

FOCUS AND COPULA IN OROMO: A TYPOLOGICAL STUDY
ACROSS SIX DIALECTS

BY

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Abstract

This study provides a comparative description of focus and copula constructions among six dialects of Oromo that are spoken in Ethiopia. It identifies the linguistic means that express focus and copula, describes morphosyntactic constraints of focus and copular morphemes, investigates the relation between focus and copula, and discovers possible diachronic relationships between them. The study makes a significant contribution to the development of the scientific study of Oromo, and to typological and comparative linguistics. Data were mainly collected from six field sites: Dembidollo, Fiche, Diredawa, Yabello, Kamise, and Robe / Shashemene. Then, the data were analyzed within an eclectic framework that consists of information structure, functional grammar, and grammaticalization theory.

The results show that focus in Oromo is realized morphologically, syntactically, and prosodically. It has been confirmed that focus is controlled either syntactically or pragmatically. The scope of focus can be on the subject, object, verb, predicate, and sentence. Most of the identified focus marking morphemes are commonly shared among the six dialects with very minor differences. In Oromo, one or more than one focus markers can occur in a single sentence. The types of focus that have been identified are: contrastive, assertive, imperative, additive, continuous, exclamatory, predicative, interrogative, and sentential. In addition to the morphological focus marking morphemes, focus is realized syntactically through clefting and prosodically through the use of stress.

Oromo uses a copula in the present and non-present tenses. The copulas in Oromo can be grouped as verbal and non-verbal. While the non-verbal copulas are invariable, the verbal copulas inflect for different grammatical categories. The affirmative copula suffixes are *-dha*, *-ti*, and *-uma*. The negative particle copula is *miti*. The Eastern and Southern Oromo use a simple juxtaposition of the subject and the predicate instead of the invariable copular suffix *-dha*. A derivational operation can also be used as a copula in Oromo. The morphemes *-oom*, *-eess*, and *-at* derive verbs from nouns and / or adjectives that can be used as a predicate nominal clause. The verbal copulas in Oromo are *jir-* 'EXIST' which is used in the present tense, *tur-* 'BE' which is used in the past tense, and *ta'* 'BECOME' which is used in the future tense. Copulas show two independent developments: they can grammaticalize into a focus marker and into a source marker. As a result, copula, focus, and source markers are extremely interrelated in Oromo.

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Note on transcription

The Roman-based script of the Oromo writing system is used to transcribe the data. Most of the symbols are similar to the IPA with some minor differences. Long vowels and geminate consonants are written twice as opposed to the singleton representation.

Symbols used	IPA equivalent	Symbols used	IPA equivalent
a	a	s	s
b	b	t	t
c	ʃ	u	u
d	d	w	w
e	e	x	t'
f	f	y	j
g	g	'	ʔ
h	h	ch	ʃ
i	i	sh	ʃ
j	dʒ	dh	d
k	k	ny	ɲ
l	l	ph	p'
m	m	aa	a:
n	n	ii	i:
o	o	ee	e:
p	p	oo	o:
q	k'	uu	u:
r	r		

Abbreviations

1	First person	LOC	Locative
2	Second person	M	Masculine
3	Third person	NEG	Negative
ABL	Ablative	NEG.PAR COP	Negative particle copula
ABS	Absolutive	NOM	Nominative
ADD.FOC	Additive focus	NP	Noun phrase
ADJ	Adjective	OBJ.FOC1	Object focus one (- <i>dha</i>)
AGR	Agreement	OBJ.FOC2	Object focus two (- <i>tii</i>)
AUX	Auxiliary	OBJ.FOC3	Object focus three (- <i>ti</i>)
BEN	Benefactive	OBJ.FOC4	Object focus four (- <i>illee</i>)
BENE	Beneficiary	OBJ.FOC5	Object focus five (- <i>uma</i>)
C	Central	P	Plural
CAUS	Causative	PAR.COP	Particle copula
C.F	Cross reference	PASS	Passive
CON	Conjunction	PFV	Perfective
COP	Copula	POSS	Possessive
CVB	Converb	PRE.FOC1	Predicative focus one
DEF	Definite	PRE.FOC2	Predicative focus two
DEP	Dependent	PROG	Progressive
DM	Discourse marker	PRP	Preposition
DO1	Derivational operation 1 (- <i>oom</i>)	Q	Question
DO2	Derivational operation 2 (- <i>eess</i>)	RD	Reduplication
DO3	Derivational operation 3 (- <i>at</i>)	REL	Relativizer
DUR	Durative	S	Southern (with dialects)
E	Eastern	S	Singular (with grammatical category)
E.C	Ethiopian calendar	SIL	Summer Institute of Linguistics
EMPH	Emphatic	SIN	Singulative
EPEN	Epenthetic	SUB.FOC1	Subject focus one (- <i>tu</i>)
EXC.FOC	Exclamatory focus	SUB.FOC2	Subject focus two (- <i>illee</i>)
F	Feminine	SUB.FOC3	Subject focus three (- <i>uu</i>)
FOC	Focus	SUB.FOC4	Subject focus four (- <i>oo</i>)
GEN	Genitive	SUB.FOC5	Subject focus five (- <i>uma</i>)
CS1	Copula suffix one (- <i>dha</i>)	SUBJ	Subject case
CS2	Copula suffix two (- <i>ti</i>)	V.COP1	Verbal copula one (<i>jir-</i>)
CS3	Copula suffix three (- <i>uma</i>)	V.COP2	Verbal copula two (<i>tur-</i>)
CS4	Copula suffix four (∅)	V.COP3	Verbal copula three (<i>ta'-</i>)
IMP	Imperative	V.FOC1	Verb focus one (<i>hin-</i>)
IMP.FOC	Imperative focus	V.FOC2	Verb focus two (<i>ni-</i>)
INS	Instrumental	V.FOC3	Verb focus three (<i>hinuma</i>)
INT.FOC	Interrogative focus	V.FOC4	Verb focus four (<i>ya</i>)
IPFV	Imperfective	VN	Verbal noun
JUS	Jussive	W	Western

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background

Oromo¹ belongs to the Lowland East Cushitic sub-group of the Afro-asiatic phylum. It is found in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia. In Ethiopia, it is spoken mainly in the Oromia Regional State. The area where the language is spoken ranges from Tigray (Raya) in the North to Kenya in the South, and from Wellegga in the West to Hararge in the East with Addis Ababa at the center of the two areas. According to the results of the 2007 census, the number of Oromo speakers is 25,489,024. The language is used for inter-group and wider communication among speakers of other languages in the different parts of the country (Appleyard 2012:236; Kebede 2009:1).

There are different studies on Oromo dialects. The most recent is Feda (2015:1-10) who classified Oromo into six dialects: Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western, Central, and Southeastern.

The main aim of my study is a description of focus and copula in Oromo from a comparative-typological point of view. The study of focus and copula is a cross-linguistic phenomenon, but it has been given less attention in Oromo. The few existing grammars of Oromo, for example, Gragg (1976), Owens (1985), Griefenow-Mewis (2001), mention very few things regarding focus and copula in Oromo.

On the other hand, there are a handful of studies that have been done specifically either on focus or copula in Oromo. Unfortunately, these studies are limited to a certain dialect only. For instance, Baye (1988) and Dabala & Meyer (2003) discuss focus phenomena in the Western dialect. Taha (1990) deals with types of focus based on the Eastern dialect. However, nothing has been said regarding this issue in the remaining dialects (i.e. Northern, Southern, Central, and Southeastern). Similarly, Ishetu (1981) and Crass et al. (2005) discuss the issue of copular construction in Oromo based on the Western dialect. Both studies do not intend to touch upon the same issue in the remaining dialects. Therefore, the study of focus and copula in Oromo is limited so far to a few dialects, but not much is known about these phenomena in the other dialects.

Above all, there is no study that treats focus and copula in Oromo together. However, the general trend (cf. Crass & Meyer 2007:7) shows that focus and copula are interrelated issues. For the absence of some focus markers in some dialects (for example Eastern and Southern), it is not clearly known whether it is just zero or an optional variant. There is also a long-standing disagreement and debate regarding the morpheme *-tu*, as a focus marker and the morpheme *-ti*, as a copula or what else they actually represent in Oromo. The disagreement

¹ In this study, I used the term Oromo to refer to both the language and the people (see Debela 2010:3-4 for a detailed discussion on the language naming).

and debate on the morphemes that should represent focus and / or copula needs a clear answer.

The need for the present study arises from these unclear and partly undescribed typological facts of focus and copula in Oromo. As Oromo is a literary language, a comprehensive study of focus and copula would also be assumed to help for its standardization. Therefore, an investigation of focus and copula together in a way that would be representative of the language is an important research topic in Oromo study, and beyond.

1.2 Research questions

The present study answers the following basic research questions of the study:

1. What are the linguistic means that express focus and copular functions?
2. What are the focus and copula morphemes and their phonological and morphosyntactic constraints across the six dialects of Oromo?
3. What are the relations between focus and copula constructions in each of the six Oromo dialects?
4. What are the possible diachronic relationships and developments of focus and copula morphemes in the six Oromo dialects?

1.3 Statement of the problem

The existing studies on focus and copula in Oromo are mainly based on the Western or Mecha dialect of Oromo. Some dialects of Oromo are left undescribed with regard to focus and copular constructions. There are also controversial and unsolved issues regarding certain assumed copula and focus morphemes which need to be answered. For example, the morpheme *-dha* (a copula suffix) is not used as a copula everywhere. Consequently, a representative study of focus and copula that is based on various existing dialects of Oromo is lacking. Therefore, the present study would fill in this research gap through descriptive and comparative analysis of focus and copula in Oromo by involving six dialects.

1.4 Objective

The main objective of this study is to identify, describe, and compare focus and copula constructions in six Oromo dialects, namely Northern (Wollo), Southern (Borana), Eastern (Harar), Western (Mecha), Central (Tulama), and Southeastern (Arsi / Bale). This includes the following specific objectives:

1. Identify and specify the linguistic means to express copular and focus functions.
2. Describe the focus and copula morphemes and their phonological and morphosyntactic constraints in the six Oromo dialects.
3. Investigate the relation between copula and focus constructions in each of the six Oromo dialects.
4. Discover possible diachronic relationships and grammaticalization of copula and focus morphemes across the six Oromo dialects.

1.5 Scope

The study is limited to the analysis and typological comparison of focus and copula in six Oromo dialects spoken in Ethiopia, namely Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western, Central, and Southeastern. These six selected dialects are usually recognized as the major dialects of Oromo in the literature (Feda 2015:7). It is also to make a description of focus and copula in the undescribed dialects (i.e. Northern, Southern, Central, and Southeastern) from a broader perspective. The Western dialect, where former focus and copular studies in Oromo are based on, is assumed to help for a better comparative analysis. The present study is not concerned with the varieties of Oromo that are spoken in Kenya and Somalia.

1.6 Significance

This study has a significant contribution to the study of Oromo in general and to typological studies in particular. Many African languages mark focus through particles, as opposed to European languages that do not mark it overtly (Kalinowski 2015:3; König 1991:29). The description of focus and copula in Oromo helps to develop a better understanding of focus marking patterns across the languages of the world.

In Oromo, the existing literature on focus and copula is mainly based on a single variety of the language, namely the Western (Mecha) dialect. The other dialects are unstudied in this regard. The description of focus and copula in Oromo, which incorporates the remaining dialects, has therefore significant contribution to know more about this phenomenon and to know the way focus and copula behave in the other dialects as well.

The emergence of Oromo literature goes back to the nineteenth century. Evidently, written Oromo has also been started by the end of the nineteenth century. For example, Onesimus Nesib translated the Bible into Oromo in 1899 and (after several years of this action) the first officially allowed Oromo newspaper (Bariisaa) appeared in 1975 (Gragg 1976: 168 & 172). Afterwards, Oromo has been functioning as one of the literary languages of Ethiopia for more than two decades. Therefore, a study of focus and copula that involves more dialects of the language would help for the standardization of the language.

The study of focus and copula from a comparative point of view is also assumed to encourage the development of comparative study either in the Lowland East Cushitic sub-group to which Oromo belongs, or to the East Cushitic group as a whole.

Chapter Two

Review of related literature

2.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the following important points. The first one is about the theoretical framework that is followed in the study. Next to this, it presents a general typological review of focus and copula and explains the connection between focus and copula. The other important point presented in this chapter is the literature review which consists of a subsection called a general description of Oromo that presents different points that have been said regarding focus and copula in different grammatical studies (theses are not specific studies on focus and copula). In addition to this, specific studies of focus in Oromo, specific studies of copula in Oromo, and a summary point are also provided.

2.2 Theoretical framework

An eclectic method, which comprises of theory of information structure, the theory of functional grammar, and grammaticalization theory, is adopted and used as a theoretical framework in this study. The facts of the present study have been explained and stated within these frameworks. Grammaticalization theory is needed because any possible development of copula to focus or the reverse development of focus to copula is explained and handled through this framework.

The discussion on the theory of information structure used in the present study is based on the one that has been developed by Lambrecht (1994) and reviewed by Polinsky (1999). According to Lambrecht (1994) mentioned in Polinsky (1999:567) information structure “is concerned with the form of utterances in relation to assumed mental states of speakers and hearers”. Regarding the relationship among information structure, mental representations, and linguistic forms, Polinsky (1999:567), explains that the mental representation of referents is used for the following important points: it is the one that forms the content of information structure and determines the form of linguistic expressions. According to Polinsky (1999-567-568), Lambrecht (1994) conceives information as relational, but not as segmentational, (i.e., argues against segmenting information in a sentence into old and new and criticizes theories that associate old information with topic and new information with focus). The fundamental category of information structure is, therefore, relational, i.e., it creates relations between propositions and representations of linguistic expressions (Polinsky 1999:568). As a result of this, information is not expressed through either syntactic structures or lexical categories. It is also worth noticing that the issue of associating old information with topic and new with focus goes against the basic distinction of properties and relations.

Polinsky (1999:568) states further that when information is defined as relational, it means that information structure has to be taken as a distinct constituent of the linguistic representation of a clause that exists between mental representations (of a given thing) and linguistic structures; the definition shows three approaches to the analysis of information structure: considering the mental representations of discourse participants, showing how

these mental representations develop into the category of information structure, and showing their connection to sentence form. It has also been indicated that Lambrecht (1994) proposed that information structure has a direct grammatical effect in a clause or sentence. This fact puts him as different from many schools of thought and functionalist approaches which usually define information structure as being over any possible linguistic element.

A proposition reflects two types of representations, i.e., the actual state of affairs (semantic presuppositions) and what the speaker assumes about the listener's state of mind (pragmatic presuppositions); semantic presupposition decides the semantic well-formedness while pragmatic presupposition creates relationship and decides the pragmatic appropriateness of linguistic expressions (Polinsky 1999:568). Information structure needs two categories: properties (which are shown in terms of mental representations) and relations (which are established in terms of topic and focus) (Polinsky 1999:569). Topic and focus are the two major concepts (categories) of information structure; they have a relation with a proposition and exist separately from the linguistic expressions that represent them; both topic and focus are, therefore, defined relationally (Polinsky 1999:571). Topic is defined in terms of a proposition that talks about some topic; in addition to the relational property it has, topic should indicate a discourse referent (Polinsky 1999:572). According to Polinsky (1999:574) focus is defined, on the other hand, "as the element of information wherein the presupposition and assertion differ from each other"; based on the definition, focus is differentiated from assertion in a sense that it complements the presupposition and even sometimes mentioned for being incorporated in the assertion. Finally, Polinsky (1999:580) clearly states that Lambrecht (1994) has developed a well-structured theory of information structure as a distinct linguistic form. Focus in Oromo is, therefore, comparatively described across the six dialects of Oromo within the framework of the theory of information structure.

Two general paradigms can be mentioned on how people view natural language: formal (which sees language as a formal object) and functional paradigm (which views language as a means of communication) (Dik 1997:2-3). The theory of functional grammar is a general theory that is concerned with the grammatical structure of languages (Dik 1997:2). It tries to describe and explain any form of linguistic expression of a language in a sufficient manner. There are two types of rules that linguistics must deal with functionally: rules that govern the organization of linguistic expressions and rules that govern the distribution of verbal interaction (pragmatic rules) (Dik 1997:3-4). The two principles of functional explanation that should be applied while describing and explaining linguistic expressions are: to explain the rules governing linguistic elements with their function and incorporating the theory of linguistic expressions into a pragmatic theory of verbal interaction (Dik 1997:4).

