This paper compares the marking of pragmatic roles in Central Somali oral narrative discourse and elicited question-answer pairs to illustrate the claim that information structure must be studied within the context of particular discourse genres. The study of pragmatic roles in Central Somali is especially interesting because clause-level focus is explicitly marked through the particle yaa. The functions of this particle in elicitation question-answer pairs and narrative discourse are compared, and it is shown that elicitation data exhibit only a few of the possible functions of yaa, viz. as a marker of assertive and contrastive focus. In contrast, narrative discourse provides examples of yaa as a marker of both event-clause focus and discourse topic. This result is discussed within the context of discourse coherence and is shown to be not as surprising as it first appears. In addition, narrative focus constructions (defined as the most salient section of new information in a narrative text) are shown to be formally well-defined and functionally important in giving coherence to a narrative, although no counterpart has been found in elicitation data. In conclusion, it is noted that pragmatic roles should be studied in a broad range of discourse genres in addition to elicited question-answer data, since each genre may illustrate different functions of the same constructions.

1. Introduction

By definition, pragmatic roles, e.g. focus and topic, must be studied within a discourse context, since they mark the status of information with respect to the preceding or following text. This necessity is acknowledged in descriptive linguistics through the use of elicited question-answer pairs in which the new information or the choice of topic in the answer is forced by the word-

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1I would like to thank Edward Finegan, Bernard Comrie, Dick Hayward, and Elinor Ochs for helpful discussions and comments on earlier versions of this paper, although none of them would agree with all of the suggested analyses in this version.
ing of the question [Comrie 1981:57]. Even within generative grammar, with its traditional emphasis on the sentence as the maximum syntactic unit of interest, the marking of focus has been discussed in terms of question-answer pairs, e.g. Jackendoff [1972:229ff]. Data of this type, however, exhibit only a small range of the possible functions of pragmatic roles in a given language, since many of these functions occur only within naturally occurring texts.

Some researchers, though, have discussed pragmatic roles within a larger context. For example, Grimes [1975:112-113] distinguishes among three different sets of information in discourse: "content" (the meaning structure—similar to the notion of coherence in other researchers' work), "cohesion" (which includes the marking of old and new information), and "staging" (which expresses the speaker's perspective). Grabe [1983] describes one of the major functions of pragmatic roles as organizing the assertions within a coherent discourse. In this case, the information structure will directly relate to the discourse topic (or theme). The following discussion shows this particular relation to be made explicit in Central Somali narrative, in which discourse topic is marked by the same particle as new information at the clause level.

To this point, I have been using the terms "focus" and "topic" as if they were well defined. This is, in fact, not the case. In general, focus refers to the salience or prominence of information, while topic refers to the general framework of aboutness (see Grabe [1983] for an overview of the range of terminology used with respect to pragmatic roles in discourse). Comrie [1981:56-59] defines focus as the essential piece of new information in a clause and topic as what the clause is about. He further distinguishes contrast from these two notions, noting that both focus and topic can serve contrastive functions. For example, in the following pairs of sentences, Bill functions as the focus of sentence (lb), but as the contrastive topic in sentence

2It is also possible for a discourse to be noncoherent, in the sense that it has no single discourse topic, and yet still have a well-defined information structure.

3Chafe [1976] also distinguishes contrastiveness from new/old information and from topic.
In this paper, I will maintain the three-way distinction of Comrie but will also distinguish between clause-level and discourse-level pragmatic roles as follows:

1. Aboutness:
   a) topic - what the clause is about;
   b) contrastive topic - what the clause is about, in explicit contrast to the topic of an earlier clause;
   c) discourse topic (or theme) - the framework of aboutness of the discourse as a whole or of an episode within a discourse.

2. Prominence:
   a) focus (assertion) - the essential new information in the clause;
   b) contrastive focus (counter-assertion) - information which the speaker substitutes for previously asserted information;
   c) discourse focus - the most salient section of new information in a discourse.

These six pragmatic roles are formally well-defined within, and important in giving coherence to, narrative discourse in Central Somali. Many of them can also be illustrated from elicited question-answer pairs, but it is not possible to elicit examples of either discourse topic or discourse focus. Rather, these constructions crucially depend on the larger framework of naturally occurring discourse. The following discussion will illustrate this point through a detailed analysis of the information structure of the oral narrative text "The woman and the thieves," although supplementary examples from other oral narratives are presented as well. All of the texts used in this paper

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*I am using the term "narrative discourse" in this paper to refer only to uninterrupted monologue which depicts a chronological series of events, i.e. "stories" as opposed to dialogue narrative or personal narrative. The texts*
were narrated by Madowbi Maalim, from Mandera, Kenya. 5

2. Pragmatic Roles in Elicited Question/Answer Pairs

Saeed [1981] has recently described the overall grammatical system of Central Somali. I will provide details of the information system here, but otherwise the reader is referred to Saeed's paper. Throughout the following discussion, all phonetic symbols have their usual value, except for \( j \), which represents the affricate \( \text{[dz]} \); \( D \), \( J \), and \( G \), which are voiced implosive consonants; and the digraph \( \text{sh} \), which is used for \( \text{[Z]} \) (in conformity with the standard Somali orthography).

