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Case and agreement in Ardalani Sorani

1. Intro

Puzzle: Nominalized clauses appear to have all the requisite elements for ergativity (that would trigger ergativity), but don't exhibit the hallmarks of ergative alignment

Question: Does argument introduction and/or licensing work the same in nominalized clauses as it does in matrix clauses?

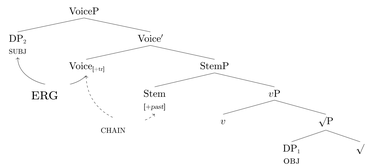
Today's goal: goal

Claim(s): primary claims

Background

Akkuş (2020) on ergative case assignment via chain
Brief snapshot of split ergative alignment

(1) Simplified structure from (Akkuş 2020)



Akkus et al. (2023) dicuss ergative case in terms of features on arguments where (in perfective transitive clauses): fb

- an Oblique head $\mathcal{O}$ AGREEs with [+subj, +obl] arguments (⇒ subject clitic | which results in subject clitic ("-doubling"))
- T does not/cannot agree w/ [+subj, +obl] arguments (⇒ no verbal agreement with the subject)

Effects/reflexives of (ergative) case need framed in terms of ϕ-features being present or not (NOT in terms of grammatical function) (in line with Akkus et al. 2023).
wrt nominalizations, this relates primarily to (absence of) [mechanisms behind] **argument introduction** and **argument licensing**
Given the restriction in presence/distribution of arguments in nominalizations:
If this is an ARG INTRO issue, then we might need to stipulate various special Voice heads for the nominal domain
If this is an ARG LIC (absence of ϕ-features and related AGREE operations (e.g. with $\mathcal{O}$ and/or T)), then we might have something to say about (either) a. how ϕ-features like [+/-subj, +/-obl] get assigned; b. potential size(s) of nP.

Voice allomorphy

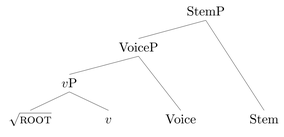
Voice allomorphy is conditioned by presence **Voice$_{\text{PASS}}$**/**Voice$_{\text{NACT}}$** (see (Paparounas 2023) for similar arguments for Greek, a.o.)

{Stem}/(default) ⇒ /-d/

{Stem, Voice$_{\text{PASS/NACT}}$} ⇒ /-ja/

- {Stem} ⇒ /-d/ (default)
- {Stem, Voice$_{\text{PASS/NACT}}$} ⇒ /-ja/

(2)



(3) zara kras-ak=**e** ʃor-**d**
zara shirt-DEF=**3SG** wash-**PFV**
'Zara washed the shirt.'

(3)′ $\sqrt{\text{WASH}}$ v_{TRANS} ∅ Voice$_{\text{ACT}}$ ∅ δ ⟹ **-d**

(4) mardin ʃiʃ-aka=j ʃk-an-**d**
Mardin glass-DEF=3SG break-CAUS-**PFV**
'Mardin broke the glass.'

(4)′ $\sqrt{\text{BREAK}}$ v_{CAUS} /-an/ Voice$_{\text{ACT}}$ ∅ δ ⟹ **-d**

(5) kras-ak-an ʃor-**ja**-n
shirt-DEF-PL wash-**PASS.PFV**-3PL
'The shirts were washed.'

(5)′ $\sqrt{\text{WASH}}$ v_{TRANS} ∅ Voice$_{\textbf{PASS}}$ β δ ⟹ **-ja**

(6) ʃiʃ-ak-an ʃk-**ja**-n
glass-DEF-PL break-**NACT.PFV**-3PL
'The glasses broke.'

(6)′ $\sqrt{\text{BREAK}}$ $v_{?}$ ∅ Voice$_{\textbf{NACT}}$ β δ ⟹ **-ja**

(7) kras-ak-an a-ʃor-**g**-en
shirt-DEF-PL A-wash-PASS-3PL
'The shirts are washed.'

(7)′ $\sqrt{\text{WASH}}$ v_{TRANS} ∅ Voice$_{\text{PASS}}$ β X ⟹ **-g**

(8) ʃiʃ-ak-an (la xwa=jan-ow) a-ʃk-∅-in
glass-DEF-PL (P self=3PL-PRT) A-break-NACT-3PL
'The glasses break by themselves.'

(8)′ $\sqrt{\text{BREAK}}$ $v_{?}$ ∅ Voice$_{\text{NACT}}$ β X ⟹ ∅

There appear to be a small set of unaccusatives that exhibit the /**-d**/ allomorph where we would expected /**-ja**/, (9), and a small set of unergatives that exhibit the /**-ja**/ allomorph where we might expect /**-d**/, (10).

(9) mahsa mir-**d**
Mahsa die-**PFV**
'Mahsa died.'

(10) mahsa gær-**ja**
Mahsa wander-**PFV**
'Mahsa wandered.'

Evidence

Perhaps some things on Stem as Perfective head
perhaps some data from statives, too?