Dik (1997:4-8) explains the functional paradigm in terms of answering questions regarding the nature and function of human language. Language exists for the sake of a given purpose and is defined in terms of the purpose it has as an instrument used for social interaction. The main function of human language is, therefore, to make communication. The ability to produce and understand linguistic forms and the ability to use them appropriately have also been mentioned for the association it has with the mind (psychology). Linguistic forms can

be well understood when used in terms of their functional settings. This is a point that explains the relation between language and its use. Language acquisition is facilitated in terms of the predetermined genetic factors and environmental communicative interaction. From a functional point of view, language universals (common properties of languages) are taken as external factors that determine the nature of human language. Within the functional paradigm, the relationship among pragmatics, semantics, and syntax is explained within the framework of pragmatics within which semantics and syntax should be studied. The basic philosophy that determines functional grammar is explained in terms of the above-mentioned points (functional paradigm).

The theory of functional grammar aims at providing a means to develop functional grammars of individual languages; its highest aim, on the other hand, is to give a comprehensive description and analysis of discourse which is assumed to incorporate all possible rules and generalizations of a language (Dik 1997:12). As a result of this, it is expected to meet the standards of descriptive adequacy. The standards of adequacy which are mentioned for having importance for the theory of functional grammar are: pragmatic adequacy, psychological adequacy, and typological adequacy together with the relationship among the standards (Dik 1997:13-15). Functional grammar should be seen in terms of being incorporated into the pragmatic theory; pragmatic adequacy is considered as advanced one if it fits to pragmatic theory; functional grammar is needed to show features of linguistic elements in a way they are used and related to rules that govern verbal interaction (Dik 1997:13). Psychological adequacy is the one that is related to psychological models of linguistic competence and behavior that show production and comprehension sub-divisions (Dik 1997:13-14). The theory of functional grammar must be typologically adequate in a sense that it should describe grammars of different languages, show similarities and differences among languages scientifically, and it should be the one that is developed based on inputs from several languages (Dik 1997:14-15). Typological adequacy is loosely connected to pragmatic and psychological adequacies which should be improved in terms of developing thorough typological theory that has psychological and pragmatic importance (Dik 1997:15).

As a constraint, the theory of functional grammar can be either very weak (unable to describe very well) or very strong (gives description beyond the class of languages); if it becomes too strong, the power should be controlled by excluding transformational rules (assumptions) (Dik 1997:18). In functional grammar, emphasis is given to functions or relations than to categories (Dik 1997:25). A text can be divided into clause and extra-clause elements where the structure of these elements is studied within functional grammar (Dik 1997:49). The elements of a clause are dependent on one another and form a network in which the structure functions at different levels (Dik 1997:56). It has also been explained that clause structure is formed by predication; lexical elements are studied as predicates and different types of predicates are also noticed (the main ones are verbal, adjectival, and nominal) (Dik 1997:58-61). Broadly speaking, predicates can be divided into verbal and non-verbal. In addition to verbs, languages can have non-verbal elements that are used in predicative functions (adjective, copula support, nominal, adpositional, possessive, etc) (Dik 1997:193). As

opposed to the previous approaches, predicates have to be studied in terms of the function they have while forming predicates (Dik 1997:194). Copula support is, therefore, the use of a copula in the expression of non-verbal predication (Dik 1997:193). The existence of non-verbal predicate urges the use of a copula (Dik 1997:212). Therefore, copula support, i.e., the use of a copula in a non-verbal predication, is one of the most important theoretical explanations of functional grammar that is used in the present study for the description and comparative analysis of copula across the six dialects of Oromo.

Even though different definitions have been suggested for grammaticalization and it appears not a uniform concept, many recent approaches and theoretical explanations are based on the grammaticalization viewpoint (Narrog & Heine 2012:2). Bisang (2012:102), who considers it as part of the study of language change, defines grammaticalization as how a lexical item changes into a marker of a grammatical element or how a marker with less grammatical function develops into a more grammatical function. It is possible to examine and handle the grammaticalization process within synchronic and diachronic frameworks. There is no single approach or model that is predetermined more than or better than other approaches to study the grammaticalization process. Fischer (2012:51) states that increasing its field of application through time, the experience of grammaticalization developed to a theoretical status (i.e. a model of understanding how language is structured, used, and develops through time); slowly, grammaticalization begins to comprise the development of grammatical elements as a whole. Hence, grammaticalization theory is also used in the present study for the description and explanation of grammatical developments of copula to focus or vice versa.

2.3 General typological review of copula and focus

2.3.1 Copula

Pustet (2003) has developed a general theoretical model of copularization (which is the semantically-based model of copularization). Pustet has also established a cross-linguistic sample that provides an overview of the typological variation observed in the grammatical field of copularization. Pustet (2003:6) defines copula as follows: “A copula is a linguistic element which co-occurs with certain lexemes in certain languages when they function as predicate nucleus. A copula does not add any semantic content to the predicate phrase it is contained in.”

Pustet states further that lexemes that occur together with a copula in the predicate position are recognized as copularizing lexemes. Corresponding to this, the process of copula use is known as copularization. Despite their existence, copulas have received less treatment in the theoretical and descriptive literature so far (Pustet 2003:2).

Pustet (2003) observes a significant cross-linguistic difference in terms of the companionability of copulas with lexical items and concerning copula usage. Several languages have copulas which could have more functions than that of a copula. In contrast, other languages (for example, Tagalog) do not employ copulas at all (Pustet 2003:2). As the cross-linguistic sample shows, languages which have copulas are more common than those

that do not have it (Pustet 2003:2). The occurrence of copulas is restricted to the predicate position (Pustet 2003:3). Although copulas are normally intransitive, some languages have transitive copulas (Basque and Koasati are languages with transitive copulas) (Pustet 2003:7).

Semantics is the one that is considered as a responsible factor for the cross-linguistic variety in the distributional features of copulas. A copula is used possibly for certain grammatical function, in some languages, however, the use of copula is controlled by pragmatic factors, i.e., by style, colloquial vs. formal style, spoken vs. written style, etc (Pustet 2003:7). Copula can have a function that exists outside of the field of semantics. Since copulas are occurring only in predicate position, it could be argued that they exist to accomplish certain syntactic functions. The three most widely recognized syntactic functions that have been attributed to copulas are, according to Pustet (2003:3) the function of a predicator, a syntactic ‘hitching post’ that carries verbal inflectional categories, and a linker between the subject and the predicate.

Furthermore, Pustet (2003:6) recognizes that semi-copulas which are meaningful like full verbs and auxiliaries which are used as helping verb are also elements that take part in the construction of predicates. Consequently, they are associated with copulas to some degree. Yet, semi-copulas and auxiliaries contribute meaning to the predicate phrase as opposed to the copulas. Since semi-copulas show similarities with copulas and full verbs, they take an intermediate position between them. Copulas are not meaningful and they cannot function as predicates by themselves. Contrary to this, full verbs are both meaningful and able to form predicates independently. Semi-copulas, in a similar pattern with copulas, cannot be used as predicates by themselves. Nevertheless, semi-copulas are different from copulas in terms of adding meaning to the predicate phrase that they are part of it. Both auxiliaries and semi-copulas are not semantically empty and cannot form predicates on their own. However, auxiliaries are often used with grammatical elements while semi-copulas are used with lexical elements.

Dixon (2002:1-36) discusses a general typological characterization of copula clauses in Australian languages. According to him, there are two main clause types found in the languages of the world: transitive and intransitive clauses. In addition to this, most languages are identified in having an additional clause type which is called a copula clause. The very fact that copula clauses have two core arguments, i.e., copula subject and copula complement jointly with a copula verb or particle (which could occasionally be lost), makes them to be differentiated from transitive and intransitive clause types. A verb should occur with the two core arguments of copula subject and copula complement and show a relation of identity/equation or of attribution so as to be considered as a copula. It could also have the senses of location, possession, wanting or benefaction, and existence as a whole or partially.

According to Dixon (2002:1), copulas have relational meaning (they lack referential meaning) while transitive and intransitive verbs contain referential meaning. The copula clauses comprise two core arguments (i.e. copula subject and copula complement) which are different from the arguments in intransitive and transitive clause types. The arguments in intransitive and transitive clause types are intransitive subject, transitive subject, and

transitive object. In a number of languages, a copula should be obligatorily used with two arguments, while in others it can be used with a single argument, i.e., the copula subject.

Dixon (2002:29) discusses the fact that copulas frequently have irregular forms and strange paradigms. Every time, copula clauses are minor clause types in spite of their existence in a very broad geographical distribution of Australian languages. Verbless clauses that employ the juxtaposition of two noun phrases may also exist. On the other hand, a copula is normally omissible. As a result of this, verbless clauses and copula clauses are considered as variants of a single clause type in Australia.

Furthermore, Dixon (2002:20-22 & 29) states that usually, stance (motion) verbs like ‘go’ and ‘stay’ are likely to be grammaticalized so as to develop into copulas. For example, in Yinjtjiparnrti (a language with no obvious copula), the inchoative suffix *-karri* has been created by grammaticalization of stance or motion verb *karri-* ‘stand’. Additionally, in Martuthunira, the stance verb *njina-* ‘sit, stay’ and the motion verb *puni-* ‘go’ are currently functioning as copulas. Characteristically, a given form could have two functions: as a copula verb, and as an intransitive verb of stance or motion. The feature of possessing a specific copula clause type also may spread among geographically adjacent languages. Due to this reason, the languages of Australia are considered in forming one big linguistic area.

2.3.2 Focus

Focus is often defined as the element of an utterance which is considered pragmatically new, i.e. contrasted by the speaker, or salient, i.e. asserted (Kalinowski 2015:2). As opposed to this, according to Polinsky (1999:574) focus is defined “as the element of information wherein the presupposition and assertion differ from each other”. In addition to this, Lambrecht (1994), which is stated in Polinsky (1999:568), considers focus as the part of the information structure that establishes relations, but not semantic properties between expressions and propositions.

Hyman & Watters (1984:233-273) studied the different characteristics of auxiliary focus (i.e. the relationship between focus and the semantic properties of tense, aspect, mood, and polarity). An interesting connection has been experienced between tense-aspect and focus in most African languages. The interaction varies from language to language. In the analysis, the labeling of AUXILIARYFOCUS has been developed in a situation where focus is found on either of the semantic parameters of tense, aspect, mood, and polarity that are used as operators on propositions. It is, hence, defined as the indication of focus with the use of auxiliary. Different auxiliary markings have been noted between structures that vary just in their focus features. For example, structures with similar elements can be sometimes presupposed while in other cases occur being asserted.

Focus is defined as “... information in an utterance which the speaker believes, assumes, or knows that the hearer does not share with him/her” (Hyman & Watters 1984:237). Four parameters of focus have been distinguished for affecting grammar: realization of focus, type of focus, the scope of focus, and control of focus (Hyman & Watters 1984:238).

Focus is realized prosodically, morphologically, and syntactically (Hyman & Watters 1984:238). Hyman & Watters (1984:239) point out that a full analysis of focus types (e.g. contrastive focus, emphatic focus, exhaustive listing focus, etc.) does not exist. Nevertheless, they have distinguished between two broad categories: assertive focus and contrastive focus. The scope of focus can be entirely on one element: the subject or the object or on both. The real discourse condition can decide the focus marking. This situation is known as a pragmatically controlled focus where the speaker decides the structures of the grammar that convey focus.

However, a different state is observed in most of the African languages. There is a partial pragmatic control of focus. Here, the speaker determines the elements of the grammar that can carry and realize focus. On the other hand, the grammar or the structure itself controls the focus marking, but not the speaker (Hyman & Watters 1984:243).

König (1991) gives an extensive study of the structure, meaning and use of focus particles. This study has been organized comparatively in order to make a cross-linguistic typological generalization. Traditionally, focus particles are categorized as adverbs in European languages. As a result, it makes focus to be assumed as part of the verb phrase. Focus particles behave in a similar way in many European languages including English. For example, in English, focus particles are placed frequently after auxiliary verb and or before the main verb, in spite of the constituent which is selected for focus (König 1991:18).

König (1991:29) states that the location of focus and the scope of focus are the two most important components of a sentence that determine the contribution that a particle makes to the meaning of a sentence. Roughly, the scope of a particle can be explained as a meaningfully equivalent part of a sentence which is appropriate for giving out the meaning contribution. A common explanation of the meaning of focus particles should be on the basis of a demonstration that shows focus and the scope of a particle in a clearly identified manner. Hence, focus particles are explained as elements that function in different structures.

The focus of a particle associates the importance of the focused constituent to different alternatives (König 1991:32). Focus particles may possibly include or exclude alternatives; based on this fact, focus particles can be set into two categories, i.e., additive or inclusive particles that include some alternatives that are controlled under their scope and, restrictive or exclusive particles, which restrict selection (König 1991:33).

In addition to this, value ordering is another important point that has to be considered for a particle to select an alternative. For example, two inclusive particles that imply a similar point may use different criteria in the selection of alternatives, either restriction or ordering. Evaluation is also an additional common feature of the meaning of focus particles that occurs in a closer link with the restriction on the selection of alternative values. Particles that provide an order to the focus and alternatives in point would state an evaluation too. The scope of a particle is, therefore, decided by the selection of focus (König 1991:45).

2.3.3 The connection between focus and copula

According to Crass & Meyer (2007:7), copulas can grammaticalize into focus markers cross-linguistically. Zólyomi (2014:1) also reports a specific phenomenon where a copula functions as a focus marker in Sumerian (i.e. the grammaticalization of a copula into a focus marker). Kalinowski (2015:7) mentions that the historical sources of focus markers are copulas, demonstratives, deictics, and relative markers. According to Crass & Meyer (2007:7) the reverse development, i.e. the grammaticalization of a focus marker into a copula, is reported only for Swahili (cf. McWhorter 1994). However, Crass & Meyer (2007:9) mention a case where Meyer (2007:175-192) concludes the development of a copula out of a focus marker in Wolane and Silt'e, which are both Eastern Gurage languages. In his discussion of nominal and adjectival predication in Lowland Eastern Cushitic, Sasse (2007:30) says non-verbal predication is directly incorporated into the focus system.

2.4 Review of literature on Oromo

2.4.1 General description of Oromo

Gragg (1976), Owens (1985), Griefenow-Mewis (2001), Appleyard (2012), and Mous (2012) give a general description of Oromo and Cushitic languages. None of them specifically deals with focus and copular constructions in Oromo, but only describe them very broadly.

The mentioned focus marking morphemes (mainly in the Western Oromo) are *-tu*, *-[t]ti*, *-dha* and *hin-* (*ni-* in the Eastern Oromo) (Appleyard 2012:241; Mous 2012:420; Griefenow-Mewis 2001:110; Owens 1985:60; Gragg 1976:193).

It has also been stated that Oromo uses several particles for the sake of emphasis and foregrounding: *-uu*, *-llee* 'even', *-uma*, *-oo* after nouns and pronouns; *-ka*, *-m* after predicates, and the preverbal *yaa* (Gragg 1976:193 & Appleyard 2012:241). However, no further explanation has been given regarding the functions and use of most of these morphemes. Furthermore, it is not known whether these morphemes exist in the other dialects of Oromo.

Appleyard (2012:239) further states that in Borana the present tense verb focus marker is *[h]in* which could possibly occur with the past tense as well. There is an additional past tense verb focus marker *yaa*, or *la* in Borana. According to Appleyard (2012:241), the particle *-tu* [*u*] which may focus several elements of a sentence, lengthens the final vowel of the NP in Eastern Oromo and appears as *-[t]ti* in Southern Oromo.

The particle copulas in Oromo (mainly in the Western Oromo) are: *-dha* and invariant *-ti* in the present affirmative, invariant *miti* in the present negative, and inflected *tur-* in the past (Appleyard 2012:241; Mous 2012:398; Griefenow-Mewis 2001:108; Gragg 1976:184). Owens (1985:79) mentions equative sentences for Eastern Oromo, which apparently lack an overt copula. In the Eastern Oromo, the negative copula shows a slight variation and appears as *mihi* in the masculine and *miti* in the feminine; the only instance where *-dhaa* (with a long vowel) occurs is after predicate adjective with the possible addition of the negative morpheme to it (Owens 1985:80-81). No detail explanation has been given in these studies about the copular constructions in Oromo.

Appleyard (2012:241) summarizes the following general points regarding copular constructions in Oromo: the copula shows variation from one dialect to the other; dialects like Eastern Oromo and Borana lack a copula and hence only juxtapose the subject and its nominal predicate. On the other hand, in Western, Central, and in the developing standard² Oromo, the copula has the form *-dha* after a long vowel, *-i* after a consonant, but *-ti* after a genitive-marked noun. The negative copula is *miti* (in Borana: *mii, nii, niiti*).