Standard informant elicitation sessions are crucial for the initial linguistic description of an unknown language. The use of question-answer pairs in such sessions provides considerable insight into the marking of pragmatic roles. One of the more noteworthy features of Central Somali grammar resulting from this type of analysis is the fact that every independent clause contains a focus marker, \( \text{yaa} \). This particle functions to mark the most salient noun phrase in the clause, i.e. normally the constituent which is either asserted as new information or counter-asserted in order to contradict a preceding statement. 6

were narrated to Somalis present at the recording session (who were free to respond to the story telling), rather than to myself or to the tape recorder. The purpose of this methodology was to transfer the focus of the situation from the "collection" itself to the actual story-telling. The narratives recorded were all folk-tales well-known to the story-teller and were told smoothly without major hesitations or false starts. Texts of this type were chosen for analysis because they are known to have very clear structural characteristics. These characteristics evolve through repeated retellings, since oral folktales must respect memory limitations by conforming to an ideal "schema" (see Mandler and Johnson [1977], Grimes [1975:33-34], and de Beau­grande [1980:259]).

Central Somali (also known as Rahaween) is closely related to Standard Somali, although the two are not mutually intelligible. It is spoken by approximately 12,000 people living in the northeast corner of Kenya, as well as by a larger population residing within Somalia. The two language assistants for this paper, Hasan Abdirahman and Mohamed Adan, were both from Mandera, Kenya.

The following references contain descriptions of focus/topic in Standard Somali: Andrzejewski [1975], Gebert [1980], and Hetzron [1965].
Central Somali Narrative

(3) a. aay dilee gool 'who killed a she-lion?'  
   who killed f.-lion
b. lanke yaa gool dilee 'the man(!) killed a she-lion'
   man-the FOC f.-lion killed

(4) a. lanke yaa gool dilee 'the man(!) killed a she-lion'
   man-the FOC f.-lion killed
b. may lanke mas aa dilee 'no, the man killed a snake(!)'
   no  man-the snake FOC killed

As can be seen, yaa marks the immediately preceding constituent as the item in focus, e.g. lanke in (3b) and mas in (4b). Example (4b) also illustrates one of three possible contractions of an NP + yaa sequence, i.e.

(5) ...C + yaa → ...Caa
(6) ...CV + yaa → ...Cii
(7) ...CVV \#CV + yaa → ...CVV \#CV + waa

Another important marker of pragmatic role is word order permutations.
The unmarked word order in Central Somali is SOV, where S is the constituent in focus. When the object is in focus, the expected word order is OVS. Thus, in general the focused constituent is sentence-initial. Exceptions to this generalization serve to mark the topic. That is, a topicalized constituent is in sentence-initial position, preceding the focused constituent, and functions to establish a framework of "aboutness" for the following predication. For example, in the story "The fox, the ticks and the elephant," the ticks slowly suck the fox's blood until she dies (the fox formerly being the owner of the goats), and then we are told that:

(8) erinki shillinaa Dahalli 'the goats, the ticks inherited'
   goats-the ticks-FOC inherited

Due to the OSV word order (object in sentence-initial position, preceding the focused subject), this sentence has the force 'As for the goats, the ticks inherited them.' Thus, this construction marks a return to the goats as the top-

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7See Ochs and Duranti [1979] for a discussion of similar constructions in Italian.
ic, with the following comment describing what happened to them.

Finally, the conjunction +na must be discussed before moving on to the narrative discourse structures. There are three separate conjunctions in Central Somali: iuye which joins two noun phrases together, oo which joins two clauses together, and +na. This last conjunction also joins two clauses together, but it additionally functions to single out the constituent that it is attached to as a contrastive topic. For example, a section in the story "The man and the snake" discusses the probable intentions of the man and then switches to the snake with sentence (9):

(9) maskiina sir aa ngali 'and as for the snake, he decided to cheat'

In this sentence, maski 'the snake' is not old or presupposed information, although it is the topic (marked as such by its sentential position and the particle +na). That is, maski establishes the framework of aboutness for this sentence, and in addition it contrasts with the topic of the immediately preceding sentence (the man). This latter fact is signalled by the suffix +na.

Given this background, we can proceed to the analysis of pragmatic roles in narrative discourse. However, I will return to the discussion of pragmatic roles in elicited data later in the paper.

3. The Functions of yaa in Narrative Discourse

The following sections will give a detailed analysis of the overall episodic structure of, and prominence within, the narrative text "The woman and the thieves." The full text of this story can be found in Appendix I, and all line references will be to this appendix.

