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ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

FUNCTIONAL CATEGORIES IN AFAAN OROMO
A MINIMALIST APPROACH

BY
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July 2006

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE
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Abbreviations, Symbols and Transcriptions

Abbreviations

acc	accusative
adj	adjective
Agr	agreement
Agro	object agreement
Agro'	object agreement bar
AgroP	object agreement phrase
AP	adjective phrase
Agrs	subject agreement
Agrs'	subject agreement bar
AgrsP	subject agreement phrase
aux	auxiliary
CCV	consonant, consonant, vowel
cop	copula
CVV	consonant, vowel, vowel
dat	dative
def	definite
det	determiner
DP	determiner phrase
epe	epenthetic vowel
FocP	focus phrase
Foc'	focus bar
Foc	focus head
foc	focus
f	feminine
gen	genitive
impf	imperfective

inst	instrumental
KATO	Komishiinii aadaa fi Turizimii Oromiyaa
m	masculine
Neg	negative
NegP	negative phrase
nom	nominative
NP	noun phrase
P	preposition
Pf	perfective
PP	prepositional phrase
pl	plural
refp	reflexive pronoun
ref	reflexive
SD	structural description
sgl	singular
sng	singulative
Spec	specifier
SpecTP	specifier of tense phrase
T	tense
T'	tense bar
TP	tense phrase
VCV	vowel, consonant, vowel.
V-feature	verb features
VP	verb phrase
V'	verb bar
V	verb
VVC	vowel, vowel, consonant

Transcription

ä	mid, central vowel
ʔ	voiceless glottal stop
C'	Voiceless palatal ejective stop
i	high central vowel.
j	voiced postalveolar affricative
θ	theta
∅	zero morpheme

Symbols

'	High tone
`	Low tone
*	Ungrammatical structure
→	Changes to /becomes
//	Phonemic transcription
[]	Phonetic transcription
-#	word final
#-	word initial
-#-	word midial

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Abstract

This thesis is on the functional categories of Afaan Oromo based on Chomsky's recent theory (1993) to (1995b), the Minimalist Programme and its subsequent developments. In the thesis an attempt is made to identify different functional categories in Afaan Oromo and show their structures in simple clause structures.

The thesis consists of four chapters. Chapter one deals with a brief introduction to the language and the people. Statement of the problem, objectives of the study, the methodology used and the significance of the study are also included in this chapter. The efforts made so far to study the language and the available records of linguistic information on the language have been discussed. The theoretical framework employed for the study is introduced. The overview of the Minimalist Programme and the difference between the Government-Binding (GB) and Minimalist Programme (MP) Models are presented.

Chapter two is about the functional categories of Afaan Oromo. The major functional categories such as Pronouns, Determiners, Tense, Agreement, Negation, Focus and Modal Auxiliaries have been identified and their realizations are discussed.

Chapter three deals with case. The morphologically realized cases in the language are identified. The different case markers and case forms are presented. The case markers are suffixes such as /-ni/ for nominative case, /-fi/ for dative, /-n/ for instrumental and /-Ø/ for accusative case. In this language, the case markers may appear on both the noun and the adjective which modifies them. Structural case is also discussed. Finally, in chapter four the summary and conclusion are given.

CHAPTER ONE

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Oromia is one of the member states of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. The region is located in the central part of the country with extended zones to the south, southwest, west, and east of the country.

Oromia shares borderlines with the regional states of Somali, Afar, Amhara, Benishangul Gumuz, Gambella, and the regional state of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples. Harari, which currently serves as the administrative seat of east Hararghe zone of Oromia, the Dire Dawa Council and the Addis Ababa City Government, are also located within Oromia. The region also shares borderlines with Kenya and the republic of Sudan.

According to the 1994 Ethiopian Population and Housing Census of the federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, the total number of Afaan Oromo speakers in Ethiopia is 17,080,318, which accounts for 32.18% of the whole population of the country. The language is spoken on the vast area of the country, from the Tigray region to the Tana river in central Kenya (Aguilar 1998:1), from the western border of Ethiopia to the far east of the country to the area between the western highlands of Ethiopia to the Blue Nile in the north, Gojeb in the south and in the large part of Shoa, (Kebede 2005, Baye 1986).

Afaan Oromo, which means literally mouth of Oromo 'Oromo language', is known to non-Oromos and some Oromos as 'Oromiffa' or 'Oromigna'. For the native speakers, Afaan Oromo is the proper designation by which the language is known. Thus one says, 'I am speaker of Afaan Oromo,' instead of a speaker of 'Oromo' not to cause confusion with the name of the people¹.

Afaan Oromo is also spoken outside Ethiopia in two neighboring countries, Kenya and Somalia (Aguilar 1998:1). Kebede (2005) refers to Stroomer (1987) and notes that the

number of speakers in Kenya is about 150,000. Regarding the number of Oromos in Somalia however, it has not been identified yet. (Wako, 1981).

The geographical boundaries and the number of dialects spoken in Ethiopia have not been determined. (Cerulli 1922, Gragg 1976). The number of dialects identified by these and others at different times varies and the dialects considered during the analysis by scholars did not cover all areas where the language is spoken within Ethiopia. Cerulli (1917) divided the dialects of Afaan Oromo into three: on other hand Taha (1990) quoting Stroomer (1987) and divided them into seven, while Bender, Mulugeta and Lloyd (1976) divided into four. In Wako (1981) and Baye (1986) are cited the following five dialects, which are similar to what is generally believed about the number of Afaan Oromo dialects. Though in Wako (1981) and Baye (1986) the numbers of dialects identified are five, there is a slight difference between the two.

The five dialects are:

1. Mecha-spoken in western Ethiopia.
2. Tulama- spoken in central Ethiopia
3. K'ottu (The eastern dialect) - spoken in eastern Ethiopia.
4. Rayya (Northern dialect)- spoken in northern Ethiopia
5. Boorana – spoken in southern Ethiopia.

Concerning Afaan Oromo dialects spoken in Kenya, Baye (1986) refers to Stroomer (1987) and identifies the following:

1. Gabra
1. Boorana (also spoken in Ethiopia)
2. Sakuye
3. Garreh
4. Ajuran
5. Orma
6. Munyo
7. Watta

Afaan Oromo is currently used as the official language of the national regional state of Oromia with the modified Latin script called 'k'ubee' used for its orthography. The region is practicing the implementation of vernacular education in which Afaan Oromo is the medium of instruction in elementary schools, regional colleges and as school subject starting from grade one. Furthermore it is used in mass media (press and audio).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Eventhough it is believed that Afaan Oromo is spoken across a wide area by numerous speakers, scientific studies made on the language are not satisfactory. For example, the functional categories of Afaan Oromo have not been examined according to recent theoretical developments such as the Minimalist Programme (MP). So, in this thesis the major functional categories found in Afaan Oromo morphosyntax will be discussed from MP points of view.

1.3 Objectives

I attempt to apply Chomsky's recent theory (1993, 1995, 1995b) to functional categories of Afaan Oromo. The researches so far do not apply the Minimalist Programme on functional categories of Afaan Oromo. The attempts made to study functional categories of Afaan Oromo explicitly are less in comparison with the grammatical categories of the language.

1.3.1 General Objectives

The thesis has two general objectives:

1. To identify the functional categories found in simple clauses of Afaan Oromo, and state how they are realized morphologically and how they behave syntactically.
2. To examine the various constituent structures in which they occur.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the thesis are:

1. To describe the formal properties of functional categories.
2. To show the hierarchical order of the projections of the functional categories in simple clauses of the language.

1.4 Significance of the Study

It is the researcher's hope that this study will have the following contributions:

1. Since functional categories in Afaan Oromo have not been studied in detail so far, this research will contribute to the knowledge of the syntax of functional categories of Afaan Oromo in particular and of Cushitic languages in general.
2. The findings of the study may serve as source material for further studies.
3. Although the thesis is coached in relevant theories of grammar, it provides detailed description about the facts.

1.5 Scope of the Study

This thesis is limited in two ways:

1. It is limited to morphosyntax, particularly to the behaviour of functional categories in Afaan Oromo.
2. Because of constraints of time and budget the database is limited to the Tulama dialect.

Eventhough the thesis is based on the Tulama dialect it is hoped that the findings might be applicable to other dialects.

1.6 The Methodology

The methodology used in this thesis is a thorough examination and analysis of data. Data are consulted from previous literatures that have been produced by different scholars at different times on Afaan Oromo. Since the researcher himself is a native speaker of the Tulema dialect of the language, he himself is a source for the data. The description and analysis of the data is based on the researcher's knowledge of the language. Informants whose first language is Afaan Oromo and the Tulama dialect are consulted for checking data.

1.7. Review of Related Literatures

1.7.1. The Previous Studies

The linguistic information about Afaan Oromo goes back to the nineteenth century European travelers. According to Gragg (1976), collecting Afaan Oromo words began with Salt (1814), continued with Beke (1844), and was followed by numerous coastal explorers. During his travels in Ethiopia Salt collected Afaan Oromo words, which numbered about 130 with their English equivalences, included in his book published in 1814.

It was in the mid nineteenth century that the first dictionary in Afaan Oromo-English-German by Karl Tutschek (1844) was published, followed by the grammar (1845) in which detailed information was provided. The European travelers collected word lists, compiled dictionaries, prepared grammar books, and produced different materials about the language.

On the basis of their contents and purposes, Baye (1986) classified these works on the language into three types. These are:

- word lists and/or dictionaries
- pedagogical grammars, and
- descriptive sketches.

The European travelers and other foreigners have produced valuable materials and contributed reliable information to the study of Afaan Oromo. The purposes of these travelers and other foreigners were to facilitate communication in order that others might easily learn the language and use it. As stated in Baye (1986), their purpose was utilitarian. However, there were some, which were written for commercial purposes, as well.

We can categorize those who produced different literatures and contributed to the development of the language into two groups: these are missionaries and secular scholars, and travelers.

The missionary activities among the Oromo were led by the church missionary society in 1830. (Gragg 1976:167). The notable pioneer was John Ludwing Krapf who devoted great attention to Afaan Oromo and studied it in Showa and translated the Gospel of St. John in 1839.

Onesimus Nesib who is one of the great figures in the study of Afaan Oromo was Oromo himself born in Illubabor. He worked for Twenty years devising a writing system, translating the New Testament (1893), preparing *an Oromo Reader* (1894) and some other religious literatures and finally translating the whole Holy Bible (1899). He also prepared an *Oromo- Swedish dictionary*, (Gragg 1976, Tarfassa 1973). A further fruit of Onesimus's work is the grammar published in 1947 by his student, the missionary Martin Nordfeldt.

The overall objective of the missionaries was to use the language for ritual purposes and to propagate their religion among Oromos. The secular scholars and travelers' activities, which assist in adding reliable information for the foundation of the knowledge of Afaan Oromo, increased from time to time. The major published works include:

- Karl Tutschek(1844),*The dictionary of Galla*
- Franz Praetorius (1890) published an Oromo fable from material left by Karl Tutschek, and went on to write a grammar (1893).
- Onesimus (1894) *An Oromo Reader*
- E.C. Foot (1913) published Afaan Oromo- English dictionary.
- Cerulli (1922) the best and most varied collection of Oromo folk literature.
- The grammar of Hodson and Walker (1922) comes off much better from the point of view of phonological representation; their aim was to supply a practical aid for the individual who needs to communicate in Afaan Oromo.
- Moreno (1939) published a reference grammar of Oromo.
- J. Landhardt (1973) wrote Oromo pedagogical grammar based on the Wellega dialect

After World War II, publications on Afaan Oromo increased in numbers and types. In Gragg (1976) it was discussed that the most important work on Afaan Oromo include that of B.W. Andrzejewski on the Boorena dialect. Andrzejewski (1957) made general remarks on phonology and on tone in (1966). In addition, E.J. Webster (1960) published a study on certain prefixes and particles of Boorena. The missionaries, travelers and others who contributed to Afaan Oromo were:

- Most of them not professional linguists.
- The approaches were traditional and their purposes were different as stated in Baye (1986).
- The studies did not focus on specific aspects of the language, rather it was general .
- The main efforts were on collecting vocabularies (words), preparing grammar books, dictionaries, and short texts about the language and the people.

In the recent past other works which have been produced by Ethiopians on Afaan Oromo and which have valuable contributions to the studies of the language that are worth mentioning here are B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. theses by students of Addis Ababa University.

We have mentioned that most of the studies made so far have not been on functional categories of Afaan Oromo. There are few which have dealt with some aspects of grammatical categories. So, it is worth discussing some of the theses, which examined the syntax of Afaan Oromo.

- Baye Yimam (1981) describes Oromo nouns and adjectives from the point of view of their formal and distributional characteristics.
- Eshetu Kebede (1981) is an attempt to analyse 'The verb to be' in Oromo. In his paper the copular /d'a/ with its different allomorphic shapes in copular expressions in simple declarative present tense of Afaan Oromo sentences are discussed.
- Kebede Hordofa (1981) is a study about processes of nominalization in Afaan Oromo. He shows how affixes are attached to different word classes.
- Abera Nefa (1982) is about verb inflections in Afaan Oromo. Some root verbs, derived verbs and their inflectional affixes are examined.
- Baye Yimam (1986), *The phrase structure of Ethiopian Oromo*, is a major work on Oromo syntax to date. Though its attempt is to explore the phrase system of Afaan Oromo, it has considered the agreement system of the language.
- Taha Yassin (1990), attempts to show the different mechanisms in which focus functions are realized in the language. It describes the system of focus according to Dik (1978) theory on the functional nature of language. The study examines types, scopes, functions and distributions of focus elements in Afaan Oromo.
- Temesgen Nagassa (1993) attempts to describe Oromo word formation rules such as derivation and compounding. In the derivation process he has

shown how adding affixes to bases of lexical categories and compounding. He has also shown the gaps found in the combination of different lexical categories.

- Abebe Keno (2002) is based on Chomsky's case theory (1981a, 1982, 1986a), and its subsequent developments. Different cases and case markers are identified and directionality of case assignment has been discussed.

In general, European travelers, missionaries, other foreigners and the students of the Addis Ababa University have made contribution to the scientific study of the language. They also help as source materials for those who want to study the language for different purposes .

1.7.2. The Present Study

This thesis is based on Chomsky's recent theory (1993, 1995 and 1995b) the Minimalist Programme and subsequent developments. The attempt is to apply this theory to the functional categories of Afaan Oromo. We have shown that most studies on Afaan Oromo are traditional dealing with general aspects of the language. There have not works on such aspects of the language as functional categories and their behaviour in syntax. The present study attempts to examine such categories of the language in various constituent structures in light of the Minimalist Programme.

