

The Genitive in Somali

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1 Introduction

Somali is a Cushitic SOV language spoken in the region of the Horn of Africa. While the VP is head-final (see (1a)), the noun phrase is head initial (see (1b))².

- (1) a. (Som) Gabadh-u buug-ga way akhri-day
girl-det(f)-nom book-det(m) focus+3fs read-[past]/3fs
'The girl read a book.' (SOV)
- b. god -ka libaax -a
den -det(m) lion -det(m)
'the lion's den' (N » genitive)

As shown in (1b) the Somali genitive construction does not involve a prepositional element, the two nouns are simply juxtaposed.

The aim of this talk is to propose a structure for the Somali DP. We will examine the properties of the genitive construction paying particular attention to the following two domains:

- (2) a. **definiteness specification:** How are the members of a noun + genitive complex marked for definiteness? Can both nouns of a genitive be marked for definiteness independently of each other?
- b. **modification** of the head noun and of the complement noun: What types of modifiers are compatible with the genitive construction? Can the complement noun in turn be modified by a genitive complement (recursivity)?

¹We would like to thank Bashir Keenadiid for his native speaker judgements and his patience in answering our questions. All misinterpretations are our responsibility.

²Given the generalisations of Greenberg 1966, this is typologically unexpected.

2 Definiteness specification

In the genitive construction both terms have to have the same definiteness marking. The definiteness matching is explicitly marked: both elements of a definite genitive construction carry the definite article.

- (3) a. dhar-ka naag-ta
dress-det(m) woman-det(f)
'the dress of the woman'
- b. dhar naag
dress woman
'a dress of a (particular) woman' (cf. Orwin [1995, p.66])

In particular, proper names cannot appear as genitive complements of an indefinite head noun³:

- (5) a. * Warsame wux-uu keenay buug Maryan.
Warsame expl-he brought book Maryan
hyp: 'Warsame brought a book of Maryan's.'
- b. ok Warsame wux-uu keenay buug-gfi Maryan.
Warsame expl-he brought book-det(m)+[past] Maryan
'Warsame brought Maryan's book.'

This phenomenon of coinciding definiteness is not exclusive to the genitive. It is also found with *ah*-relatives (see (6)) (cf. Lecarme [1996]) and with an alternative genitive construction, the prenominal genitive (see (7))(cf. Gebert [1981, p.69-70]):

- (6) AH-RELATIVES
- a. ok guri -ga buluug -ga ah
house -det(m) blue -det(m) is
'the blue house'
- b. ok guri buluug ah
house blue is
'a blue house'
- c. *: guri -ga buluug ah
house -det(m) blue is
- d. *: guri buluug -ga ah
house blue -det(m) is

³The only way to express the sense corresponding to (5a) is by using a relative clause:

- (4) ok: buug yar oo Maryan leedahay
book small coord Maryan owns it
'a small book and Maryan owns it'

(7) PRENOMINAL GENITIVE

- a. ok: macállin -ka guri -gíis -a
teacher det(m) house -his -det
'the teacher's house'
- b. ok: macállin guri -gíis
teacher house -his
'a teacher's house'
- c. *: macállin -ka guri -gíis
teacher det(m) house -his
- d. *: macállin guri -gíis -a
teacher house -his -det

3 Two types of modification

For the discussion of the modification pattern of genitive constructions, we will distinguish **autonomous modification** from **enclitic modification**.

3.1 Autonomous modification

The term **autonomous modification** is intended to cover modification by relative clauses and adjectives which occupy their own position in the syntactic structure, (see section (4)). Autonomous modifiers attach to the right of the modified noun⁴:

- (8) a. qálin-ka cusúb
pen-det(m) new
'the new pen' (adjective)
- b. qálin-ka yar-ka ah
pen-det(m) small-det(m) is
'the pen that is small' (ah-relative)
- c. gabádh-a halkáas maraysá
girl-det(f) over there walk
'the girl that walks over there' (subject relative)
- d. qálin-ka aan arkó
pen-det(m) I see
'the pen that I see' (object relative)

The postnominal genitive attaches immediately to the right of the head noun.