Throughout a narrative discourse, clauses can be divided into the two categories "events" and "nonevents" [Grimes 1975:35ff]. Events carry the story line of a narrative, while nonevent clauses provide background or collateral information. In Central Somali, event and nonevent clauses are distinguished in two ways: (1) the verb is always in the past tense in event clauses, while non-

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8My use of "event-clause" here seems quite similar to Labov's [1972] use of the term "narrative-clause".
event clauses, e.g. lines 12 and 25, utilize either past or present tenses, and (2) the particle yaa never occurs in nonevent clauses but must occur in each event clause containing a noun phrase. Thus, a minimal event clause will consist of either a verb with no nominal constituent and therefore no focus marker, e.g. line 16, or a verb together with one or more noun phrases, one of which must be in focus (marked by yaa), e.g. lines 13, 14, 22, 23, etc. Already the function of yaa is seen to be more complex than suggested by the elicitation data, since it crucially distinguishes between event and nonevent clauses as well as marking focus within a clause.

In addition, yaa functions to mark episode boundaries within a narrative. For example, "The woman and the thieves" is divided into two major episodes, both delimited by the construction maddaas a9 'then yaa ' (lines 6 and 21, see Table 1). The first episode, starting in line 6, begins with the woman going back to her own village, then moves on to her meeting the thieves and the thieves' subsequent planning. Then in line 21, the second episode is begun when the thieves actually start to implement their plan, and this entire episode describes only the way in which they carry out the plan. The construction maddaas a9 marks the beginning points of both episodes.

The initial boundaries of embedded episode units are marked by subordinate clause + yaa + event clause constructions. In "The woman and the thieves" (see Table 1 and the Appendix), the first example of this type is found in line 12, which begins the description of the woman's first meeting with the thieves (lines 12-16). The second example, in line 17, begins the description of the thieves' plotting and initial preparation (lines 17-20). The construction maddaas a9 in line 21 initiates an embedded episode (lines 21-23) as well as the second major episode. This minor episode describes the first step in the execution of the thieves' plot. Finally, the subordinate clause-yaa construction in line 24 begins the last minor episode before the discourse focus, in which the thieves take the second step in executing their plan.

In these constructions there is no single nominal constituent given prominence by the yaa. Rather, the entire subordinate clause preceding the yaa is highlighted, and the construction as a whole functions to establish a new setting for the following episode. For example, the setting of episode 12-16
is the woman coming to the place where two thieves are sitting (line 12),
while the setting for episode 17-20 is the two thieves together and the woman
nearly out of sight (line 17). Thus, in this type of construction yaa func-
tions to mark a new discourse topic (or setting).

Some other examples of this type of construction follow. In "The fox, the
ticks and the elephant," the setting for the major story line is presented as:

(10) shillin oo meeli Daraaran yaa too ku roogsido
 ticks which place are together FOC one on let-him-stand
’(when) the ticks are at a place where they are all together, yaa,
he (the elephant) stood on one of them’

This incident initiates all of the following action in the narrative. In "The
man who kept his promise," after a long introduction the main story line be-
gins:

(11) ...iddle hanka hoyidayan yaa lamankii lan ku mid eh yaa
 village-the to they-come-home FOC men-the man of one being FOC
 balankaan ku baihi
 promise-the from went-out
’...as they are (every night) coming to sleep only at the village,
yaa, one of the two men yaa broke his promise’

The following plot centers around the consequences which result from this bro-
ken promise. Finally, in "The boy who did not cheat," we are told that the
boy was sent to school, where he was learning various things, and then:

(12) ...farte Gorooshe baradi yaa aawki Dimidi
 symbols-the writing he-learned FOC father-the died
’...(when) he learned the symbols of writing, yaa, the father died’

This is the setting from which the boy sets out upon his subsequent adventures.
In all of these examples, the event described provides the setting for one of
the major episodes within the narrative.

Thus, the functions of the particle yaa in narrative discourse range
from marking assertive focus within clauses to marking discourse topic. In an
elicitation framework, this result would be unacceptable since focus and topic
are normally considered separate notions. But within the framework of dis-
course coherence, this result is perhaps not as surprising, for yaa can be
considered as consistently marking salient information in the discourse. On the clause level, this consists of nominal constituents which provide new information in event clauses (since nonevent clauses provide background information and therefore are not salient with respect to the overall discourse structure). On a higher discourse level, this consists of episode settings, which provide salient information through establishing a new framework of aboutness for the following discourse.

4. Narrative Discourse Prominence

This section will discuss several methods of marking prominence within a narrative. Just as yaa functions to mark the most salient new information in event clauses, there are grammatical devices which mark parts of a narrative as more salient new information than other parts. These devices include event chains, repetition, and collateral statements. Finally, it will be shown that these devices often combine to mark the narrative focus, or most prominent section, of a narrative.

4.1. Event chains. I have described the form of event clauses above. Normally these clauses occur in a text mixed together with nonevent information (setting, background, etc.). At certain points, however, the event line of a narrative can be brought into prominence through an event chain, i.e. a chain of event clauses (without intervening nonevent clauses), each of which contains a minimum number of nominal constituents (as in lines 18-20). Longer chains are more marked structures and therefore result in greater prominence. For example, in "The fox, the ticks and the elephant," the ticks attacked the elephant while he was sleeping, and then:

(18) kaheey, ka taanDowidi lugaagii yaa Dulke ka Dowi, he-woke-up, he-shook-self, legs-the FOC ground-the on he-beat,
Degaagii yaa "geb geb geb" ku siiyi, "uuuuuu..." yaa erri, ears-the FOC out gave, FOC he said,
(koraa fiiriyyee ogtaa)
up FOC he-was-looking know it

'The (elephant) woke up, he shook himself, he beat his legs on the

---

9This is perhaps similar to the climax in literary terms.
ground, he made his ears go "geb geb geb," he said "uuuu...," (he was looking up, do you know it?)."

