On DP positions and the location of subjects: report on 2 projects

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1.   Introduction
1.1   The issues targeted in our questionaires

DPSQ: explores differences between some African languages and more familiar Indo-European ones in the possible locations of DPs.

SSQ: probes syntactic and sematic properties of pre-verbal subject position in (some) Bantu languages.

Some specifics that we sought to ascertain:

-Is there raising from infinitives and/or tensed clauses?
-Is there multiple agreement with subjects?
-What inversion constructions are permitted?
-Are overt subjects possible in infinitives?
-What is the distribution of NPIs?
-Expletive constructions?
-Scope rigidity?
-Comparing DP versus CP positions
-ECM/raising-to-object
-Whether/what can tropicalize

1.2   The motivation

•Long-standing controversy over the role of Case in Bantu, owing to recurrent Case-theoretic anomalies. Is there no abstract Case? (Diercks 2012; Carstens & Diercks 2009, 2013; Harford Perez 1985). Or does inherent Case make full DPs extra-mobile and "agreeable"? (Halpert 2012)

•Conroversy over the location and properties of preverbal subject position in Bantu. Is it a left-dislocated position? (Baker 2003 and Schneider-Zioga 2007 on Kinande; Kinyalolo 1991 on Kilega, among others). Does it lack Case-licensing? (Halpert 2012 on Zulu).

2.   Summary of results
2.1   By language

Kinyarwanda (Kayigema Jacques)

DPSQ: SA in number, gender, person; subject agreement that iterates on all verbal heads in a clause (henceforth *hyper-agreement*; raising from tensed clauses (henceforth *hyper-raising* (with passive matrix verb also okay); no overt subjects in infinitives.

Lubukusu (Justine Sikuku)

DPSQ: hyper-raising possible with either full or default SA in higher clause; overt preverbal subject in infinitives OK but not after passive matrix verb and not in perception verb complement (in English, a gerundive environment); some OVS and locative inversion.

Xhosa (Loyiso Mletshe)

DPSQ & SSQ: hyper-agreement in number, gender, person; hyper-raising (with passive matrix verb also okay); no overt subjects in infinitives; two classes of NPIs with very different

distributions; expletive constructions including transitive ECs and impersonal passive; indefinites OK as preverbal subjcts; scope rigidity (inverse scope seems very limited)

Fe'efe'e (Djomani Gabriel)

DPSQ & SSQ. No SA at all or evidence of other agreement; no locative inversion; no hyper-raising; inverse scope readings possible; indefinites OK as preverbal subjects

Limbum (Francis Wepnong)

DPSQ. Complementizer agreement with higher subject. Overt subjects in infintives OK. Hyper/copy-raising possibilities somewhat opaque; require follow up. Great idioms! No passive.

2.2 Analytical findings summarized
2.2.1 DPSQ:

•Case-theoretic anomalies in DP positions give rise to the **appearance** that there is no Case in Bantu. Among the problem facts are multiple subject agreement, hyper-raising, inversion constructions, preverbal subjects of infinitives (as also reported in Diercks 2012; Harford-Perez 1985) or, adapting Halpert 2012, that noun class morphology includes intrinsic Case licensing.

•BUT there is novel evidence from the syntax of VSO constructions that Case is present in Bantu, only manifested differently due to a conspiracy of factors. These findings came out of Xhosa responses to the Afranaph questionaires and subsequent follow-up work. They are described and analyzed in detail in Carstens & Mletshe 2013, now under peer review. For convergent conclusions about Case based on a completely different domain of evidence see Diercks, Ranero, & Cramerus 2013 discussion of Kuria object marking.

2.2.2 SSQ:

•While scope is pretty rigid in the Bantu languages we explored, this does not correlate with clear diagnostics for left-dislocation of preverbal subjects (indefinite and non-referential subjects are permitted). We found that augmentless NPIs are barred from preverbal subject position in Xhosa and Zulu, a state of affairs that Baker 2003 and Schneider-Zioga 2007 attributed to preverbal subjects being left-dislocated. But close inspection argues for quite a different conclusion: they are negative concord items which must participate in an A'-Agree relation with the operator of sentential negation (adapting Zeijlstra 2008).

