

Somali as a pro-drop language

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*Somali has previously been analyzed as not having a verb phrase (Saeed 1999) and having free word order. This paper looks at the structure of the verbal core in Somali and suggests that Somali is a pro-drop language. It looks at evidence from sentences, such as (1) Aniga **waan tagay** 'I went' and (2) **Waan tagay** '(I) went' and comparable structures utilizing the interrogative marker, such as (3) Aniga **ma tag-ay?** 'Did I go?' and (4) **Ma tagay?** 'Did (I) go?'*

This paper reviews criterion for pro-drop and demonstrates that Somali has rich agreement marking, a precondition for pro-drop, and sentence final adjunction of the subject, a phenomena that co-occurs with pro-drop. It also describes that-trace effects, another characteristic of pro-drop languages.

This paper further explores arguments for treating the clitic pronoun as a resumptive pronoun and arguments for treating the clitic pronoun not as a pronoun, but as agreement marking on the declarative marker, topic marker, focus marker, and relative clause marker. It demonstrates that the clitic pronoun still occurs when there is a zero morpheme in the complementizer position for relative clauses, possibly supporting an analysis of the morpheme as a resumptive pronoun. It also shows that this pronoun disappears in paradigms which utilize reduced agreement marking on the verb, suggesting that it is tied to the agreement marking process, possibly supporting an analysis of the morpheme as an agreement marker.