This sequence is the focus of the entire narrative, and it is marked as such by length of the event chain.

At other times, there may be little explicit marking of the participants in an event chain. An example of this is in lines 36-44 of "The woman and the thieves." Here, the agent switches from the man (36) to the woman (37), back to the man (40), and back to the woman again (41), with no explicit marking of any of the switches. It is possible to understand the participant orientation through the verb morphology, but this is a marked construction in which all attention is focused on the event line.

4.2. Repetition. It is also possible to bring one particular event in the event line into prominence through repetition. For instance, in "The man who kept his promise," the man hid inside a hyena hole, and then:

(14) lama waraabii ha gelen. lamadii waraaba yaa ha gelen.
    two hyenas-FOC entered. two-the hyenas FOC entered

'Two hyenas entered. The two hyenas entered.'

In this case, the repeated clause is not even part of an event chain, but it is marked through repetition as a prominent event in the narrative (the man learned from the hyenas a secret which later helped him to become successful). A second example, from "The man and the snake," comes after a long introduction describing the good relationship which a man and a snake had established:

(15) maskii iyiye arirkii lanki Dali iyiye maskii yaa isgifen.
    snake-the and boy-the man-the birthed and snake-the FOC fought.
    waa isgifen.
    they fought each other.

'the snake and the boy who the man gave birth to, (and the snake), yaa, fought each other. They fought each other.'

Again, these clauses are not part of an event chain. Rather, in both of these examples, the event is focused upon through repetition because it has a crucial relation to later events in the narrative.

4.3. Collateral statements/rhetorical questions. Collateral statements also
function to focus on a particular event clause in the narrative. Grimes [1975:64-70] classifies all instances of telling what did not happen as collateral information. Collateral clauses are important in Central Somali narrative in that they bring into prominence the immediately following clause, which tells what did happen. For instance, line 19 notes that "they [the thieves] did not follow," but rather they passed a different way. Thus, the listener's attention is focused on the fact that the thieves circled around the woman by the explicit collateral statement that they did not follow her.

Rhetorical questions are a special case of collateral statements [Grimes 1975:68]. In Central Somali narrative, they often seem to bring a whole sequence of events into prominence, rather than one particular event clause. For instance, in "The man who kept his promise," we are told that a second man, who was dishonest, also went into the hyena hole, that he fought with the hyenas in the hole, and then:

\[(16) \text{ lankow ikiye lama waraaba God} Diilis \text{ e}h, \text{ maay taawliyasa } \text{ man-one and two hyenas hole inside being, what do-you-think} \]

'One man and two hyenas inside a hole, what do you think \(\text{will happen})\?'

Then we are told that the man was mutilated by the hyenas. In this way, the event describing the final outcome of this character is emphasized.

There is a special type of rhetorical question used in Central Somali narratives, ogtaa 'do you know it?!', which has a separate function. It is used mainly to raise background information, i.e. explanations or comments about what has happened, to prominence. For instance, in line 25, when the narrator wants to emphasize that the two thieves are the ones that were previously introduced and that they know each other, he uses ogtaa. In other cases, this construction can mark background information which is a type of foreshadowing, i.e. a reference to new information in an event clause before it happens. For instance, in "The man and the snake," a boy was about to go down into a well when the narrator tells us that:

\[(17) \text{ malaksheeyaa ha galee ogtaa }\]

'His angel of death is entering, do you know it?!'

(i.e. the boy is about to die)
Then later, when the boy's father is trying to negotiate with the snake, we are told that:

(18) masklina siraa ngali ogtaa  
    snake-the-and cheating-FOC entered, know it

    'and as for the snake, he decided to cheat; do you know it?!!'

That is, we are to note beforehand that the snake did not intend to honor any agreement.

4.4. Narrative focus constructions. In Central Somali narrative discourse, the discourse focus (or climax) is marked as the section which combines the greatest number of prominence constructions, and therefore it might be defined as the point of greatest prominence (or focus) in the narrative. I will use the term 'narrative focus' to refer to the discourse focus of any episode, and 'climax' to refer to the most marked discourse focus in a narrative.

It seems proper to speak of both well-defined climaxes and more loosely defined climaxes. For instance, the event chain previously discussed in "The fox, the ticks, and the elephant" (see section 4.1) is an example of a moderately well-defined climax. It utilizes only the feature of longest event chain. But since it is the most marked sequence in the discourse, it constitutes the climax.