3. Surveying the evidence: a detailed case-study of Xhosa
3.1 Case anomalies

(1) *Licit in situ subjects of passives*

      Ku-bon-w-é   u-m-tana w-am
      17SA-see-PASS-PST1   1-1-child   1-my
      'My child has been seen' (e.g. by a doctor at a hospital)

(2) *Multiple subject agreement in mono-clausal constructions*

      Wena   **u**-be   **u**-soloko   **u**-fund-a   lapha
      2SIndPron 2sSA-RFUT 2sSA-often 2sSA-study-FV here
      'You will often study here'

(3) *Raising to object out of agreeing clauses*

    Ndi-funa   u-Nomahlubi [okokuba   a-phek-e   a-ma-qanda]
    1sSA-want   1-1Nomahlubi that   1SA-cook-SUBJ   6-6-eggs
    'I want Nomahlubi to cook eggs' [Lit: I want Nomahlubi that she cook eggs]

(4) *Subject raising from finite clauses preserving idiomatic readings and feeding passive*

    a. U-Hili   u-bonakala [okokuba u-phum-ile   e-ngcongolwe-ni]
       1-1Hili 1SA-seem   that   1SA-exit-PST LOC-10weeds-LOC
       'The secret seems to have come out' [Lit: the troll seems that exited the weeds]

    b. U-Nomsa u-khol-w-a   [okokuba u-phum-ile]
       1-1Nomsa 1SA-believe-PASS=FV   that   1SA-depart-PST-FV
       'Nomsa is believed to have left' [Lit: Nomsa is believed that left]

(5) *Post-verbal subjects licit when something else occupies Spec, TP and controls SA*[1]

    I-cephe   li-tya   u-Sipho
    5-5spoon 5SA-eat 1-1Sipho
    'Sipho is eating with a spoon' *Can answer the question, "Who is eating with the spoon?"*

3.2   Non-traditional sources of evidence for Case
3.2.1 TECs: obligatory subject focus = obligatory raising to Spec, FocP

(6)   a. Ku-cula   uSindiswa   *Optional subject focus for intrans EC*
        17SA-sing-FV 1Sindiswa
        'Sindiswa sings/It's Sindiswa who sings.'

       b. Ku-theth-a   i-ndoda   ende i-siXhosa.   *TEC has obligatory subject focus*
        17SA-speak   9-9man   9tall 7-7Xhosa
        'It's the tall man who speaks Xhosa.'

3.2.2 The experiencer verb restriction

(7)   a. *Kw-a-bon-a   u-mfazi   i-ntaka   **TEC of an experiencer verb with 2*
        17SA-PST2-see-FV 1-1woman 9bird   *nominal arguments*
        '(It was) a/the woman (who) saw the bird'

       b. Kw-a-bon-w-a   i-ntaka   *OK: same V in impersonal passive*
        17SA-PST2-see-PASS-FV 9-9bird
        'A bird was seen'   *Problem isn't the verb*

       c. Ku-bon-é   u-gqirha   ukuba u-mntwana   u-ya-gula.   *OK: replace DP2 w/CP*
        17SA-see-PST1   1-1docor that   1-1child   1SA-DISJ2-be.sick
        '(It was) the doctor (who) saw that the child was sick' *Problem isn't the argument structure*

Proposal: SU of intransitive ECs CAN raise to Spec of a low FocP but SU of TECS MUST raise.

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[1] This construction was first documented in Zulu by Zeller (2011), who names it *instrument inversion*.

(8) [$_{FocP}$ SU$_{+Foc}$ [$_{Foc'}$ Foc [$_{vP}$ <SU> [$_{v'}$ v [$_{VP}$ V...]]]]]

Various potential accounts include linearization problems (Richards 2001) labeling problems (Chomsky 2013); Case problems (Alexiadou & Anagnostopoulou 2001). But the experiencer verb restriction is powerful evidence that abstract Case is involved. Nothing else captures (7).

(9) *Arguments of experiencer verbs have inherent Cases in many languages (Bhatt 2003).*

a. ti-la   rag   ala   [Marathi]   b. hamraa   ii   naa miilal   [Bhojpuri]
she-Dat anger came   I-Gen.Obl this not find
'She got angry'   'I didn't find it'

Proposal: uCase is a property of D = the augment layer. v* of Xhosa TECs is defective and cannot value accusative. Hence all and only augmented nominals require Case-licensing.