1.8. Theoretical Framework

Under this subsection the overview of Chomsky's recent work on the Minimalist Programme will be discussed. I start by examining the reasons why the Minimalist Programme (MP) has developed and an overall outline of how it works. The difference between the Minimalist Programme and Government- Binding Theory (GB) is also included. Finally, some structure-building processes and constraints are discussed with examples drawn from Afaan Oromo and English.

1.8.1. Overview of the Minimalist Programme

Minimalist Programme is a result of an on-going process of studying of syntactic structures of languages. Siloni (1997:10) described the Minimalist Programme as follows: *'the Minimalist Programme is a research design (not a worked out theory), which assumes Minimalism, or simplicity, as a central criterion.'*

The overall aim of the Minimalist Programme continues through the tradition of making statements about human language simple and general as possible. It is also discussed in Radford (1997a: 515) that Minimalism /Minimalist Programme is a theory of grammar (outlined in Chomsky 1995) whose assumption is that grammars should be described in terms of a minimal set of theoretical and descriptive apparatus necessary.

The different periods in Chomskyan approach about language have resulted in major shifts in syntax. Since 1957, *Syntactic Structures*, Chomsky continued research on the field, which enabled him to move from specific grammatical rules to simple general principles. The major works, which have proved the dynamicity of syntax, are:

- Chomsky (1957) *Syntactic Structure*, which appeared with the earliest approach of Transformational Grammar (TG) argues for a separation between phrase structure rules that generate basic structures and transformations, which alter these in various ways.
- Chomsky (1965) *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* was introduced, which later came to be called the *Standard Theory*. The theory differed from TG in making use of levels of Deep and Surface Structures of sentences, related by transformations.
- In the 1970's the *Standard Model of TG* came to be known as *Extended Standard Theory of Transformational Grammar (EST)*, later called the *Revised Extended Standard Theory (REST)*. The Standard Theory in turn led to the Government-Binding (GB) Model (Chomsky, 1981). Some

aspects of this model have since been modified, primarily in *Barriers* (Chomsky, 1986).

- Chomsky's writings such as Chomsky (1993) and Chomsky (1995) put together major revisions of the theory, known as the Minimalist Programme (MP). His (1993, 1995b) works on the Minimalist Programme are the latest and show a major shift in the field of syntax.

Cook and Newson (1996:312) stated that *'despite its radically different analysis, the Minimalist Programme is a progression rather than a complete u-turn.'*

As has already been mentioned at the beginning of this sub-section, MT is not a complete theory yet. From the researches so far one can infer that MT might not be final, because linguists are still continuing the research on different languages.

Siloni (1997:11) has stressed the need for continuing research on MT by saying, *'ongoing research in the Minimalist Program has already gone through somewhat distinct stages. The newly developed linguistic mechanisms are constantly subject to investigation and reconsideration.'*

There were two motivations for the move from GB to MT, as stated in Authier and Reed (1999:51-52).

Primarily the move was due to Chomsky's desire to 'Minimize' that is, capture the greatest possible number of cross-linguistic generalizations to the fewest number of syntactic rules. The second is due to results in the fields of Psycholinguistics, Computer Science, and Semantics, which showed that a move in this direction is highly desirable: i.e. work in these areas strongly supports a desire to 'Minimize'.

In the move from GB to MT, concepts such as *Full Interpretation and Economy of Representation* were drawn from Chomsky's works. The Principle of Full Interpretation claims that there are redundant elements in a structure of a sentence. Each element plays

some role, whether semantic, syntactic or phonological and must be interpreted in some way, (Cook and Newson 1996:312).

In GB the linguistic system has two external interface levels. These are the levels of semantic and phonetic interpretations, LF and PF. It has an internal level that represents basic lexical information (D-Structure). These three levels connected by a single level of representation (S-structure), (Chomsky 1995, Cook and Newson 1996, Authier and Reed 1999).

MT eliminates D-Structure and S-Structure and uses the remaining syntactic levels of representation that is LF and PF. The Minimalist design is represented in the following diagram. (Cook and Newson 1996:314).

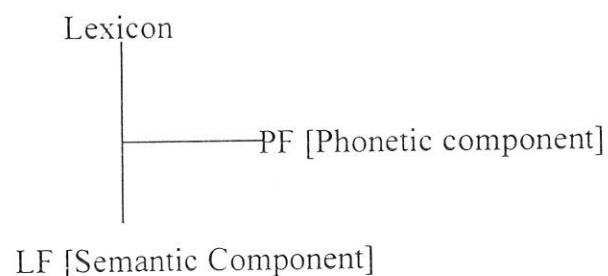


Diagram 1: Representation of Chomsky's Minimalist Theory (MT) of Syntactic System

In the diagram the lines represent the computation that forms the LF and PF by drawing items from the lexicon.

In Chomsky's Minimalist Theory (MT) the syntactic system (also known as the computational system) consists of seven mechanisms:

- Merge
- Move
- The Extension Conditions
- A set of new Economy Principles
- Spell-Out

- Feature Checking
- The reformulated version of Theta Theory

Merge and Move are structure building processes in MT. Merge is a general syntactic procedure whereby two independent syntactic categories combine (Merge) to form a new complex. In this process, the head of the category that projects becomes the label of the complex. This building process involves partly, building individual trees for lexical items and then combining them at some point to larger trees. It is stated in (Cook and Newson 1996:323) that how and when items are combined have repercussions on the eventual SD formed; hence the process is ultimately constrained by a convergence requirement at the interface levels².

Move is the second of the structure building processes. It has the effect of raising a category that has already been merged to a target phrase marker, and merges it with the target to form a new complex category. The process leaves a silent copy of the raised element (trace) in the structural position it occupied before movement.

According to Chomsky (1995b: 401), movements are constrained by a Minimal link condition that only accepts movement into the nearest relevant position: '*α must make the shortest move*'. 'Procrastinate' and 'Greed' are two major constraints in the move operation. The former delays movement for as long as possible while the latter allows movement of an element only if it satisfies some property of the moved element. Movement cannot be made to satisfy the properties of an element that becomes related to the moved element by the movement process: '*Move raises to a position β only if morphological properties of α itself would not otherwise be satisfied in the derivation*' (Chomsky 1995:400).

The structure-building processes are triggered and constrained by the *economy condition*, *extension condition*, *feature checking*, and *θ-roles*.

In GB theory, a sentence is judged syntactically well formed if it obeys all syntactic rules (sub-theories) that apply at each level of representation while in MT well-formedness is determined by features at PF or LF which have to obey the principle of Full Interpretation. (Autheir and Reed 1999:59-60).

- *The principle of Full Interpretation (FI)*

PF and LF can only contain information, which the system they interface with can recognize. According to this principle, certain types of features cannot be fed to the PF. This is because the *Articulatory-Perceptual (A-P)* or the *Conceptual-Intentional (C-I)* Systems with which they interface cannot 'read' or interpret such information.

- *The Extension condition*

Structure creating applications of Merge and Move can only target nodes not already dominated by another node. The condition states that syntactic derivations must always proceed 'bottom-up' from the smallest syntactic units to the largest.

- *Lexicon*

The types of categories that may undergo Merge and Move are determined, to a significant extent, by the C-selection and S-selection properties of lexical items, which the categories dominate.

- *Featuring Checking*

This takes place whenever an item bearing a feature moves into the 'checking domain' of a head bearing a matching feature. The 'Checking domain' of a head is its Spec position adjoined to the maximal projection of the head.

Cook and Newson (1996:325) refer Chomsky (1993:32) and state that movement operations are driven by morphological necessity that certain features must be checked in the checking domain of the head, or the derivation will crash. For example, to check the features of a verb, the verb will have to move to Agr and T but not the latter to the verb. It is also stated in Autheir and Reed (1999:60) that in MT the thematic subject of a sentence

moves from the spec VP to I' in order to check its strong nominative case feature in the checking domain of the inflectional head. It is also stated that objects in English undergo covert movement for the same checking purposes.

1.8.2. The Difference between GB and MT

The MT shows a radical departure from the previous assumptions held in the generative framework. Authier and Reed (1999:54) have identified the following points as the differences between MT and GB.

MT differs from GB in that, MT:

- Makes use of two fewer levels of representation
- Assumes that these two remaining levels are the interface levels LF and PF. There is no D-structure as a level of representation since the process of building structure is done by generalized transformations in MP.
- Makes use of a purely derivational approach to structure building.
- Emphasizes the role of formal-morphological features of the lexicon in the structure building process.
- Introduces a novel set of general constraints on structure-building known as the 'Economy conditions.'
- Eliminates most of the sub-theories and alters the role played by the remaining ones, PF & LF.
- No longer assumes that effect the affixation of inflectional morphemes is affected by syntactic processes.

CHAPTER TWO

2. Functional Categories in Afaan Oromo

A principled description of the grammar of any language requires us to recognize that all words in a language belong to a restricted set of grammatical categories, (Radford 1997b:29). It is also discussed in Fukui (2001) that the feature analysis of syntactic categories are defined in terms of the two primitive features ($\pm N$) (substantive) and ($\pm V$) (predicative)³. Based on these features, it is generally recognized that there are two types of categories, lexical and functional. Words which belong to lexical categories are said to be contentives (content words) or open class items because they have idiosyncratic descriptive content. Languages also have functional categories or functors, i.e. words which carry information about the grammatical function of particular types of expression within a sentence.

Radford (1997a: 45) puts words into lexical and functional categories, which include nouns, verbs, adjectives, and prepositions, classified under lexical categories, because they have lexical (descriptive content) whereas particles, auxiliaries, determiners, pronouns, and complementizers fall under functional categories, because they have essentially grammatical functions. The basic idea of functional categories is that certain kinds of grammatical information must also be categorially projected into syntax.

According to Roberts (1997:16-17), functional elements are often phonologically 'weak'. It appears that they have syntactic properties and defective semantic properties. In light of these classifications, let us see the major functional categories in Afaan Oromo.

2.1. Pronouns

Pronoun is traditionally defined as a word used in place of a noun expression. In a sentence a pronoun can be used replacing a noun to avoid repeating the noun. Pronouns differ from nouns in that they have no intrinsic descriptive content and so are functors. (Radford 1997a:525).

2.1.1. Personal Pronouns

The most familiar kind of pronouns are personal pronouns. According to Radford (1997a: 48) pronouns like I/me, we/us, you, he/him, she/her, it, they/them, are called personal pronouns not because they denote people, but rather they encode the grammatical property of person.

In Afaan Oromo personal pronouns differ morphologically from nouns. They inflect for case, gender, person and number.

1 (a) inni/*isa išii/*išiin jaalat-e
 ‘he-nom/he-acc she-acc/she-nom love-pf
 ‘He loved her’

(b) ani *ana sihi *ati arg-e
 I-nom I-acc you-acc/you-nom see-pf
 ‘I saw you’

The pronouns in (1a) *inni* and *išiin* and in (1b) *ani* and *ati* are in nominative case forms. Their positions in sentences are the subject position, and *isa* which is the base form, is in accusative case. The third person, singular, masculine nominative form is *inni*. In the same way *išii* the accusative case forms is in object position. Consider the following table.

<u>Person</u>	<u>Base Form</u>	<u>Nominative</u>	<u>Accusative</u>	<u>Possessive</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
Sgl 1m f	ana	ani	ana	(kan)koo	‘I’
2m/f	sihi	ati	sihi	(kan)kee	‘you’
3m	isa	inni	isa	kan isaa	‘he’
3f	išii	išiin	išii	kan išii	‘she’
Pl 1m f	nu?u	nu?i	nu?u	(kan) keeñña	‘we’
2m f	isin	isini	isin	(kan)keessan	‘you’
3m f	isaan	isaani	isaan	kan isaanii	‘they’

Table 1: Personal Pronouns

Personal pronouns lack descriptive content: for example a personal pronoun denotes not a specific type of entity but one whose reference is determined from the linguistic or non-linguistic context, as stated in Radford (1997a), which means that they are like demonstratives.

Nominative forms like *inni/išiin* require the grammatical subject position and their accusative counterparts *ana isa* require the object position. In possessive pronouns *kan* which means 'of' is optionally used to denote the possessor, in first and second person, masculine and feminine singular and plural. Since personal pronouns encode purely grammatical properties, it is reasonable to suppose that they are functors too.

2.1.2 Demonstrative Pronouns

The most commonly used demonstrative pronouns in Afaan Oromo are shown in table (2).

<u>Demonstrative Pronoun</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>case</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
kana	m	acc	'this'
tana	f	"	"
sani sana	f/m	"	'that'
kun i	m	nom	'this'
tuni	f	"	"
sun i	f/m	"	'that'
kunniin	m	"	'these'
kanniin	"	acc	'those'
tunniin	f	nom	'these'
tanniin	"	acc	'those'
sunniin	f/m	nom	"
sanniin	" "	"	"

Table 2: Demonstrative pronouns in Afaan Oromo

Demonstrative pronouns are one of the sets of determiners in Afaan Oromo that occur to the right of the head word which they specify. In other words, they appear following the head word. For example, *kana* 'this' denotes masculine, third person singular, and accusative case, and *tana* which is its counterpart denotes feminine, third person, singular, and accusative. In Afaan Oromo, gender distinction is made by /k-/ for masculine and /t-/ for feminine. Thus, in table (2) (above) the demonstrative pronouns which denote masculine begins with /k-/ and feminine demonstrative pronouns of feminine reference begin with /t-/.

In this language, adjectives can appear between the head word and the demonstrative pronouns as in the following examples.

2 (a) mana guddaa kana
house big this
'This big house'

(b) man-ni guddaa-n suni
house-nom big-nom that-nom
'That big house'

(c) kun-nii-n d'e-d'eera-n barat-oot-a
this-pl-nom pl-tall-nom student-pl-impf
'These are tall students'

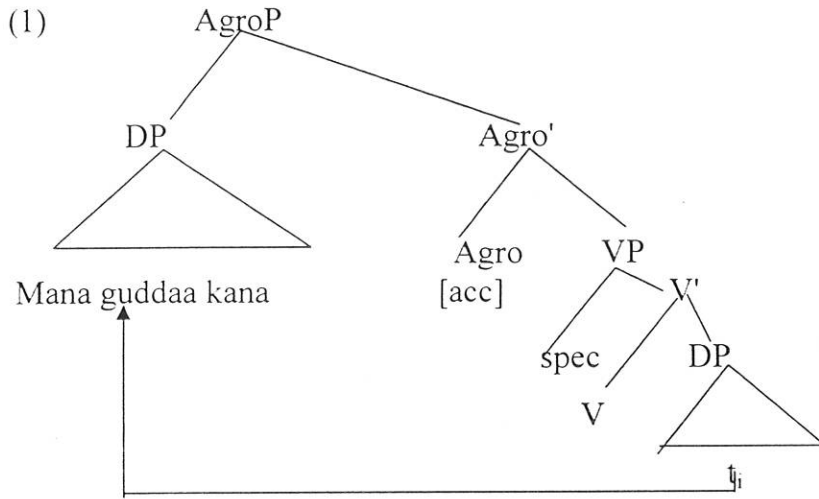
(d) kuni d'eera-ni barataa-d'a
this tall-nom student-is
'This tall is a student.'