- (9) qálin-ka gabádh-a
pen-det(m) girl-det(f)
'the girl's pen' (genitive)

⁴An exception is the prenominal genitive *Warsame guri-gíisa*, '(lit) Warsame, his house'='Warsame's house'. We will come back to this construction later (section (6.1)).

3.2 Enclitic modification

Enclitic modification, on the other hand, is expressed on the determiner, which is enclitic on the noun.

- (10) a. buúg-ga
book-det(m)
'the book' (definite article)
- b. buúg-gíi
book-det(m)+[past]
'the book (you know it, we have been talking about it)'
(definite article+[past])
- (11) buúg-g-íisa
book-(m)-his
'his book' (possessive suffixes)
- (12) a. naág-tán
woman-dem.(f)
'this woman'
- b. naág-taás
woman-dem.(f)
'that woman' (demonstrative suffixes)

4 Autonomous modification of the genitive construction

4.1 Autonomous modification of the complement noun

The modification of the postnominal genitive by an autonomous modifier is compatible with the structure of the genitive construction:

- (13) a. qálin-ka macállin-ka cusúb
pen-det(m) teacher-det(m) new
ok: 'the pen of the new teacher'
*: 'the new pen of the teacher' (complement noun + adjective)
- b. qálin-ka gabádh-a qurúx-da badán
pen-det(m) girl-det(f) beauty-det(f) much
'the pen of the very beautiful girl' (complement noun + adj noun)

- c. qálin-ka gabádh-a yar-ta ah
pen-det(m) girl-det(f) small-det(f) is
'the pen of the girl, that is small'
(complement noun + *ah*-relative)
- d. qálin-ka gabádh-a halkáas maraysá
pen-det(m) girl-det(f) over there walk
'the pen of the girl that walks over there'
(complement noun + subject relative)
- e. qálin-ka gabádh-a aan arkó
pen-det(m) girl-det(f) I see
'the pen of the girl that I see'
(complement noun + object relative)

In particular, the genitive complement may itself be modified by a genitive, i.e. the Somali genitive allows right recursion (see Lecarme (1989a))

- (14) xafiis-ka hormúud-ka kulliyád-da
office-det(m) dean-det(m) faculty-det(f)
'the office of the dean of the faculty', example from Lecarme (1989a:3)

To sum up, autonomous modification of the complement noun is directly compatible with the structure of the genitive construction, i.e. the following structure is wellformed:

- (15) ok: [N [N MOD]]
Head noun Genitive Modifier

4.2 Autonomous modification of the head noun

An adjective following the postnominal genitive cannot modify the head noun:

- (16) qálin-ka macállin-ka cusúb
pen-det(m) teacher-det(m) new
ok: 'the pen of the new teacher'
*: 'the new pen of the teacher'

The headnoun of a genitive construction cannot be modified directly either (see Lecarme [1989a,b]):

- (17) a. * qálin-ka cusúb macállin-ka
pen-det(m) new teacher-det(m)
hyp: 'the new pen of the teacher'
- b. * kóob-ka shaah-a ah macállin-ka
cup-det(m) tea-det(m) is teacher-det(m)
hyp: 'the tea cup of the teacher'

The meaning corresponding to a modification of the headnoun of a genitive construction is expressed by a conjunction of the modifier and the postnominal genitive with the conjunction *oo* or *ee* (see (18))⁵

- (18) a. qálin-ka macállin-ka oo cusúb
pen-det(m) teacher-det(m) oo new
'the new pen of the teacher' (complement noun + adjective)
- b. ok kóob-ka macállin-ka oo shaah-a ah
cup-det(m) teacher-det(m) oo tea-det(m) is
'the tea cup of the teacher' (complement noun + *ah*-relative)
- c. ok: waláal-ka Warsáame oo [halkáas kú cayaarayá]
brother-det(m) Warsame oo there prep runs
'Warsame's brother who is running there (far away)'
(complement noun + subject relative)