At other times a narrative will have a narrative focus for each episode in the story, with no overall climax. As shown earlier, episodes are demarcated through the use of either subordinate clause-yaa constructions, or maddaas aa constructions. For instance, "The man who kept his promise" has two narrative focuses, which correspond to the two episodes. The first episode begins with the subordinate clause-yaa construction describing how one man broke his promise (discussed in section 3). We are then told how (as a result of this broken promise) the honest man ended up in a hyena hole, where he learned from the hyenas how to cure a certain rich man who had been sick for many years; and subsequently how he did in fact cure that rich man and win a great reward. This episode ends with the following discourse focus construction:

(19) shinniidii yaa la haa gooyi!, Gurbigii yaa la gowriy!,  
    bees-the FOC were cut, m. camel-the FOC was slaughtered,
Central Somali Narrative

lankii meellii yaa liinke Daawi, fayayada.
man-the place-the FOC was prayed for at, he became well.

'the bee hive was cut, the camel was slaughtered, the man was prayed for at that place, (and) he became well.'

This sequence is marked as a narrative focus construction through the feature of longest event chain.

The second episode begins with the following subordinate clause-yaa construction:

(20) hoobe ... gaalshee hortiis ko odini, gebertun manki
when camels-his in front were fenced, girl-this house-the
nki jerti, walaagun baatirke eh, yaa, kii kala koiyi.
was there inside, this one beautiful being, FOC, the other came.

'When (the honest man was given 100 camels), his camels were fenced in front of his house, this girl was in the house for him, (and she) was very beautiful, yaa, the other one (i.e. the dishonest man) came.'

In this episode, then, the dishonest man learns how the first man became successful, and subsequently he also goes to the hyena hole in the hope of overhearing an equally valuable secret, whereupon he is killed by the hyenas.

This episode ends with the following focus construction:

(21) meellii yaa liki harbiyi. lankow iiye lama waraaba God Datlis
place-the FOC was fought at. man-one and two hyenas hole inside
eh, maay taawiliyaasa? lankii meellii yaa liki Jejabsadi.
being, what do you think? man-the place-the FOC was broken to pieces
lankii meellii yaa liki Jejabsadi.
man-the place-the FOC was broken to pieces

'The place was fought at by them. One man and two hyenas inside a hole, what do you think will happen? The man was mutilated at that place. The man was mutilated at that place!'

The features of an event chain, a rhetorical question, and repetition are combined in this narrative focus.

It can be noted that the narrative focus constructions in both of these episodes occur in episode-final position. In fact, these constructions generally occur in the final position of the discourse unit they are serving as focus for, i.e. either an episode or entire narrative.
Finally, unlike most Central Somali narratives, there is no overall climax or point of focus in "The man who kept his promise." Rather, each of the two episodes has a discourse focus. In narratives of this type, the episodes are simply concatenated, i.e. they are not part of a larger structure which has its own focus. Thus, after the second episode in this story we are merely given an explanation and a moral concerning what happened. There are no further events to serve as a focus for the entire narrative.

In contrast, "The woman and the thieves" consists of two episodes, each of which contains a narrative focus construction, plus a discourse-final climax, which serves as the focus for the entire narrative. The overall structure of this text is outlined in Table 1.

The narrative focus of the first episode occurs when the one thief actually makes all of the necessary preparations for their plan (in lines 18-20). This focus is marked by an event chain and a collateral statement (line 19). The narrative focus of the second episode (lines 27-33) occurs when the second thief actually takes the sheep. It combines a collateral statement (line 27) and repetition (lines 28 and 29) with a well-developed event chain.

These narrative focus constructions occur episode-finally. The climax in lines 36-44 also occurs unit-finally, although the unit in this case is the entire narrative rather than an episode. This climax is the most marked focus construction in the entire discourse, describing the manner in which the first thief completes the execution of the plan. It combines the features of a long event chain, repetition (41-42, 43-44), and a rhetorical question (line 39).

There is one further focus marker in this construction: participant re-orientation. Grimes [1975:262-271] discusses the permutations which can occur between the different case roles assigned to the participants in a narrative. He ranks the case roles on a scale of relative involvement in the action and claims that whenever a permutation moves a participant over several case roles, "...there is a surprise, an interruption, or a point where things go wrong" [1975:266]. The shifts from lines 36 to 37, 38 to 40, and 40 to 41 are all of this type. In each of these permutations, a participant who is totally removed from the action is shifted to the agent case role, thus bringing this entire sequence into even greater prominence.
Table 1. Overall discourse structure of the narrative "The woman and the thieves," showing the episode and paragraph divisions, the location of the subordinate clause-yaa discourse topic constructions, and the marking of discourse focus and climax

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lines 1-5</th>
<th>Initial setting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Line 6</strong></td>
<td>Episode 1: maddaas aa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line 6</td>
<td>Paragraph 1: maddaas aa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line 12</td>
<td>Paragraph 2: Subordinate clause-yaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line 17</td>
<td>Paragraph 3: Subordinate clause-yaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lines 18-20</td>
<td>Discourse focus construction: Event chain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Line 21** | Episode 2: maddaas aa |
| Line 21   | Paragraph 4: maddaas aa |
| Line 24  | Paragraph 5: Subordinate clause-yaa |
| Lines 27-33 | Discourse focus construction: Event chain |
|           |                  | Collateral statement |
|           |                  | Repetition |

| Lines 36-44 | Climax: Most marked event chain |
|             | Repetition |
|             | Rhetorical question |
|             | Participant reorientation |

| Lines 45-47 | Moral |

In summary, this narrative has provided an example of a discourse which is structured as a series of episodes embedded in a narrative with its own discourse focus. Conversely, "The man who kept his promise" illustrates a narrative which consists of a mere concatenation of episodes, with no embedding. There are probably other ways in which a Central Somali narrative can be structured. It seems that in all of them, however, the same prominence markers are employed, and combine together to provide discourse focus constructions.