The adjectives *guddaa* in (2a), *guddaan* in (2b), and *d'ed'eeraan* in (2c) occur after the head nouns *mana* in (2a), *manni* in (2b), and *barattoota* in (2c) and before the demonstrative pronouns *kana* in (2a), *suni* in (2b), and *kunniin* in (2c) respectively.

The positions of the demonstratives vary depending on their grammatical functions. They can occur before the head or after the adjectives.

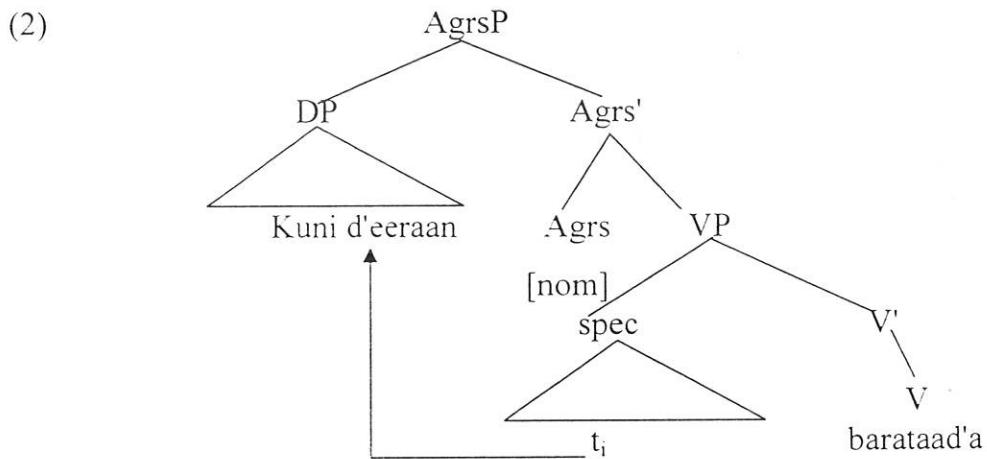


The structure of cf. (2a) *mana guddaa kana* may be represented in the following way.



When the demonstrative pronouns are placed in the subject position and function as nominative subject the structure may be as follows.

Cf. (2d) $[_{DP}[_{D}[kuni] [_{AP}[_{A}[d'eeraan]]]] [_{VP}[_{NP}[_{N}[barataad'a]]]]$
 'This tall is a student'



2.1.3. Interrogative Pronouns

Interrogative pronouns refer to persons or things about which questions are asked. The following are the common forms in Afaan Oromo.

- (3) (a) *maal-tu ñaat-e*
 what-foc eat-pf
 'It is what that he did eat'
- (b) *maal jed'-e*
 what say-pf
 'What did he say'
- (c) *maal-iif deem-t-a*
 what-for go-2sgl-impf
 'Why do you go'
- (d) *maal-iin deem-t-a*
 what -inst go-2sgl -impf
 'By what do you go'
- (e) *eeññu-tu d'uf-e*
 who -foc come-pf
 'who did come'
- (f) *eeññuu kan duf-e*
 who that come-pf
 'Who is that which came?'
- (g) *man-ni kee kami*
 house-nom your which
 'which one is your house?'

As we can see from the above examples, interrogative pronouns suffix different grammatical functions such as focus, case (nominative, instrumental and dative), etc. The interrogative pronoun *maal* is in its neutral form in (3b). It occurs with the focus marker *-tu* in (3a), *-iin* in (3d), and *-iif* in (3c). *-iin* and *-iif* are instrumental and benefactive case post-positions.

The interrogative pronouns *eññuu* and *kami* suffix different grammatical elements in the same way to express questions about different people and things.

2.1.4. Reciprocal Pronouns

KATO (1996:275) citing Catherine (2001:34) states that reciprocal pronouns occur in different case forms with a large number of reciprocal verbs.

wal- is the reciprocal marker which indicates an action done to one another by two or more persons or things. Consider the following examples.

- 4 (a) *isaani wal jaalat-u*
they-nom one another love -pl impf
'They love each other'
- (b) *isaani wal hin jaalat-an*
they-nom each other neg-love -impf
'They do not love each other'
- (c) *isaani oduu wal-i-tti him-u*
they-nom news each other-epe tell-pl/impf
'They tell news to each other.'
- (d) *isaani wal-iin boon-u*
they-nom each other -inst proud -impf
'They proud of each other'
- (e) *isaani wal-iif birmat-u*
they-nom each other-for help-impf
'They help each other in the case of emergency.'

wal- appears preceding verbs, i.e. is a post verbal. When it is used with preposition it occurs before the preposition. Consider the following examples.

- 5 (a) nu?i wal bira teeññ-a
 we-nom one another near sit-impf
 'We sit near each other.'
- (b) inni d'agaa wal -irra tuul-e
 he-nom stone one other-on put-pf
 'He puts stones on each other.'
- (c) man-ni isaan-i wal -cinaa -d'a.
 house -nom they-poss one another- near is.
 'Their houses are near to each other.'

In (5a-c) above the reciprocal marker *wal-* appeared preceding the prepositions *bira* near in (5a), *irra* 'on' in (5b), and *cinaa* 'beside' in (5c).

2.1.5. Reflexive Pronouns

of- is a proclitic in Afaan Oromo, which cannot stand alone as a word. Blake (2001:12) explained clitics as follows: *They are forms that are analyzable as separate elements from the point of view of syntax, i.e; they are words, but which are pronounced as part of an adjacent word from the point of view of phonology.*

Gragg (1976:179), states that the proclitic *of-* alone is used for all subjects. For emphatic reflexive, one can use *ofii* with a possessive- and oblique case suffix in Afaan Oromo. The following table illustrates the realization of reflexive pronouns.

<u>Person</u>	<u>Nominative</u> <u>case form</u>	<u>Reflexive</u> <u>Pronouns</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
sgl 1	ani	ofii-koo	'myself'
2	ati	ofii-kee	'your self'
3	inni	ofii-saa	'himself'
3	išiin	ofii-šii	'herself'
pl 1	nu?i	ofii-keeñña	'ourselves'
2	isin	ofii-keessanii	'yourselves'
3	isaan	ofii-saanii	'themselves'

Table 3: Reflexive pronoun in Afaan Oromo

In the above examples, *of-* is equivalent to *oneself* in English. It appeared in the order of *ofii- possessive genitive* to show reflexive pronouns. *of-* is used with all person, number, and gender.

The following expressions are also used to denote reflexive pronouns in this language.

6 (a) ati ofi eggad'-u
you-nom ref keep - impf
'You take care of yourself.'
[-d':Occurs with 1sgl, 2sgl/pl]

(b) tolaa-n ofii-fmana ijaarra-t-e
T-nom ref-dat house build-2sgl-pf
'Tola built a house for himself!'

(c) ati ofii-kee-tii ñaad'-u
you-nom ref-your-for eat-impf
'You eat for yourself.'

(d) nu?i of-umaa-f of-barsiis-n-a
 we-nom ref-foc dat self-teach-pl-impf

‘We teach ourselves.’

(e) mataa kee-tii-f fud’-u
 one your-foc-dat take-impf

‘Take for yourself.’

In the examples the hosts of *of-* stands on it’s own in (6a), dative case in (6b), possessive genitive in (6c), and focus marker and, dative marker in (6d). In (6e) *mataa* literary ‘head’ shows emphasis. The gloss means ‘take for your self only, do not give it to any body else’. *mataa* is used as a reflexive pronoun substituting ‘of-’. In the above examples the position of *of-* is at the left boundary of the phrase that contains it.

2.2. Determiners

What is termed as ‘referential determiners’ in Radford (1997b:46) are determiners like this, the, that, my, etc, which are used to introduce referring expressions.

Determiner is a word used to specify a noun, but which has no descriptive content of its own. Traditionally, determiners restrict the referential or quantificational properties of the noun expression which occurs with them. In English, determiners are words like a, the, this, that, which are typically used to specify a noun, without any descriptive content of their own.

In Afaan Oromo, determiners are bound, but some are free. For example, the singulative feminine marker /-tii/ is bound whereas demonstratives like, *kun, tun, kana*, etc are free. The bound morphemes are suffixed to head words they modify which means determiners are post- head in this language.

In Afaan Oromo, determiners and adjectives can be used together to modify a noun, as in the following examples.

7 (a) farda gurraačča d’eeraa kiyyaa
 n-horse adj/ black adj/ tall det/ my

‘My black tall horse’

(b) farda gurraačča d'eeraa guddaa k-i-yyaa
 horse adj adj adj m-epe-my
 'My black tall big horse'

(c) farda adii deeraa guddaa k-i-yyaa
 horse adj adj adj m-epe-my
 'My white tall big horse'

As we can see from the above examples (7 a-c) the adjectives can appear successively preceding the determiners.

2.2.1. The Singulative Feminine Marker

The singulative definite marker is suffixed to feminine nouns. Nouns that take *-tii* do not show any morphological change.

8 a) c'aalaa-n sa?a gurgur-e
 Ch-nom cow sell-pf
 'Chala sold a cow'

b) c'aalaa-n sa?a-ttii gurgur-e
 Ch-nom cow-sng sell-pf
 'Chala sold the cow'

c) gaññaa-n ilmoo hoosisu did-t-e
 mare-nom calf to feed-impf refuse-f-pf
 'A mare refused to feed a teat to a calf.'

d) gañña-ttii-n ilmoo hoosisu did-t-e
 Mare-sng-nom calf to feed-impf refuse-f-pf
 'The mare refused to feed a teat to a calf.'

In (8a) *sa?a* and in (8c) *gaññaa* are indefinite nouns, whereas in (8b) *sa?attii* and in (8d) *gaññattii* are definite nouns. In (8a) *sa?a* is not identified, it could refer to any cow and it

is morphologically unmarked. In (8 b) *sa?a-ttii* is identified and it refers to a particular cow which is assumed to be known by both the speaker and hearer, as the single and particular cow which they know. The difference between the two is that in (8 b) *sa?a* has a suffix *-ttii* which marks the head to which it is suffixed as singulative feminine definite. Thus, *-ttii* can be considered as a singulative, feminine marker. *-ttii* also has an extended use of showing diminutiveness or smallness (Eshetu 1981, Baye 1986).

- 9 (a) *farda-ttii-n duf-t-e*
horse-sng-nom com-f-pf
‘The horse (diminutive) came’
- (b) *nam-i-ttii-n ?arak’ee d’ug-d-e*
man-sng-nom alcohol drink-f-pf
‘The man drank alcohol (womanish)’
- (c) *gurba-ttii-n gabaa baa-t-e*
Young boy-sng-nom market go-f-pf
‘The young boy (diminutive) went to the market’

In the above examples (9 a-c) *-ttii* appeared as the singulative and diminutive marker. Syntactically the heads (nouns) to which *-ttii* is suffixed shows grammatical gender which is feminine and also the sense of smallness.

2.2.2. The Singulative Masculine Marker

It has been a subject of controversy in Afaan Oromo syntax. Nordfeldt (1947) and Gragg (1976) considered *-čč-* as a definite marker, whereas Moreno (1939), Baye (1986), and Abebe (2002) considered it as a singulative marker. Before we conclude that *-čč-* in Afaan Oromo is either singulative or definite marker, let us consider the following points.

Like many bound morphemes in Afaan Oromo *-čč-* has different grammatical functions. It is suffixed to words such as nouns and adjectives to show definiteness, singularity, particularity and masculine gender. *-čč-* is suffixed to masculine nouns only and its

feminine counterpart is *-tii*. Baye (1986:276), referred to Moreno (1939:129) and stated that *-čč-* shows the singleness of the nouns with which it is associated as opposed to many, which means it is a singular, definite marker as opposed to plural definite.

In syntactic structures, *-čč-* appears with nouns in different case positions, such as nominative, accusative and dative case. When *-čč-* is used with nominative case it is followed by *-i* which is a nominative case marker and when it used with accusative nouns is followed by *-a*. Example (10) illustrates its realization.

10)	Base form	Nominative case	Accusative case	Gloss
	nama	nam-i-čč-i	nam-i-čč-a	'man'
	barsiisa	barsiis-i-čč-i	barsiis-i-čč-a	'teacher'
	gurba	gurb-i-čč-i	gurb-i-čč-a	'young boy'
	deeraa	deer-ti-čč-i	deer-ti-čč-a	'tall/long'
	furdaa	furd-i-čč-i	furd-i-čč-a	'fat'
	harree	harr-i-čč-i	harr-i-čč-a	'donkey'

In these examples *-čč-* is used as a definite, singular, and masculine marker. The difference between the definite and indefinite nouns (above) is that, the definite nouns show *-čč-* while the indefinite nouns are not marked. An expression like *namičči* and *barsiisičči* refer to a nominative case position, particular, singular, and masculine 'man' and 'teacher' respectively, which are specific and whose identity is assumed to be known by speaker and hearer, while *namičča* and *barsiisiča*, denote the same but in accusative case position.

When the intention is to denote definiteness, *-čč-* may appears with both a head noun and its adjectival modifier.

Consider the following examples.

- 11 (a) c'aalaa-n farda adii bit-e
 Ch-nom horse white buy-pf
 'Chala bought a white horse'
- (b) c'aalaa-n farda adii-čč-a bit-e
 Ch-nom horse-white-sng-m buy-pf
 'Chala bought the white horse'
- (c) Caalaa-n nam-i-čč-a furd-i-čč-a arg-e
 S-nom man-epe-sng-m fat-epe-sng-m see-pf
 'Chala saw the fat man.'

In (11b) the sentence is ill-formed because suffixing the singulative marker *-čč-* on both the head and the adjective results is impossible in the language.

2.2.3. Definiteness

Both definite and indefinite markers are lacking in Afaan Oromo. Nouns appear in their bare forms, without any morphological marker to denote indefiniteness. On the other hand, in this language, definiteness is expressed in different forms. It can be expressed by pronominals that occur before nouns in focus, or by using possessives and demonstratives. Definiteness can also be expressed by suffixing portmanteau morphemes, which have cumulative functions. These are the suffix *-čč-* that denotes masculine definiteness and the suffix *-tii* that denotes feminine definiteness, (see example 10.11 above). On the other hand definiteness with plural nouns is expressed by the suffix *-ii* as shown in table (4) below.