Both linear orders of the genitive and the second modifier are possible, so the inverse order modifier > genitive is also good⁶:

- (20) a. ok: qálin-ka cusúb oo macállin-ka
pen-det(m) new oo teacher-det(m)
'the new pen of the teacher', cf.(18a)
- b. ok: kóob-ka shaah-a ah oo macállin-ka
cup-det(m) tea-det(m) is oo teacher-det(m)
'the tea cup of the teacher', cf.(18b)

The coordination of possessors with an autonomous modifier is a special case of multiple modification. In general any two modifiers of a noun have to be coordinated by *oo*:⁷

- (21) a. * qálin-ka dhéer cusúb
pen-det(m) big new
- b. ok: qálin-ka dhéer oo cusúb
pen-det(m) big oo new
'the big new pen' (two adjectives)

⁵The coordinating particle *oo* alternates with *ee* in certain environments. For the examples given here, our informant uniformly preferred *oo*.

⁶The modifier that appears first is perceived as more important or new:

- (19) a. qálin-ka macállin-ka oo cusúb
pen-det(m) teacher-det(m) oo new
ok: the new pen of the TEACHER (complement noun + adjective)
- b. qálin-ka cusúb oo macállin-ka
pen-det(m) new oo teacher-det(m)
ok: the NEW pen of the teacher (adjective + complement noun)

⁷Note that in Persian where multiple modifiers are also obligatorily linked (by the EZAFE-vowel), this does not result in a free ordering among the modifiers (see Ghomeshi (1997)).

- (22) a. *: heesá-ha soomaaliy-éed cusúb
songs-det(m) Somali-*eed* new
b. ok: heesá-ha soomaaliy-éed oo cusúb
songs-det(m) Somali-*eed* oo new
'the new Somali songs' (adjective + noun-*eed*)⁸
- (23) a. * kóob-ka [bulúug-ga ah] cusúb
cup-det(m) [blue-det(m) is] new
b. ok kóob-ka bulúug-ga ah oo cusúb
cup-det(m) blue-det(m) is oo new
'the new blue cup' (adjective + *ah*-relative clause)
- (24) a. *: gabdhá-haas qurúx-da badán halkáas marayá
girls-those beauty-det(f) much over there walk
b. ok: gabdhá-haas qurúx-da badán oo halkáas marayá
girls-those beauty-det(f) much oo over there walk
'those very beautiful girls that are walking over there'
(adj. noun + subject relative)
- (25) a. *: wíil-ka yar [halkáas ku cayaarayá]
boy-det(m) small there prep runs
b. ok: wíil-ka yar oo [halkáas ku cayaarayá]
boy-det(m) small oo there prep runs
'the little boy running there (far away)' (adjective + subject relative)
- (26) a. *: wíil-ka yar aan arkó
boy-det(m) small I see
b. ok: wíil-ka yar oo aan arkó
boy-det(m) small oo I see
'the small boy that I see' (adjective + object relative clause)

The free order between the genitive and any further complement of the head noun is a particular case of a more general property of Somali. The order of any two coordinated modifiers is free, so we have e.g.:

- (27) a. ok: wíil-ka [aan arkó] oo yar
boy-det(m) I see coord small
'the small boy that I see', cf (26b)

⁸The forms ending in *-eed* have been treated as genitive forms. As we will show in section (A), these forms cannot be assimilated to noun forms. It seems that this suffix turns nouns into modifiers. However, since noun + *eed* forms do not take the tense marking characteristic of adjectives they cannot be fully assimilated to adjectives either. In what follows we will gloss this suffix neutrally by '*eed*' rather than by 'genitive/adjective'.

