Toward a (Contrast) Focus Analysis
of Almost Wackernagel Clitics in Wakhi

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Goal:

- Illustrate data from own fieldwork

- Show that when second-position clitics in Wakhi occur to the right of second position, it is a contrastive-focus effect, independent of new information focus

- Provide a preliminary analysis, discuss challenges

Overview

1. Background

2. "Floating" clitics

3. Prosodic vs focus analysis

4. Focus movement analysis in Wakhi

5. Conclusion

1 Background

Wakhi:

- endangered East Iranian language spoken by about 60,000 speakers

- dialects in Pakistan, **Pamirs of Tajikistan**, China, and Afghanistan

- SOV, split ergative

- several clitics, including question-marking, aspectual, and **pronominal** clitics

This talk will focus on pronominal clitics that agree with the subject (1) of the sentence and appear only in the past tense

(1)

	SG	PL
1st	=əm	=ən
2nd	=ət	=iʃ
3rd	=i	=iʃ

Wackernagel's Law clitics (henceforth 2P clitics) (Wackernagel 1892) occur in second position in the clause, after the first word or phrase

In Wakhi, 2P clitics occur after the first phrasal constituent (rather than just the first word), which may be arbitrarily complex:

- after **pronoun**

(2)   wuz=**əm**   gefse-tu
        1SG=1SG.CL run-PERF
        'I ran.'

- after **noun phrase**

(3)   [ja ṣelzị̣n]=**i**   gefse-tu
        det woman=3SG.CL run-PERF
        'That woman ran.'

- after **coordinate structure**

(4)   [wuz-ət   Laura]=**ən**   droz
        1SG=AND Laura=1PL.CL tall
        'Me and Laura are tall.'

- after **complex noun** (with relative clause)

(5)   [ja   badʒ ðaj kumd ki   ja   ṣapik ptun jitk]=**i**   ruɕpetk
        [DET fat   man who   COMP DET food all   eat.PST]=3SG.CL sleep.PST
        'The man who ate all the food slept.'

First constituent need not be an DP or the subject of the sentence to host the clitic:

- after fronted **wh-expression**

(6)   jem=**i**   ja   ðaj [[kumde-e kitob]=**əm**   ki   djojet]
        this=3SG.CL DET man [[who-GEN book]=1G.CL comp read.PST]
        'This is the man whose book I read.'

- after fronted **adverb**

(7)   jɛzi=**m**   wuz dra   niɛŋg=tu
        yesterday=1SG.CL 1SG there sit.PERF
        'Yesterday I sat there.'

2   "Floating" Clitics

Almost Wackernagel Clitics (Erschler 2010) (aka "floating" clitics) most frequently occur in second position but may also occur further to the right.

Consider a transitive sentence with a prepositional phrase complement:

(8)　　a.　　wuz=**əm** bil　　pə çi　　　znax dijt-i
　　　　　　1SG=1SG shovel in SELF.GEN jaw　put-PST
　　　　　　'I put the shovel in my jaw.'
　　　b.　　wuz bil=**əm** tə çɨ znax dəjt-əj
　　　c.　　wuz bil [tə çɨ znax]=**əm** dəjt-əj
　　　d.　　wuz bil tə çɨ znax dəjt=**əm**

We can summarize (8) in the following schema, where $=X$ represents a possible site for the clitic:

(9)　　[(*=X)　　　NP$_{subj}$=X　　　NP$_{obj}$=X　　　PP$_{comp}$=X　　　VP=X]

For a transitive sentence with an adjunct PP:

(10)　　a.　　wuz=**əm** ja　　put-i　　　ara boɣ litʃ dijt-i
　　　　　　　1SG=1SG DET ball-ACC at　park kick LV-PST
　　　　　　　'I kicked the ball in the park.'
　　　b.　　wuz [ja put-i]=**m** ara boɣ litʃ dijt-i
　　　c.　　wuz ja put-i [ara boɣ]=**əm** litʃ dijt-i
　　　d.　　wuz ja put-i ara boɣ [litʃ dijt-i]=**m**

Again, to summarize (10) schematically:

(11)　　[(*=X)　　　NP$_{subj}$=X　　　NP$_{obj}$=X　　　PP$_{adjunct}$=X　　　VP=X]

Ditransitive (with accusative marking on the object, unlike in (10))

(12)　　a.　　wuz=**əm** tar　　　jet kitob-i　　rɨt-i
　　　　　　　1SG=1SG 2SG.OBL DET book-ACC give-PST
　　　　　　　'I gave you the book.'
　　　b.　　wuz tar=**əm** jet kitob-i rɨt-i
　　　c. ??wuz tar [jet kitob-i]=**m** rɨt-i
　　　d.　　wuz tar jet kitob-i rɨt-i=**m**

(13)　　[(*=X)　　　NP$_{subj}$=X　　　NP$_{benef.}$=X　　　NP$_{obj}$(??=X)　　　VP=X]

Interim Summary

- pronominal clitics usually occur in 2P

- can occur further to the right of 2P, regardless of argument structure

- **Question**: What is the syntax of 2P in Wakhi?