2.4.2 Specific studies of focus in Oromo

The focus marking morphemes (in the Western Oromo) are *-tu*, *-ti*, *-dha* and *hin-* (Baye 1988:365-384; Dabala & Meyer 2003). The morphemes *-tu*, *-ti*, and *-dha* are used to show contrastive and assertive focus on non-verbal elements while *hin-* is used for focusing a verb. According to Zaugg-Coretti (2007:1-8) *-ti* is used in Southern Oromo to emphasize noun phrases and to indicate the location of the action of the verb. She states further that the particle *-tu* (which is a focus marker in Oromo) is also used as a focus marker in Yemsa (Omotic).

In addition to focus marking morphemes, there are numerous ways of emphasizing specific elements of a sentence such as a word order change, accusative marking, cleft and pseudo-cleft constructions, and prosodic features like stress (Dabala & Meyer 2003:173 & 187; Baye 1988:378-381).

Taha (1990) identified various types of focus: assertive focus, counter assertive focus, exhaustive listing focus, polar focus, and counter polar focus which exhibit completing, selecting, replacing, expanding, restricting, and parallel focus functions. However, many of these focus type and function are expressed by similar morphemes, so that these pragmatic distinctions are questionable.

2.4.3 Specific studies of copula in Oromo

There are two kinds of particle copulas in Oromo (Ishetu 1981; Crass et al. 2005:19-22). There is also a long-standing disagreement between scholars regarding the morpheme *-ti* and what it marks in Oromo (Ishetu 1981; Bender 1986:127-135).

The two kinds of particle copulas in the Western (Wellega) Oromo are *-dha* and *-ti*. The present tense affirmative copula *-dha* occurs in complementary distribution with zero copula and the vowel *-i* (i.e. it appears in three shapes). The environmental distribution of these allomorphs is explained as: *-dha* occurs after long vowels, *-i* after consonants, and $-\emptyset$ after short vowels (Ishetu 1981:9; Crass et al. 2005:19). On the other hand, copula clauses in the negative present tense are formed with the use of a free and invariant morpheme *miti* ‘to be not’ which occurs in the position of the affirmative present tense copula *-dha* (Crass et al. 2005:20).

Regarding the morpheme *-ti*, it was Ishetu (1981) who has claimed first for its copular status in Oromo. Bender (1986:127-135), contra Ishetu (1981), argues that the morpheme *-ti* is not a

² There is no clear point so far as to which variety the standard Oromo refers to.

copula, but a genitive marker. Lloret (1988:131) on her part claims that *-ti* is not a genitive marker, rather a source marker. Crass et al. (2005:21-22) mention the following important points regarding the morpheme *-ti* without taking a specific position to its function: it does not appear in each genitive structure obligatorily (some can be formed by lengthening the final vowel of the modifier(s)), it does not exist in negative copula clause constructions, it occurs in complementary distribution with *miti*, which is the negative particle copula. Therefore, despite some of the claims above, the status of the morpheme *-ti* looks still controversial and is an unresolved issue in Oromo.

Apart from the above basic discussion, there is another study which views a copula entirely from a different perspective. Tamam (2019:2) disagrees with all the previous findings of copula in Oromo (he does not consider *-dha*, *-ti*, \emptyset , and *miti* as a copula in Oromo), i.e., according to him, a copula is not represented by a particle or low tone. However, a copula in the simple present tense is represented by short vowels (a and i) that occur at the end of a predicate nominal (clause) (Tamam 2019:14).

2.4.4 Summary

Almost all of the existing studies of focus in Oromo are based on one variety of the language (i.e. the Western or Mecha dialect). There is only one specific study of focus that has been made based on the Eastern dialect of Oromo, namely Taha (1990). This study aims at identifying the functions of focus in the Eastern dialect and the researcher himself does not claim that his study is exhaustive in its nature. Hence, the other dialects of the language are left unstudied in this regard. Similarly, there are few studies of copula in Oromo which are also made based on the Western dialect. This point also shows that the copular constructions are left unstudied in the other dialects of Oromo.

Even from the existing literature, there are also unclear points and contradictions that need a solution. For example, the morpheme *-dha* (CS1) is identified as a copula in the literature. However, *-dha* is not always used as a copula. For instance, simple juxtaposition of the subject and the predicate is used as a copula in the Eastern Oromo, but not *-dha*. In addition to this, the morpheme *-dha* is identified as a focus marker in some, but not in all dialects. There is also a long-standing disagreement among scholars regarding the morpheme *-ti* and what it marks in Oromo.

There is a tendency of treating focus and copula separately in the Oromo literature. However, the general phenomenon (Crass & Meyer 2007:7-9) shows that focus and copula are typological facts that are often treated together. Consequently, the need for having the present study arises from the above-mentioned gaps, unclear points, and contradictions.

Chapter Three

Research methodology

The current study is empirical in nature involving two types of qualitative data: free texts vs. elicitation, and introspection. Data has been collected mainly from the field. Written Oromo texts and introspection have also been used as additional sources of data. Written Oromo text has been used as a data source in a situation where the dialect that has been used to write is clearly identified and confirmed. Fieldwork was conducted twice to collect data from native speakers. Corresponding to the objective of the study that intended to treat six dialects of the language, six field sites that have been taken into account are: Fiche (for the Central dialect), Dembidollo (for the Western dialect), Diredawa (for the Eastern dialect), Yabello (for the Southern dialect), Kamise (for the Northern dialect), and Shashemene and Robe (for the Southeastern dialect).

The first fieldwork which had a month-long duration at each place has been conducted in the years 2009 & 2010 E.C. It has been started in June 2009 E.C. and continued until December 2010 E.C. The second fieldwork which had fifteen days long duration at each place has been conducted in the years 2010 & 2011 E.C. It has been started in July 2010 E.C. and continued until October 2011 E.C. The fieldwork was ordered from the assumed easiest to the difficult one. Since I am also the speaker of the Central dialect, it was easier for me to start with the one I know best and then move on to the ones I know least. The order of the fieldwork was as follows: Fiche, Dembidollo, Diredawa, Yabello, Shashemene and Robe, and Kamise.

Regarding the sampling, I worked with three consultants from each dialect selected through non-random sampling. The consultants were both male and female (I focused on working with consultants who are native speakers). Since texts should be collected from a variety of speakers, I also worked mostly with two adults and a young consultant separately at different times. Because based on Dixon (2010:322), although old people could be the best storytellers, youngsters who are willing to work should also be involved. In line with this, Dixon (2010:319) adds that the collected text should be of different types: some must be monologues, while others must engage more than one person like recording of daily conversation; hence they should be collected from a variety of speakers with different age groups preferably through involving speakers from both sexes. In addition to this, people from different age groups had various experiences and knowledge of telling and remembering stories that have been taken into consideration for the analysis of the present study. I selected the consultants mainly based on their native knowledge of Oromo, nativity to the specific areas selected for the study, and their age (cf. appendix 1).

In the collection process, I recorded mainly stories from each place. In addition to stories, oral literature which includes proverbs, riddles, tales, war songs, etc. has also been collected (cf. appendix 3). Then the recorded stories and oral literature have been transcribed and those that have more relevance to the study of focus and copula were put separately. Following this, the transcribed and selected data has been compared and analyzed as a typological fact based on the descriptive and comparative approaches.

Selected Oromo texts that helped for the investigation of focus and copula have also been considered. Here, I used texts that have been written in Oromo based on their relevance. For example, I have used a written text as a data source, namely the poetics of nationalism: a poem by Jarso Waaqo Qoot'o, which has been written by Abdullahi (1996)³. According to Abdullahi (1996:265), Jarso Waaqo is a man from Borana who lived in a specific place called Tuqa near the border town Moyale in the Southern part of Ethiopia. Data that is taken from this specific source is representative of the Southern Oromo only. Linguistic studies (books) that have been made on Oromo are also used as a data source. For instance, Owens (1985), a grammar of Harar Oromo is used as a data source for the Eastern Oromo. Sasse (2007) & Appleyard (2012) are also used for the Southern (Borana) Oromo. Similarly, Dejene (2010), Kamisee Oromo phonology is used as a data source for the Northern Oromo and Kebede (2009) is also used as an additional data source. Helpful data that was identified from the consulted texts was kept alone and used for the analysis of focus and copula.

Introspection has also been used in the analysis based on the knowledge of the language I have. Overheard data collection process was also employed for the analysis of the present study. Additionally, elicitation (judgment of focus and copula forms) from the respective of other dialects was employed. This was planned to be done separately which I preferred to make it on the final field trip. However, in order to do it well and come up with a better comparative analysis, I changed my original plan and elicited at the end of the first field trip session. Here, I provided the consultants with different morphemes representing focus and copular forms in Oromo and expected them to tell (judge) whether the forms provided are right or wrong. The morphemes (sentences) provided to the consultants were of different construction types (i.e. affirmative, negative, present tense, past and future tense, etc.). When the forms were judged wrong, then the consultants were expected to give the correct forms together with their meaning and function. In such a way, data was also elicited from three consultants separately. This elicitation process helped me well to check the use and appearance of the morphemes comparatively.

The collected data was transcribed phonemically and then glossed based on the Leipzig glossing rules. The interlinear morpheme-by-morpheme gloss (vertically left-aligned), which helps to give information about the meaning, grammatical properties and parts of individual words, is clearly indicated for each data entry. This has a direct input in identifying each and every element in terms of its exact grammatical category and morphemic analysis. Based on this, elements or sentences that consist of focus and copula features were selected for the sake of comparative description and analysis.

Hence, constituents that consist of focus and copula elements are described as they are in each individual dialect based on the property they show. For instance, the description and analysis of focus is given based on realization, type, scope, and control. The types of sentences that the focus markers often occur with were also investigated accordingly. The description has been done parallel with the comparison, i.e., every description is given from a

³ It is me who added the interlinear morpheme by morpheme glossing to the data that is adopted from Abdullahi (1996).

comparative point of view (comparative description). In order to do this, first I have seen the individual property of each and every focus morpheme in each of the existing dialects of Oromo and then presented the comparative analysis. In connection with this, the presence and / or absence of individual morphemes has also been clearly observed and investigated in each of the existing dialects before giving the comparative analysis.

The comparative description identified and considered how focus realizes, i.e., it examined morphology, syntax, and prosody in the dialects considered for the present study. From a morphological point of view, free versus bound and prefix versus suffix morphemes were investigated for marking focus. Emphasis is one of the criteria used for categorizing a given morpheme (element) as a focus marker. Their pragmatic use and syntactic feature are also duly considered in order to label morphemes as focus markers. Along with this, the type, scope, and control of focus were also critically examined and analyzed comparatively as parameters of focus.

As word order change and clefting play a role for the sake of emphasis, a deviation from the normal word order of Oromo (i.e. subject - object - verb) was also well examined. Because part of a sentence that could be put at the beginning of a sentence despite the normal word order can be taken as part of a sentence that falls under emphasis. Additionally, any other word order change, except for clefting, was also investigated specifically for focus. Part or element of a sentence which could be pronounced loud and or with additional energy, as opposed to the other part of a sentence was also considered for focus. Because giving extra energy in the pronunciation of elements of a sentence has a direct contribution to focus.

Regarding the copular analysis, the previously existing typological fact is used as a basis for the identification procedure. From a typological point of view, languages can be classified into three categories based on the nominal clause they have: languages with zero copulas, languages that use copula (in the present and non-present tenses), and those that use copula in the non-present tenses (Payne 1997:114-119). Hence, sentences and / or clauses with a simple juxtaposition of the subject and the predicate and those with the present and non-present tenses were investigated for the identification of copular elements. In addition to this, verbs were also investigated for their use in terms of the relation of identity/equation or attribution they show and in terms of the senses they have. The copulas were also compared based on their form and occurrence across different dialects of Oromo. The analysis of grammaticalization was mainly done based on the development or functional change that the copulas and the focus markers show either synchronically or diachronically.

The collected data was used for the sake of comparative description of focus and copula in six dialects of Oromo based on language-internal evidence (criteria). It was also used for the analysis of any development of copula to focus or to source markers.

Therefore, the following major points are expected in the following section: a comparative description of focus, types and function of focus, forms of focus marking, the pragmatics of focus marking, a comparative description of copula, and analysis on grammaticalization (i.e., the development of copula to focus or source markers, etc).

Chapter Four

An overview of the grammatical structure of Oromo

4.1 Phonology

There are twenty-four native consonant phonemes in Oromo; (/p, v, and z/) occur only in loan words and the velar fricative /x/ occurs in the Eastern Oromo replacing /k/ (and it is an intervocalically occurring allophone of /k/ in the Southern Oromo) (Gragg 1976:174; Lloret 1995:258; Griefenow-Mewis 2001:13). Sasse (1979:5) does not reconstruct the phoneme *p for the proto East Cushitic, however, only Bender & Mulugeta (1976:132) consider the phoneme /p/ as native to Oromo.

Table 1 The consonant phonemes of Oromo

		Labial	Alveolar / dental	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Stops	voiceless	(p)	t		k	ʔ
	voiced	b	d		g	
	ejective	p'	t'	tʃ̥	k'	
	implosive		d̥			
Fricatives	voiceless	f	s	ʃ	(x)	h
	voiced	(v)	(z)			
Affricates	voiceless			tʃ		
	voiced			dʒ		
Nasals		m	n	ɲ		
Lateral			l			
Trill			r			
Glides		w		j		

(based on Gragg 1976:174; Bender & Mulugeta 1976:32; Lloret 1995:258; Griefenow-Mewis 2001:13)

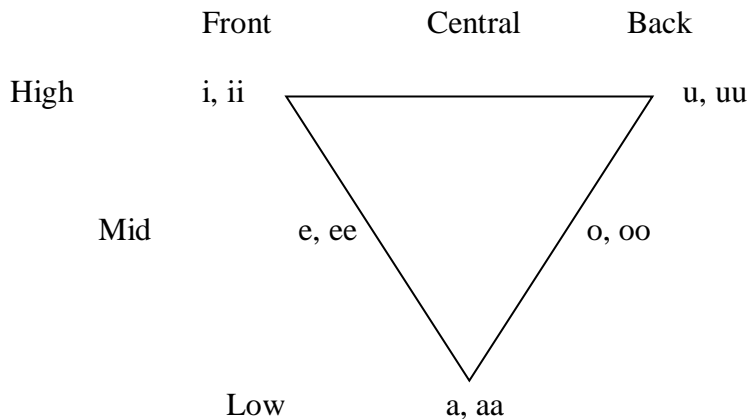
Oromo makes use of four-way distinction in the stop sequence. Only a few languages show four-stop series (i.e., simple voiceless, simple voiced, ejective, and implosive) like Oromo: Dullay is a Cushitic language with a similar feature, Hamar and Dawro which are both Omotic languages spoken in the Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Regional State of Ethiopia, and Koma (a Nilo-Saharan language) also make a four-way distinction in the stop series (Lloret 1995:276; Binyam & Moges 2014:73).

Consonants occur as simple and geminate, /p' and tʃ̥/ do not occur at the beginning of native words, /ʃ/ is infrequent and occurs in a few words, /h/ usually occurs word-initially, and /d̥/ has more clear implosion in Borena than in Wellegga (Gragg 1976:174). Table 1 shows the existence of four ejectives /p', t', tʃ̥, and k'/ which are voiceless due to the absence of the movement of the vocal cords and are glottally initiated egressive sounds; on the other hand, /d̥/ is a voiced alveolar implosive sound which is also glottally initiated with ingressive suction articulation (c.f. Wakweya 2014:2). The ejective /s'/ is out of the list above and it does not occur in Oromo at all (Bender & Mulugeta 1976:32). On the other hand, table

one does not show voiced and / or voiceless distinctions for nasals, lateral, trill, and glides as they are all vocalic due to the vibration of the vocal cords during their articulation.

Oromo has five simple vowels together with their long counterparts (Bender & Mulugeta 1976:31; Griefenow-Mewis 2001:19).

Table 2 The vowel phonemes of Oromo



(based on Gragg 1976:175; Lloret 1997:494)

In written Oromo, long vowels are indicated by doubling the short ones. In addition to the phonemic value it has, vowel length functions to mark case and to form questions in Oromo (Griefenow-Mewis 2001:19). In the orthographic representation of the language (i.e., written Oromo or Qubee), the phonemes /d/, /f/, /ʃ/, /ɲ/, and /pʰ/ are written using two letters which are known as diagraphs such as dh, ch, sh, ny, and ph; except for word-initially, the phonemes /f/ and /ɲ/ are pronounced as geminated consonants, but not written twice in the orthographic representation (Griefenow-Mewis 2001:13; Wakweya 2014:2). Often, I also observe the same for the other phonemes as well that are represented through two letters or diagraphs.