Base	Plural	Definite	Nominative	Gloss
farda	farad-oota	farad-oot-ii	rad-oot-ii-n	'horse'
nama	nam-oota	nam-oot-ii	nam-oot-ii-n	'man'
dubara	dubart-oota	dubart-oot-ii	dubart-oot-ii-n	'woman'
hoola	hool-oota	hool-oot-ii	hool-oot-ii-n	'sheep'

Table 4: Definiteness in plural nouns

-ii is used as a definite marker as illustrated in examples presented in table (4). The plural nouns drop their final vowel *-a* and add *-ii* to form the definite counterpart. We can see also from the table that nouns under the column 'plural' are in their indefinite forms. They form their definite forms by suffixing *-ii*.

Definiteness can be shown also by means of definiteness agreement. According to Roberts (2003:137) definiteness harmony is Spec-head agreement in definiteness by lower projection, which involves movement of a head noun to D in DP.

The following examples illustrate the N to D movement of nouns in Afaan Oromo.

- 12 (a) [farda tullu]
 horse Tulu
 'Tulu's horse'.

If the possessed noun is modified by an AP, the AP intervenes between the noun and the possessor noun and it also gets a definite reading.

- (b) [[farda gurraačča] tulluu]
 horse-(possessed) black-(adjective) T-(possessor)
 'Tulu's black horse'.

The head noun can be interpreted as definite or indefinite depending on absence or the presence of the definite article.

From the examples so far, we can infer that in Afaan Oromo *-čč-* marks the singulative masculine; whereas *-tii-* is a singulative feminine and *-ii* is a definite plural marker. *-čč-* and *-tii* occur with singular nouns which are individuated and known as opposed to a collection of entities or an agglomerated mass, as discussed in (Baye 1986).

-čč- and *-tii* are used when the information is assumed to be known by the speaker and hearer.

-čč- show definiteness, singleness, particularity, masculine and feminine respectively. Thus, may they considered as a portmanteau morphemes⁴. To conclude, we have mentioned that in this language there is no overt definite marker and interpretive evidence context must be used.

2.2.4 Quantifiers

A quantifier is a special type of determiner used to denote quantity. Typical quantifiers include the universal quantifiers all/both, the distributive quantifiers each/every, the partitive quantifiers some/any, etc. (Radford1997b:270).

Items can belong to more than one category and may have more than one grammatical function. In Afaan Oromo, quantifiers can be used as determiners and pronouns. Let us consider the following examples in (13).

13 (a) nam-oot-ni martuu deem-an
 man-pl-nom all go-pf/pl
 ‘All men have gone’

(b) martuu deem-ani
 all go-pf/pl
 ‘All have gone’

14 (a) ani mahaallak'a homaa hin-k'ab-u
 I-nom money any neg-have-impf/1sgl
 ‘I haven't any money’

(b) homaa hin-k'ab-u
 any neg-have-impf/ 1sgl
 ‘I haven't any thing’

15 (a) nam-oon-ni baayyeen galgala barat-u
 man-pl-nom many evening learn-pl
 ‘Many people learn in the evening.’

(b) bayyeen galgala barat-u
 many evening learn-pl
 ‘Many learn in the evening.’

16 (a) dubart-oon-ni lamaa-nu d'uf-ani
 woman-pl-nom two-pl come-pf/pl
 ‘Both women have come’
 [-nu: is attached to numbers to show plurality]

(b) lamaa-nu d'uf-ani
 Two-both come-pf/pl
 ‘Both have come’

In such examples, *martuu* in (13), *homaa* in (14), *baayyee* in (15) and *lamaanu* in (16) are used as determiners and quantifiers. In the (a) sentences in (13-16), the quantifiers serve as determiners by modifying the nouns, whereas in the (b) examples (13-16) the head nouns are null and occur in their post head position.

Thus, some words can be used both as determiners and as pronouns. Most such items have the same form when used as determiners or pronouns. Concerning their position the determiners follow the nouns they are modifying. In other words, determiners occur following heads which can be null.

Quantifiers like, *baayyee* and *t'innoo* etc, are expressions of degree as in the following

17 (a) c'aalaa-n baayyee furdaa-d'a
 S - nom very fat - is
 ‘Chala is very fat’

- (b) roob-ni t'innoo rooba
rain - nom little rain
'It rains a little'

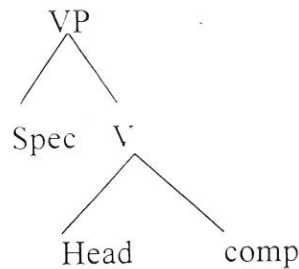
baayyee in (17a) is used as a degree word, *t'innoo* in (17b) it is used as a quantifier referring to the amount of rain and not to the degree /extent of raining. The position of degree words are within the VP whereas that of quantifiers are within the DP/NP.

2.3 Agreement

In Afaan Oromo, subject verb agreement relation is manifested in verbs, because in this language, verbs are inflected for person, number, gender and aspect.

The subject-verb agreement can be shown in linear or in tree structures. The structure in (3) below, which shows the basic phrase structure of any language, cannot hold for the relation of subject verb agreement. It has to be mediated through an agreement node of Spec AgrsP, i.e. AgrsP and AgroP.

(3)



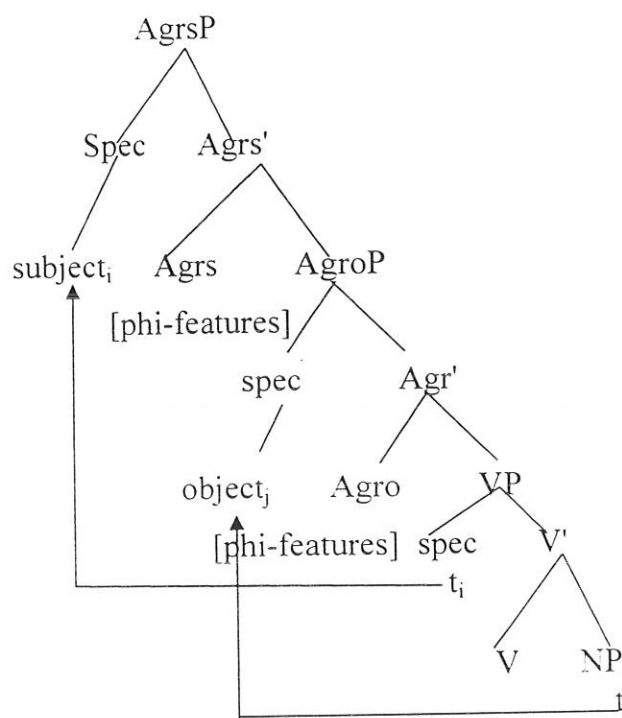
To show subject-verb agreement, one needs a maximal projection of Agrs.

Roberts (1997:78) states that the *subject* and *object* positions in VP are also the positions where subjects and objects typically receive their θ -roles. VP is not a position where a NP (DP) can receive case. Hence DPs have to move from this VP internal position to where they can check case.

The phenomenon of subject verb agreement is thus a result of two operations: movement of subject from spec-VP to spec of AgrsP, and the Agrs head which shows features in the verb.

The following structure shows the relation of subject-verb agreement.

(4)



In Minimalist assumptions, according to Belletti (2003: 488), a relation of *agreement* in a particular sense is a relation in which an element of Spec and a head share the same features. The features in Agrs include the phi-features of person, number, gender of the subject DP whereas the Agr features in Agro include the same phi-features of person, number and gender of the object DP.

Another feature which is currently assumed to be involved in the subject-Agr relation is case. In Chomsky, (1995b) it is generalized that the phi-feature of case is systematically checked within an 'agreement' configuration in the domain of an AgrS head. The fact that case and 'agreement' involve other phi-features often 'go together' in languages with overt case morphology provides support to the plausibility of this general hypothesis.

The following examples illustrate the subject, object-verb agreement in person, gender, number, aspect, and tense.

- 18 (a) *tolaa-n c'aaltuu jaalat-Ø-e*
 T-3sgl-nom obj-Ch love-gen-pf
 'Tola loved chaltu'
- (b) *c'aalaa-n gabaa deem-Ø -e*
 Ch-3sglm-nom market go-gen-pf
 'Chala went to a market'
- (c) *c'aaltuu-n gabaa deem-t-e*
 Ch-3sglfm-nom market go -f-pf
 'Chaltu went to a market'
- (d) **tolan-n c'aaltuu jaalat-ani*
 T-3sgl- nom Ch love-pl/ pf
 'Tola (singular) loved (plural)(Chaltu.'
- (e) **inni gabaa deem-t-e*
 he-3sgl -nom market go-f-pf
 '*He (feminine) went to a market.'

In (18a), the past tense verb *jaalate* agrees with the NP subject *Tola* in the features person, gender and number. In (18b) the subject *Chala*, which is third person, singular, masculine, agrees with the verb *deeme*, which has the same features which are covert and aspect. In (18a, b) above the gender marker is zero /Ø/ whose position is after the root. The same is true of (18c) where the subject and verb agree in gender. The gender marker in (18c,e) is *-t-*. (18d) and (18e) are ill- formed; in (18d) the subject is singular whereas verb is plural. In (18e) the subject is masculine and the verb has a feminine morpheme.

The agreement and aspectual features are presented in the following table.

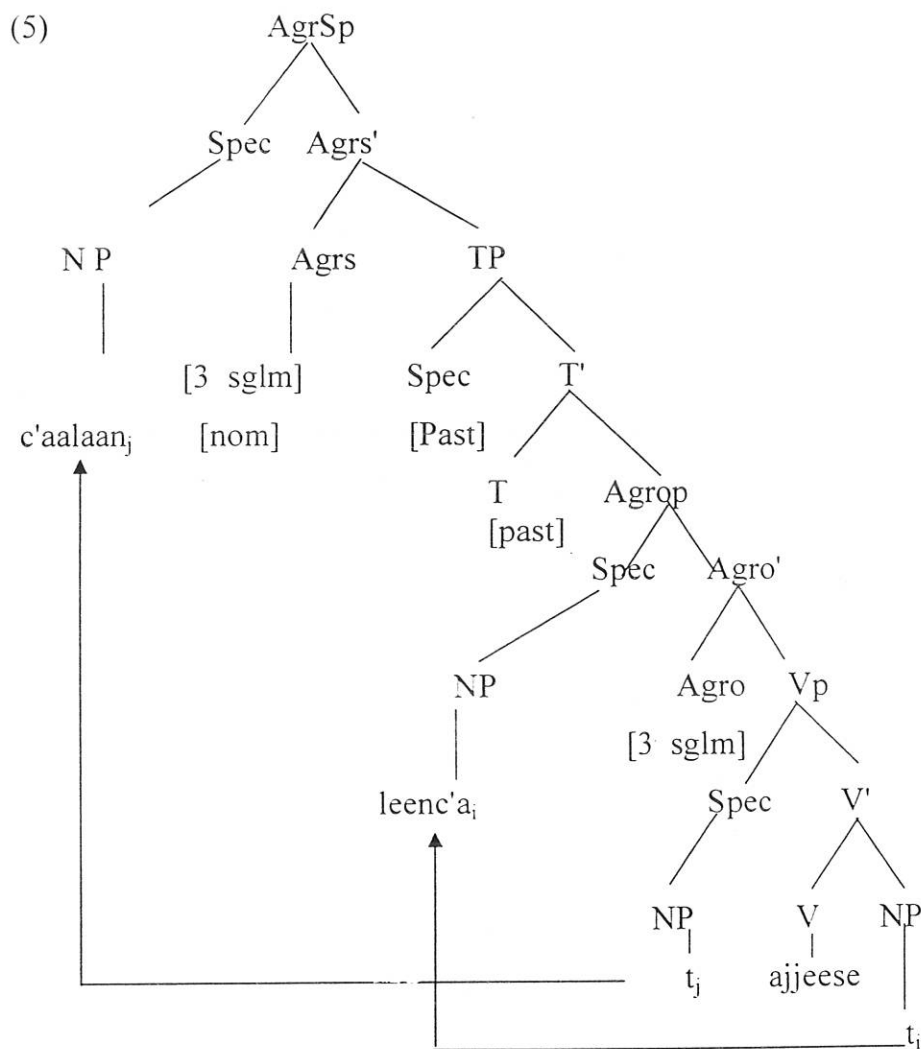
<u>Person</u>	<u>Nom</u>	<u>Verb</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Aspect</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
1	ani	deem- Ø -e	-	Ø	-e	'I went'
2	ati	deem-t-e	-	Ø	-e	'you went'
3	inni	deem- Ø-e	-	Ø	e	'he went'
3	isiini	deem-t-e	-	t	-e	'she went'
1	nu?i	deem-n-e	-n-	Ø	-e	'we went'
2	isiini	deem-t-ani	-n-	Ø	-i	'you went'
3	isaani	deem- Ø -ani	-n-	Ø	-i	'they went'

Table 5: The Agreement and Aspectual Features

In subject agreement phrase, nominative NPs (DPs) raise to spec-AgrsP in order to check their strong nominative case and subject agreement-features under spec-head agreement with Agrs. In object DPs there is movement to spec-AgroP for checking accusative case feature.

The following tree structure shows the positions of the agreement features in sentence (19).

19 c'aalaa-n leenc'a ajjees-e
 S-3sgl-m-nom lion kill-pf
 3sgl-m
 'Chala killed a lion'



We have the structure (5), after movement of the subject and object have taken place. *c'aalaan* is raised from spec VP to spec AgrsP in order to check its nominative case features against AgrS head. Spec AgrsP is the nearest available case position to SpecVP. *leenc'aa* is raised from compVP to specAgroP to receive accusative case. The verb *ajjeese* remain in its base position within VP.

In this structure, the verb (V) has to check its past tense feature against T, and Agreement features of both subject and object against Agrs and Agro at LF. *became* aspect, gender, and number are overt features which means they are strong features that cannot wait until LF.

In the checking domain of a head, the specifier is where DP will check case and phi-features against a head and the position adjoined to it. The verb adjoins to the functional heads to have its verbal features checked against these heads. Nominative case leads to raising for spec-VP to spec-AgrsP and accusative case leads to raising from DP-complement position to the spec-AgroP. The cases are associated with features of T and V respectively.

2.4 Tense

According to Girma (2001:146) tense is a grammatical category which is marked by morphemes such as suffixes, auxiliaries, reduplication etc. In the morphology of Afaan Oromo, two tenses are distinguished: past and non past.