- **Question**: What is it that motivates a departure from 2P? What determines the position of the clitic if it's not in 2P?

3   Prosodic vs Focus analysis

3.1   Prosody vs Focus

> Goal: Implement some preliminary diagnostics to motivate focus analysis

There are two prominent ways of dealing with floating clitics in the literature: prosodic- and focus-driven.

A **purely prosodic** account (as presented for Irish in Bennett et al. 2013), uses as a diagnostic the fact that clitic movement motivated by prosody **may not obey syntactic boundaries**.

Irish: clitic may occur within coordinated phrase
Wakhi: cannot occur within coordinated phrase (14)

(14)   a.   [wuz ət ja   ʃatʃ]=**nəʂ**   gefs-tu
              1SG and DET sheep=1PL.CL run-PST
              'The sheep and I ran.'
        b.   *[wuz=**nəʂ** ət ja ʃatʃ] gefs-tu
        c.   *[wuz=**m**   ət ja   ʃatʃ=**i**]   gefs-tu
              1SG=1SG.CL and DET sheep=3SG.CL run-PST
              'The sheep and I ran.'

Irish: clitic can move out of its clause
Wakhi: cannot move out of its clause

(15)   jem=i   ja   ðaj(***=m**) [[kumde-e kitob]=**əm**   ki   djojet]
        this=3SG.CL DET man=1G.CL [[who-GEN book]=1G.CL read.PST]
        'This is the man whose book I read.'

A **focus-driven** account should be sensitive to focus and discourse effects. This is what we find in Wakhi. Let's revisit an example from earlier for illustration:

(16)   a.   wuz=**əm** bil   pə ɕi   znax dijt-i
              1SG=1SG shovel in SELF.GEN jaw   put-PST
              'I put the shovel in my jaw.'
        b.   wuz bil=**əm** tə ɕɨ znax dəjt-əj
        c.   wuz bil [tə ɕɨ znax]=**əm** dəjt-əj
        d.   wuz bil tə ɕɨ znax dəjt=**əm**

Sample judgments:

- (16-a) is "informational"

- (16-b) can be used in response to *What did you put in your jaw?*

- (16-c) can easily be interpreted as contrastive focus: *in my jaw rather than in my knee or in my stomach*

- (16-d) can be used in response to *What did you do with the shovel to your jaw?* or it can be some kind of *verum focus*, placing focus on the tense

In fact, all of (16) can also be expressed through some kind of fronting:

(17) a. wuz=əm bil   pə çi   znax dəjt-i
          1SG=1SG shovel in SELF.GEN jaw   put-PST
          'I put the shovel in my jaw.' *neutral*
      b. bil=əm wuz tə çɨ znax dəjt-əj =**(16-b) in meaning**
      c. [tə çɨ znax]=əm wuz bil dəjt-əj =**(16-c) in meaning**
      d. dəjt=əm wuz bil tə çɨ znax =**(16-d) in meaning**

I'll be calling cases like in (16) *in situ focus* and cases like in (17) *fronted/extraction focus* cases.

3.2 Dissecting 'Focus'

Roughly two schools of thought when it comes to the nature of Focus

- Focus is a cover-all term (Rooth 1992)

- Focus is too vague, it can actually be separated into two independent concepts: rhematicity (new vs given information) and contrast (English, Finnish, Hungarian, Catalan; Vallduvi and Vilkuna 1998)

Can we tease apart contrast and new information focus in Wakhi?
Yes. **New information** focus marked by **pitch accent** (as in English), **contrast** marked with **clitic**. Minimal pair in (18).

(18) a. BIL=əm   wuz tə çɨ   znax dəjt-əj
          shovel=1SG 1SG in SELF.GEN jaw   put-PST
          'It was the SHOVEL (not the pencil or the sword) that I put in my jaw.' answer to 'What did you put in your jaw?'
      b. bil=əm   wuz tə çɨ   ZNAX dəjt-əj
          shovel=1SG 1SG in SELF.GEN jaw   put-PST
          'I put the shovel (rather than the pencil or the sword) in my JAW.' answer to 'Where did you put the shovel?'