The phonotactics of Oromo does not allow word-initial and word-final consonant clusters; medially, Oromo allows clusters of two consonants that belong to different syllables, but if clusters of three consonants occur medially (which is the impermissible sequence) it can be made permissible through the epenthetic vowel i (Gragg 1976:176; Bender & Mulugeta 1976:32; Griefenow-Mewis 2001:14-15; Lloret 2005:2). Assimilation, dissimilation, deletion, epenthesis, metathesis, and consonant alternation (e.g., /d/ and /ʔ/) are some of the commonly occurring morphophonemic processes in Oromo (Bender & Mulugeta 1976:32; Gragg 1976:176-177; Griefenow-Mewis 2001:15-18).

The representation of a glottal stop at the word-initial position is a serious problem of East Cushitic languages in general: /ʔ/ is optional before word-initial vowels in almost all East Cushitic languages, in Somali and Oromo, there is no need to represent glottal stop before a vowel and syllable initially as it is possible to use it almost constantly at this positions, and the fact that word-initial vowels are normally preceded by a glottal stop has been confirmed based on a reference made to Welmers (on Saho) and Mahaffy (on Afar) (Sasse 1979:50). In written Oromo, a glottal stop is not represented at the word-initial position. Word medially,

however, the glottal stop is consistently represented in written Oromo. Taking this fact into consideration, there is no syllable in Oromo that starts with a vowel. Accordingly, there are four possible syllable structures in Oromo: CV, CVC, CVV, and CVVC (Griefenow-Mewis 2001:21). Most Oromo words end in a vowel, i.e., words that end in a consonant are very rare. According to Dabala & Meyer (2003:162) native Oromo nouns end in m, n, l, r, and t (cf. also appendix 2).

Oromo is a pitch-accent⁴ language; a unique feature of a pitch-accent language is the existence of one high pitched accent per a single word (in a tonal language, pitch is supposed to exist on every syllable of a word while in a pitch-accent language, an accent occurs on one syllable of a word and whose realization is related to tone (Shimelis 2014:46 & 57)); since pitch-accent and / or suprasegmental feature, in general, is predictable, it is not marked in Oromo representations (i.e., in written Oromo) (Lloret 2005:2; Gragg 1976:175; Griefenow-Mewis 2001:22). For a detailed discussion on this issue see Shimelis (2014:44-57) and Owens (1985:26-59).

4.2 Morphosyntax

The common pronouns of Oromo consist of personal pronouns (which include subject form that is used with unfocused subject and basic form which is used with focused subject), direct object, (there is no form that shows object or base pronouns), dative, possessive, demonstratives, interrogatives, indefinite, reflexive, relative *kan/tan* (invariable because of person and number), and reciprocal pronouns (Gragg 1976:178-179; Griefenow-Mewis 2001:34-40; Bender & Mulugeta 1976:136-137).

Table 3 The personal pronouns of Oromo

Person	Subject form	Gloss	Citation / object / basic form	Gloss
1S	<i>(a)n-i</i>	I	<i>(a)na</i>	Me
1P	<i>nu-i [nuti]</i>	We	<i>nu</i>	Us
2S	<i>ati</i>	You	<i>si</i>	You
2P	<i>isin-Ø</i>	You	<i>isin</i>	You
3SM	<i>is-ni [inni]</i>	He / it	<i>isa</i>	Him / it
3SF	<i>ishee-n</i>	She	<i>isee [ishee]</i>	Her
3P	<i>isaan-Ø [isaan]</i>	They	<i>isaan</i>	Them

(based on Griefenow-Mewis 2001:34; Gobena 2017:121)

Gobena (2017:120-122) notes the following: first person plural pronoun *nu* ‘us’ which is the object form adds the nominative marker *-i* and appears as *nu-i>nu-t-i* or *nu-y-i* ‘we’ because the impermissible occurrence of two successive vowels in Oromo made permissible through the epenthetic consonants *-t-* or *-y-*; there are two root pronoun forms: *is-* for third persons and second person plural pronoun and *n-* for first persons, but second person singular pronoun does not have a clear root form; the object pronouns which are formed from the roots *is-* and *n-* are described as absolutive as there is no distinct object morpheme attached to

⁴ See Habte (2003), Banti (1988) and Andrzejewski (1970) who have a different view and consider Oromo rather as a tonal language.

them; on the other hand, a marker *-n* that comes with object pronouns shows emphasis in actual sense, but not accusative case, and makes short vowels that exist before it (the ones in the absolutive form) long.

Nouns of Oromo inflect for gender and number. They make two-way gender distinctions: masculine and feminine and two-way number distinctions: singular and plural. Gender is marked lexically and through the use of different suffixes, for instance, the morphemes *-aa* and *-tuu* are added to verbal nouns in order to mark masculine and feminine genders respectively, contrastive final syllables *-ssa* vs. *-tii* show masculine and feminine, and additionally, proper nouns can also show gender difference in Oromo (Gobena 2017:115-116). Plurality is formed by adding several suffix morphemes, for example: *-(o)ota*, *-lee*, *-wwan*, *-een*, *-olii* / *-olee*, *-eetii*, *-oo* and *-aan* (Griefenow-Mewis 2001:23; Gragg 1976:180; Bender & Mulugeta 1976:34). In addition to singular and plural forms, Oromo has another number category called singulative which refers to ‘one’ and ‘a specific thing’ only and as a grammatical category, this form can be marked through the addition of the suffix morpheme *-icha* (Bender & Mulugeta 1976:133).

The singulative suffixes *-icha* (M) and *-tii* (F) express definiteness as well. Since there is no dedicated definite marker in Oromo, demonstrative pronouns and third person singular pronouns are also used to express definiteness, but there is no element that shows indefiniteness where the numeral *tokko* ‘one’ is used instead as it is common elsewhere (Gragg 1976:181; Griefenow-Mewis 2001:24; Bender & Mulugeta 1976:135). The grammatical morpheme *-icha*, which is mentioned for having a double role (singulative and definiteness), can be added to nouns, adjectives, and numerals (Griefenow-Mewis 2001:30). The feminine definite suffix morpheme *-ittii* has additional diminutive, pejorative, and caritative function (Gragg 1976:180).

Adjectives can also be marked for gender, number, and definiteness where they form their plurality through reduplication (as opposed to nouns that form their plurality through suffixation); adjectives come next to the noun they modify and agree with the head noun in terms of gender, number, and case (Griefenow-Mewis 2001:28-29; Gragg 1976:181-182; Bender & Mulugeta 1976:135-136). If a noun is modified by both an adjective and a demonstrative pronoun, the demonstrative pronoun that shows definiteness comes after the adjective; the ordinal numerals are created by adding *-ffaa* to the cardinal in the Central, Western, and written Oromo, *-eessaa* (M) and *-eessituu* (F) in the Eastern and some Southern dialects, and *-eessoo* in Borana; the cardinal and ordinal numerals come after the word they occur with (Griefenow-Mewis 2001:30-32).

Within the Cushitic languages, the common marked-nominative case system is frequent. Oromo, which belongs to the Lowland East Cushitic, is also a marked-nominative language where the nominative, but not the accusative, is overtly marked (Mous 2012:369ff; Sasse 1984:112). In Oromo, case is marked on nouns, adjectives, and pronouns; in connection with this, base is a form of a noun, an adjective, and a pronoun that carries no case suffix and used for citation, direct object, predicate nominal, oblique cases, and focused subject (Griefenow-Mewis 2001:41). The nominative case is marked by the suffix morpheme *-n(i)* and its

different realizations, and through the use of *-ti* in feminine nouns (Gragg 1976:183; Lloret 2005:3; Bender & Mulugeta 1976:134). The fundamental subject forms which are used in unfocused subjects (i.e., the different realizations of the nominative marker morpheme are): *-ni* which is suffixed to words that end in CV, *-i* which occurs after words that end in CCV, *-n* which is added after words that end in long vowels, nouns that end in voiced alveolar nasal *-n* are unmarked or presented as having similar form in the subject and basic forms, and uniquely, *-ti* marks feminine subject (Griefenow-Mewis 2001:41-42). Syntactically, subject marking case is weak in Cushitic languages because of its absence when the subject is focused and followed by determinants and as compared to the proto nominative marker **-i/-u*, the use of Oromo *-[n]ii* (M) and *-tii* (F) makes it to be considered as an innovative language (Tosco 1994:229 & 231).

The accusative is unmarked and used as a citation form, and the vocative case is formed by adding prefix, suffix, or both to the citation form (e.g. *ya nama-na*) (Bender & Mulugeta 1976:134). In Oromo, dative is expressed in different ways: making short final vowels long, making short final vowel long and adding the suffix *-f*, suffixing *-f*, *-dhaa* or *-dhaaf* to nouns that terminate with long final vowel, suffixing *-ii* to nouns that end in consonant, suffixing *-(tii)f* to a genitive structure, and suffixing *-tti* regardless of the spelling (Griefenow-Mewis 2001:45-46; Gragg 1976:83).

The genitive construction in Oromo is expressed by possessed-possessor relationship where elements of the genitive constructions are connected by the relative particle *kan* (M) and *tan* (F), short vowels of the modifiers become long, *-ii* is suffixed to nouns and pronouns that end in *n*, in cases where a noun has more than one modifier only the last element of the noun phrase carries the genitive marker, and possessive pronouns that end in long vowels add *-tii* (Gragg 1976:183; Griefenow-Mewis 2001:43-44). The addition of the following suffixes to nouns forms instrumental case: *-n* which is added to nouns that end in short vowel and the process of adding the suffix changes short final vowel to long, *-(dhaa)n* which is added to nouns that terminate in long vowel, *-iin* which is added to nouns that end in consonant, and *-tiin* which is added to genitive structure (Gragg 1976:183-184; Griefenow-Mewis 2001:47).

The ablative (a movement from a place) in Oromo is formed through the following rules: making short last vowels long, suffixing *-dhaa* to nouns with long last vowels, suffixing *-ii* to nouns that end in a consonant, and suffixing *-tii* to a genitive structure; the locative (a movement to a place), on the other hand, is formed through suffixing *-tti* to a noun while the action of putting the word *yaa* before a noun with occasional addition of the emphatic particle (*-yyo*) and the suffix (*-nana*) forms the vocative (Griefenow-Mewis 2001:48-50).

Apart from the lexical words, Oromo makes use of functional words like prepositions, postposition, circumpositions (e.g. *gara...tti* 'to'), and conjunctions with coordination and subordination functions which can have also further categorical subdivision based on their form; as it is common in verb-final languages, Oromo uses more postpositions as compared to prepositions (Bender & Mulugeta 1976:139; Griefenow-Mewis 2001:50-53 & 55-61).

Oromo has more than twenty (emphatic) particles that are used to emphasize a word, part of a sentence, and feature of an utterance; they differ from dialect to dialect in terms of the contrastive strength they have, form, meaning, and function; the most common emphatic particles that have double roles of emphasis and conjunction are: *-llee / -illee* ‘even, exactly’, *-mmoo / -immoo* ‘and even’, *-oo / -wool/-hoo* ‘and what about’, *-uma* ‘expressing pure emphasis’, *-yyuu / -iyyuu* ‘even’ (Griefenow-Mewis 2001:61-62). The emphatic particles *-yyo* and *-kaa* are suffixed to a noun or a verb: *-yyo* emphasizes nouns in vocative and *-kaa* is used to emphasize facts in imperative sentences or in a dialogue (Griefenow-Mewis 20001:64). There are also two relative particles in Oromo which are not obligatorily used: *kan* which denotes a person, an animal, and a thing and *waan* which denotes only unanimated things; *-ree* or *-yii* are used for emphatic questions (Gragg 1976:191; Griefenow-Mewis 2001:63-64).

The verbs of Oromo can be classified into three types: action or stative, auxiliary, and copula; action verbs are verbs that are used in derivational process, auxiliary verbs are the ones that are used as helping verb, and copulas are different particles that are used in the affirmative, negative, and genitive forms (Gobena 2017:128). Oromo has base verb stems and four derived stems: autobenefactive, passive, causative, and intensive, where the first three derived stems are formed through attaching affixes to the base stem while the fourth one is created through repeating the first syllable of a word (Gragg 1976:185; Griefenow-Mewis 2001:65). The affix *-at-* (which has a different conjugational form with 1st person singular subject having *-a* as its agreement marker) creates the autobenefactive stem; it states an action performed for the benefit of the agent and rarely formed from nouns, but not from base stem (Gragg 1976:185; Griefenow-Mewis 2001:65; Gobena 2017:130). The affix *-am* regularly creates the passive stem; the suffixes *-s-*, *-sis-*, or *-siis-* (basically *-s* with variants *f*, *is*, and *iis* and *i ~ ii* being epenthetic), which change intransitive verbs to transitive, are used to create causative stems; repeating the initial consonant and a vowel that comes next to it and geminating of the initial consonant of a word creates intensive (frequentative) stem which expresses an action that is performed intensively or frequently (Gragg 1976:186-187; Dubinsky et. al. 1988:485; Lloret 1988-82-93; Griefenow-Mewis 2001:66-68).

The things that are responsible for the inflection of verbs in Oromo are: inherent verb forms and grammatical categories of agreement where the inherent verb inflections are aspect, mood, and voice with little morphological tense distinction (past and non-past) while person, number, gender, and case belong to the agreement properties; perfective and imperfective aspects are recognized in Oromo based on the completeness and incompleteness of an action; indicative, imperative, and jussive are some of the mood types with active and passive voice distinctions (Gobena 2017:130-135).

In (the Eastern) Oromo, the perfective aspect is marked by the vowel *-e* for all persons except for 2nd and 3rd plural pronouns which are represented by zero morpheme (Shimelis 2016:121). On the other hand, the vowel *-i* is identified as an allomorphic variant form of the perfective aspect marker *-e* that occurs with the second and third plural pronouns (Gobena 2017:129). As a perfective marker, the vowel *-e* (and its variant *-i*) comes after the subject suffixes being attached to a verb at the terminal position. The person and / or gender markers that exist on the verb are: *-t-* for 2nd singular and plural and 3rd singular feminine and \emptyset for 1st singular, 3rd

singular masculine, and 3rd plural pronouns. However, there are different views regarding first person plural: Shimelis (2016:121, 127 & 128) considers *-n* as person and or gender marker with no number marking while Gobena (2017:129, 130 & 132) considers *-n* as a number marker and \emptyset as a person or gender marker in the perfective aspect; the element *-an* marks number on the verb for the 2nd and 3rd plural pronouns which are also used as honorific forms. The following table shows the perfective aspect conjugation and the identical forms of 1st singular subject with 3rd singular masculine subject and 2nd singular subject with 3rd singular feminine subject; and it is also worth to be considered that a perfective verb that exists in the affirmative main clauses may be sometimes focused by *ni-* (Shimelis 2016:121).

Table 4 The perfective aspect conjugation

Person	Root/Stem	Agreement		Perfective aspect	Inflected form	Gloss
		Person / gender	Number			
1S	<i>deem-</i>	\emptyset	-	-e	<i>deem-\emptyset-e</i>	'I went'
2S	<i>deem-</i>	-t	-	-e	<i>deem-t-e</i>	'You went'
3SM	<i>deem-</i>	\emptyset	-	-e	<i>deem-\emptyset-e</i>	'He went'
3SF	<i>deem-</i>	-t	-	-e	<i>deem-t-e</i>	'She went'
1P	<i>deem-</i>	\emptyset	-n	-e	<i>deem-n-e</i>	'We went'
2P	<i>deem-</i>	-t	-an	-i (\emptyset)	<i>deem-t-an-i</i>	'You went'
3P	<i>deem-</i>	\emptyset	-an	-i (\emptyset)	<i>deem-an-i</i>	'They went'

(based on Shimelis 2016:121; Gobena 2017:129)

Note that Gobena (2017:128) clearly states that the perfective aspect is marked by the vowel *-e* which has an allomorphic variant *-i* as opposed to Shimelis (2016:121) who considers \emptyset as a variant form of the morpheme *-e* that occurs with 2nd and 3rd plural pronouns; as an agreement suffix, the morpheme *-t* marks sometimes person on the verb in other cases it marks person and gender jointly, consequently, this morpheme can be taken as an agreement marker of both person and gender that exists on the verb.

According to Shimelis (2016:126-128), there are two imperfective conjugations in Oromo that occur in complementary distribution: the independent imperfective which occurs only in the affirmative main clauses and the dependent imperfective that occurs in an elsewhere distribution. He explains further that the independent imperfective is marked by *-a* for all persons except for 3rd singular feminine which is marked by *-i* and zero morpheme for 2nd and 3rd person plural pronouns; the dependent imperfective is marked by the terminal vowel *-u* for all persons except for 2nd and 3rd plural pronouns which occur as zero morpheme. The dependent imperfective is used in affirmative dependent clauses, in a negative imperfective verb that occurs in the main clauses, and in the affirmative jussive forms; the focus marker *ni-* occurs commonly with the imperfective verbs of the affirmative main clauses, but happens to be not obligatory with the perfective verbs (Shimelis 2016:127-128).