In Afaan Oromo, tense is expressed by auxiliaries. The auxiliaries which denote tenses, refer to past and non past. Non-past which includes present and future is marked by an auxiliary *jir-* and the past tense by *tur-*. Both *jir-* and *tur-* inflect for person, number and gender.

In this language simple present tense and simple future are marked identically, but are differentiated from past tense. To disambiguate, we use time adverbs. Thus:

- 20 (a) hin deem-a 'He will go' (future tense) or,
 (b) hin deem-a 'He goes', (present tense).

The time adverbs are like: *boru*, *amma*, *har?a*, etc. Consider the examples that follows

- 21 (a) inni boru hin deem-a
 he-nom tomorrow non past go-impf
 'He will go tomorrow.'

- (b) inni amma hin deem-a
 he-nom now non past go-impf
 'He is going now.'

KATO (1996:80-92) identified the following tenses which show how auxiliaries are realized in Afaan Oromo.

2.4.1. The Past Tense

As we have discussed we can find the following tenses in the past tense.

22 Remote past (past perfect)

- (a) an-i leenc'a ajjees-e-ni tur-e
 I-nom lion kill-pf-1sgl aux pf
 'I had killed a lion.'

Near past (present perfect)

- (b) an-i leenc'a ajjees-e jir-a
 I-nom lion kill-pf aux impf
 'I have killed a lion.'

Simple Past

- (c) an-i leenc'a ajjees-e
 I-nom lion kill-pf
 'I killed a lion.'

Past Continuous

- (d) c'aalaa-n kitaaba dubbis-a tur-e
 Ch-nom book read-impf aux pf
 'Chala was reading a book.'

In the above examples the auxiliaries *jir-* and *tur-* are used to denote tenses.

2.4.2. The Non-past Tense

Non past which includes the present and the future tense, as discussed above, is used if the action is happening now or is to happen in the future. Consider the following examples.

- 23 (a) inni boru gabaa deem-a
he-nom tomorrow market go-impf
'He will go to a market tomorrow.'
- (b) ani amma nan deem-a
I-nom now 1sgl go-impf
'I leave now.'
- 24 (a) c'aalaa-n kitaaba dubbis-a jira
Ch-nom book read-impf aux
'Chala is reading a book.'
- (b) tolaa-n k'otaa jira
T-nom plough aux
'Tola is ploughing.'

Examples (22a - d) are in the past tenses. They differ from each other only in time of action. (22a) is in a remote past tense, i.e. the verb is marked for perfective aspect and the auxiliary shows past time. Example (22b) is in the near past tense. The verb is marked for perfective aspect and the auxiliary shows non past tense. Example (22c) is in the simple past tense, i.e. the verb is marked for perfectiveness and appears without an auxiliary for past tense. Semantically, we understand that it is a past action. Since both tense and aspect have to do with time, the perfective aspect associates with the past and the imperfective with non-past tense, (Girma 2003:113). It is also discussed in Girma (2005:93) that when there is no visible tense marker the association of the perfective is with past and the imperfective is with non-past.

(22d) is expressing a progressive aspect in the past. This is expressed by the perfective marker on the verb and the past auxiliary marker. Examples (23a and b) describe non-past actions. Example (23a) refers to a situation in the future tense while (23b) refers to a present tense. (24a) and (24b) refer to a present progressive imperfective aspect. In these examples in (23a and b) the verb occurs without auxiliary while in (24a and b) the verb occurs with an auxiliary which show a non-past event.

We can conclude from these examples and the discussion that auxiliaries are tense markers in Afaan Oromo.

In the Minimalist approach T(ense) projects to TP. In Afaan Oromo, verbs do not move from their original position within VP to Spec of TP to check their tense / aspect features. Instead, they make use of attraction (percolation).⁵

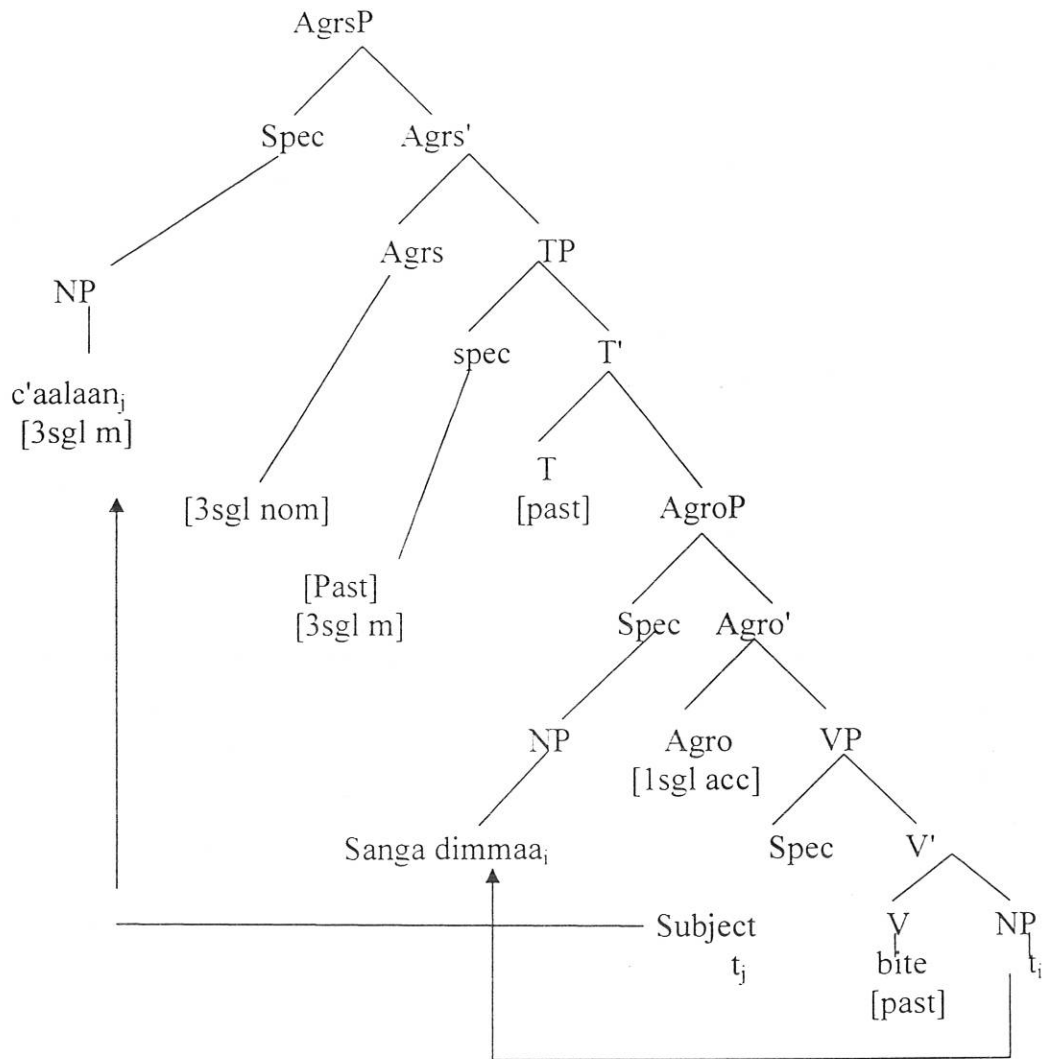
According to Radford (1997a: 230), attraction involves movement of a set of grammatical features carried by a head without the head category moving. Consider example (25) below

- 25 c'aalaa-n sanga diimaa bit-e
 S[3sgl m]-nom bull red buy-pf [3sgl m]
 'Chala bought a red bull.'

The head features of the verb 'bite' are [3sglm] and [past]. They move to the SpecTP to check these features against the T-head. The verb 'bite' remains in its original position in the VP.

Consider the following diagram.

(6)



It is clear that the tense features of 'bite' are attracted to spec-TP, but the head remain in its original place. The functional nodes of AGR and T serve only to carry the morphological (inflectional) features which N and V should check. Verbal features are attracted to Spec-TP with the verb still in its head position.

Movement cannot take place to satisfy the properties of the moving element. As it is stated in (Chomsky1995b:400): *Move raise α to apposition β only if morphological properties of α itself would not otherwise be satisfied in the derivation).*

Agreement cannot be checked by movement of the verb to Agrs because attraction of the feature of the verb is more economical than the movement of the verb. In other words, the economy principle requires that attraction is always being preferred to movement unless (strong) morphological properties force category movement.

The agreement- features of the subject and the specifier features of verb in the above structure, have to percolate to Agrs. The [3psgl nom] features of the specifier require a third person, singular, nominative subject to be checked for compatibility with the [3sgl nom] head-features of 'c'aalaa'.

According to Marantz (1995: 363), the functional nodes of Agrs and T serve only to carry morphological features necessary to check features of N's and V's.

2.5. Negation

Afaan Oromo uses *hin-n-*, *hin-* and *miti* as negative markers. The discontinuous morpheme *hin -n-* and the prefix *hin-* are used with verbal heads and *miti* 'not' with pronominal, adjectival and postpositional heads. Semantically, the discontinuous morphemes and the prefix cannot carry meanings independently of their verbal bases and it is grammatically impossible to separate them from their hosts.

hin-n is used with perfective aspect while *hin-* is used with the imperfective aspect. Consider the following examples.

Affirmative	Negative
26 (a) tolaa-n sirba sirb-e T-nom dance dance-pf 'Tola danced a dance'	tolaa-n hin-sirb-i-n-e T-nom neg dance-epe-neg-pf 'Tola didn't dance'
(b) tolaa-n gabaa deem-e T-nom market go-pf 'Tola went to a market'	tolaa-n gabaa hin-deem-n-e T-nom market neg-go-neg-pf 'Tola didn't go to a market.'

- | | |
|---|---|
| (c) tolaa-n re?ee k'ale
T-nom goat slaught-pf
'Tola slaughtered a goat' | tolaa-n re?ee hin-k'al-l-e.
T-nom goat neg-slaught-neg-pf
Tola dindn't slaught a goat.' |
| (d) tolaa-n mana -tti gore
T-nom house-foc turn-pf
'Tola turned to the house' | 'tolaa-n mana -tti hin-gor-r-e
T-nom house foc neg-turn-neg-pf
'Tola didn't turn to the house'. |

The negative marker *hin-n-* circumfixes the main verb in perfective and it is used as a verb in negative forms. In the examples, (26) above, the actions denoted by the verbs are in the past tense. In these examples the negative marker is *hin-n-* and the aspect marker is *-e*.

A second type of negative marker *hin-* is used in the imperfective aspect. The following examples may show how this morpheme is used to negate expressions in the non-past tenses.

Affirmative	Negative
27 (a) ani nan deem-a I-nom 1sgl-go-impf 'I will go'	ani hin-deem-u I-nom neg-go-impf 'I will not go.'
(b) ati hin deem-t-a you (sgl) -nom impf go-2sglm -impf 'You [2sglmf] will go'	ati hin-deem-t-u you (2sgl) nom-neg-go-2sgl-impf 'You [2sglmf] will not go.'
(c) inni hin deem-a he-nom impf go-impf 'He will go'	inni hin-deem-u he-nom neg-go-impf 'He will not go.'
(d) iŠiin hin deem-t-i she-nom impf-go-f-impf 'She will go.'	iŠiin hin deem-t-u. she-nom neg-go-2sglf-impf 'She will not go.'

(e) nu?i hin deem-n-a we-nom impf-go-pl-impf 'We will go.'	nu?(i) hin deem-n-u we-nom neg-go-1pl-impf We will not go'
(f) isiin hin deem-t-u You (pl) nom Impf-go-2pl-impf You (pl) will go	isiin hin deem-t-an you (pl) nom neg-go-2pl-impf You (pl) not go
(g) isaan hin deem-u they - nom impf-go-impf 'They will go'.	isaan hin deem-an they- no-neg-go-impf-pl 'They will not go'.

In the examples (27a-g) above, the actions denoted by the verbs are in the imperfective aspects which show that the actions are taking place at the time of speaking. The negative marker *hin-* with low intonation is used with imperfective aspect and the affirmative *hin-* with a raised intonation. We have discussed that perfective aspects show the past and the non past. Both *hin-n-* and *hin-* do not inflect for person, gender and number.

miti is the third type negative marker which occurs after pronominals, adjectives and postpositional, KATO (1996:394). Its position is at sentence final. *miti* can be used as a negative copula as in the following examples.

Affirmative	Negative
28 (a) inni nama he-nom man 'He is a man.'	inni namaa miti he-nom men is not 'He is not a man.'
(b) c'aala-d'a ch-is 'It is Chala.'	caalaa miti ch-is not 'It is not Chala.'
(c) išiin magaala she-nom brown 'She is brown.'	išiin magaala miti she-nom brown is not 'She is not brown.'

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| (d) mana keessa | mana keessaa miti |
| House in | house in is not |
| 'It is in a house.' | 'It is not in a house.' |

In the examples, (28a-d) (above), the negative marker *miti* occurs after *nama* (noun), *c'aalaa* (noun), *magaala* (adjective), and *keessaa* (preposition).