Takeaway: New information focus and contrast are independent but not mutually exclusive in Wakhi; clitic placement leads to contrastive interpretation.

Interim Summary 2:

- 2P clitics after subject are information-neutral

- 2P clitics after fronted expression give focus interpretation

- non-2P clitics give focus interpretation

- strong contrastive focus judgments motivate some kind of focus analysis of floating clitics in Wakhi

4   Toward a Focus Analysis of Floating Clitics in Wakhi

Goal: Sketch a possible analysis and discuss challenges

4.1   2P Clitic

Serbo-Croatian 2P clitics have been heavily studied, and I use this as a point of departure:

- syntactic approaches: clitic is located in structurally fixed position high in the tree, usually in C or a maximal projection right under C

    - **Strong syntactic** accounts offered by Franks and Progovac (1994), Progovac (1996), Roberts (1994), Cavar and Wilder (1994a,b). In these approachs, syntax is fully responsible for 2P clitics.

    - **Weak syntax approach**: Movement of clitics takes place in syntax, but some word reordering is still allowed in PF. Clitics are not in the second position in syntax, under certain well-defined conditions they can undergo movement to that position (Halpern (1992, 1995), Embick and Izvorski (1997), Percus (1993), Schutze (1994), and King (1996)).

- phonological approaches

    - **Strong phonological approach**: phonology is fully responsible; analysis relies on heavy word reordering at PF (Radanovic-Kocic 1988, 1996)

    - **Weak phonological approach**: phonology plays dominant role; 2P is a morphophonological requirement of clitics. Relevant movement occurs in syntax, and phonology plays a passive filtering role by ruling out syntactically well-formed sentences that violate this morphophonological requirement (Boskovic 1995a,b, 1997a,b)

I posit that the clitic is hosted in C, but I will discuss some challenges to this at the end. Following Hughes (2014) the clitic probes the subject for its ϕ-features.
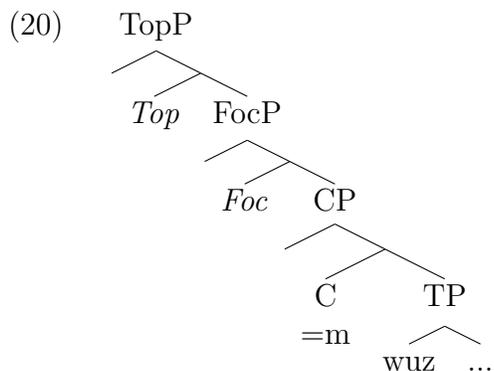
4.2   Focus Movement?

Strategy: Assume the clitic is hosted in C head and assume a (Contrastive) Focus projection above the CP (as in (19)), further dominated by a Topic Phrase, and see if we can account for the position of the clitics in the *fronted* focus data we saw above, before turning to *in-situ* focus data.

(19)   TopP
         /\
      Top   FocP
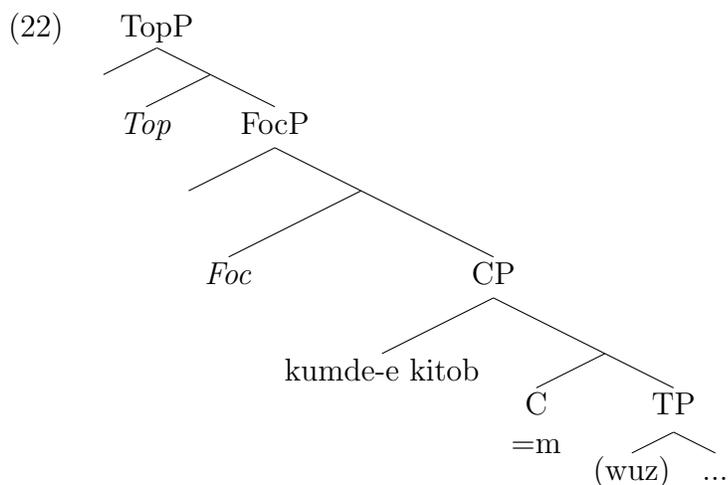   /\
         Foc   CP
               /\
                C
               cl.
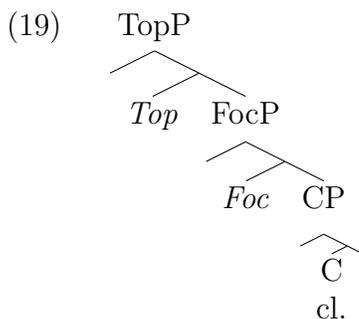
1. When Spec-CP, FocP, and TopP are all empty:
   The enclitic cannot stand on its own, so it must lower onto the first constituent → 2P clitic

(20)   TopP
        /\
      Top   FocP
            /\
         Foc   CP
                /\
               C   TP
              =m   /\
                   wuz   ...