Table 5 The imperfective aspect conjugation

Person	Root/ Stem	Agreement		Imperfective aspect	Inflected form	Gloss
		Person / gender	Number			
1S	<i>deem-</i>	<i>-Ø-</i>	-	<i>-a</i>	<i>deem-Ø-a</i>	‘I (will) go’
2S	<i>deem-</i>	<i>-t-</i>	-	<i>-a</i>	<i>deem-t-a</i>	‘You (will) go’
3SM	<i>deem-</i>	<i>-Ø-</i>	-	<i>-a</i>	<i>deem-Ø-a</i>	‘He (will) go(es)’
3SF	<i>deem-</i>	<i>-t-</i>	-	<i>-i</i>	<i>deem-t-i</i>	‘She (will) go(es)’
1P	<i>deem-</i>	<i>-n-</i>	-	<i>-a</i>	<i>deem-n-a</i>	‘We (will) go’
2P	<i>deem-</i>	<i>-t-</i>	-	<i>-u (Ø)</i>	<i>deem-t-u</i>	‘You (will) go’
3P	<i>deem-</i>	<i>-Ø-</i>	-	<i>-u (Ø)</i>	<i>deem-Ø-u</i>	‘They (will) go’

(based on Gobena 2017:132; Shimelis 2016:127)

On the other hand, Gobena (2017:132) notes that the imperfective aspect in Oromo is marked by the morpheme *-a* which has two allomorphs that occur in complementary distribution: *-i* which occurs with 3rd person singular feminine and *-u* which occurs with 2nd and 3rd plural pronouns. See table 4 above that *-i* is also an allomorphic variant form of the perfective aspect marker *-e* that occurs with 2nd and 3rd plural pronouns. Based on Shimelis (2016:121 & 126-128), 2nd and 3rd plural pronouns are neither overtly marked for the perfective aspect nor for the imperfective aspect; they lack an overt marker (but marked by *-i* and *-u* respectively based on (Gobena 2017:129 & 132).

According to Shimelis (2016:117-137), tense and aspect are the grammatical temporal expressions of verbs that are strongly linked (together); tense is indicated contextually within aspect and sometimes it is indicated with auxiliaries or time adverbs; past is not marked through an auxiliary in the Eastern Oromo, but it does in the Western Oromo. Verbs are inflected for perfective and imperfective aspects. Aspect is indicated grammatically with verbal inflection. Consequently, the morphemes *-e* and *-a* are the ones that stand for the perfective and imperfective aspects respectively in Oromo.

The fact that the subject of first person singular pronoun is obligatorily marked by the clitic *-n* that occurs before the verb in the imperfective verbs (both in the dependent and independent forms) can be taken as a peculiar feature of Oromo (Shimelis 2016:127-128). Similarly, Griefenow-Mewis (2001:72) states that the addition of *-n* to a word that exists before the verb distinguishes first person singular form from third person singular masculine pronoun.

The suffixes that are used to generate imperative in Oromo are: *-i* which produces singular imperative base stems and all derived stems except for autobenefactive, *-u* which produces singular imperative autobenefactive stem, *-aa* which produces imperative plural of all stems, and the same *-i* and *-aa* produce negative imperatives of singular and plural respectively for the autobenefactive and normal verbs; on the other hand, the use of the particle *haa* with subordinate verb conjugation (*-u* or *-i* on the verb) creates jussive in Oromo (Griefenow-Mewis 2001:71 & 74; Gobena 2017:133-134).

Negation in Oromo is formed through employing the negative proclitic *hin-* together with dependent suffixes used after the verb like *-n-* in the perfective and *-u* in the imperfective which has *-an* as a variant form used in the 2nd and 3rd plural pronouns (Gobena 2017:129; Griefenow-Mewis 2001:75). Several derived words exist in Oromo as derivation and compounding are the most common word formation processes in Oromo (Griefenow-Mewis 2001:24). For example, the suffix *-oom* derives verbs from nouns or adjectives, causative verbs are derived from verbs, adjectives, and nouns; compound verbs, which are abundant in Oromo as compared to compound nouns which are rare, are also formed through the combination of prepositions, postpositions, pronouns, and adverbs with a verb and through the use of the words *jechuu* ‘to say’ and *gochuu* ‘to do’ after verbs (Griefenow-Mewis 2001:85-90; Bender & Mulugeta 1976:141-143).

The infinitive (verbal nouns), which add the object marker⁵ in their verbal nature, end in *-uu* and the infinitive autobenefactive verbs in *-chuu*; the suffixation of *-aa* to a verb stem produces active participle which can also be used as masculine agent nouns and *-tuu* is used for the feminine; similarly, the suffixation of *-naan* to a verb stem produces gerund (Bender & Mulugeta 1976:147; Griefenow-Mewis 2001:70; Gobena 2017:128). Irregular verbs do also exist in Oromo: *jiru* ‘to be, exist’, *dhufu* ‘come’ that has *kottu* and *kottaa* as imperative singular and plural forms respectively, and *hodhu* ‘take’ having *hodhu* / *ho’u* and *hodha* / *ho’a* as imperative singular and plural forms are listed for having a deviated inflectional process from the commonly used ones (Bender & Mulugeta 1976:139). Similarly, verbs with root consonants that end in /ʔ/, /h/, /d/, /j/ and those that inflect through vowel change, for example, *daw-* as in *daw-t-e* > [dooftē] ‘you/she weaved’, are irregular verbs (Gobena 2017:128-129). On the whole, the verb agrees with the subject in terms of person, number, gender, and etc.

Adverbs are used to show relations of time, place, manner, and measure; accordingly, in Oromo, there are adverbs of time, adverbs of place, adverbs of manner, and adverbs of measure (Bender & Mulugeta 1976:140-41; Griefenow-Mewis 2001:96-98).

Under normal circumstance, Oromo follows an SOV word order in the main clause; direct speech, which is taken as an object, also comes before the verb; in a noun phrase, the noun comes before the modifiers (i.e., a noun comes first and followed by an adjective and then possessive or demonstrative pronoun follows (Gragg 1976:190-191; Griefenow-Mewis 2001:98-100). In a similar manner, Bender & Mulugeta (1976:147-48) have explained the following regarding the word order in a sentence: verb and copula (both positive and negative) come finally, adjectives come exactly before the copula, the subject appears at the head of the clause, and the objects (both direct and indirect objects) come before the verb. They have also added that in the presence of many complements, the word order becomes free; for instance, when it is important to emphasize some other parts of a sentence, the subject does not come first rather time and space determiners appear before it and sequentially, dependent clauses appear before the main clause.

⁵ This point is specific to Bender & Mulugeta (1976:147) and it is important to see it along with the discussion of pronouns set in one of the previous pages which points out that there is no form that shows object pronouns.

From a syntactic point of view, plural is little used in Oromo (which is a feature of other Ethiopian languages as well) and therefore alternatively it is expressed by the use of adjectives, numeral, verb form, or sense of a sentence (Bender & Mulugeta 1976:143-144). They have also added that in a possessive construction, the possessed noun comes first and then the possessor follows (an adjective comes next to the possessor and it adds a postposition in a noun-adjective compound). In a modifier modified relationship, adjectives, numerals, and demonstratives come next to a noun and numerals and demonstratives also come next to an adjective; if two adjectives modify a noun they can be joined by a conjunction and normally, adjectives agree with nouns in terms of number, gender, and case.

4.3 Dialect

The existing literature shows different views on the dialects of Oromo. For example, according to Bender & Mulugeta (1976:30), Oromo has five dialects, namely: Western (Mecha), Central (Tulema), Northern (Wello and Raya), Eastern, and Southern (Arsi, Guji, and Borena). On the other hand, Oromo is studied for having three major dialects: Western (Wellezza), Eastern (Harer), and Southern (Borena), including the unclassified but mentioned Central (Shewa) (Gragg 1976:173). Contrary to this, Appleyard (2012:236) lists seven dialects of Oromo. Kebede (1991) classifies Oromo into four dialects, while Kebede (2005) adds up the number and classifies it into five dialects. Some years later, based on a comprehensive study, Kebede (2009:164ff) classifies Ethiopian Oromo and the varieties that are spoken in Kenya into ten genetic units. Fedaa (2015:7)'s study, which classifies Oromo into six dialects (Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western, Central, and South-eastern), is used as a basis for the dialect selection of the present study as it is one of the most recently and objectively made studies on the dialects of Oromo.

It is normal to observe a lexical difference among dialects of a given language. According to Bender & Mulugeta (1976:130), it is not yet known how far the dialects of Oromo are different in terms of speech and geography. However, in terms of mutual intelligibility and basic vocabulary, the different dialects form up a single language, Oromo (Bender & Mulugeta 1976:131). Similarly, the difference among the dialects of Oromo is similar to the Dutch-Flemish, where basic communication is possible among extreme dialects, but the exact boundary of sub-division is not thus far known (Gragg 1976:173). Based on a study made to calculate lexical distance, Fedaa (2015:7) notes that the result of the classification of Oromo dialects indicates that they are mutually intelligible.

Chapter Five

Focus

5.1 Introduction

There are different ways of marking focus in Oromo: it is marked morphologically, syntactically, and prosodically. Morphologically, it is marked through several morphemes. Focus is also expressed through cleft construction, through manipulating the word order, and prosodically, through the extra energy which is given to a word by the means of stress. The morphemes that mark focus in Oromo can occur before or after the focused element. Parts of a sentence, like the subject, the object, and the verb can be focused.

A single sentence may contain one or more morphological focus markings depending on the number of clauses and elements that need to be focused. Mostly, however, just one morphological focus marker occurs per clause. Two different parts of a sentence may be focused simultaneously (e.g. subject or noun phrase and verb or verb phrase):

- (1) *isa-tu* *hin-deem-n-a* *jedh-Ø-e*
3SM-SUB.FOC1 V.FOC1-go-1P-IPFV say-3SM-PFV
'It is HIM who said LET US GO'

The two focus marking morphemes that occur in (1) are *-tu* and *hin-*. The above sentence occurs as *isa(a)-tu ni-deemna jedhe* 'it is him who said let us go' in the Eastern Oromo. For the discussion on the preverbals *hin-* and *ni-* see section 5.2.10 and 5.2.11 below. The same focus marking morpheme can occur on different words. There is also a process that develops into the formation of a new focus marking morpheme that is composed of two separately occurring morphemes diachronically and synchronically. For example, the morpheme *hinuma* (continuous verb focus) acts and functions as a single focus-marking morpheme in Oromo (based on *hin-* and *-uma*).

The type and use of focus marking morphemes have minor dialectal differences in Oromo. But, most of the focus marking morphemes are commonly shared among the six dialects of Oromo. There is a broad development of copulas into focus markers. This point has a direct indication that focus and copula are strongly interrelated issues in Oromo. Some focus marking morphemes have allomorphic variants that are phonologically conditioned. The allomorphic variants are usually observed with focus marking morphemes that occur with subject and object noun phrases.

Regarding person marking in Cushitic, the overlap between certain persons was mentioned in (Tucker 1967:665-672). The same process is observed in Oromo verb conjugation between first person singular and third person singular masculine pronouns and in the second person singular and third person singular feminine pronouns. The postulation of zero morpheme is discussed in different literature. For example, in Somali, since 3rd person object pronouns do not appear physically they are understood as Ø morpheme (Tosco 2004:83). On the other

hand, third person pronouns tend to grammaticalize into zero morpheme as compared to first and second person pronouns (Bickel et al. 2013:15). Currently, since zero morpheme is fairly accepted and used in linguistics, it should be, however, postulated reasonably (not for an arbitrary reason), i.e., for the absence of equivalent phonetic element in the presence of meaningful unit (Segel 2008:1-2; Mul'čuk 2009:177). Hence, in the data presentation, I will consistently use and present zero morpheme for first person singular and third person singular masculine pronouns in the perfective and imperfective aspect and for the third person plural pronoun in the imperfective aspect reference.

This chapter starts with the comparative description of the focus marking morphemes across the six Oromo dialects. Then, the syntactic means for marking focus, cleft, and pseudo-cleft constructions are discussed. The analysis of prosodic mechanism for marking focus, on the other hand, is given in section 5.4. The discussion on the type of focus among the six dialects is presented in section 5.5 that comes next to the discussion on the realization of focus.

5.2 Focus marking morphemes

This section deals with a description and analysis of different focus marking morphemes in Oromo. The focus marking morphemes are divided into subject, object, verb, predicate, and sentence based on the function they have. Accordingly, the focus marking morphemes *-tu*, *-illee*, *-uu*, *-oo*, *-s*, and *-uma* are used to focus subject of a sentence, i.e., they occur along with the subject of a sentence. They are suffixed to the head of the subject noun phrase or sometimes to the modifiers of the subject noun phrase with having a scope and control on the subject noun phrase. On the other hand, the morphemes *-dhaa*, *-tii*, *-tii* (E), *-tii* / *-too*, *-s-illee*, and *-uma* are labeled as object focus markers because they are suffixed to the object of a sentence from the functional point of view.

The morphemes *hin-*, *ni-*, *hinuma*, and *ya* are named as verb focus markers because they are used to give emphasis to the verb of a given sentence. The scope and control of these focus marking morphemes is on the verb. The morphemes *kaa* / *gaa*, *bee*, *bar*, *-m*, *ree*, and *yii* are used to give emphasis to the predicate of a sentence. In addition to this, the morphemes *bee*, *bar*, and *hinuma* are known as sentential focus markers because they can occur at the beginning of a sentence with having a wider emphasis, scope, and control on the whole sentence.

Each of the morphemes is discussed separately. Sometimes, if a given morpheme has different forms across the dialects, then a form of a morpheme that occurs in most of the dialects is provided. For example, in data number one a sentence that consists of the preverbal *hin-* is provided as *hin-* occurs in the five of the dialects of Oromo, except for the Eastern Oromo. There is also a separate section where a morpheme that occurs only in a single dialect is also discussed. For instance, in the case of the preverbal *ni-*, there is a separate section (5.2.11) that discusses it. Again, if a given dialect has a slightly different form (as in *-t*, *-um*, and *hinum* of Southern Oromo) a note is provided within the text. But not separately discussed. Table six (below) is also provided in order to show the focus marking morphemes, the function they have, dialects in which the morphemes occur, and the type of focus.

The focus marking morphemes in Oromo are shown in table 6:

Table 6 Type, function, and distribution of focus marking morphemes in Oromo

No.	Function of focus	Focus morphemes	Dialect it occurs in	Type of focus	
(1)	Subject focus	<i>-tu</i>	N, E, W, C, and SE	Contrastive	
			S (- <i>t</i>)		
(2)		<i>-illee</i>	N, S, E, W, C, and SE	Contrastive	
(3)		<i>-uu</i>	N, S, E, W, C, and SE	Assertive	
(4)		<i>-oo</i>	mainly W	Assertive	
(5)		<i>-s</i>	N, S, E, W, C, and SE	Additive	
(6)		<i>-uma</i>	N, E, W, C, and SE	Contrastive	
			S (- <i>um</i>)		
(7)	Object focus	<i>-dhaa</i>	N, S, E, W, C, and SE	Contrastive	
(8)		<i>-tii</i>	N, S, E, W, C, and SE	Contrastive	
(9)		<i>-tii</i>	E	Assertive	
(10)		<i>-tii / -too</i>	N, S, E, W, C, and SE	Imperative	
(11)		<i>-s</i>	N, S, E, W, C, and SE	Additive	
(12)		<i>-illee</i>	N, S, E, W, C, and SE	Contrastive	
(13)		<i>-uma</i>	N, E, W, C, and SE	Contrastive	
			S (- <i>um</i>)		
(14)	Verb focus	<i>hin-</i>	N, S, W, C, and SE	Assertive	
(15)		<i>ni-</i>	E	Assertive	
(16)		<i>hinuma</i>	N, E, W, C, and SE	Continuous	
				S (<i>hinum</i>)	
(17)		<i>ya</i>	S	Assertive	
(18)	Non-argument	<i>kaa</i>	N, S, W, C, and SE	Exclamatory	
				E (<i>gaa</i>)	
(19)		<i>bee</i>	N, S, W, C, and SE	Predicative	
(20)		<i>bar</i>	E, rarely in SE, and S	Predicative	
(21)		<i>-m</i>	Mainly W	Predicative	
(22)		<i>ree</i>	N, S, E, W, C, and SE	Interrogative	
(23)	Sentential focus	<i>bee</i>	N, S, W, C, and SE	Sentential	
(24)		<i>bar</i>	E	Sentential	
(25)		<i>hinuma</i>	N, S, E, W, C, and SE	Sentential	

Note: N, S, E, W, C and SE stand for (Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western, Central, and Southeastern dialects) and S (-*t*) means *-tu* > *-t*, S (-*um*) means *-uma* > *-um*, and S (*hinum*) means *hinuma* > *hinum* in the Southern Oromo.