- b. qayb-tani yaab-kéeda [loo bogay] ee fiican
sharei-dem.f surprise-hers one+with be satisfied (with) coord good
'this surprising and good way of sharing that one is satisfied with'
(in Morin [1986, p.114])

(relative clause » adjective)

The following table summarises the modification pattern of N+N genitive constructions that we have just discussed:

- (28) DIRECT MODIFICATION OF THE GENITIVE NOUN IS POSSIBLE

ok: [N [N MOD]]
Head noun Genitive Modifier

- (29) DIRECT MODIFICATION OF THE HEAD NOUN IS IMPOSSIBLE

a. *: N_i N MOD_i
Head noun Genitive Modifier

b. *: [N MOD] N
Head noun Modifier Genitive

- (30) MODIFICATION OF THE HEAD NOUN TRIGGERS COORDINATION

ok: N_i N ee/oo MOD_i
Head noun Genitive coord Modifier

This is a particular case of a more general property:

- (31) DOUBLE MODIFICATION A NOUN GENERALLY TRIGGERS COORDINATION

ok: N_i MOD ee/oo MOD_i
Head noun Modifier coord Modifier

The order between modifiers is relatively free (see exs (27)).

5 Enclitic modification

5.1 Enclitic modification of the complement noun

Enclitic modification of the genitive complement is compatible with the structure of the genitive construction:

- (32) ok: afá-da inan-kiis
wife-det(f) son-his
'his son's wife' (complement + possessive)

- (33) ok: afá-da nín-kaas
wife-det(f) man-that(m)
'that man's wife' (complement + demonstrative)

(34) a. afá-da bará-ha
 wife-det(f) teacher-det(m)
 'the teacher's wife'

b. afá-dii bará-ha
 wife-det(f)+[past] teacher-det(m)
 'the teacher's wife (you know her/we've been talking about her)'

c. afá-da barí-hii
 wife-det(f) teacher-det(m)+[past]
 'the wife of the teacher (you know him/we've been talking about him)'

d. afá-dii barí-hii
 wife-det(f)+[past] teacher-det(m)+[past]
 'the teacher's wife (you know both of them/we've been talking about both
 of them)'

(complement + tense-marking)

5.2.1 Possessive suffixes

(35) ok: buúg-gīsa heesá-ha
book-his songs-det(m)
'his book of songs'

(36) ok: masáwir-k-fīsa Ayáan
picture-(m)-his Ayaan
'his picture of Ayaan (female first name)'

(37) a. afá-dán bará-ha
 wife-dem.(f) teacher-det(m)
 'the teacher's wife here'

 b. afá-daás bará-ha
 wife-dem.(f) teacher-det(m)
 'the teacher's wife over there'

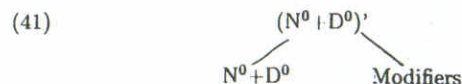
In the genitive construction both DPs can be marked for tense on the determiner (see (34d)).

The modifications of the noun expressed on the enclitic determiner, on the other hand, (demonstrative, tense, possessive) never triggers coordination by *oo/ee*.

We will argue that the properties of the Somali genitive that have been presented

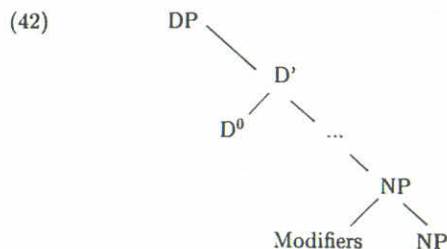
above can be accounted for if we assume a structure that provides a single position for the autonomous modifiers that is in the scope of the N+D-complex.

We propose that the structure of the Somali noun-phrase is essentially as follows:



Departing from Lecarme [1996] who proposes a hierarchical adjunction structure for the modifiers within the DP, we take the free linear order among modifiers to indicate that the modifiers of a noun occupy a single XP position.

The postnominal modifiers occupy an XP position that is c-commanded by the complex head N⁰+D⁰. There is no relationship of selection between an N/DP and its modifiers (→no complement position). We will represent the modifiers as adjuncts to the NP. We then have to stipulate that multiple adjunction is barred.



According to the analysis proposed here postnominal genitives occupy the same position as other modifiers (cf. Lindauer [1998] who analyses German s-genitives and possessive pronouns as adjectives.) There is no θ -relation between the **underived noun** and its genitive, cf. English:

- (43) my grandmother's cake = she brought it, she made it, she is eating it, she invented the recipe ...

