

# Locatives and biclausal progressives in Wolof\*

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# Wolof Locatives and Progressives

- Wolof has a special clause type for locative predication and progressive structures:

(1) Locative predication

Ma-**a-ngi** ci biir néeg bi.  
1SG-C<sub>Wh</sub>-LCL in stomach room the.SG  
'I am in the room.'

(2) Progressive

Ma-**a-ngi** di (> maangiy) ñew.  
1SG-C<sub>Wh</sub>-LCL IMPF come  
'I am coming.'

- We discuss the syntax of constructions which contain the element *a-ngi*, most commonly interpreted as a progressive marker.

# Main Claims

- Progressive sentences in Wolof are **biclausal**, with a locative matrix clause and an imperfective infinitival reduced clause with adverbial properties.
- The element *a-ngi* is not a progressive marker, but a bimorphemic element consisting of the A'-complementizer *a* and a locative clitic *ngi*.

# Outline

- 1 Bicausal progressives
- 2 The marker a-ngi
  - The distribution of a-ngi
  - Complementizer (l)a
  - Locative clitic -ngi
- 3 Wolof progressives
  - Evidence
  - Negation
  - Structure of a progressive clause
- 4 Conclusion

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# Locatives and Progressives

- Progressive constructions are often biclausal, consisting of a locative clause with a nominalized clausal complement/adjunct (Comrie 1978; Bybee et al. 1994; Fontanals and Simon 1999; Polinsky and Comrie 2002; Laka 2006; Salanova 2007; Coon 2010).
- In Basque, the same verb can be used in locational clauses and in progressive structures (Laka 2006).

# Locatives and Progressives in Basque

- The verb *egon* 'be' takes a locative PP with a nominalized clause to yield progressive meaning. (Note the ABS subject in (3b).)

## (3) *Basque (Western varieties)*

a. Emakume-a [PP Bilbo-n ] **dago**.

woman-DET.ABS Bilbao-at is

*'The woman is in Bilbao.'*

b. Emakume-a [PP ogi-a ja-te-n ] **dago**.

woman-DET.ABS bread-DET.ABS eat-NML-at is

*'The woman is eating bread.'*

(Laka 2006:182)

# Wolof locatives and progressives

- How Wolof is similar:
  - two predicates in progressive clauses
  - the complement clause has adverbial properties
  
- How Wolof is different:
  - the predicate in the locative clause is not overt
  - the complement clause is not nominalized, but has the form of an infinitival imperfective clause



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# Background

- All finite clauses in Wolof contain an overt C, often said to encode different aspectual or information-structural properties.
- Martinović (2015): syntactically, there are only two clause types, one with verb movement to C, and one with A'-movement to Spec,CP.

(4) Neutral sentence  
 Lekk-**na**-a            ceebujén.  
 eat-C<sub>V</sub>-SCL.1SG ceebujén  
 'I ate ceebujén.'

(5) Wh-question  
 Lan **la-ñu**            lekk?  
 what C<sub>Wh</sub>-SCL.3PL eat  
 'What did they eat?'

## Distribution of *a-ngi*: (1) Progressives

- One of the elements that occupy the complementizer position is *a-ngi*, commonly considered to be progressive marker (e.g. Torrence 2005, 2012), as it occurs in default progressive clauses like (6).

(6) Ma-**a-ngi** di (>maangiy) lekk.  
 1SG-C<sub>Wh</sub>-LCL IMPF eat  
 ‘*I am eating.*’

- Eventive verbs have a default past tense interpretation.
- Adding *di* to any other clause type yields a present/progressive, habitual or future interpretation.
- In *a-ngi* clauses, adding *di* results only in a progressive reading.

## Distribution of a-ngi: (2) Locatives

- *a-ngi* also occurs in verbless locative clauses (7).
- The imperfective marker *di* is impossible.