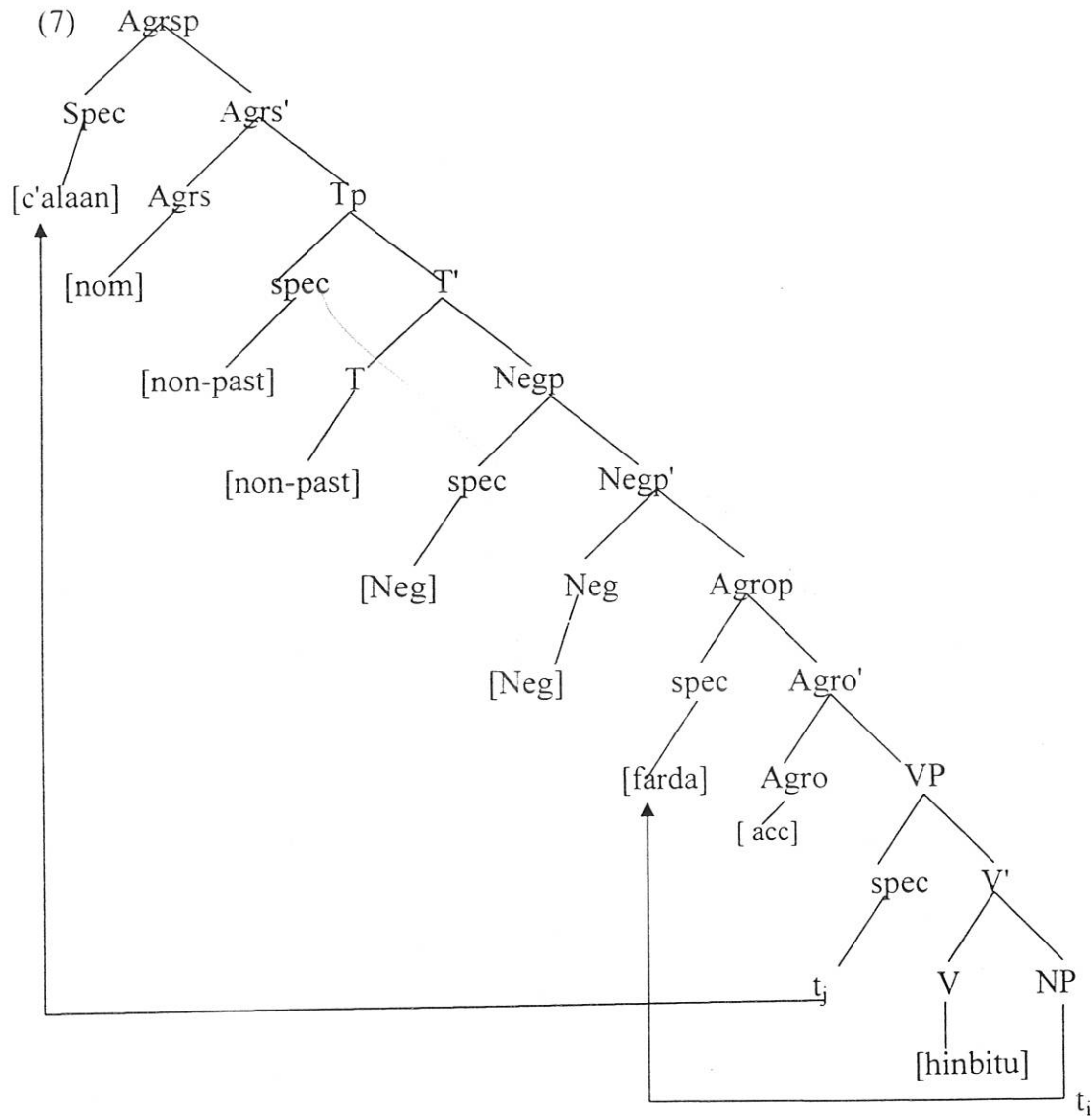
Similar to the morphemes which occur with verbs, *miti* does not also inflect for gender, person, and number. *miti* cannot be used either with *hin-* or *hin-*. Consider the following examples.

- 29 (a) tolaa-n nama
T-nom man
'Tola is a man'
- (b) tolaa-n namaa miti
T-nom man is not
'Tola is not a man'
- (c) *tolaan-n hin-nama-n-e
- (d) *tolaa-n hin-nam-u

In the examples above, (29a-b) are grammatical while (29c-d) are ill-formed: because *hin-n-* and *hin-* should be associated with verbs to function as a negative markers but in these sentences they occur with nouns.

Syntactically, in tree structures negation has its own functional projection, NegP. We have said that in Afaan Oromo verbs do not raise to TP, but remain within VP because verbs have *weak* features. It is true that the negative markers *hin-n-* and *hin-* occur with verbs and do not raise to either TP or NegP. Their features are checked against the head of NegP. Consider the tree structure that follows.

- (30) c'alaan farad hin-bit-u
 ch-nom horse-neg-buy -impf
 'Chala do not buy a horse.'



2.6. Focus

According to Taha (1990:24) focus is the increment of information in a sentence which a speaker signals structurally to a most important.

Taha (1990:36) citing to Dik (1981:42) has identified four major devices for signaling focus in linguistic expressions which are true of Afaan Oromo. The focalizing devices are:-

- Intentional prominence: stress, high tone, emphatic accent.
- Special focus markers are particles which distinguish focused constituents from the rest of a clause.
- Special constituent orders: special positions for focused constituents in the linear order of clauses.
- Special focus constructions.

The focused nouns, in the examples (31 a - c) have two intonations, when it's under focus pronounced with raised tone while non-focused not.

One of the manifestations of focus in Afaan Oromo is prosodic (intentional) prominence which is assigned to focalized constituents in sentences. The focalizing elements are attached to constituents which need focus. Consider the following examples.

- 31 (a). c'aalaa-n bišáán d'ug-e
 Ch-nom water drink-pf
 Chala drunk water'
- (b) c'aalaa-n jimmáa deem-e
 Ch-non Jimage-pf
 'Chala went to jima'
- (c) farda irra gaangée wayya
 horse that mule better-impf
 'A mule is better than a horse'

In (31a-c) above the focus is marked by high pitch in (31 a) *bišáán* 'water', in (31 b) *jimmáa*, and in (31 c) *gaangée* mule.

Special focus markers are particles which distinguish focused constituents from the rest of a clause. These includes *-tu*, *-d'a*, *-uma*, *-h(y)oo*, *-ira*, and *bari*. In addition, Gragg (1976:193) included *-ullee*, *-uu*, and *-oo* which are suffixed to nouns, and *-ka*, and *-m*, to predicates. Consider the following.

- 32 (a) *tolaa-tu d'uf-e*
 T- foc come-pf
 'It is Tola who did come'.

-tu is also used in interrogatives such as *eeññu-tu* 'it is who', *kam-tu* 'it is which', *maal-tu* 'it is what'.

- (b) *c'aalaa-d'a-f k'awwee keen-e*
 Ch-foc-for gun give-pf
 'It is to Chala (he) gave a gun.'

- (c) *c'alaa-n y(h)oo deem-e*
 Ch-nom foc go-pf
 'If Chala will go.'

- (d) *c'aalaa-n d'eem-ee bari*
 Ch-nom go-pf foc
 'Chala has already gone'
bari:(Lit.) 'you see', to show emphatic.

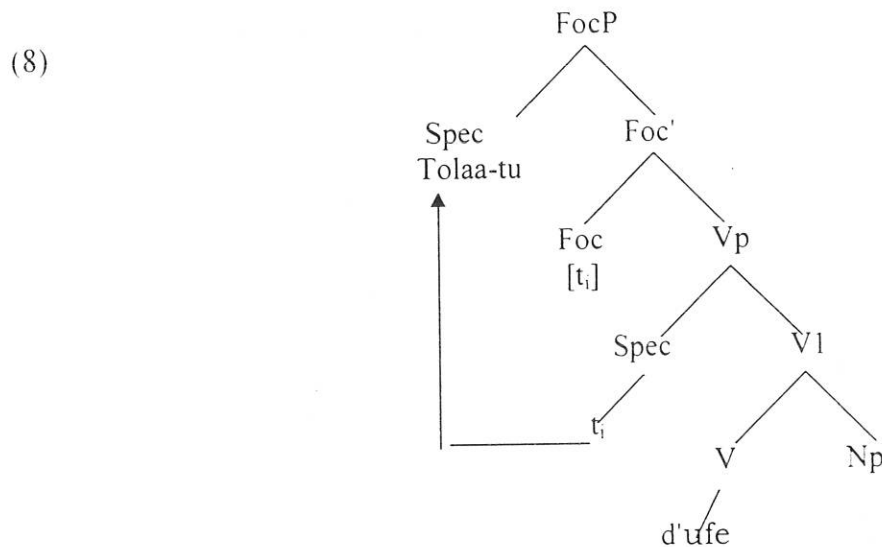
We can see from the examples that in (32 a) *-tu* is used to focalizes the NP, in (32 b) *-d'a* focalizes the dative, in (32 c) *y(h)oo* focalizes the NP and in (32 d) *bari* focalizes the verb. *-tii* is another focus marker which is suffixed to focused NPs.

- 33 (a) *inni mana barumsa-tii-f kitaaba bit-e*
 he-nom school-foc-for book buy-pf
 'It is to the school, he bought the book.'

- (b) k'e?ee-ti d'iyoo-d'a
 Village-foc near is
 'It is not far from the village'

Focus is a category that has its own maximal projection FocP. The structure of the sentence *tollaa-tu d'uf-e* may be represented as follows.

- Cf: 32 (a) *tollaa-tu d'uf-e*
 T-foc come-pf
 'It is Tola who did come'



The subject *tola* moves to SpecFocP to check its focus feature.

2.7. Modal Auxiliaries

Auxiliary is a functional category which is associated with verb expressions. According to Radford (1997a:50), auxiliaries take verb complements as their complements and have the semantic function of marking grammatical properties associated with the relevant verb, such as tense, aspect, mood or modality. One type of auxiliaries is modal verbs. Their position is following the main verb. There are syntactic differences between auxiliaries

and verbs. Verbs inflect for different grammatical categories. Consider the following examples.

- 34 a) hin deem-a ta?a
foc go-impf aux
'He may go'.
- b) hin deem-t-i ta?a
foc go-3sglf- impf- aux
'She may go'.
- c) isaani hin deem-u ta?a
they foc go-impf aux
'They may go'.
- d) isiini deem-t-u ta?a
you foc go-3pl - impf aux
'You (pl) may go'.

We can see from the examples (34a-d) above the head verb inflects for person, number, and gender.

2.7.1. Mood

Mood is a category that shows whether an action is necessary, possible, permissible, or impermissible. The following mood types are identified in Afaan Oromo.

2.7.1.1. The Imperative Mood

The imperative mood is used to show structures which refer to orders or requests. The command takes place between speaker and hearer, that is a second person. The imperative affirmative marker is *-i* for singular and *-a* for plural. The following table shows the imperative form in Afaan Oromo.

Person	Verb form	Imperative sgl	Imperative pl	Gloss
2 sgl	deem-	deem-i	deem-a	'go!'
" "	sirb-	sirb-i	sirb-a	'dance!'
" "	d'ug-	d'ug-i	d'ug-a	'drink!'
" "	ajjees-	ajjees-i	ajjees-a	'kill!'
" "	bareess-	barreess-i	bareess-a	'write!'

Table 6: Imperative mood in Afaan Oromo

For imperative reflexive, the form is like in (35) below.

- 35 a) farda bita-d'-u
horse buy-2 impf
'Buy a horse for yourself!'
- b) farda bita-d'-a.
horse buy- 2 impf
'Buy a horse for yourselves!'
- c) kitaaba fud'a-d'-a
book take- 2-impf
'Take book for yourselves!'

In imperative, verbs show aspect, person, and number features. Negative imperatives have different forms. The following examples illustrate singular and plural negative imperatives.

- 36 (a) hin deem-i-n-a
neg go- 2neg -impf
'You (pl) don't go!'
- (b) hin deem-i-n-i
neg go - 2neg- impf
'You (sgl) don't go!'

In the above examples (36a, b) the discontinuous morpheme *hin-n-* is negative marker which occurs in verb. Consider also the following.

- 37 (a) bad'aad'-i
 be prosperous-2sgl
 'May you be prosperous!'
- (b) nagayaa-n bul-i
 peace-inst pass a night-2sgl
 'Have a nice night!'
- (c) utubaa sibiilaa ta?-i
 pillar metal be-psgl
 (Lit: May you be a pillar of metal)
 'Live for ever!'

Afaan Oromo has emphatic imperatives indicated by adverbs of manner which show reduplicated initial segment. The following examples may illustrate this.

38. (a) daf-i deem-i
 be fast-impf 2sgl go-impf 2sgl
 'Go fast!'
- (b) daddaf-i deem-i
 be fast-fast-impf sgl go-impf sgl
 'Go quickly.'
- (c) daf-a deem-a
 be fast-impf/pl go-impf/pl
 'Go fast!'
- (d) daddaf-a deem-a
 be fast fast impf/pl to-impf/pl
 'Go faster!'

As we can see from the examples, the imperative has weak and strong forms. The strong command is expressed by reduplicating the adverbs initial segment as in (38b, d) whereas weak form show plain forms.

2.7.1.2. The Jussive Mood

Unlike imperatives, jussives express permission. The markers are the proposition *haa* or *yaa*, and the suffix *-u* or *-a*. The former occurs preceding verb, while the latter appears following them.

- 39 a) inni h(y)aa deem-u
he -nom jus go-3sglm
'Let him go!'
- b) isaani h(y)aa deem-an-i
they- nom jus-go-3pl
'Let them go!'
- c) iššini h(y)aa deem-t-u
she-nom jus go-f-3sglf
'Let her go!'

In jussive mood the action takes place among the first, second, and third persons. *h(y)aa* here is a jussive marker as illustrated in the above examples. It do not inflect for person, number and gender, while the verb is inflected. The verb also shows aspect, i.e. it is in imperfective aspect.

CHAPTER THREE

3. The Structure of Case in Afaan Oromo

3.1 Case in Afaan Oromo

Chomsky (1982) quoted in Abebe (2002:8), states that case is a syntactic notion that defines the relation between NPs and their predicates and this applies to all phonetically overt NPs.

According to Cook (1996:224), it is assumed that cases are similar to θ -roles in certain respects: θ -roles are assigned by certain θ -role assigners (predicates) to certain arguments, under a structural condition of sisterhood. Case is also assigned by elements to certain other arguments under particular restrictions. Verbs and prepositions assign accusative case to objects and nominative case is restricted to subject positions.

As it is discussed in Abebe (2002), case theory has a significant role in the description and explanation of the syntax of languages. It explains why NP movement takes place in a structure and it also determines the direction of head in a language.

In Afaan Oromo, structural case is realized morphologically. It is determined by the structural position in which a subject NP is found. Subjects usually have nominative case, direct objects have accusative case and indirect objects have dative case.

Case is a syntactic and semantic notion. Syntactic case refers to the syntactic function of a noun or a noun phrase, such as subject, direct object, indirect object, etc. depending on its position in relation to a verb in a clause. In English, oblique case refers to the semantic functions nouns such as location, direction, instrumental, etc. Many languages mark oblique case by prepositions or postpositions and the case markers do not appear on the NPs phonologically. In other words, nouns do not show affixes for oblique case.

Baye (1987:60) proposed the following three criterion, which can help in identifying prepositions in Amharic.

- Propositions appear preceding noun to show location, direction, etc.
- Prepositions do not inflect for grammatical function.
- Prepositions do not serve as base for derivations of words.

Consider the following Amharic examples:

1. (a) wädä gondär thedallähu
'I will go to Gonder'

(b) kä jtmma
'From Jima'

In (1a) wädä and in (1b) kä are prepositions and they occur preceding the nouns gondär and jtmma. In these examples, the prepositions mark direction *to* in (1a) and source *from* in (1b).

The statement made for Amharic may fit Afaan Oromo as the following examples show.

- 2 (a) inni gara harar deem-e
he-nom to harar go-pf
'He went to Harar'

(b) inni gara manaa gal-e
he-nom to house come-pf
'We went to a house'

(c) inni gara biraa deem-e
he-nom to other (place) go-pf
'He went to another place.'