(10) *[$_{vP}$ v [$_{VP}$ V OB$_{uCase}$]]   *Accusative unavailable in TECs*

In the grammars of speakers who accept TECs, raising the subject to Spec, Foc provides non-canonical Case licensing of the object from Foc (see Haegeman & Lohndal 2010 for a serial interpretation of Hiraiwa's 2001 Multiple Agree).

(11) *Foc probes and raises the subject to Spec, Foc, then probes and Case licenses the object:*

a.   [$_{FocP}$ SU$_{+Foc}$ [$_{Foc'}$ Foc$_{CASE}$ [$_{vP}$ <SU> [$_{v'}$ v [$_{VP}$ V OB$_{uCase}$...]]]]]

b.   [$_{TP}$ SU$_{+Foc}$ T [$_{FocP}$ Foc$_{CASE}$ [$_{vP}$ <SU> [$_{v'}$ v [$_{VP}$ V OB$_{uCase}$...]]]]]

But the inherent Cases borne by arguments of experiencer predicates are not compatible with this strategy for valuing uCase, because it violates the constraint in (12). Leaving off the augments or replacing the DP object with a CP yields a licit result because augmentless nominals and CPs do not have uCase.

(12) *The semantic Case constraint*: no argument can bear more than one semantically linked Case.

3.2.3 Supporting evidence for defective v*: the ban on object pronouns

Additional evidence that v* is defective in TECs: the object in a TEC cannot be pronominalized. Following Diesing & Jelinek 1995 pronouns must undergo object shift out of VP.

(13)   *[$_{vP}$ <SU> v [$_{VP}$ V Pronoun]]   *Pronouns cannot escape VP in TECs*

Case-anomalies like (1)-(5) must have alternative explanations; see Carstens 2011; Carstens & Mletshe 2013 for proposals.

3.3 Preverbal subject position
Indefinite, non-specific OK

(14) Xa u-lahl-eka,   buza nje e-ba-ntw-ini.
       If 2sSA-lost-STAT ask   just LOC-2-people-LOC

       U-m-ntu   u-ya   ku-nceda   wena
       1-1-persn 1SA-FUT 15-help   you
       'If you get lost, just ask people. Somebody will help you'

NPI subjects not OK, even with c-commanding negation

(15) ✓A-ndi-fun-i   okokuba u-Sabelo a-bon-e   m-ntu   [Xhosa]
       NEG-1sSA-want-NEG   that   1-1Sabelo 1SA-see-SUBJ 1-person[-A]
       'I don't want Sabelo to see anybody'

(16) *A-ndi-fun-i   okokuba m-ntu   a-bon-e   u-Sabelo
       NEG-1sSA-want-NEG that   1-person[-A] 1SA-see-SUBJ 1-1Sabelo
       'I don't want anybody to see Sabelo

We will show that the distribution of Xhosa NPIs aligns with that of negative concord items, which must move leftwards in many languages (see (17)). We relate the contrast between (15) and (16) to that in (18) (see Kayne 1981's proposal that *personne* must undergo LF movement and hence (18) is a *that*-trace or ECP violation).

(17) a. da Valère   **van niemand** ketent   en-was   [West Flemish Haegeman 1995]
        that Valère   of   no one   contented en-was
        'that Valère was not pleased with anyone'

     b. *da Valère ketent   **van niemand** en-was
        that Valère contented   of   no one   en-was

(18) a. Je n' ai   exigé   qu' ils   arête   **personne**   [French: Kayne 1981]
        I *ne* have   required that they arrest(subj) nobody
        'I didn't require that they arrest anybody'

     b. *Je n'   ai   exigé   que **personne** soit arêté
        I *ne*   have   required   that no one   be   arrested
        (I didn't require that anybody be arrested')

4. Conclusion

Our Afranaph projects were undertaken to explore the ways that DP-positions in some African langauges (particularly Bantu) contrast with English and other well studied langauges, and to probe some characteristic properties of Bantu preverbal subjects. We began with the impression that abstract Case was not present in Bantu, but the results changed our minds. They also show that there is more than one way to account for restrictions on preverbal subjects.