(7) Tééré b(i)-a-ngi (\*di) ci taabal bi.  
 book the-C<sub>Wh</sub>-LCL (\*IMPF) on table the  
 ‘*The book is on the table.*’

Distribution of *a-ngi*: \*Statives

- (8) \*Ma-a-ngi njool.  
 1SG-C<sub>Wh</sub>-LCL be.tall  
 intended: ‘*I am tall.*’
- (9) \*Ma-a-ngi sonn.  
 1SG-C<sub>Wh</sub>-LCL be.tired  
 intended: ‘*I am tired.*’

- The imperfective *di* can be added to these sentences, in which case they are grammatical and the meaning is *become X*.

(Posture verbs can be used with *a-ngi*. More on that later.)

# *a-ngi* is bimorphemic

We argue that *a-ngi* contains :

- the A'-movement complementizer  $(l)a$
- a locative clitic *ngi* (LCL)

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*a* in *a-ngi* is  $C_{Wh}$

- Only clauses with  $(l)a$  can be extracted out of.
- Clauses with *a-ngi* can be extracted out of.

# A'-extraction in Wolof

- *Wh*-constructions in Wolof contain an obligatory complementizer that exhibits a subject/non-subject asymmetry (Torrence 2005, 2012; Martinović 2013, 2015, 2017):
  - local subject extraction: **a**, otherwise: **la**

# A'-extraction in Wolof

- (L)a is obligatory in any long-distance A'-movement, and occurs in all intermediate C positions (Dunigan 1994).

(10) Demba wax-na-∅ ni lekk-**na**-ñu ceeb.  
 Demba say-C<sub>v</sub>-3SG that eat-C<sub>v</sub>-3PL rice  
*'Demba said that they ate rice.'*

(11) a. Kan<sub>i</sub> **la** Demba wax mu-**a** t<sub>i</sub> lekk ceeb?  
 who C<sub>Wh</sub> Demba say 3SG-C<sub>Wh</sub> eat rice  
*'Who did Demba say ate rice?'*

b. \*Kan<sub>i</sub> **la** Demba wax lekk-**na** t<sub>i</sub> ceeb?  
 what C<sub>Wh</sub> Demba say eat-C<sub>v</sub> rice

(Note: every long-distance subject extraction involves a subject resumptive pronoun in the local Spec,CP.)

*a* in *a-ngi* is  $C_{Wh}$

- When embedded, the subject from sentences with *a-ngi* can be extracted.

(12) Lan **la** Demba wax ni mu-**a**-ngi ci taabal bi?  
 what  $C_{Wh}$  Demba say that 3SG- $C_{wh}$ -LCL on table the.SG  
 ‘*What did Demba say was on the table?*’

# The syntax of *a-ngi* sentences

## *a* in *a-ngi* is the A'-movement complementizer

- Why is A'-movement involved in the formation of the locative clause?
  - short answer: no idea
  - slightly longer answer: copulaless clauses with nominal predicates also involves A'-movement (of the nominal predicate)
  - movement to Spec,CP commonly involves focusing, and for some reason in locative clauses the subject needs to be focused

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## -ngi is a locative clitic

- We propose that *-ngi* is a locative clitic, on a par with similar elements in locative existentials in Romance languages (French *y* 'there', Spanish *-y*, Catalan *hi*; Freeze 1992).

(13) Il **y** a un livre sur le table.  
 EXPL LCL has a book on the table  
*'There is a book on the table.'*

- Locative clitics in existentials in Romance seem to be redundant elements, cooccurring with other locative pronouns or PPs.