For **deverbal nouns** this analysis is probably not appropriate. Deverbal nouns contrast with underived nouns when combined simultaneously with a pre- and post-nominal genitive. In this configuration the post-nominal genitive of a deverbal noun is introduced by *ee* (see (44a)); this is not the case for underived nouns (see (44b)):

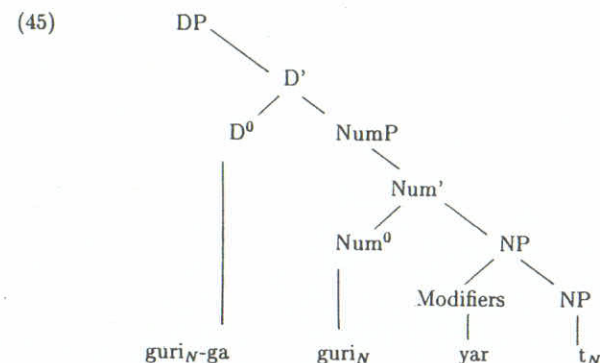
(44) a. DEVERBAL NOUN WITH TWO GENITIVES

magaalá-da burburín-t-eed-a ee ciifan-ka
 city-det(f) destruction-(f)-hers-det coord. rebels-det(m)
 'the destruction of the city by the rebels' (ex (16c) in Lecarme [1989a])

b. UNDERIVED NOUN WITH TWO GENITIVES

ardayád-dan búug-g-éed-a xisáab-ta
 student(f)-this book-(m)-hers-det mathematics-det
 'this student(f)'s book of mathematics' (ex (19b) in Lecarme [1996, p.12])

Since all nouns (including bare nouns) precede their modifiers, we have to assume that the noun occupies a position higher than the modifiers. Following Ritter [1991], Lecarme [1996] we assume a DP-internal NumP. To derive the correct word-order we have to assume that the bare noun raises to Num'. The possible positions for the head noun are illustrated below using the example *guri-ga yar*, 'house-DET small':

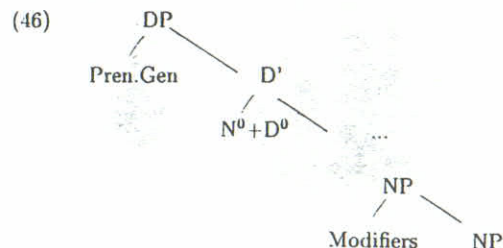


Lecarme (1996) assumes that the abstract Num⁰ head is a genitive case assigner for the DP or the possessive suffix on the head noun. On the basis of examples like (39b) we would like to suggest that the pronoun suffix does not require case (since otherwise the noun would have to assign two cases).

In Somali there is a further structural XP position below the N₀+D₀ complex; since the N₀+D₀ complex c-commands the phrasal modifiers, the DP has to contain an XP position for them⁹.

Let us now consider the prenominal genitive. One possibility would be to analyse the pre-nominal genitive as occupying the spec DP.

⁹This contrasts with the Persian NP as analysed by Ghomeshi [1997]. She claims that in Persian the noun does not project; it can only be modified by bare nouns (i.e. X⁰) with the exception of the possessor that she analyses as occupying spec DP.



As pointed out by Serzisko (1984), however, the two elements of a possessive prenominal genitive construction can be split by a simple focus particle *ayaa* (without the pronominal suffix *aan*, that we see in example (48)):

- (47) a. *Nfn-ka guri-giis-a ayaa gubtay.*
 man-det(m) house-poss3m-det focus burnt 3ms
 'The house of the man burnt down.'

- b. *Nfn-ka ayaa guri-giis-u gubtay.*
 man-det(m) focus house-poss3m-det burnt 3ms

(Serzisko 1984:136)

- (48) *: *Axmed baan walaal -kiis arkay*
 Axmed focus+1s brother -his saw, cf:
 ok: *Axmed walaal -kiis baan arkay*
 Axmed brother -his focus+1s saw
 'I saw Axmed's brother.'