Oblique cases tend to mark functions that are to some degree semantic. For example, in English, a common oblique case is the instrumental case, which marks a noun phrase as having a function of denoting the means by which an action is done.

Based on their functions, cases may be categorized into grammatical case and oblique case. Let us see the features of each in Afaan Oromo.

3.1.1 Grammatical Case

We have stated that grammatical case indicates grammatical functions. In Afaan Oromo grammatical case includes nominative, accusative, dative, possessive and instrumental cases. In this language grammatical case is realized morphologically.

3.1.1.1 Nominative Case

Nominative case is indicated by an inflectional suffix /-ni/, /-n/, /-i/, and /O/ as discussed in Abebe (2002), Baye (1981), Eshetu (1981), Nordfeldt (1947), Moreno (1939) had also identified /-n/ and /-ni/ as nominative markers in this language. KATO (1996:277) refers to Abdulsamed (1994) and states /-n/, /-ni/, /-i/, /-tu/ and /-ti/ as nominative markers. Most of the researchers have commonly identified /-ni/, /-n/, and /-i/ as nominative markers, while Abdulasamad (1994) adds /-ti/ and /-tu/ to the list.

These nominative case markers are phonologically conditioned. The following table shows their realizations.

	Base form	Nominative form	Gloss
3	(a) mana	[man-ni]	'a house'
	(b) nama	[nam-ni]	'a man'
	(c) bara	[bar -ri]	'a year'
	(d) jala	[jal-li]	'under'

4	(a) saree	[saree-ni _o]	'a dog'
	(b) garaa	[garaa-ni _o]	'belly'
	(c) garbuu	[garbuu-ni _o]	'barle'
	(d) mataa	[mataa-ni _o]	'a head'
5	(a) harka	[hark-i]	'a hand'
	(b) farda	[fard-i]	'a hourse'
	(c) jilba	[jilb-i]	'a knee'
	(d) oboleessa	[oboless-i]	'a brother'
6	(a) biŠaan	[biŠaan-i _o]	'water'
	(b) mid'aan	[mid'iaan-i _o]	'grain'
	(c) k'oraan	[k'oraan-i _o]	'firewood'
	(d) ?injiraan	[?injiraan-i _o]	'louse'

Table 1: Nominative case forms

In (3a-d) above the base forms drop their final vowel /-a/ and use [-ni] for nominative case. In (4a-d) the base forms add [-ni_o] ('-n/ plus the devoiced [-i_o]) to the base form. In (5a-d) the base form drop the final vowel [-a] and add [-i] for the same case. As we can see from the examples in (3a-d) and (5a-d) the nouns undergo phonemic loss, which involves deletion of word final segments. In the same way, the base forms in (6a-d) appear with a devoiced [i_o]⁵.

In the process of marking nominative case we may observe some phonological assimilation⁶ which take place.

In the same way, when a nominative case marker occurs in adjectives and prepositions, it occurs in different forms and is phonologically conditioned. Nominative case markers in compound nouns also follow the same pattern of allomorphy. Consider the following examples.

<u>Base Form</u>	<u>Compound Nouns in Nominative Case Form</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
mana barumsaa	man-ni barumsaa	'School'
waajjira fayyaa	waajjir-ri fayya	'Health office'
mana daabboo	man-ni ñaata	'Hotel'
waraana lafoo	waraan-ni lafoo	'Military'
koree-	Koree-ni misoomaa	'Development committee'
misoomaa		
minjaala buna	minjaala-li bunaa	'Coffee table'

Table 2: Nominative case markers in compound heads

In table (2) above the compounds are left headed. The nominative markers are suffixed to the heads.

We can conclude from the data in (table 2) that /-ni/ is the nominative case marker in Afaan Oromo. Its variations are phonologically conditioned.

3.1.1.2 Accusative case

In Afaan Oromo, the base form of noun, pronoun, adjective or adverb is the same as the accusative case form. The accusative case marker is not overt. Gragg (1976), Baye (1981), Abebe (2002), Eshetu (1981). Nouns, which are marked for different grammatical functions, appear in accusative case form as in the following examples.

- 7 (a) tolaa-n gaññaa- Ø bit-e
T-nom mare-acc buy-
'Tola bought a mare'
- (b) tolaa-n gaññaa- Ø adii- Ø bit-e
T-nom mare-acc white-acc
'Tola bought a white mare'

- (c) tolaa-n gaññaa-ttii adii- Ø- bit-e
 T-nom mare-sgl white-acc buy-pf
 'Tola bought the white mare'
- (d) *tolaa-n gaññaa-ttii -aui-ttii san bit-e
 T-nom mare-sgl white-sgl that buy-pf
 *'Tola bought that the white the mare'

In (7a-d) the noun occupies the position of object but does not show accusative case marker. Similarly all personal pronouns occur in accusative case position but never show accusative affix. Eshetu (1981:8) explained the unmarkedness of accusative case in Afaan Oromo by saying: *'in Afaan Oromo which is very unusual among the world's languages the base form of a noun, pronoun, adjective or adverbial is the accusative (direct object).'*

3.1.1.3 Dative Case

The dative case marker is /-f/. This case encodes indirect object in many languages. Syntactically, the indirect object can be distinguished by its position. In Afaan Oromo the indirect object appears following the subject as in the following examples.

- 8 (a) c'aalaa-n tulluu-f kitaaba kenn-e
 Ch-nom T-dat book give-pf
 'Chala gave the book for Tulu.'
- (b) inni nam-i- čč-aa-f farda kenn-e
 he-nom man-epe- sng-dat horse give -pf
 'He gave the horse for the man.'
- (c) inni mahaallak'a naa-f fid-e
 he-nom money me-dat bring-pf
 'He brought money for me.'

- (d) tolaa-n hoolaa isin-iif bit-e
 T-nom sheep you (pl)-dat buy-pf
 'Tola bought for you a sheep.'

From the examples in (8a-d), it is observed that /-(ii) f/ is suffixed to NPs occurring in dative case position. According to Abebe (2002:25) the variation of vowels preceding /-f/ is attributed to the phonology of the word the vowel is suffixed to. Noun that end in short vowel lengthen the final vowel before adding /-f/ while nouns that end in long vowel suffix /-f/.

In this language the dative case marker is /-f/ which also occurs following the focus marker /-d'a/, in structures like the following. /-d'a/ lengthens its final vowel before adding /-f/.

- 9 (a) goofta-d'aa-f sagad-e
 Lord-foc-dat bow-pf
 'It is to the Lord.'
- (b) mootii-d'aa-f kenn-e
 King - foc -dat give-pf
 '(He) gave for the king'
- (c) dubartii-d'aa-f dabars-e
 woman -foc -dat pass -pf
 '(He) forwarded to a woman'
- (d) barataa -d'aa-f sirrees-e
 Student- foc-dat correct-pf
 '(He) corrected for a student.'

In (9a-d) the dative case marker /-f/ is preceded by /-d'a/ the focus marker. It may also occur following the genitive copula -ti and the focus marker /-tii/. Consider the examples that follow.

- 10 (a) kuni obboleessa isaa –ti
 this brother his –cop.
 ‘This is his brother.’
- (b) obboleessa isaa –tii –f kenn-e
 brother his –foc –dat give-pf
 ‘He gave for his brother.’
- (c) obboleessa isaan –i –tii –f bit-e
 brother their-epe-foc–dat buy-pf
 ‘They bought for their brother’

In (10a) above, the copula /-ti/ appears with the short vowel /-i/. When /-ti/ encliticizes to grammatical morpheme(s), it triggers vowel lengthening. In (10b-c) the dative case marker occurs after long vowel.

3.1.1.4 Genitive Case

In Afaan Oromo, genitive case includes many types, among which Baye (1986) has identified the following: genitive of location, genitive of possession, genitive of source, genitive of time, and genitive of purpose.

Abebe (2002:22) has stated that the genitive case in Afaan Oromo is marked by long vowel and high tone on the modifier of a head word. The following examples may illustrate how this is realized in Afaan Oromo.

- 11 (a) buddeena garbuu (genitive of source)
 bread of-barley
 ‘Bread made from barely.’
- (b) hattuu kaleessaa (genitive of time)
 thief of-yesterday
 ‘Yesterday’s thief’

- (c) mana tuluú (genitive of possessive)
house Tuluu
'Tulu's house'
- (d) horii booranáa (genitive of location)
cattle of-borona
'Cattle from borana'
- (e) mid'aan saññii (genitive of purposive)
grain for-seed
'A seed grain'

According to Gragg (1976:175), the use of word level pitch and stress patterns are characteristic of Afaan Oromo. Pitch and stress have two purposes. They contribute to the phonological shape of a word and to its morphological or syntactic role.

In the process of marking genitive case, vowel length and pitch are involved. For example, in (11a), the head noun, which is in genitive case, is located at the initial position of the NP. In this phrase, both the head word and the modifier have short final vowel in their base forms. In denoting the genitive of source, the final vowel of the modifier, which was short, becomes long and carries high pitch. Nouns end in short vowel mark genitive case in two ways.

Some head nouns lengthen their final vowel /-i/ with high pitch. Consider the following examples.

- 12 (a) hubboo bišàan-ii
 pot of-water
 'Pot of water'
- (b) rooba halkàn-ii
 rain of -night
 'Rain of night'
- (c) muka k'òràan-ii
 wood of -fire
 'wood for use in kitchen'
- (d) gootara mid'aan-ii
 grain storage of-grain
 'Storage of grain'

In the examples (12a-d), the complements of the head nouns have the base forms *bišàani* 'water' in (12a), *halkani* 'night' in (12b), *k'òraani* 'firewood' in (11c) and *mid'aani* 'grain' in (12d). These nouns show genitive case by lengthening the final vowel and by high pitch.

The second groups of heads that end in consonants are pronominal. According to Abebe (2002:23) a pronominal which ends in a single consonant preceded by a long vowel does not take /-ii/ for its genitive possessive. In stead, such nouns appear in their base forms. The following examples may illustrate this.

- 13 (a) muc'aa asteer-Ø
 child of-Aster -gen
 'Aster's child'
- (b) mana galaan- Ø
 house of -galan -gen
 'Galan's house'

- (c) farda kamaal- Ø
 horse of-kamal -gen
 'Kamal's horse'.

In (13a-c) above, the modifier shows no overt genitive case marker. I want to refute Abebe's argument about pronominal and nouns that end in consonants. In Afaan Oromo, pronominal or nouns do not end in consonants: rather they end in vowels. A native monolingual person in Afaan Oromo suffixes a short [-i], long [-ii], or a devoiced [-i̥] when he /she pronounces words seemingly endings in consonants. Consider the following examples.

<u>Nouns that end in consonant</u>	<u>A native monolingual Afaan Oromo speaker's Pronunciation</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
(a) poolis	[poolisii]	'police'
(b) ?aster	[?asteeri]	'Aste'
(c) ?tspoort	[?ispoortii]	'sport'
(d) ?tnnät	[?innaati]	'mothe'
(e) k'alläb	[k'alläbii]	'board'
(f) jämäl	[jamaali]	'Jema'

Table 3: consonant ending loan words and their pronunciation.

As it is illustrated in table (3) the borrowed words and nouns end in consonants are difficult for a native monolingual of Afaan Oromo. A native monolingual uses the vowel *i* to such words in order to pronounce them. Thus, from the examples given (above) we may conclude that in this language words do not end in consonants and in their genitive case they occur with a vowel(s). Non- monolingual or schooled Oromos may pronounce such forms without difficulty. Habte (2003:19) explained that most unschooled native speakers could not pronounce words that end in consonants. Hence, they insert the front, high vowel *-i*.

3.1.1.5 Instrumental Case

An instrumental case encodes the instrument with which an action is carried out, (Blake 2001:154). Consider the following examples.

- 14 (a) inni ko p'p'ee-d'aa-n barreess-e
he-nom pen-foc-inst write-pf
'He wrote with a pen'
- (b) inni k'awwee-d'aa-n ajjees-e
he-nom gun -foc-inst kill-pf
'He killed with a gun'
- (c) inni kop'p'ee diimaa-n barreess-e
he-nom pen red -inst write-pf
'He wrote with a red pen'
- (d) inni k'awwee namaa-tii-n ajjees-e
he-nom gun man-gen-inst kill-pf
'He killed with somebody's gun'

In the above examples, (14 a-d) the instrumental case marker is /-n/ which is a postposition. Its function as its name suggests is denoting the instrument used. In (14a) and (14c) above the instrument used is 'pen' with which the action of writing was performed. In (14b) and (14d) the instrument used is 'gun' for the action of 'killing.' In these examples, the instrumental case marker /-n/ is encliticized to the instrumental nouns. When the head noun appears without a modifier, the postpositional enclitic occurs with the head noun and when there is a modifier, the enclitic occurs with it. In Afaan Oromo, the focus marker /-d'a/ and the possessive genitive marker /-tii/ as in (14 a, b, c) may occur following the instrumental head noun and the instrumental postpositional enclitic /-n/.

3.1.2 The Oblique Case

Oblique case is not about syntactic functions but about semantic functions. According to Blake (2001:9), in most languages, adpositions (postpositions and prepositions) play, at least, some role in marking the relations of dependent nouns with their heads. In Afaan Oromo, postpositions and preposition perform this function of marking such dependency. Consider the following examples.

- 15 (a) tulluu-n mana keessaa jir-a
T-nom house inside present-impf
'Tulu is in a house'
- (b) tulluu-n mana gubbaa jir-a
T-nom house on present-impf.
'Tulu is on a house'
- (c) tulluu-n gara mana barumsaa deem-e
T-nom- to school go-pf
'Tulu went to a school'

In (15a) above *keessaa* 'in,' and *gubbaa* 'on' in (15b) are postpositions whereas *gara* 'to' in (15c) is a preposition. The adpositions (preposition and postpositions) in these examples occur without any case affixes as case is abstract in such structure.

According to Roberts (1997:55) in many languages case marking is morphological in DPs. Syntactic case marking takes place in designated structural positions where syntactic functions like subject, object, etc are expressed. If a DP has to have such a function, it has to occur in the position of that function. For example, if a DP has to show nominative case, it should be associated with the syntactic function of subject and should occur in subject position. Morphological case is a particular kind of nominal inflection whereas abstract case⁸ is a theoretical construct. (Roberts 1997:55).

3.2 Case Checking

In the Minimalist Programme, derivations are driven by the need to check inflectional morphology such as agreement, tense, aspect, focus, case, etc. According to Sobin (1997:322) agreement and case features can only be checked in certain 'local'⁹ structural positions, chiefly is the specifier of a head, hence, the need for categories to move to these positions.