5. **Comparison of Pragmatic Roles in Elicitation Data and Narrative Discourse**

It is useful at this point to summarize the ways in which pragmatic roles are marked syntactically in Central Somali narrative discourse. Section 2 described the functions of yaa, word order, and +na in marking the corresponding pragmatic roles of focus (new information and counterassertion), top-
Figure 1: Comparison of surface form-pragmatic role pairs in question-response elicitation and narrative discourse

A. Question-response elicitation

B. Narrative discourse
ic, and contrastive topic. These generalizations, however, were shown to hold only for a question-response elicitation framework. Pragmatic roles are marked quite differently in narrative discourse (see Figure 1).

The function of \( \gamma \) is particularly noteworthy. It continues to mark the most salient new information in the clause, with the restriction that it occurs only in event clauses (and is in fact one of the main markers distinguishing between event and nonevent clauses). In addition, subordinate clause-\( \gamma \)-event clause constructions function as boundary markers for episodes within a narrative. In this position, these constructions establish a setting, or framework of aboutness, for the following episode. Thus \( \gamma \), which appears to be strictly a marker of focus in elicitation data, functions as a topic-marker in narrative discourse.

The other noteworthy difference is the existence of discourse focus constructions. By definition, these constructions could not be illustrated in question-response elicitation data, yet they have been shown to be formally well-defined and quite important in providing coherence to narrative discourses.

6. Conclusion

The elicitation method of data collection and analysis has a crucial place in both the initial identification and later analysis of syntactic constructions in previously unstudied languages. With respect to the analysis of pragmatic roles, which is by definition a discourse notion, elicitation data are still important in identifying the relevant constructions and indicating their functions. However, results obtained in an elicitation framework may not have a general applicability. I have shown in this paper that results obtained from elicitation data are not representative of pragmatic roles in naturally occurring narrative discourse. Similarly, it is possible, perhaps likely, that the pragmatic roles identified in Central Somali narrative discourse will not be valid for other genres in the same language. Future research should document pragmatic roles in a broad range of discourse genres in order to provide a fuller picture of their function in Central Somali.
APPENDIX

"The Woman and the Thieves"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line #</th>
<th>Nonevent</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td><strong>inti</strong> ku hor maay Diideey</td>
<td>the time before what happened (was)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>inni islaanto iddiye roogdi</strong></td>
<td>that woman-one village-her stayed at</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td><strong>hartishe maay ke terrey</strong></td>
<td>husband-her what to she said (was)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>[&quot;iddi rear aawkey yaa mbahee&quot;]</strong></td>
<td>[&quot;village-the people father-my FOC to-I-go&quot;]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td><strong>marki ruusGe siiyi yaa</strong></td>
<td>when permission he gave FOC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>bati</strong></td>
<td>she went</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td><strong>haddi bati</strong></td>
<td>when she went</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>maay inseeteey iddi</strong></td>
<td>where to-she got (was) village-the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>reer aawshe</strong></td>
<td>family father-her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td><strong>marki iddi aawshe</strong></td>
<td>when village-the father-her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>hoobe seeti</strong></td>
<td>when she got there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>iddi yaa roogdi mudde</strong></td>
<td>village-the FOC she stayed a period (of)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>lama blood ama sedde blood Don</strong></td>
<td>two months or three months altogether</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td><strong>maddaas aa le erri</strong></td>
<td>then FOC -A was said</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|        | **["maddun wal ki sigootiyee now -A IN you will be escorted.
|        | **iddaa ngalbidaasa "]**                   | village-your to-you will be taken home.                       |
7. ha bati
   B she went

8. maddun iddiye waa haan nagatii
    time-this village-her FOC B-to-returned

9. maay lahaa siiyey eeleenko iiyey
    what -A/B given (was) ram-one and
    teneg Daise eh
    tin ghee being

10. wal ha ka sigootiyi
    -A B IN she was escorted

11. marki sii haan dareeaaq sii jid aad
    while like that B she was walking, road FOC
    haa haitey sii haan dareeaaq
    B she had, like that B she was walking

12. lama lan tuugo oo talaad-daan meel faDiyaa yaa
    two men thieves who are plotting (and) a place sitting FOC
    nkoiti
    to-she came

13. nimankii yaa saaanti
    men-the FOC she greeted

14. idaad aad warsiti
    village FOC she asked about

15. ["arladun xeeli nki jeer" yaa terri
    land-this how -A in are there? FOC she said
    "meel fulaan wal ki jeer"
    place certain -A at there are.
    "ooke ki hoo yid koree" "haa"
    tonight to-go home can-I? yes.