(Gebert [1981, pp.57-8])

The particle *ayaa* is a focussing particle characteristic of main clauses in Somali. This particle cannot interfere between the head noun and a post-nominal genitive (see Serzisko [1984, p.136]).

Since the prenominal genitive and the head noun can be separated by *ayaa*, we will assume that the prenominal genitive DP in example (47) is not inside the DP projection of the head noun.

We propose that the relationship between the prenominal genitive and the possessive pronoun in (47) is established by co-indexation.

- (49) *Nfn-ka_i ayaa [_{DP} guri -giis_i-u]*
 man-det(m) focus house -poss3m-det

Possessive prenominal genitives can only be separated from their head noun by the particle *ayaa*. The prenominal genitive construction found with locative nouns differs from the possessive construction in that the prenominal genitive and the locative nominal can be arbitrarily far from each other.

- (50) a. *Cali ayaa nin-kaas xafiis-ka debe-dfiis-a kú arkay.*
 Ali focus man-dem office-det(m) outside-poss-det part. see 3m[past]

- b. *ok Xafiis-ka Cali ayaa nin-kaas debe-dfiis-a kú arkay.*
 office-det(m) Ali focus man-dem outside-poss-det part. see 3m[past]
 'Ali saw this man outside the office.'
 (Serzisko [1984, p.131])

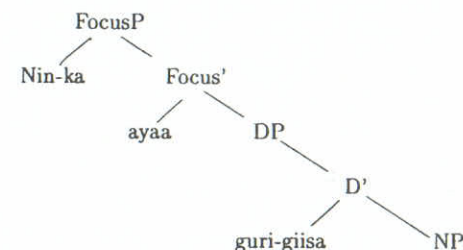
A deverbal noun can also be separated from its preverbal genitive:

- (51) *waa búug-ga aan is weydíinayo haddii aad akhrisáy tarjamád-iisa*
 FOC book-the I REFL ask if you(sg) read translation-its
 'it is the book the translation of which I wonder if you read'

(ex (10) in Lecarme [1989b])

We therefore have to distinguish possessive prenominal genitives from the prenominal genitives found with locative nouns and deverbal nouns. Following a proposal in Kihm [1998] we will postulate that the Somali DP can be embedded in a FocusP. The bare focus particle *ayaa* then instantiates the head of this projection:

(52) POSSESSIVE PRENOMINAL GENITIVE



This structure is then comparable to clitic left dislocation.

If the prenominal genitive is not possessive it is not contained in the extended DP; the relationship is established by co-indexation with the possessive pronoun exclusively:

(53) PRENOMINAL GENITIVE WITH LOCATIVE AND DEVERBAL NOUNS

- xafiis-ka Cali ayaa nin-kaas [_{DP} debe-dfiis-a] kú arkay.*
 office-det(m) Ali focus man-dem outside-poss-det part. see 3m[past]

Both – the prenominal genitive DP and the head noun – can be modified without triggering coordination of the postnominal modifiers by *oo/ee*:

(54) MODIFICATION OF THE PRENOMINAL GENITIVE

- a. [*laba_i sam-ood*] *dhex-dood_i*
 two_i furs in.between-them_i
 'in between two furs' (numeral + ood-genitive)

- b. [hormúud_i-ka kulliyád-da] xaffis_i-ka
 Dean-det.m_i faculty-det.f office-his_i-det.m
 'the Dean of the faculty, his office' (example 4c. in Lecarme [1989a])
 (noun + genitive)

- c. [nin_i-ka shalay dhintay] faras-kiisa_i
 man_i-det.m yesterday died horse-his_i
 'the man who died yesterday, his horse' = the horse of the man who died
 yesterday (example taken from Serzisko [1984, p.132])
 (noun + relative clause)