The morphemes *-tu*, *-illee*, and *-uu* (table 6: 1-3) are used to focus subjects and glossed as *-tu* as SUB.FOC1, *-illee* as SUB.FOC2, and *-uu* as SUB.FOC3 (see the list of abbreviations for the remaining glossed elements).

5.2.1 *-tu*

The morpheme *-tu* can only be added to the subject argument and evokes a contrastive reading. It occurs in declarative affirmative, negative, exclamatory, and interrogative sentences.

- (2) *ana-tu dhug-Ø-e*
 1S-SUB.FOC1 drink-1S-PFV
 ‘It is ME who drunk’
- (3) *isin-tu afaan saanii beek-Ø-a*
 2P-SUB.FOC1 language their know-3SM-IPFV
 ‘It is YOU who know their language’
- (4) *farda-tu du’-Ø-e*
 horse-SUB.FOC1 die-3SM-PFV
 ‘It is a HORSE that died’

The pronouns and the noun to which the focus marker is added occur at the subject position of the sentences.

Example (5) and (6) further illustrate the occurrence of the morpheme *-tu* with the negative and interrogative constructions.

- (5) *si-tu hin-beek-Ø-u*
 2S-SUB.FOC1 NEG-know-3SM-NEG.IPFV
 ‘It is YOU that do not know’
- (6) *maal-tu akkana godh-Ø-a*
 what-SUB.FOC1 like.this make-3SM-IPFV
 ‘WHAT makes it like this?’

Non-focused subjects are marked for the nominative case (see the discussion in section 4.2 for case marking). As opposed to this, all elements that are found before the focus marker *-tu* are not marked for nominative case. In all examples the verb occurs in the invariant third person singular masculine form, i.e. the verb does not inflect for agreement. The morpheme *-tu* looks a syntactically controlled one in (6) because it is obligatory to have the morpheme *-tu* with this sentence. The absence of the morpheme *-tu* from (6) makes the sentence ungrammatical or to have meaning change.

Subject focus marking occurs in possessive constructions as in (7) and (8) below where the noun that bears the suffix morpheme comes after the relativizer *kan*.

- (7) *kan rabbii-tu caal-Ø-a*
 REL god-SUB.FOC1 great-3SM-IPFV
 ‘(That of God’s is better’
- (8) *kan ormaa-tu kiyya ta’-Ø-a-a?*
 REL fellow:GEN-SUB.FOC1 mine be-1S-IPFV-Q
 ‘Could what belongs to OTHERS be mine?’

The following examples, on the other hand, show the occurrence of the morpheme *-tu* mainly with the affirmative copular constructions. Focused subjects in the negative copular construction tend to be used usually with the past tense and future verbal copulas (cf. (11)). In the occurrence of the morpheme *-tu* with a copula, the copula should come with adjectives (i.e., the usage of the morpheme *-tu* with a copula is assisted by adjectives). Example (9), (10), and (11) show this fact.

- (9) *kiyya-tu* *guddaa-dha*
mine-SUB.FOC1 big-CS1
‘It is MINE that is big’
- (10) *isa-tu* *furdaa-dha*
3SM-SUB.FOC1 fat-CS1
‘It is HIM who is fat’
- (11) *kiyya-tu* *jabaa hin-tur-r⁶-e*
mine-SUB.FOC1 strong NEG-V.COP1-NEG-PFV
‘It is MINE that was not strong’

As indicated above, the morpheme *-tu* focuses head noun of the subject noun phrase. In other cases, however, when modifiers of the head noun (of the subject noun phrase) exit, the focus marker does not come immediately after the head noun; rather it comes with the modifiers.

- (12) *mucaa furdaa-tu* *dhuf-Ø-a*
boy fat-SUB.FOC1 come-3SM-IPFV
‘It is A FAT BOY who comes / will come’

In cases where there are modifiers of the head noun as in (12), the focus marker comes with the modifier *furdaa* ‘fat’, but not with the head noun *mucaa* ‘boy’. The presence and absence of the modifiers determine the exact place of the contrastive focus marker *-tu*. The other determining factor for its exact placement is the number of modifiers that come along with the head noun. Consider, for example, the following sentences:

- (13) *mucaa furdaa gabaabaa-tu* *deem-Ø-e*
boy fat short-SUB.FOC1 go-3SM-PFV
‘It is A SHORT FAT BOY who went’
- (14) *nam-icha bareedaa dheeraa dureessa sana-tu* *dhuf-Ø-a*
man-DEF.SIN handsome tall rich that-SUB.FOC1 come-3SM-IPFV
‘It is THAT HANDSOME TALL RICH MAN who comes / will come’

In (13), the adjective *gabaabaa* ‘short’ carries the subject focus marker. In (14), on the other hand, the focus marker morpheme *-tu* is suffixed to the determiner *sana* ‘that’. Both

⁶ /*hinturne*/ becomes [*hinturre*] ‘was not’ where *n* completely assimilates to the preceding *r*.

sentences show that the element that carries the focus marker is the modifier that comes last (i.e., the last element of the subject noun phrase can carry the focus marker). The elements that carry the focus marker in (13) and (14) exist immediately before the verb. This occurrence may not always hold true because some verbs may be modified by elements that may occur before the verb itself. For example, consider the following sentence: *namicha dureessa bareedaa dheeraa kaleessa dhufe san-tu har'as deebie dhufa* 'it is the tall rich handsome man who came yesterday will come also today'. Here, the morpheme *-tu* occurs before the modifiers of the verb. Generally speaking, the last element of the noun phrase can carry the focus marker in a sentence.

The non-verbal focus marker *-tu* is used to foreground nouns (including proper and non-proper nouns), pronouns, numerals, demonstratives, adjectives, and adverbs (like *yerootu* 'it is time...'). The subject focus marker *-tu* can be used as a focus marker with both inflectional verbs and copulas being employed (cf. *isatu dureessa-Ø* 'it is him who is rich' and *isatudhufa* 'it is him who comes').

The non-verbal focus marker which occurs as *-tu* in most of the dialects of Oromo, does not have one and regular form in the Southern Oromo. Sometimes it appears as *-tu* and very commonly as *-t*. The latter one is observed to be frequent as most of the Southern Oromo words, especially the ones that end in a short vowel in the other dialects, tend to end in a consonant. Let us observe the following examples that show the appearance of this morpheme in different circumstances.

(15) (a) *isa-t na bar-siis-Ø-e*
 3SM-SUB.FOC1 me teach-CAUS-3SM-PFV
 'It is HIM who taught me'

(b) *gulan kumaa-t du'-Ø-a*
 later thousand:DUR-SUB.FOC1 die-3SM-IPFV
 'It is a THOUSAND that would die later'

(Abdullahi 1996:271)

(c) *takka qubaa-t du'-Ø-a*
 first FINGER:DUR-SUB.FOC1 die-3SM-IPFV
 'It is only ONE that would die first'

(Adullahi 1996:271)

In (15 a-c) the focus marker appears as *-t*, but not as *-tu*. In (b and c of 15) which are both adopted from (Abdullahi 1996), the final vowel of the words that carry the focus marker (*kuma* 'thousand' and *quba* 'finger') gets lengthened before adding the focus marker. The equivalent forms of the above examples in the other dialects of Oromo are *isa-tu na barsiise* 'It is him who taught me' *gulana kuma-tu du'a* 'it is a thousand that would die later' and *takkaquba-tu du'a* 'it is only one / finger that would die first'. Obviously, the morpheme which occurs as *-t* in the Southern Oromo appears as *-tu* in the Northern, Eastern, Western, Central, and Southeastern Oromo.

- (16) *dubbii-t* *jir-Ø-a* *hin-awwaal-an-i*
 problem-SUB.FOC1 be-3SM-IPFV NEG-burly-3P-PFV
 ‘As there is a PROBLEM they could not bury the dead body’
 (Abdullahi 1996:273)

The morpheme *-t* is further observed in the following sentences: *waaqayyoguddaa-t nuu jira* ‘it is the great God that is there for us’ and *isanumaat eeget hafe* ‘it is them who have been left behind’ (Abdullahi 1996:283 & 287). This morpheme remains *-t* after words that end in long vowels like *guddaa* ‘big’ and sometimes words that end in short vowel get lengthened before adding the morpheme *-t* (cf. *kumaat*, *qubaat*, *isanumaat* above).

- (17) *mammaaksa* *kana-llee* *abboo-t* *na-tti* *him-Ø-e*
 proverb this-SUB.FOC2 father-SUB.FOC1 me-DAT tell-3SM-PFV
 ‘It is my father who told me EVENTHIS proverb’

Just like the other examples, (17) also consists of the focus marking morpheme *-t* with a contrastive function. A declarative affirmative sentence like (17) can consist of two focus markers (*-illee* and *-t* which are carried on by the words *kana* ‘this’ and *abboo* ‘father’). Sometimes the morpheme *-tu*, but not *-t*, is used in the Southern dialect as it is used in the other dialects. Observe (18) below which is a negative declarative sentence:

- (18) *isin-tu* *hin-beek-n-Ø-e*
 2P-SUB.FOC1 NEG-know-NEG-3SM-PFV
 ‘It is YOU who did not know’

The focus marker *-tu* appears with different sentence types like declarative, interrogative, and exclamatory sentences, but not with the imperative ones. In affirmative declarative, it appears very well. Sometimes, its distribution is restricted to the dependent clause in the negative declarative (*ana-tu hinnyaanne malee warri kaan nyaatan* ‘it is me who did not eat, but the others have eaten’). In the interrogative, it occurs well in both affirmative and negative cases (*isatudhufee* ‘is it him who came?’ and *isatuhindhufnee* ‘is that him who did not come?’). It exists firmly in the affirmative and negative exclamatory sentences. Therefore, the morpheme *-tu* is used as a contrastive focus marker, which is attached to the head noun of the subject noun phrase in the absence of any modifier that follows the head noun. In the presence of modifiers, the morpheme *-tu* is attached to the last modifier of the subject noun phrase (which is part of the subject noun phrase).

The addition of the contrastive morpheme *-tu* eliminates the nominative marker that comes with the subject noun phrases. The nominative case marker appears in the absence of the subject focus marker. And the subject focus marker occurs in the absence of the nominative case marker; they do not occur together (e.g. *mucaa-tu dhufe* ‘it is a child who came’ vs. *mucaa-n dhufe* ‘a child came’). On the other hand, in the copular constructions, the adjectives agree in number and gender with the focused subjects (cf. also Crass et al. 2005:20).

5.2.2 -illee

The subject focus marking morpheme *-illee*, which is used as a contrastive focus marker, is one of the most widely used focus marking morphemes in Oromo. The following examples show the function and distribution of this morpheme:

- (19) *sangaa-n diimaa-fi gurraachi-llee-n nyaat-am-Ø-e*
 ox-NOM red-CON black-EPEN-SUB.FOC2-NOM eat-PASS-3SM-PFV
 ‘THE RED AND EVEN BLACK OXEN have been eaten’

(19) is an instance where the subject focus marker *-illee* occurs with the adjective *gurraacha* ‘black’. In this example, the nominative case marker which occurs with the adjective *gurraacha* ‘black’, comes after the focus marker. The non-verbal focus marker *-illee* occurs also with different word classes: for example with nouns and adjectives to focus subjects as indicated in the above example. The following elements also consist of this focus marker: *lola-llee* ‘even fight’, *biyyee-llee-n* ‘even soil’, *jireenyi-llee-n*, ‘even life’, *biroo-llee* ‘even other’, *diqqoo-llee* ‘even little’, *tokko-llee* ‘even one’ and etc.

- (20) *booran-ni-llee-n guji-llee-n godaansaa-f ka’-i*
 borana-NOM-SUB.FOC2-NOM guji-SUB.FOC2-NOM movement:GEN-BEN stand.up-2S.IMP
 ‘EVEN BORANA AND GUJI stand up for a movement’

Example (20) is taken from Southern Oromo. It is an affirmative imperative sentence that gives an order. The statement consists of two focus markers that appear on the nouns Borana and Guji which occur at the subject position of the sentence. This shows the fact that a given sentence can have two identical focus markers carried by different words. Note also that the nominative case marker comes after the focus marker morpheme *-illee* in the word *guj-illee-n* ‘even Guji’. Compare also a parallel statement in the other Oromo varieties: *booranni-llee gujii-n-illee godaansaaf ka’i* ‘even Borana and Guji stand up for a movement’ where the nominative case is added to the noun that exists before the focus marker.

The following statements are also formed in a similar way: *aannan-illee dhugne miju-llee unanne amma gara sirbaattiyaana* ‘since we had even food and drunk milk, now we will go out for a song’. The two nouns that carry the focus markers (*aannan* ‘milk’ and *mijuu* ‘food’) are both focused in this case. There are two focus marking morphemes (*-illee* and *-llee*) that exist per sentence (in the later mentioned example and in (20)). Hence, the *-illee* / *-llee* distribution can be stated as follows: *-illee* occurs after words that end in a consonant and *-llee* occurs after words that end in long and short vowels (which could be stated as an elsewhere distribution). This suffix morpheme can be added to the right member of a compound noun. For example, *manni kitaabaa-llee ijaarame* ‘even library has been built’ has the focus marker *-llee* on the element *kitaaba* ‘book’ which modifies the head element *mana* ‘house’. Here, the morpheme occurs at the subject position of the affirmative declarative sentence.

In addition to the subject, the morpheme *-ille* is used to focus the object of a sentence:

- (21) *inni* *nuti qal-l⁷-e* *foon-illee* *hin-qab-Ø-u*
 3SM:NOM.what we slaughter-1P-PFV meat-OBJ.FOC4 NEG-have-3SM-NEG.IPFV
 ‘What we have slaughtered does not have EVEN MEAT’

Example (21) consists of the focus marking morpheme *-illee*, which is attached to the noun *foon* ‘meat’. The suffix morpheme *-illee* distributes in the main and subordinate clauses of the negative declarative sentence having a contrastive function.

Additional example regarding the morpheme *-ille* (that focuses the object) is given below:

- (22) *inni* *laaqana-llee* *nyaat-Ø-e*
 3SM:NOM lunch-OBJ.FOC4 eat-3SM-PFV
 ‘He ate EVENLUNCH’

In (22), the morpheme *-llee* focuses the object word *laaqana* ‘lunch’.

Therefore, in addition to the subject, this morpheme focuses also the object of a sentence. It has been observed that this morpheme occurs with nouns, adjectives, numerals, adverbs and etc. It distributes in the subject and object of a declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory sentences. It also occurs both in the affirmative and negative construction types.

5.2.3 *-uu*

The other focus marking morpheme which is used to focus the subject is *-uu*. It is almost similar to the previously mentioned focus marker, but with the function of the assertive type.

- (23) *inn-uu* *si* *beek-Ø-a*
 3SM.NOM-SUB.FOC3 you.ABS know-3SM-IPFV
 ‘Even HE (himself) knows you’

- (24) *tolaa-n-uu* *kaleessa* *dhuf-Ø-e*
 tolaa-NOM-SUB.FOC3 yesterday come-3SM-PFV
 ‘Even TOLAA (himself) came yesterday’

- (25) *laf-t-uu* *hin-qot-am-n-e*
 land-NOM-SUB.FOC3 NEG-plough-PASS-NEG-PFV
 ‘Even THE LAND (itself) is not plowed’

In (23) and (25), the final *i* is lost from the words *inni* ‘he.NOM’ and *lafti* ‘land.NOM’ before adding the focus marker *-uu*. This morpheme distributes in the affirmative and negative sentences.

⁷ *qalne* becomes *qalle* ‘we slaughtered’ where *n* completely assimilates to the preceding alveolar lateral *l*.

5.2.4 -oo

The occurrence of the morpheme -oo is observed mainly in the Western Oromo for marking subject focus. The following examples are presented in order to show the distribution and function of this morpheme:

(26) *an-oo* *hin-beek-Ø-u*
1S:NOM-SUB.FOC4 NEG-know-1S-NEG.IPFV
'Even I do not know'

(27) *ishee-n-oo* *amma dhuf-t-i*
3SF-NOM-SUB.FOC4 now come-3SF-IPFV
'Even SHE comes / will come now'

(28) *isaan-oo* *boru deem-Ø-u*
3P:NOM-SUB.FOC4 tomorrow go-3P-IPFV
'Even THEY will go tomorrow'

The morpheme -oo occurs predominantly with personal pronouns.

5.2.5 -dhaa

This morpheme is attached to the object of a given sentence in order to show contrastive focus in Oromo. It occurs in the declarative, interrogative, exclamatory, and imperative sentence types in their affirmative and negative forms. The following examples show the existence of the morpheme -dhaa in different sentence types (circumstances).