## -*ngi* is a locative clitic

- *ngi* occurs immediately to the right of C, where all Wolof pronominal clitics cluster (Russell 2006)
- pronouns and determiners encode proximity in Wolof

- (14) a. Gis-na-a-ko-**fi**.  
 see-C<sub>V</sub>-SCL.1SG-OCL.3SG-LCL.PROX  
*'I saw it here.'*
- b. Gis-na-a-ko-**fa**.  
 see-C<sub>V</sub>-SCL.1SG-OCL.3SG-LCL.DIST  
*'I saw it there.'*



## -*ngi* is a locative clitic

- *ngi* also encodes proximity

- (15) a. Mu-a-**ngi**      fii.  
 s/he-C<sub>Wh</sub>-LCL here  
 ‘*S/He is here.*’
- b. Mu-a-**nga**      faa.  
 s/he-C<sub>Wh</sub>-LCL there  
 ‘*S/He is there.*’

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Two types of sentences with *a-ngi*

- Locative clauses: **subject** + *a-ngi* + **locative adverbial**

(16) Ma-a-ngi      ci biir      néeg bi.  
 1SG-C<sub>Wh</sub>-LCL in stomach room the  
 ‘*I am in the room.*’

- Progressive clauses: **subject** + *a-ngi* + *di* + **verb**

(17) Ma-a-ngi      di (> maangiy) ñew.  
 1SG-C<sub>Wh</sub>-LCL IMPF                      come  
 ‘*I am coming.*’

# Progressives are biclausal

## Our claim:

- Progressive clauses contain two clauses:
  - 1 The locative clause (SBJ-*angi* + null locative predicate)
  - 2 A reduced complement clause: (*di* + verb)

**There are two predicates in progressive clauses: the one in the locative clause, and the one in the complement clause.**

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# Evidence for biclausality: PP adjuncts

- PP verbal modifiers (e.g. ‘in fear’) only follow and never precede the verb

- (18) a. Da-ma                    lekk ci tiitange.  
           do.C<sub>V</sub>-SCL.1SG eat in fear  
           ‘I ATE in fear.’
- b. \*Da-ma                    ci tiitange lekk.  
           do.C<sub>V</sub>-SCL.1SG in fear eat

# Evidence for biclausality: PP adjuncts

- In progressives, the PP either follows the verb or precedes *di*

- (19) a. Ma-a-ngi [ di lekk **ci tiitange** ].  
 1SG-C<sub>Wh</sub>-LCL [ IMPF eat in fear ]  
*'I am eating in fear.'*
- b. Ma-a-ngi **ci tiitange** [ di lekk ].  
 1SG-C<sub>Wh</sub>-LCL in fear [ IMPF eat ]  
*'I am in fear, eating.'*

- ⇒ **When the PP modifier precedes the progressive verb, it modifies a higher verb – the locative predicate.**
- ⇒ **The verb *lekk* is contained in a separate VP.**

## Evidence for a reduced clause: Extraction

- We have seen that embedded locatives can be extracted out of

(20) Lan la Demba wax ni mu-**a**-ngi ci taabal bi?  
 what C<sub>Wh</sub> Demba say that 3SG-C<sub>wh</sub>-LCL on table the.SG  
*‘What did Demba say was on the table?’*

- Progressives can also be extracted out of

(21) Lan la Musaa nee ma-**a**-ngi di (> maangiy) lekk?  
 what C<sub>Wh</sub> Moussa say 1SG-C<sub>Wh</sub>-LCL IMPF eat  
*‘What did Moussa say I am eating?’*



## Not clause chaining: Clitic climbing

- Wolof clitics cluster immediately next to C in all finite clauses.
- In embedded infinitival clauses, there is cliticization and restructuring (Wurmbrand 2001).

(22) Faatu jéem-na- $\emptyset$ -**ko** toggu.  
 Fatou try-C<sub>V</sub>-SCL.3SG-OCL.3SG cook  
*'Fatou tried to cook it.'*

- In progressives, the clitics climb:

(23) Ma-a-**ngi-ko** di (> maangikoy) lekk.  
 1SG-C<sub>Wh</sub>-LCL-OCL.3SG IMPF eat  
*'I am eating it.'*

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# Negation

- Clauses with *a-ngi* cannot be negated.
- Verbless clauses with nominal predicates also cannot contain negation:

- (24) a. Man ndongo la-a.  
 1SG student C-SCL.1SG  
*'I am a student.'*
- b. Man nekk-u(1)- $\emptyset$ -ma ndongo.  
 1SG BE-NEG-C<sub>v</sub>-SCL.1SG student  
*'I am not a student.'*