(55) MODIFICATION OF THE HEAD NOUN

- a. Cali_i [aqoon-tiis_i -a af-eed]
 Cali_i knowledge-his-det language-*eed*
 'Cali's linguistic knowledge' (example 4b. Lecarme [1989b])
 (noun + pron + *eed*-genitive)
- b. qayb-tan_i yaab-kéed_i-a loo bogay
 share_i-dem.f surprise-hers-det one+with be satisfied (with)
 'this surprising way of sharing that one is satisfied with' (Morin [1986])
 (noun + pron + relative clause)
- ardayád-dan [búug-g-éed-a xisáab-ta]
 student(f)-this book-(m)-hers-det mathematics-det
 'this student(f)'s book of mathematics' (ex (19b) in Lecarme [1996, p.12])
 (noun + pron + postverbal genitive)

The fact that no coordination appears suggests that the DP is not extracted from the modifier-position inside the DP. We will assume that the possessive prenominal genitives are base-generated in spec FocusP; for the other prenominal genitives we will assume that they are base-generated in an adjoined position in the clause.

6.3 The phonological behaviour of noun+enclitic aggregates

According to our analysis the N⁰+D⁰ complex is a complex head resulting from head adjunction. This analysis is supported by the fact that phonologically, the N⁰+D⁰ complex mirrors that of the V⁰+I⁰ complex, an uncontroversial example of a complex head.

In the Somali verbal system [t] is systematically linked to the 2s and 3fs forms:

- (56) a. *keen*, 'to bring' → *keen-tay* 2s/3fs past tense, full form
 b. → *keen-ta* 3fs past tense, reduced form
 c. → *keen-taa* 2s/3fs habitual present, full form
 d. → *keen-tó* 2s/3fs present subjunctive

As all the verb forms given in (56) show the same assimilation processes we will limit ourselves to the form in (56a) (2s/3fs of the full paradigm of the past tense).

(57) 2/3fs + assimilation of [t]¹⁰

- | | | |
|----------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| A) w/y/V + [t] → | w/y/V + d | |
| bari + tay | bariday | 'to beg' |
| day + tay | dayday | 'to look at, to examine' |
| B) gutturals + [t] → | c/q/x/h/kh + d | |
| bax + tay | baxday | 'to leave, to exit' |
| C) d + [t] → | d + d | |
| qaad + tay | qaadday | 'to take' |
| D) dh + [t] → | dh + dh | |
| gaadh + tay | gaadhay | 'to reach' |
| E) l + [t] → | sh | |
| gal + tay | gashay | 'to enter' |
| F) other Cs + [t] → | no change | |
| tag + tay | tagtay | 'to go' |

The voicing observed here is not a simple voice spread since not all voiced consonants trigger voicing of [t] to [d]. The phonological behaviour of consonant+[t] clusters in noun+determiner complexes is exactly parallel:

(58) det(f) + assimilation of [t]

- | | | |
|------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| A) w/y/V + [t] → | w/y/V + d | |
| mind _i + ta | mindida | 'the knife' |
| shaq _i + ta | shaqada | 'the work' |
| ey _i + ta | eyda | 'the she-dog' |
| B) gutturals + [t] → | c/q/x/h/kh + d | |
| lo' + ta | lo'da | 'the cattle' |
| lix + ta | lixda | 'the six' |
| C) d + [t] → | d + d | |
| shandad + ta | shandadda | 'suitcase' |
| D) dh + [t] → | dh + dh | |
| gabadh + ta | gabadda | 'the girl' |
| E) l + [t] → | sh | |
| hal + ta | hasa | 'the she-camel' |
| F) other Cs + [t] → | no change | |
| galab + ta | galabta | 'the afternoon' |
| naag + ta | naagta | 'the woman' |

¹⁰The retroflex [dh] does not appear as a surface geminate. It can be phonologically identified as a geminate since in Somali intervocalic [dh] is realised as a tapped [ɾ]. The fact that the [dh] surfaces in D) indicates that it is not in intervocalic position but a geminate consonant.

7 The syntax of the noun phrase in other Cushitic languages

In the following we will compare the properties of the Somali noun phrase shown above with the syntax of noun modification in Afar (Bliese 1977), Beja (Almkvist 1881), Iraqw (Mous1993), and Harar Oromo (Owens 1985).