(29) *tulluu-n* *ulee-dhaa-n* *rukut-Ø-e*
tulluu-NOM stick-OBJ.FOC1-INS hit-3SM-PFV
'Tulluu hit WITH A STICK'

(30) *ati* *ulee-dhaa-n* *rukut-t-e-e?*
2S:NOM stick-OBJ.FOC1-INS hit-2S-PFV-Q
'Did you hit WITH A STICK?'

(31) *ulee-dhaa-n* *rukut-i*
stick-OBJ.FOC1-INS hit-2S.IMP
'Hit WITH A STICK!'

(32) *inni* *ulee-dhaa-n* *hin-rukut-n-Ø-e*
3SM:NOM stick-OBJ.FOC1-INS NEG-hit-NEG-3SM-PFV
'He did not hit WITH A STICK'

This morpheme appears in three different phonologically conditioned forms: -dhaa, -ii, and vowel length (aa). The allomorphic distribution of this morpheme is stated as follows: -dhaa occurs after words that end in long vowels, -ii occurs after words that end in consonants and vowel length occurs when the words end in other short vowels (especially a). The instrumental marker morpheme occurs regularly after the focus marking morpheme in all the

examples mentioned. Hence, the morpheme *-dhaa* is a contrastive one, which is usually followed by the instrumental marker as illustrated further in the following examples.

- (33) *dabalaa-n albee-dhaa-n hoolaa qal-Ø-e*
 dabalaa-NOM knife-OBJ.FOC1-INS sheep slaughter-3SM-PFV
 ‘It is WITH A KNIFE that Dabalaa slaughtered a sheep’
- (34) *ishee-n aannan-ii-n daabboo nyaat-t-e*
 3SF-NOM milk-OBJ.FOC1-INS bread eat-3SF-PFV
 ‘It is WITH A MILK that she ate bread’
- (35) *caaltuu-n farda-a-n mana-barumsaa dhuf-t-e*
 caaltuu-NOM horse-OBJ.FOC1-INS school come-3SF-PFV
 ‘It is WITH A HORSE (back) that Caaltuu came to school’
- (36) *inni dallaa irra-a-n gara alaa utaal-Ø-e*
 3SM:NOM fence on-OBJ.FOC1-INS to(wards) outside:GEN jump-3SM-PFV
 ‘It is OVER the fence that he jumped to the outside’

The morpheme *-dhaa* occurs with words of different word classes. For example, it is attached to nouns, adjectives, demonstratives, prepositions (postpositions), numerals, adverbs, pronouns that occur at the object position of a sentence. Since most Oromo nouns (words) end in short central vowel *a*, it is a bit problematic to find words and examples that end in other short vowels. The morpheme *-dhaa* should not be confused with the copula *-dha* that has a similar form. Note that their difference is on vowel length: the focus marker is the one with a long vowel, however, the copula manifests itself with a short vowel. In all the examples indicated above, the morpheme *-dhaa* occurs in the main clause. It also occurs in a subordinate clause as in the following:

- (37) *ulee-dhaa-n waan ari'-Ø-ee-f as dhufuu sodaat-t-e*
 stick-OBJ.FOC1-INS since expel-3SM-CVB-CON here come:VN frighten-3SF-PFV
 ‘Since he expelled her WITH A STICK she is frightened to come here’

In sentences like the above one, the word *waan* has an equivalent meaning to the word since or because. In other cases, on the other hand, the element *waan* itself marks focus in different circumstances being in the subordinate clause (see section 5.3 for a syntactic means for focus).

- (38) (a) *yoo qarshii-dhaa-n ta'-Ø-e malee hin-hojjat-t-u-u?*
 if money-OBJ.FOC1-INS be-3SM-PFV without NEG-work-2S-NEG.IPFV-Q
 ‘If it is not FOR MONEY, you do not work?’ / ‘you do not work without money?’
- (b) *qarshii-dhaa-n yoo ta'-Ø-e malee hin-hojjat-t-u-u?*
 money-OBJ.FOC1-INS if be-3SM-PFV without NEG-work-2S-NEG.IPFV-Q
 ‘If it is not FOR MONEY, you do not work?/ You do not work if it is not for money?’

Example (38) is an instance where the focus marker *-dhaa* occurs in the dependent clause of a negative interrogative sentence. The position of the focused element varies: in (38 a) the word *qarshiidhaan* ‘with money’ occurs after the word *if*, but in the next one (38 b) it occurs before it. Both are, however, possible utterances in everyday conversation.

Additional examples regarding the use of the morpheme *-dhaa* are given below:

- (39) *tooftaa-dhaa-n* *itti* *dhiyaach-uu-dhaa-n* *waliin* *hojjat-Ø-u*
 system-OBJ.FOC1- it.towards approach-VN- together work-3P-
 INS OBJ.FOC1-INS IPFV
 ‘They work together by APPROACHING it SYSTEMATICALLY’

- (40) *bar-siis-uu-dhaa-n* *nama* *jijjiir-uu-n* *ni-danda'-am-a*
 teach-CAUS-VN- human change-VN- V.FOC2-possible-PASS-
 OBJ.FOC1-INS NOM IPFV
 ‘It is POSSIBLE to change human being THROUGH TEACHING’

There are two identical focus marking morphemes in example (39): *-dhaa* which is attached to the word *tooftaa* ‘system’ and the one that is attached to the word *dhiyaachuu* ‘approach’. On the other hand, two separate (i.e., of a different type) focus marking morphemes occur within a single sentence as in the example (40). The first one is *-dhaa* which is the object focus marker which is attached to the verbal noun *barsiisuu* ‘teach’ and the second one is *ni-* which is a verbal focus marker prefixed to the word *danda'ama* ‘possible’. For the occurrence and distribution of the morpheme *ni-*, see the discussion under section 5.2.11.

5.2.6 *-tii*

The morpheme *-tii*, which is partly related to the morpheme *-dhaa*, is also a contrastive focus marker added to objects. Let us have a look at the following examples:

- (41) *ati* *bifa* *barreeffama-a-tii-n* *galch⁸-i*
 2S:NOM form written-GEN-OBJ.FOC2-INS submit:2S-IMP
 ‘Submit in a WRITTEN form’

The object of (41) is focused with the morpheme *-tii* as opposed to the *-dhaa*, which has been discussed previously. In this particular example, the word *barreeffama* ‘written’ changes into genitive form before adding the suffix morpheme *-tii*. The instrumental marker morpheme follows the object focus marker *-tii* which also the case in the discussion of *-dhaa* (cf. section 5.2.5). The following example is also provided to show the use of the morpheme *-tii* further.

- (42) *mana* *isaa* *halluu* *magariisa-a-tii-n* *dib-Ø-e*
 house 3SM:GEN color green-GEN-OBJ.FOC2-INS paint-3SM-PFV
 ‘He painted his house WITH A GREEN color’

⁸ *t* which is the second person singular marker in this case palatalizes into *ch* (*ʃ*) before high front unrounded vowel.

‘They have MADE a long discussion’

- (c) *akkana je'-an-ii-tii* *jir-Ø-u*
 like.this say-3P-CVB.PFV-OBJ.FOC3 AUX-3P-IPFV
 ‘They have SAID like this’

- (d) *him-an-ii-tii* *jir-Ø-u*
 tell-3P-CVB.PFV-OBJ.FOC3 AUX-3P-IPFV
 ‘They have TOLD’

The focus marker in (47) occurs in the affirmative declarative sentences. In all the cases it is suffixed to the converbes or progressive verbs that occur before the auxiliary verb *jir-*. In addition to this, it can be used with the auxiliary verb *tur-*. It is dominantly used with the copular/auxiliary verb *jir-* which has the present reference.

The assertive focus marker *-tii* occurs almost with all personal pronouns. In the following examples, the morpheme *-tii* appears with adding *n* as a suffix in the first person singular and plural and third person plural pronouns. But, the absence of *-n* in the third person singular feminine pronoun (cf. *eegal-t-ee-tii jir-t-i* ‘she has begun’) makes it to be an optionally used one. Further examples are given below.

- (48) (a) *ark-ee-tii=n* *jir-Ø-a*
 see-CVB-OBJ.FOC3-1S.AGR AUX-1S-IPFV
 ‘I have SEEN’ cf. *arg-ee-n jir-Ø-a* in the other dialects.

- (b) *dhuf-ee-tii=n* *jir-Ø-a*
 come-CVB-OBJ.FOC3-1S.AGR AUX-1S-IPFV
 ‘I have COME’ cf. *dhuf-ee-n jir-Ø-a* in the other dialects.

- (c) *dhuf-an-ii-tii* *jir-Ø-u*
 come-3P-CVB-OBJ.FOC3 AUX-3P-IPFV
 ‘They have COME’ cf. *dhuf-an-ii jir-Ø-u* in the other dialects.

- (d) *kanaan goolab-an-ii-tii* *jir-Ø-u*
 with.this finish-3P-CVB-OBJ.FOC3 AUX-3P-IPFV
 ‘They have FINISHED (CLOSED) with this’ cf. *kanaan goolab-an-ii jir-Ø-u* in the other dialects.

- (e) *har'aaf raaww-an⁹-n-ee-tii* *jir-r¹⁰-a*
 for.today finish-BEN-1P-CVB-OBJ.FOC3 AUX-1P-IPFV
 ‘We have FINISHED for today’ cf. *har'aaf raawwannee jirra* in the other dialects.

⁹ The autobenefactive morpheme *-at* changes into *-an* due to the influence of the first person agreement marker *-n* which is an instance of total assimilation.

¹⁰ The first person plural number marker *n* is influenced and totally assimilates to the root *r*.

The morpheme *-tii* is attached mainly to converbs. The auxiliary verb that is used in support of the converb is *jir-*. In addition to this, it can be used with the auxiliary verb that has past reference *tur-*.

5.2.8 *-tii/-too*

This focus marking morpheme is used in the imperative construction type. It shows an assertive focus by being attached to converbs and imperative verbs that occur at the object position a sentence. The examples that follow demonstrate the occurrence of *-tii* / *-too*.

- (49) (a) *daf-ii* *koott-u*
 quick-2S.CVB come-2S.IMP
 ‘Come quickly’
- (b) *daf-ii-tii* *koott-u*
 quick-2S.CVB-IMP.FOC come-2S.IMP
 ‘Come QUICKLY’
- (50) *nyaadh-uu-tii* *deem-i*
 eat-2S.CVB-IMP.FOC go-2S.IMP
 ‘EAT and go’
- (51) *barbaad-aa-too* *naaf* *erg-aa*
 search-2P.CVB-IMP.FOC for.me send-2P.IMP
 ‘SEARCH and send it (to) me’

Imperative verbs of both come and go, which are considered as irregular forms, are used in the above examples. 49 (a) and (b) are glossed with a similar element ‘come quickly’. The difference is on the existence of the focus marker *-tii* in (b), but (a) is unfocused in this case. Note, however, examples (49-51) are all in the affirmative imperative construction type. The imperative markers occur twice: for example in (51), the imperative marker *aa* appears on the elements *barbaad-* ‘search’ and *erg-* ‘send’. Similarly, in the second person singular *nyaadh-uu-tii koott-u* ‘eat and come’, the second person singular imperative form that occurs with the focused word appears long. In such constructions, the imperative forms that occur with the focused words seem to have a converbial function. Exclamatory sentences in the affirmative form can also be focused with this morpheme.

The morpheme *-tii* alternates with the morpheme *-too* because of the appearance of honorific pronoun(s) as a triggering environmental condition. There is a brief tendency of difference in usage between the two: *-too* tends to be used usually with the second person plural while the morpheme *-tii* happens to be used with the second person singular form. Obviously, the imperative form is used in the second person singular and plural forms only. This focus marker is used to give an order for things (activities) that have to be done sequentially, i.e. one after the other. It functions to focus a given action with the meaning or sense of ‘do this and/then the other’. Since it links the actions, it is a sort of coordinating focus type as well. It is a pragmatically controlled one because it gives an option for the speakers so that they can

use unfocused counterparts where necessary. In all the examples presented, this morpheme is attached to the object of a sentence.

The following additional example is presented to show the occurrence of the morpheme *-tii*.

- (52) *da~ddaf-t-ee hin-hojjat-i-n-ii-tii irr-uma ciisaa ool-i*
 RD~quick-2S- NEG-work-EPEN-NEG- on- sleep:PROG stay-
 CVB 2S.IMP.CVB-IMP.FOC OBJ.FOC5 2S.IMP
 ‘Instead of DOING it very QUICKLY, just sleep ON it!’

In (52), when the imperative construction is in the negative form, the focus marker occurs in the subordinate clause of the sentence, but not in the main clause. Note that (52) consists of two different focus markers: (*-uma*) in the main and (*-tii*) in the subordinate clause. Therefore, in the affirmative and negative forms *-tii* seems to occur in the subordinate clause. Its occurrence remains in the subordinate clause in the interrogative form of the imperative as in the following:

- (53) *daf-t-ee-too deemuu mannaa as-uma-tti rakkachuu sii wayya-a?*
 quick-2S- go:VN rather here- problem:VN for.you better-
 CVB- OBJ.FOC5- Q
 IMP.FOC LOC
 ‘Is that better for you to face a problem HERE than going very QUICKLY?’

(53) also consists of two different focus markers in the main and subordinate clauses: *-too* in the subordinate and *-uma* in the main clause. Here, both morphemes, *-too* and *-uma*, are pragmatically controlled morphemes as a non-focused counterpart of this statement is also possible in Oromo.

In the imperative and sometimes in the exclamatory sentence types, the subject of this focus marker would always happen to be second person singular and plural pronoun. In the jussive, however, singular and plural nouns or pronouns occupy the subject position.

- (54) (a) *inni daf-Ø-ee-too haa deem-Ø-u*
 3SM:NOM quick-3SM-CVB-IMP.FOC JUS go-3SM-IMP
 ‘Let him GO QUICKLY’
- (b) *ishee-n daf-t-ee-too haa deem-t-u*
 3SF-NOM quick:3SF-CVB-IMP.FOC JUS go-3SF-IMP
 ‘Let her GO QUICKLY’
- (c) *isaan daf-an-ii-too haa deem-an-i*
 3P:NOM quick-3P-CVB-IMP.FOC JUS go-3P-IMP
 ‘Let them GO QUICKLY’

- (d) *nuti daf-n-ee-too haa deem-n-u*
 1P:NOM quick-1P-CVB-IMP.FOC JUS go-1P-IMP
 ‘Let us GO QUICKLY’
- (e) *ani daf-Ø-ee-too haa deem-Ø-u*
 1S:NOM quick-1S-CVB-IMP.FOC JUS go-1S-IMP
 ‘Let me GO QUICKLY’

The situation of alternation can be described as follows. The *-tii/-too* alternation is due to the sentence type and due to being negative or affirmative: *-tii* occurs with singular pronouns in the imperative and exclamatory sentences (in the affirmative and negative form), while *-too* occurs with plural pronouns in the affirmative imperative and with a singular in the negative and interrogative. In the jussive sentence type, it occurs with singular and plural subjects.

5.2.9 -s

The focus marking morpheme *-s* occurs with different word classes. For instance, it occurs with nouns, pronouns, verbs, verbal nouns, prepositions, etc in the dependent and independent clauses. It is used to show an additive focus.

- (55) *inni nyaat-Ø-uu-s dhug-Ø-uu-s san-uma*
 3SM:NOM eat-3SM-VN-ADD.FOC drink-3SM-VN-ADD.FOC that.same-CS3
 ‘He is the same whether he EATS and DRINKS’ / ‘does not show change’
- (56) *ishee-n raf-t-uu-s rafuu baat-t-uu-s san-uma*
 3SF- sleep-3SF-VN- sleep:VN if.not-3SF-VN- that.same-
 NOM ADD.FOC ADD.FOC CS3
 ‘She is the same whether she SLEEPS or NOT’

In (55) and (56), the focus marker *-s* occurs after the verbal roots *nyaat-* ‘eat’, *dhug-* ‘drink’, *raf-* ‘sleep’, and *baat-* ‘which shows negation’. These verbs change into the verbal nouns through the regular addition of the morpheme *-uu* before adding the focus marker *-s*. In example (55), two verbal nouns of different verb roots occur one after the other in the subordinate clause and both of them carry the focus marker. In (56), two verbal nouns of the same verb root occur one after the other in the subordinate clause. When two verbal nouns of the same verb root come together as in example (56) above, a third verbal noun that shows negation (*baattuu-* ‘if not’ in this case) is added in order to carry the second focus marker *-s*. Here, the verb root *baat-* ‘if not’ is negative and explains negation in the verbal nouns that are focused. The two examples given above occur as an affirmative and negative declarative sentence respectively.

The following additional examples are provided to show the occurrence of the morpheme *-s*.