Case and agreement features are associated with DP arguments. And features of functional categories are said to be either 'strong' or 'weak' with respect to their visibility at the PF interface. 'Strong' Agr features are visible at PF; hence they should be checked off before the interface. 'Weak' features are not visible; hence they may not be checked.

To show how inflectional morphology is checked, in specifier-head and head-head relations, let us consider the following example.

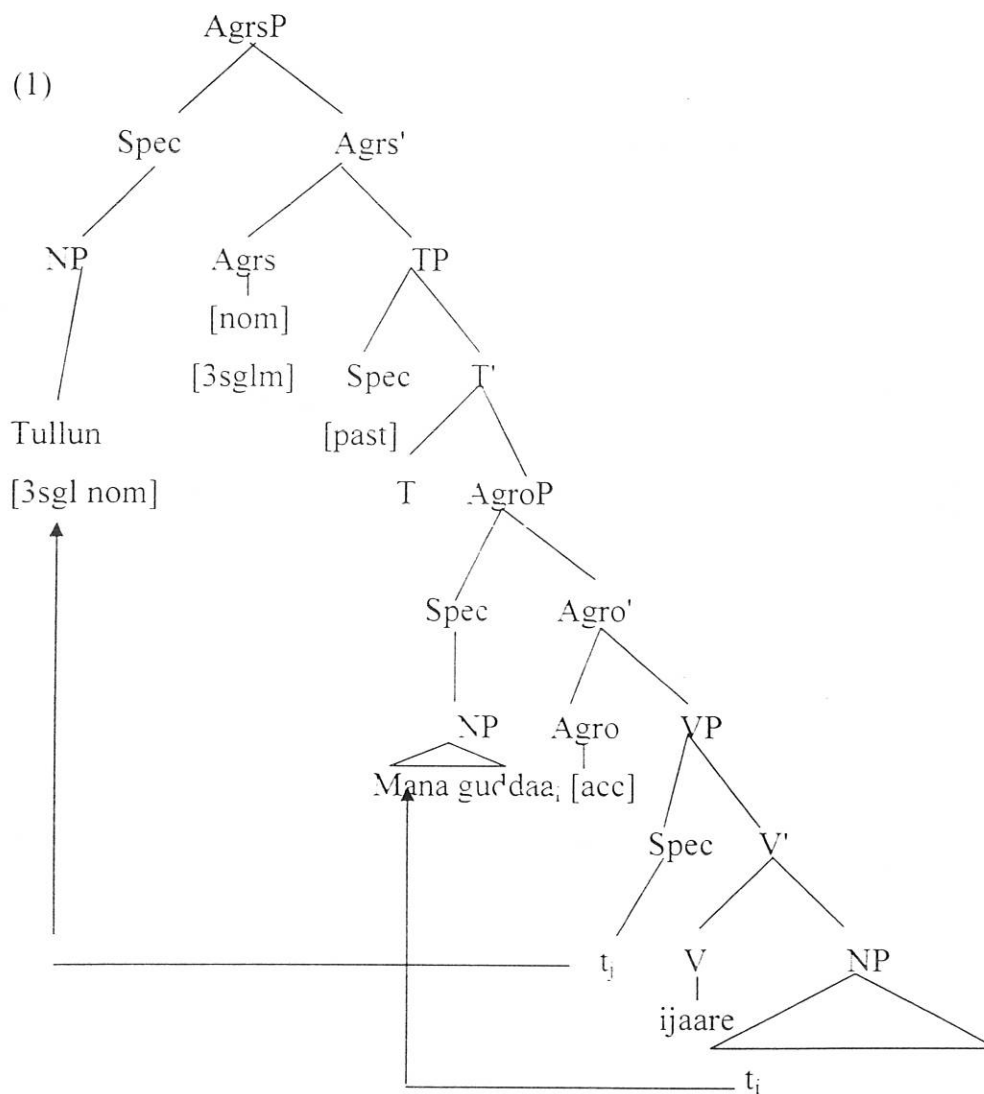
- 16 *tullu-n mana guddaa ijaar-e*
 T -nom house-big build -pf
 'Tullu built a big house.'

SpecVP is not a position where a NP or DP can receive nominative case and the case filter dictates that movement from this position is always obligatory. The subject and object positions in VP are the positions where subjects and objects receive their θ -roles.

In (16) above *Tullu* is raised from SpecVP to spec AgrsP to check the nominative case features of the NP in a spec of Agrs. SpecAgrs is the nearest available case position of SpecVP. In the same way, the object *mana guddaa* moves to the SpecAgroP to check accusative case from specAgrop. The movement of the object to spec of AgroP crosses the spec of VP, which was the original position of the subject. Here it violates the rule of the shortest move¹⁰.

In Afaan Oromo verbs do not move to TP. They remain in their original place in V of VP. Verbs contain agreement features, which must be checked against both the subject and object DPs. It is mentioned that verbs and nouns are taken from the lexicon fully inflected with inflectional affixes. The T contains the 'V-feature' past tense to check against the past tense feature on the verb *ijaare*. Sentence (16) can be shown as follows.

Cf: 16 tuluu-n mana guddaa ijaar-e,
 'Tullu built a big house.'



Since case and agreement features are checked in specifier position and the number feature of NP is singular, the verb is singular.

Marantz (1995:363) stated the following concerning the functional nodes of Agreement and tense.

The functional categories of Agr and T in this system (in the computational system of language) are the locus of tense and agreement features that may check off or eliminate the corresponding features on a verb that moves up and adjoins to these categories. Agr and T also contain case and phi-features that they may check off against features of NPs (DPs) that raise to their specs. In the MP, these functional nodes never contain items from the lexicon; they are not the positions in which inflectional affixes are inserted. Rather, inflectional affixes are attached to items of the lexical categories in the lexicon. The functional nodes of Agr and T serve only to carry the morphological (inflectional) features necessary to check off the features on Ns and Vs.

As it is shown in (16) the NP 'tulluun' is moved to spec AgrsP to check its case features. In the same way the NP *mana guddaa* move to the position SpecAgro from its original position in the complement of VP to check its case and Agreement features, while the verb *ijaare* remains in its VP position in V- head.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. Summary and Conclusion

In this chapter, the main issues that have been dealt with throughout the thesis are summarized. The general objectives of the thesis are two: identifying the different types of functional categories, and examining their structures in simple clauses of Afaan Oromo. The thesis consists of four chapters.

Chapter one is an introduction about the background of the study, the people, the language, methodology, significance, objectives, the relevant literature review and theoretical framework.

In chapter two the major functional categories in Afaan Oromo have been presented. It has been stated that functional categories are words which serve primarily to carry information about grammatical properties of expressions of clauses. They include such features as number, gender, person, case, aspect, etc. The categories discussed in the chapter include determiners, pronouns, auxiliaries, tenses, negation and agreement.

In Afaan Oromo two tenses are identified: past and non-past. The non-past includes present and future tenses. It is stated in Girma and Mayer (2001:144) that tense and aspect are closely related to time concepts. Aspect is divided into perfective and imperfective. The aspect used for incomplete actions is imperfective /progressive and that used to indicate completed actions is perfective aspect. In Afaan Oromo aspect is denoted by verbs, whereas tense is denoted by auxiliaries.

Three negative markers are identified: *hin-n-*, *hin-* and *miti*. *hin-n-* and *hin-* are used with verbals while *miti* is used with nouns, adjectivals and postpositional heads.

As it has been stated in Radford (1997:61) the categorial properties of words are specified by assigning each word to an appropriate category. The properties of lexical words are

specified in terms of a set of grammatical features. Auxiliaries appear to be related to verbs, whereas pronouns and determiners are associated with nouns, adjectives, etc.

In MP, morphological features include those which are associated with tense, case and agreement. Since lexical categories are fully inflected in the lexicon, all functional categories have maximal projection only. Their positions have been shown in linear and hierarchical representations.

Chapter three is about case. In the morphosyntax of Afaan Oromo case markers occur as clitics on head words. In Blake (2001:145) it is stated that cases are not isomorphic across languages: i.e. languages do not generally have the same number of cases with each case in one language matching the extension of a corresponding one in other languages. For instance, Afaan Oromo marks the instrumental case with postpositional clitics while English uses prepositions. Case is commonly divided in two categories: grammatical case and oblique case. Grammatical case refers to the syntactic functions of noun (noun phrase), while oblique case refers to semantic functions. In Afaan Oromo, lexical nouns are morphologically marked for their grammatical case.

Nominative, accusative, dative, genitive and instrumental cases are identified and discussed from a morphosyntax point of view.

Nominative case is indicated by an inflectional suffix *-ni*, which has phonologically conditioned variants. The dative case marker in Afaan Oromo is */-f*. This case encodes the indirect object. In this language, the instrumental case marker is */-n/* which is suffixed to the noun. Its function is denoting the instrument used in carrying out something.

In the Minimalist Programme, derivations are driven by need to check agreement and case features of certain constituents. Case features are 'strong' or 'weak' at the PF interface. All morphologically realized cases have strong features, which trigger movement to maximal

projection for checking features. In Afaan Oromo, verbal agreement features are checked by attraction: there is no category movement.

Feature checking takes place whenever an item bearing a feature moves to the checking domain of a head bearing a matching feature. It has been shown that the checking domain of a head is the spec position of its maximal projection.

In addition, case and phi-feature checking are discussed. According to Marantz (1995:363) the functional categories of Agr and T contain case and phi-features that may need to be checked against the features of NPs (DPs) that raise to their specs.

Notes to the Chapters

1. To disambiguate, I prefer to use Afaan Oromo instead of Oromo to refer to the language through out this the is.
2. A derivation converges if the resulting PF representation contains only phonetically interpretable features, and the associated LF representation contains only semantically interpretable features.
3. According to Radford (1997:64) the two binary grammatical features, i.e. \pm N (nominal/ non-nominal) and \pm V (verbal/ non- verbal) decomposes in to feature matrices as follows:

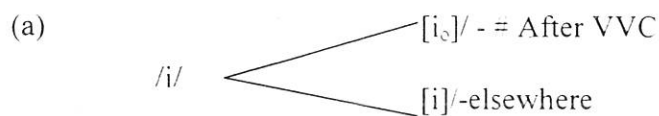
V(erb) = [+V, -N]

N(oun) = [+N, -V]

A(djective) = [+N, -V]

P(reposition) = [-N, -V]

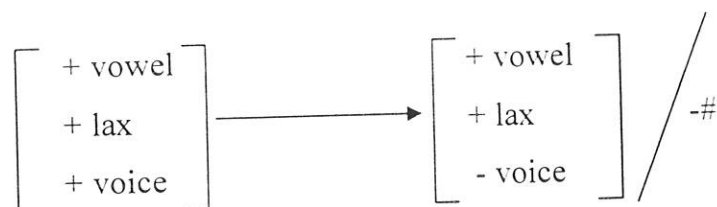
4. The term portmanteau is used to refer to a single morpheme simultaneously represents a bundle of several different grammatical elements. (Katamba 1993:36). For example, *-čč-* in *nam -i- čč-a* signals the three morphemes simultaneously; namely, third person, masculine and singular.
5. The realization of allophonic variants which mark the nominative case /-ni/ in Afaan Oromo may represent diagrammatically as follows.



The distribution of a phoneme /i/ is:-

- [i₀] appears at a word final following [l],[t], [m], [n] and [r]
- [i] appears else where
- [i] and [i₀] never occur in identical phonetic environment. [i₀] is an allophone of phoneme /i/.

We have discussed that in Afaan Oromo words do not end in consonants; rather they suffix lax (short) devoiced vowel at a word final. This process can be formalized as follows.



A voice lax (short) vowel becomes a voiceless lax vowel at a word final. In the same way:



The distribution of phoneme /ni/ is:-

- [ni₀] appears at a word final following long vowel, while [ni] appears elsewhere.

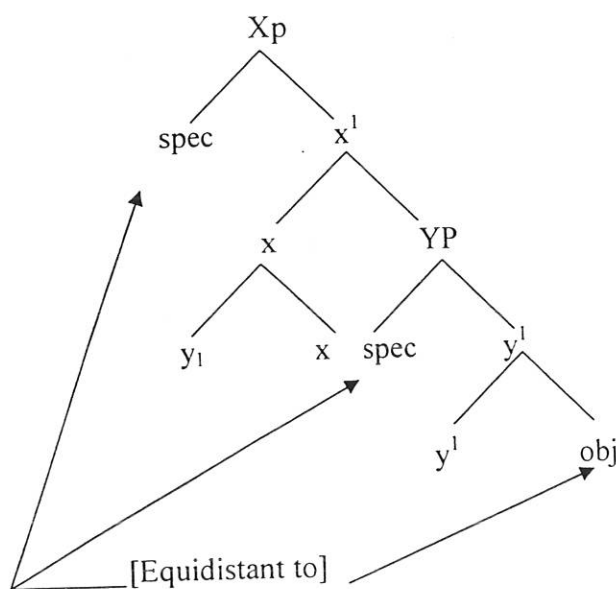
6. According to Crowley (1997:47-48) assimilation is the influence of one sound upon another. When one sound causes another sound to change, the two sounds end up being more similar to each other in some way. In other words assimilation always results from a sound becoming more like another near by sound in terms of one or more of its phonetic characteristics.

Assimilation can be regressive or progressive. In regressive assimilation the force of the change operates backwards in the word; i.e. from right to left; while in progressive assimilation the preceding sound exerts its influence over the sound that follows.

The assimilating sounds adopt features value already passed by its neighbours. In Afaan Oromo some examples which express conditioned changes with their expressions in words are given below.

- (a) /n/ → [m] / - [b]
 /Sinbiraa/ → [s^yimb^yiraa]
- (b) /n/ → [ñ] / - [ñ]
 /k'unc'ee/ → [k^wuñc^yee]
- (c) /n/ → [r] / - [r]
 /jar-ni/ → [jarri]
- (d) /n/ → [l] / - [l]
 /jal-ni/ → [jalli]

7. Since the purpose of this thesis is functional categories of Afaan Oromo, I do not discuss the phonology of the language. I would like to suggest that the issue needs further research.
8. The abstract case is not included in this thesis, because the thesis deals with functional categories which are morphologically realized.
9. The term *local* in this context refers to 'place'. Local cases express notions of location ('at'), destination ('to'), source ('from') and path ('through').
10. Marantz (1995:369) refers to Chomsky and defined the shortest movement as 'a notion of equidistance that allows the spec of XP and the spec of YP that is a complement to x to be equidistant from an element inside Y just in case Y adjoins to x, as shown below.'



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Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work, has not been presented for degree in any university and that all sources of material used for this thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name Gema da Hca de

Signature 

Place AAU

Date of Submission 25/07/06

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as a thesis advisor.

Name Baye Tunam

Signature 