7.1 The positions of noun modifiers

Somali is unique among the Cushitic languages reviewed here in that the modifiers of a noun occupy a unique syntactic position.

Like Somali all the languages in question have SOV order. The word order inside the noun phrase, however, is different for the four languages considered here. Somali is the only language that allots the modifiers a single structural position. That the other languages have multiple slots for the different types of modifiers can be seen from the strict ordering among different types of modifiers in Afar (Af), Harar Oromo (HOR) and Iraqw(Iqw):

(59) Afar

	dem	adj	gen	N
		sagá-h	'iba	
		cow-gen	foot	'a cow's foot' (Bliese 1977:277)
amá	casá		saró	
that	red		clothing	'that red dress'(Bliese 1977:25)
wóo		amoyt-í	ba:rrá	
that		leader-gen	wife	'that leader's wife'(Bliese 1977:179)
	datá	awk-í	ko9só	
	black	boy-gen	ball	'the boy's black ball'(Bliese 1977:285)
				not:'the black boy's ball'

(60) Harar Oromo

N	adj	gen	
namá	gaarii		
men	good		'good men', (Owens 1985:87)
xeesummiccá	gaarii	namiccá suní	
guests	good	man that	'that man's good guests' (Owens 1985:104)

(61) Iraqw

N	gen	adj	
maká	gadá	ninakw	
animals(n)(CS)	forests(n)(CS)	small(p)	'small forest animals' (Mous 1993:229)

Relative clauses follow all other modifiers (Mous 1993:231):

(Iqw) tsir'i tam ar wák ar aa dakúus i káhh.
bird(f) even indep.f.CS one indep.f.CS S.3:perf miss:3ms:past S.3 be.absent3fs

'A bird, even one, that he missed, does not exist.'

In Beja (Bej) definite genitives and adjectives are clearly distinguished: they occupy different syntactic positions.

(62) Beja

det-gen	det-N	
ó:-tak-i	ó:-gaw	
the-man-gen	the-house	'the man's house'
	det-N	det-adj
	ú:-kam	ú:-win
the-camel	the-big	'the big camel'

7.2 Adjacency

In Harar Oromo the head may be separated from the genitive by an adjective or a numeral (Owens 1985:104):

(63) Harar Oromo [N adj] [N-gen]

(HOR) xeesummiccá gaarii namiccá suní
guest good man that/gen
'that man's good guests' (Owens 1985:104)

In Iraqw, modification of the genitive construction always follows the genitive: like in Hebrew, the adjective can be construed either with the genitive or with the head noun:

(64) (Irq) maká gadá ninakw
animals(n)(CS) forests(n)(CS) small(p)
'small forest animals' (Mous 1993:229)

8 Conclusion

The analysis proposed here accounts for the properties of the Somali postnominal genitive construction as follows:

1. The DP contains a single position for modifying maximal projections *XP*. To combine different modifiers it is necessary to create a unique *XP* (coordination by *oo/ee*).
2. The postnominal genitive complement occupies the same position as the other modifiers.
3. Enclitic and autonomous modification can coexist without triggering coordination since enclitic modifiers are heads and do not occupy the phrasal modifying position of the autonomous modifiers.
4. The linear order among the autonomous modifiers is (relatively) free since the modifiers form a complex by coordination.

For the the Somali prenominal genitive construction we have proposed that:

1. The position of the prenominal genitive DP depends on the type of relation it entertains with the head noun: possessive prenominal genitives occupy a left peripheral position (FocusP) in the nounphrase complex, other prenominal genitives can be arbitrarily far from the head noun.
2. The prenominal genitive is not extracted from inside the DP.

A brief excursion into the modification in other Cushitic languages shows that the modifier-like behaviour of Somali postnominal genitives cannot be reduced to cross-linguistic variation in terms of headedness and enclitic determiners. Harar Oromo shows the same fundamental word order properties (SOV, *N>>genitive*) and enclitic determiners, while at the same time this language distinguishes several syntactic positions for the different types of noun modifiers and even allows direct modification of the head noun.

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