Voice in nominalizations

The following diagnostics indicate the presence of (implicit agents) in nominalized clauses (which should only be licit if Voice^0 is present)

Agent-oriented adverbs[XX]

(11) [**ʃepirz** libas ʃor-d-in] ba kar na-jet
[**clumsily** clothes wash-PFV-NMZ] P work NEG-come.3SG
'Washing clothes clusmily is not good.'

Agent-oriented instrumentals:

(12) [**ba tʃeow** dirga baz kir-d-in] zara=j adʒiz kir-d
[**with stick** door open do-PFV-NMZ] Zara=3SG angry do-PFV
'Opening doors with stick made Zara angry.'

Rationale clauses

(13) [la das ʃor-d-in [bo **nuwʒ xwan-d-in**]] hitʃ na-zan-m
[P hand wash-PFV-NMZ [P **prayer read-PFV-NMZ**]] nothing NEG-know-1SG
'I don't know anything about washing hands for saying prayers.'

Voice$_{\text{PASS}}$

(14) [**kuʒ-ja-n-∅ aw kawra**] par-aka bu-a dardisar bu dowlɛt-∅ turkja
[**kill-PASS.PFV-NMZ-EZ DEM guy**] last.yr-DEF be.PST.3SG-P problem for gov't-EZ Turkey
'That guy being killed created problems for the Turkish gov't last year.'
✗ '[That guy being killed **last year**] created problems for the Turkish gov't.'

! CHECK WITH SAMAN

(15) [kuʒ-ja-n-**∅ aw kawra-k-an**] par-aka bu-a dardisar bu dowlɛt-∅ turkja
[kill-PASS.PFV-NMZ-EZ **DEM guy-DEF-PL**] last.yr-DEF be.PST.3SG-P problem for gov't-EZ Turkey
'**Those guys** being killed created problems for the Turkish gov't last year.'

v_{CAUS} / nominalized causatives vs. unaccusatives:

(16) [ʃiʃa ʃk-**an**-d-in] kar xas-ek n-ijæ
[glass break-**CAUS**-PFV-NMZ] work nice-INDF NEG-be.3SG
'Breaking glasses is not a good job.'

(17) [ʃk-**ja**-n-∅ ʃiʃa] niʃanæ-j xas-ek n-ijæ
[break-**NACT.PFV**-NMZ-EZ glass] sign-EZ good-INDF NEG-be.3SG
'Glass breaking is not a good sign.'

XXWord order suggests that this construction is not an adjectival modifier modifying the nominalized construction. Cf. Note the use/distribution of the modifier as an adjective with Ezafe in (18), (19):

(18) restaurant-aka [aʃpaz-∅ **ʃepirz**-ek]=i bu
restaurant-DEF [cook-EZ **clumsy**-INDF]=3SG be.PST.3SG
'The restaurant had a clumsy cook.'

(19) [minal-∅ **ʃepirz**-ek]=m di
[child-EZ **clumsy**-INDF]=1SG see.PFV
'I saw a clumsy child.'

Internal arguments and Case (licensing)

Unmarked/generic themes/objects?
Theme arguments must (*psuedo-incorporate?)
Coordination of (pseudo-incorporated) theme (20):

(20) [$_{vP}$ [**sef-u pi.ɪtæqal**] xwaɪ-d-in] kar xraw-ek-u
[[**apple-and orange**] eat-PFV-NMZ] work bad-INDF-be.PST.3SG
'Eating apples and oranges was a bad idea.'

Overtly marked definite objects? must occur in an Ezafe construction, (22) (cf. the unmarked theme in (21)[XX]).

(21) [(***libas**) ʃepirz **libas** ʃor-d-in] ba kar na-jet
[(***clothes**) clumsy **clothes** wash-PFV-NMZ] P work NEG-come...
'Washing clothes clumsily is not good.'

(22) [la [[xwar-d-in]-∅ **aw goʃt-a**]] xwaʃ=m naje(t)
[from [[eat-PFV-NMZ]-EZ **that meat-DEM**]] good=1SG NEG-come.3SG
'I dont like eating that meat.'

Assumption: Definite objects require special licensing that involves short object shift (i.e. (optionally overt) movement of the theme to some position at the left edge of vP. (Akkus et al. 2023, a.o.)
Claim: Landing site for definite objects is not available within a nominalized construction (i.e. nP does not include a potential landing site and/or licenser for definite objects))

Nominalized unaccusatives:
Arguments cannot pseudo-incorporate, (24); must occur in an Ezafe construction, (23)

(23) miɪ-d-in-i mædim
die-PFV-NMZ-EZ people
'the death of people'

(24) ***mæ.ɪdim** miɪ-d-in
people die-PFV-NMZ
Int. 'the death of people'

Since the internal arugment cannot pseudo-incorporate, it needs licensing from somewhere. In matrix clauses, licensing a la mvmt to Spec,IP. Nominalized clauses do not contain IP. Thus, licensing a la Ezafe (Larson and Samiian 2021, 2020) (see later on whether this involves movement).