Accounted for every time we get 2P clitic hosted by subject:

(21)   wuz=**əm** bil   pə çi   znax dijt-i
        1SG=1SG shovel in SELF.GEN jaw   put-PST
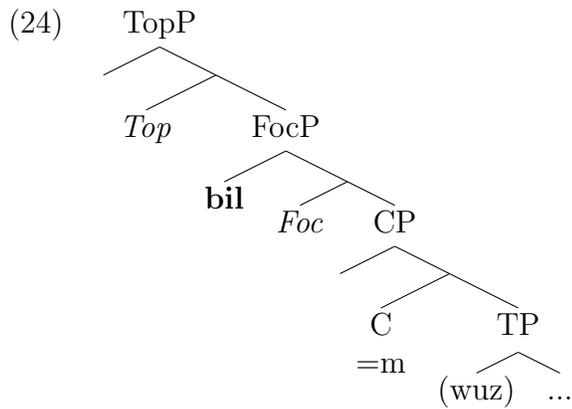   'I put the shovel in my jaw.'

2. When a wh-expression is in Spec-CP → 2P, hosted by the wh-expression

(22)   TopP
        /\
      Top   FocP
            /\
         Foc   CP
                    /\
            kumde-e kitob /\
                         C   TP
                        =m   /\
                           (wuz)   ...

Accounted for (=(6)):

(23)   jem=i   ja   ðaj [[kumde-e kitob]=**əm**   ki   djojet]
        this=3SG.CL DET man [[who-GEN book]=1G.CL read.PST]
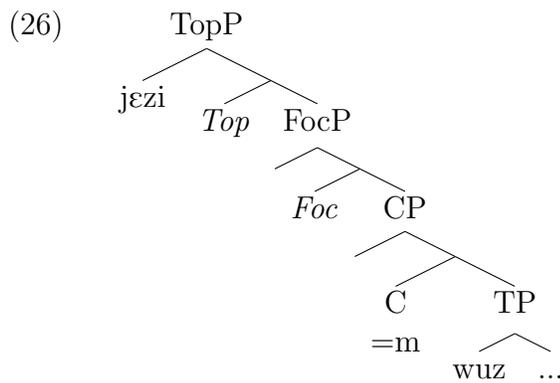   'This is the man whose book I read.'

3. When a focused expression is extracted into the Focus Projection → 2P clitic hosted by focused expression

(24)

```
        TopP
       /    \
     Top    FocP
           /    \
         bil    /  \
              Foc   CP
                   /   \
                  C     TP
                 =m    /  \
                   (wuz)  ...
```

Accounted for:

(25)   bil=**əm**   wuz tə çɨ   znax dəjt-əj
       shovel=1SG 1SG in SELF.GEN jaw   put-PST
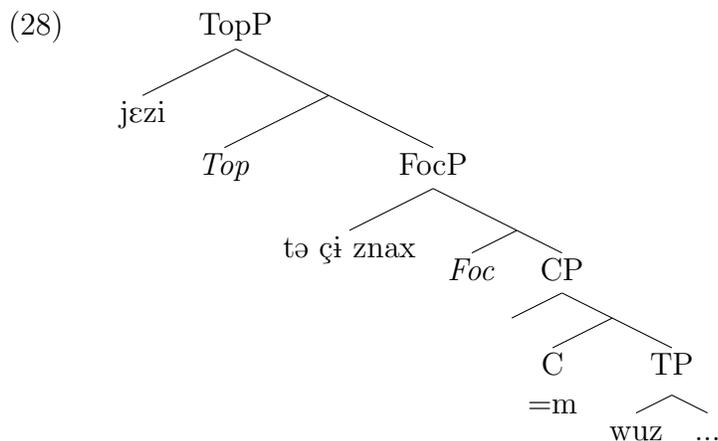   'I put the shovel$_F$ in my jaw.'