16. mooddi
    she passed

17. hoobe mooddi islaantiba bartiye maaddi yaa
    when she passed woman-the image-her almost gone FOC
    lamaddii lamba erren
    two-the men said

["wariya hibihaw" "hoo" "islaantun hoolashe wedita
    hey you. yeah. woman-this animal-her leading,
    sife iyeena wali nki diirna adina hoolaa ku ke Da?ada
    way she-&) -A NEG/IN reached you-& property M IN you rob,
    weele korteey" "haa weele kora" "see weelaasa" "ku hor
    do can-you? yes do I can. how you do it? in front
koiyee islaante garrunaa madegii Datiiisa Dowee" erri
I come woman-the cane FOC head-the its middle I hit. said
kow "tan iyeede eh ma jertoo" erri "sife ya?ani
one this one being NEG there is. he said way that is
iyeena kii-n-ke kasna hoolana unu kuke Gaadanu ani
she-ä you-NEG-IN knows property-ä we M IN take I
weelee" waa erri "see weelaasooow" "hiinDoole iske
will do. FOC he said how you do it? blind R to-
weelee" waa erri "ul Deeraa Gaaddeee jidke
I make. FOC he said stick long-FOC I will take, road-the
Datiiisaa an fDeedeed adina oo hor koy" yaa erri]
middle-FOC I will sit you-ä in front come. FOC he said

18. talaaden ogtäa
they planned, know it!

19. islaantiba ma dabakanna
woman-the NEG they follow-ä

inte Gaadenna
here they took-ä

hor goobenna
in front they circled-ä

kow aa jidke Datiiis nfaDeedi
one FOC road-the middle in-he sat

20. ulio Deer yaa Gaadad!
stick-one long FOC he took

21. maddaas aa
then FOC

erri lanke
he said man-the

["shangarte weeraasoo eeyu" "anuwu" "adina" "ana hibilee hibileeyuu
sound-the calling who? it's me, you-ä? I so and so
so?oti ahaa iddeey yaa njeedi" "anina lan hinDoole eh ahaa
traveller I am village-my FOC to-going. I-ä man blind I am,
id geedde eh ku Dumeey islaanle ahaa ini i kalmeeto
village shifting M I am lost, Muslim-only I am, that me you help
meel islaan fDeeye i jeeto fadee" "walaalow ana waana
place Muslim are settled me to reach I want. brother-oh I also
ulusaa tenegona wedeey neef i di enna wedeed
am heavy, tin-one-ä I'm carrying, animal sheep also I'm leading,
Central Somali Narrative

see ke weeleen "neefkii ida eh ani kiinjiidee" waa erri how do I do it? animal-the sheep I for you will lead. FOC he said "hinDoo aa beellina maayaa gaalnaa hoogaa ku lahaa eyes FOC I have lost-6 maybe hands strength-FOC in I have.

ada ule inGoboi "hayeh" you stick-the me-for-grab. OK.

22. neefkii yaa nDibti animal-the FOC to-she handed

23. ullii yaa nGobati stick-the FOC of-she took hold

24. waalii la dareeroob dareeroob iridii yaa Data as they were walking and walking, sun-the FOC middle

  nke gaabati maana nDlina yaa for-at became short, NEG-6 did it set (yet), FOC

  lankii kalaa ku hor kooyi man-the other from front came

25. ["nebede" "nebed allaay"] peace. peace (of) God.

  iskasaayana ogtaa lamad lan R-they are knowing, know it!, two-the men

  lakiin iyeede ma kasaasa but she NEG is knowing

26. maay terreey what she said (was)

  ["aaboow meelotun meel ooke unne ke hoiyenna father-oh places-these place tonight we at spend the night

  ama jerti oo id eh islaan meel ku Dowya" "haa" "intee" is there which village Muslim place to close? yes. where?

  "meel fulaan aa la faDiyi" yaa erri] place certain FOC -A they are settled. FOC he said

  lamada lanna is ogyina ogaw two-the men-6 R know, know it!,

  iridina Diidi maddun sun-the-6 fell now

27. kun aileenkii hadegge ma goiynee this one ram-the rope-the NEG cut

28. siibi he removed it

29. madasheeyaa aa ku siibi head-his FOC M he removed (from the rope)
30. erreetaa saaradeey
back-the-FOC he put it on
31. la ba khi
with (it) he went
32. ["hayeh ni kihee aay"]
ok, us let's make go, mother
33. israihen
R they went
34. sidi ndareereyen ndareereyen maay erreey
like that they were walking and walking, what he said was
["abbay galanteey fuuddaa eleenkii inni siibidi yaa elder sister hand-my is light ram-the that it escaped FOC
taawiye fliri" yaa erri]
I think, look! FOC he said
35. hoobe riid ha deeshi eleenkii maleh
when behind she looked, ram-the there was not
["eleenkii meellun Dowaa ha deereey geedun reedsheey ram-the place-this close-FOC B he reached, tree-this behind
inte eh ha deereey fiiri" yaa erri "tenegona wededee" there B he reached, look! FOC he said tin-a-& I'm carrying.
"haa tenegge inti Dig" yaa erri "ani hayee sheen teneg yes, tin-the here put. FOC he said I will have it, bring tin,
galanteey ha ka siin" yaa erri]
hand-my B in put. FOC he said
36. teneggi yaa kor faDeedi
tin-the FOC on top he sat
37. ha roorteey
B she ran
38. eleenkii yaa ha weeddidi
ram-the FOC B she looked for
39. eleen aman Deer erretii le saaradi
a ram time long back-the -A kept on,
inte le ke aragee
where -A at will be seen?
40. baihi
he went
41. ha nagateey
B she came
42. teneggi me yaalaa
tin-the NEG is there
43. ha nagateey
   B she came

