

Hybrid alignment in Laki agreement and the special status of clitics

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In Laki (Southern Kurdish, Northwestern Iranian), depending on the tense and valence of the verb an inventory of suffixes and clitics is involved in subject agreement. A present verb and a past intransitive verb (1-2) express subject agreement with suffixes in Table 1 (null expression for {3sg} subject agreement in past). A past transitive verb (3-4) expresses subject agreement with enclitics in Table 2. The enclitics in Table 2 appear on the first constituent in the verb phrase. These enclitics are also used in possessive constructions and in PPs, appearing on the possessed NP (5) and on the preposition (6).

Table 1. Subject agreement suffixes

1SG	2SG	3SG	1PL	2PL	3PL
-(e)m	-(i)n	i/∅	-(i)men	-(i)nān	-(e)n

Table 2. Subject agreement enclitics

1SG	2SG	3SG	1PL	2PL	3PL
-(e)m	-(e)t	-i/y	-mān	-tān	-(ā)n

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| <p>1. <i>Ali yo Sārā to-na mown-en.</i>
Ali and Sara you-OBJ see.PRS-SBJ.3PL
'Ali and Sara see you.'</p> <p>4. <i>Ali yo Sara to-(ā)n di.</i>
Ali and Sara you-SBJ.3PL see.PST
'Ali and Sara saw you.'</p> | <p>2. <i>zu ĉ-in.</i>
soon go.PST-2SG
'(You) left/went soon.'</p> <p>5. <i>rafix-a-t</i>
friend-DEF-POSS.2SG
'your (sg) friend.'</p> | <p>3. <i>sif-ela-t wārd.</i>
apple-PL-SBJ.2SG eat.PST
'(You) ate the apples.'</p> <p>6. <i>aben-ān</i>
to-OBJ.3PL
'to them'</p> |
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The agreement patterns discussed above (1-4) signify a split-ergative alignment system. In past intransitive and present clauses, subject agreement is obtained via Agree between T and the subject, realized as the suffixes in Table 1. We posit that in past transitive clauses, there are two loci of agreement, one on T and the other on v (see Aldridge 2008 & references therein). The v head Agrees with the external argument, realized morphologically as the enclitics in Table 2. Meanwhile, T does not establish an Agree relation with a full DP (3), or a full pronoun (4). We take this to be a locality issue, with T and the objects being in different phases (Chomsky's 2001 PIC), leading to a default realization of the phi features on T as ∅ (3sg).

Further data from Laki shows clearly that the Agr head on T is active, as it gets realized with pronominal object clitics. In this context, the phi-features of the object clitic are realized as agreement suffixes of Table 1 on the verb (7). This pattern is found in two other past transitive contexts, both involving clitics. When the object is a possessive construction, and the possessor is a clitic, the clitic is realized as T agreement (Table 1) on the verb (8) (cf. the present tense counterpart in (9)). The third context involves preverbal indirect object PPs (10).

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| <p>7. <i>Ali yo Sara di-(i)n-ān.</i>
Ali and Sara see.PST-OBJ.2SG-SBJ.3PL
'Sara and Ali saw you (sg).'</p> <p>9. <i>to no Sara saga-m mown-in.</i>
you and Sara dog-POSS.1SG see.PRS-SBJ.2PL
'You and Sara see my dog.'</p> | <p>8. <i>to no Sara saga-tān di-m.</i>
you and Sara dog-SBJ.2PL see.PST-POSS.1SG
'You and Sara saw my dog.'</p> <p>10. <i>aben-em vet-in</i>
to-SBJ.1SG tell.PST-OBJ.2SG
'I told you.'</p> |
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We propose that agreement with T arises due to the clitic nature of the elements involved. Following Roberts (2010), we take clitics to move to the edge of the phase, in this case the vP, and as such becoming accessible to agreement with T. As a result, their phi-features are realized as Table 1 agreement suffixes on the verb. As before, ergative subject agreement is realized as Table 2 enclitics on the first constituent in the verb phrase as a result of agreement with the transitive v. The analysis laid out above provides us with an account of Laki's complex agreement alignment using otherwise motivated assumptions. In the talk, we will discuss the implications of this analysis for agreement alignment in other Kurdish dialects.

References

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