4. When TopP is filled but FocP is empty, the topicalized constituent should be able to host a 2P clitic

(26)

```
         TopP
        /    \
     jɛzi    /  \
          Top   FocP
               /    \
             Foc    CP
                   /   \
                  C     TP
                 =m    /  \
                     wuz  ...
```

Accounted for:

(27)   jɛzi=m   wuz dra   niɛŋg=tu
       yesterday=1SG.CL 1SG there sit.PERF
       'Yesterday I sat there.'

5. What if TopP and FocP are both filled? Predict clitic would occur in "third" position, hosted by the focused expression.
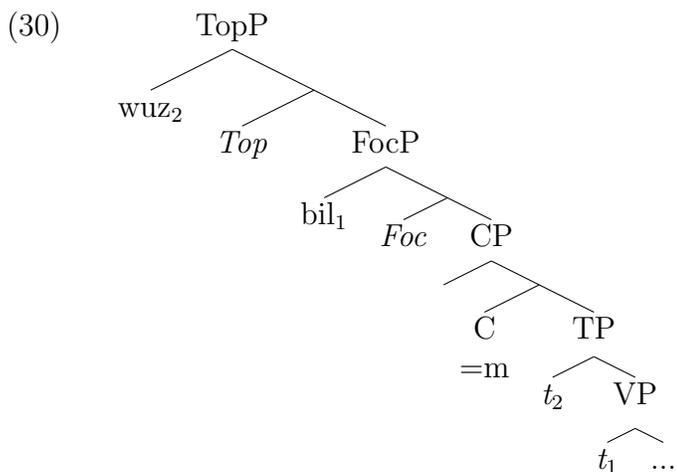
(28)

```
              TopP
             /    \
          jɛzi     \
                /      \
             Top        FocP
                       /    \
                tə çɨ znax    \
                           /      \
                         Foc      CP
                                 /   \
                                C     TP
                               =m    /  \
                                   wuz  ...
```

Accounted for:

(29)　　ar box　　çɨ　　　　　pɨd=əm　　wuz ṣkendovdi
　　　　in forest SELF.GEN foot=1SG 1SG break.PST
　　　　'It was my foot that I broke in the forest'

This structure accounts for the *fronted* focus conditions well. Now we turn to the *in-situ* conditions, which are trickier:
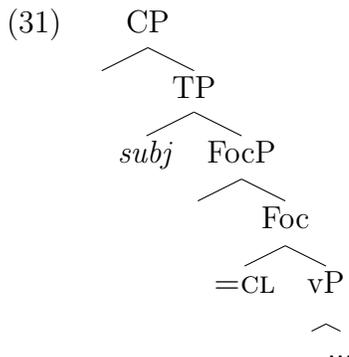
The focused expression is fronted, and everything structurally higher than its trace is also fronted to the TopP(s) (extended from Tomic 1996)

(30)

```
              TopP
             /    \
        wuz_2      \
                /      \
             Top        FocP
                       /    \
                    bil_1    \
                          /      \
                        Foc      CP
                                /   \
                               C     TP
                              =m    /  \
                                  t_2   VP
                                       /  \
                                     t_1  ...
```

Challenge: This gets messy when there are many constituents in the clause. Ex. when the verb hosts the clitic (recall that the language is verb-final), every constituent has to be fronted around it.

4.3 An Alternative

Clitic heads its own Focus projection under TP, focused constituents are probed for and moved into Spec,FocP (proposed for a different dialect of Wakhi by Hughes (2014)):

(31)

```
        CP
       /  \
          TP
         /  \
      subj  FocP
           /   \
           Foc
          /   \
       =CL    vP
              /\
              ...
```

Major differences:

- Clitic placement below TP

    - Advantage: Fits with ellipsis data: clitics do not appear in VP-ellipsis, suggests clitic may be lower than C (Stjepanovic 1998)

    - Disadvantage: Makes incorrect predictions for clitic placement when constituents undero extraction into the left periphery

    - Works nicely when clitic is hosted by subject or object

    - Also struggles with word order issues when non-argument constituents host the clitic

- Clitic in C vs heading its own projection

    - When clitic heads its own projection, it is a focus marker

    - Clitic in C is not a focus marker but is associated with focus because constituents that are focused move into a position from which they can host the clitic

5 Conclusion

- 2P clitics appearing in non-2P position is a focus effect

- More specifically, this is an effect of contrastive focus, independent of new information focus, providing evidence for theories of focus which maintain contrast and new information as separate notions

- Clitic hosted in C accounts well for data with extraction into the left periphery

- Next steps: Further the VP-ellipsis data and try to determine how it fits with the fronting data, in an effort to solidify location of the clitic in the syntax

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