root Transformation, in the sense of Emonds (1976).

It seems that syntactically specified focus is restricted

to NPs since there are no parallel structures for focusing verbs (or adjectives). These categories cannot occur as cleft complements, nor therefore may they be fronted by the rule of Focus Fronting. It was shown in Chapter Six that attempting to analyse the classifier was as some form of verb focus particle results in a very unsuccessful analysis, full of ad hoc constraints and unexplained irregularities.

Turning to topic structures: these again are NPs and they occur outside and to the left of sentences. They may be coreferential with an element in the sentence, form a set-subset relationship with such an element, or merely set the context for the following sentence. In each case they play no part in the sentence-internal grammar and cannot be derived by a rule which extracts them from the following sentence. It appears that apart from the P.S. rule introducing the extra-sentential NP, no other syntactic rules are specifically needed for the derivation of topic structures, although the pragmatic description will have to account for successful pairing of NP and S, possibly by some principle of relevance.

These then are the general conclusions of this study. So central are the structures of NP focus to the syntax of Somali, however, that the detail of this analysis of them has had to deal

with many other of the basic processes of the grammar. Thus this study has dealt with, in varying degrees of detail, the syntax of yes-no questions, relative clauses, and WH-questions, in addition to the mechanisms of sentence type differentiation, and concord marking. Various rules have been formulated in addition to those principally concerned with focus like Cleft Reduction and Focus Fronting. These other rules include Relativisation, Subject-Verb Concord, 'Fuzzy' or Extra-Sentential Concord, rules to elide yahay 'to be' (=Copula Reduction), and classifier movement rules.

Perhaps the most interesting feature of the syntactic rules described in this study is that there appear to be no rules which move an element across a sentence boundary. Thus the syntactic constraint below seems to hold for Somali:

#### General Movement Constraint

No rule may involve X and Y in the following:

...X...[<sub>S</sub> ...Y...]...X...

It will be very interesting to see whether this constraint will be validated by future syntactic studies in other areas of Somali grammar.

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