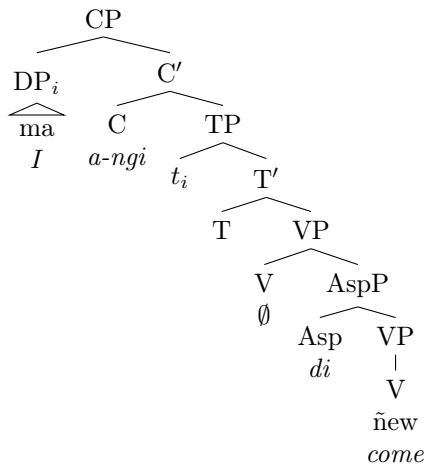


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## Structure of a progressive clause

(26)



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# Conclusion

- The Wolof marker *a-ngi* is a bimorphemic element, consisting of C and a locative clitic, and not a progressive marker.
- Progressive sentences are biclausal constructions, containing locative clauses which take imperfective infinitival complement clauses.
- Further cross-linguistic support for the biclausality of progressive structures.
- Enriches the typology by uncovering variation in the type of adjunct/complement a locative clause can take.



## Future Research: Posture verbs

- *a-ngi* is also found in structures with **posture verbs**.
- They behave like locatives in that the imperfective marker *di* is impossible.

(27) Ma-a-ngi (\*di) toog.  
 1SG-C<sub>Wh</sub>-LCL (\*IMPF) sit  
 ‘*I am sitting.*’

## Posture verbs II

- Progressive sentences can also contain a posture predicate in addition to the infinitival clause, as in (28).

(28) Ma-a-ngi      jaaxaan      di      lekk.  
 1SG-C<sub>Wh</sub>-LCL lay.on.back IMPF eat  
*“I’m laying on my back eating.”*

## Posture verbs III

- It seems like they are **not** an overt realization of the locative predicate, since the PP modifier can precede them and, by hypothesis, modify the null locative verb, see (29).

(29) Ma-a-ngi (ci tiitange) jaaxaan di lekk.  
 1SG-C<sub>Wh</sub>-LCL in fear lay.on.back IMPF eat  
*‘I’m (in fear) laying on my back eating.’*

- Posture verbs seem to be contained in a separate complement clause.

Thank you!

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# Location and Progressive Aspect

- Possible reason for the close relation of progressive and locative constructions (Demirdache and Uribe-Etxebarria (2000)): these types of temporal and spatial relations make reference to *central coincidence*. If temporal and spatial relations are understood as relations between a figure (entity) and a ground (place), central coincidence describes the relation in which a figure *coincides* with the ground.
- Evidence: lots of use of locational expressions to convey progressive meaning (e.g. Spanish *estar* from Latin *stare* 'to stand', other ex.: see....)

- (30) a. Zazie est **en train** de jouer.  
Zazie is in along of play  
'Zazie is playing.'

*French* (Coon 2010:165)

- b. Ik ben het huis **aan** et bouwen.  
I am the house at the build  
'I'm building the house.'

*Dutch* (Demirdache &  
Uribe-Etxebarria 2000:178 via Coon 2010:165)

- c. Mae Rhiannon **yn** cysgu.  
is Rhiannon in sleep  
'Rhiannon is sleeping.'

*Welsh* (Coon 2010:165)

- d. He is **on** hunting.

*Middle English* (Laka 2006:188  
via Coon 2010:165)



# Infinitival structure

- (31) illustrates an imperfective infinitival complement, showing that its structure corresponds to the proposed clausal complement in progressives, in that it also contains the imperfective *di*

(31) Musaa<sub>i</sub> wéy-na-∅ [TP PRO<sub>i</sub> [AspP di [VP lëkk  
 Moussa continue-C-3SG [TP PRO<sub>i</sub> [AspP IMPF [VP eat  
 suukar ]]].  
 sugar ]].  
 ‘*Moussa continues eating sugar.*’