44. lankii hanDoolage haayi liye teneggli me yaalan
   man-the blind he was and tin-the NEG are there

45. [maay terreey "insheffi?adoi shar ma ke daaraaso"]
   what she said was do not help people, evil NEG at will touch.

46. ya?ani lankun hoo iyye in kaalmeena
   that is, man-this if she had not helped,
   shar ma aragfanne ogtaa
   evil NEG see-would, know it!

47. taas aa saas hatoi
   that one FOC like that let it be

List of Abbreviations:

- A agentless passive
- B movement towards the speaker
- M movement away from the speaker
- IN instrumental
- NEG negative
- QUES question
- R reciprocal action

English translation of "The Woman and the Thieves"

1. Long ago there was a woman, and she was living at her own village. 2. (One day) she said to her husband, "I will go to visit my father's family." 3. So when he had given her permission, she went. 4. When she went, eventually she arrived at her father's village. 5. When she got there, she stayed for a period of two or three months. 6. Then, someone said, "You will be sent home now." 7. So she went back. 8. At this time, she went back to her own village. 9. What she was given was a ram and a tin of ghee. 10. She was escorted back home with these things [i.e. they were her going-away presents]. 11. While she was walking (she was taking a road back), [and] while she was walking, 12. she came to two men who were thieves, who were sitting at a place and plotting together. 13. She greeted the men. 14. She asked about [her] village. 15. "How are the people settled in this area?"
she asked. "They are at a certain place." "Can I get home tonight?" "Yes."
16. She passed by them. 17. When she had gone, so that her image was almost
out of sight, the two men said to each other, "Hey you." "Yeah." "This woman
who is leading her animal, do you know any way you can steal her belongings
without harming her?" "Yes, I can do it." "How will you do it?" "I will come
from in front of the woman and will club her over the head" said the one.
"That method is not acceptable" said (the other one). "I will show you a way
with which I will steal her property while she doesn't even know who I am" he
said. "How will you do that?" "I will make myself to be blind" he said. "I
will take a long stick and I'll sit in the middle of the road; and you will
(then) come from in front" he said. 18. So they planned—do you know it?!
19. They did not follow the woman. Rather they took another route, and cir-
cled around in front of her, and the one sat in the middle of the road. 20.
He had taken a long stick. 21. Then the man said, "Who is making that sound?"
"Me." "And who are you?" "I am so and so, a traveller going to my own village."
"And I am a blind man, and am lost because my village has shifted away. I am
a Muslim. What I want is for you to help me get to a place where Muslims are
settled." "But brother, I am also burdened, I am carrying a tin and leading a
sheep, so what will I do?" "The sheep I will lead for you" he said. "I may
have lost my eyes, but my arms are still strong. You grab this stick for me."
"ok." 22. She gave the animal to him. 23. She took hold of the stick. 24.
As they walked on and on, and the sun was almost to go down (but it had not set
yet), the other man came from in front of them. 25. "Peace." "God's peace."
The two men know each other, do you know it?! But she is not aware. 26. She
said "Oh father, is there a place around here where we can sleep tonight,
which is a Muslim village and nearby." "Yes." "Where?" "They have settled at
such and such a place" he said. And the two men are knowing each other (know
it!), and the sun fell right then. 27. This one (thief) did not cut the
ram's rope. 28. Rather he removed it. 29. He removed the ram's
head out from [the rope]. 30. He put it [ the ram ] on his back.
31. He went with it. 32. "Ok, let's go mother." 33. So they went together.
34. After they had been walking and walking, what he said was, "Elder sister,
my hand has become light, I think that the ram has slipped out of the rope.
Look!" he said. 35. When she looked behind, there was no ram. "The ram has reached to only that close place, just behind that tree. Go look!" he said. "But I am carrying this tin." "Oh yes, put the tin here" he said. "Bring it, I will keep it by putting my hand on it" he said. 36. So he sat on top of the tin. 37. She ran back. 38. She looked for the ram. 39. A ram which has been carried on somebody's back for a long time, how can it be found? 40. He went. 41. She came back. 42. The tin is not there. 43. She came back. 44. The blind man and the tin are not there. 45. She said, "If you do not help people, no harm will come to you." 46. That is, if she had not helped this man, she would not have been tricked, do you know it?! 47. That one [i.e. this story] let it be like that.
REFERENCES