XXFollowing Akkus et al. (2023) and others, we take event modifying adverbials to mark the left edge of vP, as indicated in (25). Additionally, definite objects are assumed to undergo short object shift for licensing-related reasons, which allows for definite objects to occur to the left (i.e. higher than) event modifying adverbials, as in (26)

(25) zara (***libas**=e) [$_{vP}$ dasanqas **libas**=e for-d]
Zara (***cloth**=3SG) [intentionally **cloth**=3SG wash-PFV]
'Zara washed clothes intentionally.'

(26) mardin **ʃiʃ-aka**=j [$_{vP}$ dasanqas ʃk-an-d]
Mardin **glass-DEF**=3SG [intentionally break-CAUS-PFV]
'Mardin broke the glass intentionally.'

External Arguments and (Ergative) Case

Sorani does not exhibit overt case marking

- Ergative alignment occurs in perfective clauses (in Akkuş 2020 when Stem and Voice$_{[+tr]}$ create a chain)
- realized via obligatory subject clitic doubling (via Agree with Oblique head in Akkus et al. 2023), as in (27) (in addition to absence of agreement on the verb)

(27) **mardin** dirg-aka=**e** ba tʃeow baz kir-d
Mardin door-DEF=**3SG** with stick open do-PFV
'Mardin opened the door with a stick'

Observations re: Status of external (agent) "arguments" in nominalizations:

- What appear to be external (agent) arguments must occur in an Ezafe construction (akin to geneitive agent/subjects a la Chomsky 1970 (i.e. **John's** criticizing the book.))
- No clitic doubling occurs in nominalized clause (28), cf. clitic doubling in ergative matrix clause.
- Cannot have both Agent and theme in Ezafe (weird bc Ezafe is typically iterative/recursive)

(28) [(***mardin**) ba tʃeow dirga(***=e**) baz kir-d-in-**∅ mardin**] zara=j adʒiz kir-d
[(***Mardin**) with stick door(***=3SG**) open do-PFV-NMZ-**EZ Mardin**] Zara=3SG angry do-PFV
'Mardin's opening doors with stick made Zara angry.' (habitual reading)

(29) [[dirga baz kir-d-in]-**∅** [[**dirg-aka**]-**j mardin**]] zara=j adʒiz kir-d
[[door open do-PFV-NMZ]-**EZ** [[**door-DEF**]-**EZ Mardin**]] Zara=3SG angry do-PFV
'Opening (of) Mardin's doors made Zara angry.' (possessive interpretation of **the doors**)
✗ 'Mardin's opening doors made Zara angry.' (habitual reading)

Further data showing that subject clitic doubling cannot occur in nominalized clause:

- In matrix ergative clauses, a 3SG clitic can index an expletive **pro**, as in (31). In the nominalized form in (32), the expletive clitic cannot occur, hence the unavailablility of the expletive reading.

(30) mardin aw-ak=ej da kird
Mardin water-DEF=3SG down do-PFV
'Mardin poured the water down.'

(31) (baran) da=**j** kir-d
(rain) down=**3SG.EXPL** do-PFV
'It started raining.'

(32) da(***=j**) kir-d-in-∅ baran xwa=j ʃkat kir-d
down(***=3SG.EXPL**) do-PFV-NMZ-EZ rain god=3SG tired do-PFV
'Pouring (of) rain made God tired.'
✗ Int. 'That it started raining made God tired.'

Variable binding:

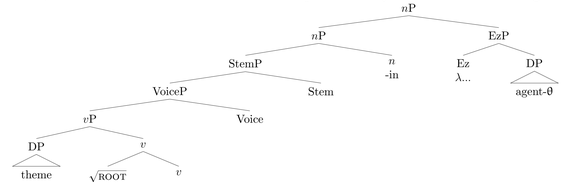
(33) zara **xwe**=j kuʃ-t
Zara **self**=3SG kill-PFV
'Zara killed herself.'

(34) **xo** koʃ-t-in-∅ zara ba kar na-jet
self kill-PFV-NMZ-EZ Zara good work NEG-come.3SG
'Zara's killing (her)self was not good.' (Lit. Zara's self killing...)

If this were a case of variable binding, then the structure below, in which the Agent DP is base-generated/externally merged in an Ezafe phrase would be problematic, as the Agent DP does not c-command the reflexive pronoun. However, if we assume that in nominalized constructions, there is a Voice head that is similar in function to Voice$_{\text{pass}}$ in matrix clauses such that it only introduces agent semantics but crucially does not involve a syntactically projected agent. In order to account for the variable binding effects in **??**, we consider the possibility that an implicit agent is introduced by, say, a Voice$_{\text{NOM}}$ head, and, crucially, this implicit agent is akin to an (overt) impersonal DP (i.e. **??** would essentially be something like 'Zara's killing oneself').

Analysis

Raising into Ezafe vs. base-generate in Ezafe?
Well, cannot raise into Ezafe bc it would require sideways movement, assuming that we have the following structure:



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Standard leipzig is used except for the following: EZ = Ezafe, NACT = non-active, P = prep/postposition, PRT = particle.