- (57) *ati-s daf-ii hojjadh-u*
 2S:NOM-ADD.FOC quick-2S.IMP work-2S.IMP
 ‘YOU ALSO do it quickly’

- (63) (a) *haf-uu-s* *hin¹¹-dandeessa*
 absent-VN-ADD.FOC V.FOC1-able:2S:IPFV
 ‘You CAN also be ABSENT’
- (b) *haf-uu-s* *hin-dandeess-u*
 absent-VN-ADD.FOC NEG-able:2S-NEG.IPFV
 ‘You cannot also be ABSENT’
- (64) *duri-s* *yoom dhuf-t-ee beek-t-a?*
 before-ADD.FOC when come-2S-CVB know-2S-Q
 ‘When did you come even BEFORE?’/ ‘Did you even come before?’

Example (63 a & b), which are in the affirmative and negative declarative form respectively, can function also as exclamatory form. In (63 a), there are two focus markers that exist per the sentence: *-s* and *hin-* (both words *haf-* ‘absent’ and *dandeess-* ‘able’ are focused). Sentences like this give two options for the listener: you can come or you can also be absent. In (63 b), the preverbal morpheme *hin-* shows negation, but not focus. The additive focus marker *-s* occurs in the affirmative interrogative sentences like (64). All the examples presented above show that the morpheme *-s* occurs with the declarative, interrogative, imperative, jussive and exclamatory types of sentences. It is suffixed to a pronoun as in the following.

- (65) *inni-s* *obbooleessa koo-ti*
 3SM:NOM-ADD.FOC brother mine-CS2
 ‘HE is also my brother’

In order to show the additive function it has, the morpheme *-s* is suffixed to pronouns like *ana/anis* ‘1S’, *nu/nus* ‘1P’, *ati/atis* ‘2S’, *isin/isins* ‘2P’, *isa/innis* ‘3SM’, *ishii/isheen*, ‘3SF’ and *isaan/isaanis* ‘3P’ in their subject and absolutive form. In addition to the pronouns, the morpheme *-s* can occur after proper nouns:

- (66) *caalaa-n-i-s* *haa dhuf-Ø-u*
 caalaa-NOM-EPEN-ADD.FOC JUS come-3SM-IPFV
 ‘Let CAALAA also come’

In the above example, the focus marker is added to the proper noun Caalaa which exists at the subject position of the jussive sentence. Note that the nominative case marker occurs along with the focus marker *-s*. This morpheme can be used with sentences of the perfective and imperfective aspects. The following examples are also presented to show the occurrence of the morpheme *-s* further.

- (67) *harree-n-i-s* *du'-Ø-e*
 donkey-NOM-EPEN-ADD.FOC die-3SM-PFV
 ‘The DONKEY also died’

¹¹ The pre-verbal focus in the Eastern Oromo is ni-

(68) *amma-s dhuf-Ø-e*
 now-ADD.FOC come-3SM-PFV
 ‘He came AGAIN’

(69) *irra-tti-s dabal-i*
 on-LOC-ADD.FOC add-2S.IMP
 ‘Add also ON it’

(67) is an instance where the additive focus marker is attached to the common noun *harree* ‘donkey’. In addition to this, it can also be added to adverbs like *amma* ‘now’ as in (68), *yeroo* ‘time’, *boru* ‘tomorrow’, *akkasumas* ‘on the other hand/like that’ etc. Example (69) carries the additive focus marker *-s* and the morpheme *-tti*, which shows the locative case.

Demonstratives like *as-itti-s* ‘also here’, *ach-itti-s* ‘also there’, prepositions *jala-tti-s* ‘also below’, *gubbaa-tti-s* ‘also above’, and postpositions (adverbs) *booda-tti-s* ‘also later’ etc can carry the locative *-tti* and the additive focus marker *-s*. The suffixation of the additive *-s* and the morpheme *-tti* to the pronouns, demonstratives, and postpositions can be used with the imperative verbs that give an order, with the interrogatives that are used to ask, in statements that declare something and etc.

5.2.10 *hin-*

The prefix morpheme *hin-* is an assertive verb focus marker that is used in all varieties of Oromo except for the Eastern Oromo. This focus marker is prefixed to verbs that are used in the declarative and interrogative sentence types. It can also be used in the exclamatory sentences; however, it cannot be added to imperative sentences to show focus. In the declarative sentences, it is added to the affirmative sentences, but not to the negative ones. The same also holds for the interrogative sentences because it is added to the affirmative ones with having the purpose of focus. It is not used in the interrogative negative constructions. The following examples illustrate the use and distribution of this morpheme in a sentence. The examples also help to understand the difference between focused and unfocused verbs. In addition to this, they are meant to show how the focus marker and the negative marker morpheme are used in a sentence.

(70) *inni hin-dhuf-Ø-a*
 3SM:NOM V.FOC1-come-3SM-IPFV
 ‘He COMES / WILL COME’

(71) *inni hin-dhuf-Ø-u*
 3SM:NOM NEG-come-3SM-DEP.IPFV
 ‘He does not come’

In example (70), the morpheme *hin-* shows focus, but the other one (*hin-* plus *-u*) that exists in (71) shows negation. Although the two examples are in the imperfective declarative sentence type, they differ in terms of marking focus and negation. The action declared in the

sentences is that he comes / will come as in (70) or that he does not come as in (71). Example (70) represents the Central, Western, and Northern Oromo only with the given meaning. In the Southern and Southeastern Oromo, on the other hand, *hindhufa* has two meanings: ‘he comes / will come’ and ‘I come / will come’; see section (5.2.11) for a similar discussion in the Eastern Oromo. The negative morpheme (*hin-* plus *-u*) and the focus marking morpheme occur before the verb and are prefixes in Oromo. There is a little difference between the focus marker *hin-* and the one that functions as a negative marker: the focus marker is produced with the extra high energy (high pitch), but the negative marker is not produced with the high energy like that of the focus marker (cf. Baye 1988:369; Dabala & Meyer 2003:166).

There are different ways of forming interrogatives: the first one is through lengthening the final vowel of a declarative sentence and the other one is through using the verbal copula *tur-* which shows past tense. In both instances, the morpheme *hin-* is used as a focus marker.

(72) *ishee-n hin-dhuf-t-i*
 3SF-NOM V.FOC1-come-3SF-IPFV
 ‘She COMES / WILL COME’

(73) *inni hin-dhuf-Ø-a-a*
 3SM:NOM V.FOC1-come-3SM-IPFV-Q
 ‘Does he COME?’

(74) *ati hin-dhuf-t-a tur-t-e-e*
 2S:NOM V.FOC1-come-2S-IPFV AUX-2S-PFV-Q
 ‘Do you used to COME?’

The assertive verb focus marker *hin-* is used with a declarative affirmative sentence type as in (72). Example (73) and (74) are in the interrogative affirmative form, but with time or tense difference. Example (73) is an affirmative interrogative used for the present or future tense. Example (74), on the other hand, is an affirmative interrogative that is used in the past tense. Affirmative interrogative in the present and future tense is formed through lengthening of the final vowel of the aspect marker that is attached to the verb root; it is *a* in (73), but it varies according to the aspect marker. The other type of affirmative interrogative is the one that is formed with the use of the auxiliary *tur-*, which is used for the past tense. In the declarative and interrogative sentences, like the above ones, the focus marker seems obligatory and it is totally controlled by the grammar, but not by the pragmatics (by the speaker).

In the non-past actions, the focus marker *hin-* is obligatorily used with all the personal pronoun forms, i.e., first, second, and third person singular and plural forms (see table eight below). This happens regularly when the intransitive verb forms are used (Dabala & Meyer 2003:169). In the Central, Western, and Northern dialects of Oromo, the verb focus marker that is used with the first person is, however, different from the verb focus marker used in the other personal pronouns. It is *nan-*, but not *hin-* that is used with the first person singular form. On the other hand, it is *hin-* in the Southern and Southeastern Oromo and *nin-* in the Eastern that is used with the first person singular form. In the past tense form, the verb is not

obligatorily focused in all the personal forms. Therefore, the occurrence of this morpheme looks optional in the past tense forms.

The focus marker morpheme *hin-* comes with the declarative, interrogative, and exclamatory sentences. It does not seem to occur with the imperative and jussive sentences. The following example shows the occurrence of the focus marker *hin-* with personal pronouns:

Table 8 Focus markers with personal pronouns in the Central, Western, and Northern Oromo

(a)	<i>nan-dhuf-Ø-a</i>	V.FOC1-come-1S-IPFV	'I come / will come'
(b)	<i>hin-dhuf-n-a</i>	V.FOC1-come-1P-IPFV	'We come / will come'
(c)	<i>hin-dhuf-t-a</i>	V.FOC1-come-2SF&M-IPFV	'You come / will come'
(d)	<i>hin-dhuf-t-u</i>	V.FOC1-come-2P-IPFV	'You come / will come'
(e)	<i>hin-dhuf-Ø-a</i>	V.FOC1-come-3SM-IPFV	'He comes / will come'
(f)	<i>hin-dhuf-t-i</i>	V.FOC1-come-3SF-IPFV	'She comes / will come'
(g)	<i>hin-dhuf-Ø-u</i>	V.FOC1-come-3P-IPFV	'They come / will come'

The examples in table eight are presented in the imperfective aspect with having present and future reference. The imperfective aspect marker is *-a* with the allomorphic variants *-i* which occurs with third person singular feminine and *-u*, which occurs with the second and third person plural pronouns. First person singular and third person singular masculine pronouns have identical person marker and appear as *dhuf-Ø-a* 'come', but have different focus marking morphemes (*nan-* and *hin-* respectively). The person marker is zero morpheme in the third person plural. Second person singular masculine and feminine have also the same form *hindhufta* 'you masculine and feminine come / will come'. Regarding the focus marker, all the personal pronouns except for the first person singular pronoun, have identical focus marker *hin-*.

Therefore, just like *hin-* which is used as a focus marker with the other pronouns except for first person, *nan-* can also be used as a focus marker for the first singular pronoun as it is in the Central, Western, and Northern Oromo. If the morpheme *nan-* can be analyzed into *na* 'first person object pronoun' and *-n* for marking focus, then the same point should be applied to the *nin-* of Eastern Oromo and *hin-* of the Southern and Southeastern Oromo. The Eastern Oromo form may look analyzable, but not the Southern and the Southeastern Oromo form. Hence, such kind of analysis seems to lack consistency. Additional example is given below.

- (75) *ati* *mana-barumsaa* *hin-dhuf-t-a-a*
 2S:NOM school V.FOC1-come-2S-IPFV-Q
 'Do you COME to school?'

In the interrogative sentences like (75) above, at least it is important to have the focus marker. In cases like this, i.e., in the interrogatives and declarative sentences with future reference, the focus marker is totally controlled by the grammar, but not by the pragmatics (i.e., not by the speaker).

The focus marker that is used with first person singular pronoun is one of the elements that is shared among the Central, Western, and Northern Oromo. The Southern and Southeastern Oromo also show similarity in terms of using the same first person focus marker. In these two varieties of Oromo, the morpheme *hin-* is regularly used along with all the personal pronouns. See the following data which is representative of the Southern and Southeastern Oromo.

- (76) *ani hin-beek-Ø-a*
 1S:NOM V.FOC1-know-1S-IPFV
 ‘I KNOW’

In example (76), the morpheme *hin-* focuses first person singular pronoun. If the subject of the sentence is not given in example (76), the element *hinbeeka* would have both of the following meanings in the Southern and Southeastern Oromo: ‘I know’ / ‘I will know’ and ‘he knows’/ ‘he will know’.

According to Kebede (2009:42), Raya and Wollo have this focus marker optionally as (*h*)*in-*. (He mentions the following example with an asterisk, which I do not need it in my discussion).

- (77) *hin-raf-n-e* > *hirrafne*
 EMPH-to sleep-1P-FV n assimilates to r
 ‘We did sleep’ (EMPH)

(Kebede 2009:42)

- (78) *gammachuu-n hin-dhuf-Ø-a*
 gammachuu-NOM FOC-come-3SM-IPFV
 ‘Gammachuu will come’

(Dejene 2010:48)

Dejene (2010:48) glosses the morpheme *hin-* as NEG, but it is obvious from the discussion that he meant it for emphasis or focus (as in the above example).

5.2.11 *ni-*

This section discusses *ni-* as a main verb focus marker in the Eastern Oromo. The following table and the examples that follow illustrate the distribution and function of this morpheme in different sentences.

Table 9 Focus marker with the personal pronouns in the Eastern Oromo

(a)	<i>nin-dhuf-Ø-a</i>	V.FOC2-come-1S-IPFV	‘I come / will come’
(b)	<i>ni-dhuf-n-a</i>	V.FOC2-come-1P-IPFV	‘We come / will come’
(c)	<i>ni-dhuf-t-a</i>	V.FOC2-come-2M&F-IPFV	‘You come / will come’
(d)	<i>ni-dhuf-t-u</i>	V.FOC2-come-2P-IPFV	‘You come / will come’
(e)	<i>ni-dhuf-Ø-a</i>	V.FOC2-come-3SM-IPFV	‘He comes / will come’
(f)	<i>ni-dhuf-t-i</i>	V.FOC2-come-3SF-IPFV	‘She comes / will come’
(g)	<i>ni-dhuf-Ø-u</i>	V.FOC2-come-3P-IPFV	‘They come / will come’

The morpheme *ni-* occurs consistently with all the pronouns except for the first person singular pronoun. First person singular and third person singular masculine pronouns have an identical aspect and person markers. They differ only in terms of the focus markers that are used with them. In the Eastern Oromo, like it is the case in the Central, Western, and Northern Oromo, the focus marker for the first person singular pronoun is different from the focus marker used in the other personal pronouns. The verbal focus marker for the first person singular pronoun is *nin*-¹², which is different from the focus marker used with the other personal pronouns (*ni-*).

- (79) (a) *nin-barbaad-Ø-a* V.FOC2-want-1S-IPFV ‘I want / will want’
 (b) *nin-jarjar-Ø-a* V.FOC2-hurry-1S-IPFV ‘I am (will be) in a hurry’
- (80) (a) *ni-sob-d¹³-i* V.FOC2-lie-3SF-IPFV ‘She lies / will lie’
 (b) *ni-jir-t-i* V.FOC2-present-3SF-IPFV ‘She is present’
 (c) *ni-cuf-am-a* V.FOC2-close-PASS-IPFV ‘It will be closed’
 (d) *ni-kireess-am-a* V.FOC2-rent-PASS-IPFV ‘It will be rented’
 (e) *ni-ta’-Ø-a* V.FOC2-be-3SM-IPFV ‘It could be’

Example (a) and (b) of (79) are focused with the morpheme *nin-* since the subject of these sentences is first person singular pronoun I. The sentences refer to the present and future actions. The focus marker is obligatorily used with the first person because the action has imperfective reference. The same obligatorily placed focus marker may not be expected with the past tense reference. For the past and improbable condition, the examples would have added *tur-* and yield *ninbarbaada ture* ‘I wanted’, *ninjarjara ture* ‘I was in a hurry’, which looks for the focus marker to occur. The morpheme *nin-* is a grammatically controlled focus marker because it may not give an option to the speaker so that he/she can use non-focused sentences in the imperfective references.

Example (80 b) is the only example with the present reference where the focus marker does not look obligatory in this case. In (80), (a), (c), (d), and (e) it should be placed obligatorily, unless and otherwise the sentences become ungrammatical and unacceptable ones. Additional example is provided below regarding the use and occurrence of the morpheme *-ni*.

- (81) *koott-aa* *ni-seen-n-a*
 come-2P.IMP V.FOC2-enter-1P-IPFV
 ‘Come let us ENTER’

¹² Compare the *nan-* which is used to focus first person singular pronoun in the Central, Western, and Northern dialects of Oromo. The two morphemes (*nan-* and *nin-*) have the final *n* in common. The morpheme *nin-* has additional *n* as compared to *ni-*. In any case, if *nan-* and *nin-* can be analyzed into different morphemes, then it would be the final *n* that is used to focus first person singular pronoun. In this sense, *na-* which is the first person object pronoun should also be used as a focus marker in the Central, Western, and Northern Oromo. Because *ni-* is used as a focus marker with the other pronouns except for first person singular in the Eastern Oromo. But, this kind of analysis becomes problematic if we consider *hin-* as a focus marker for the first person singular pronoun in the South and Southeastern Oromo.

¹³ The 3rd person feminine marker *-t* partially assimilates to the *b* and becomes *d*.

In the imperfective, the focus marker *ni-* occurs obligatorily with the verbs. Example (81) cannot be a grammatical one without the use of the focus marker *ni-*. This gives the idea for its obligatory placement with the imperfective aspect. The following example, on the other hand, shows the presence of the focus marker *ni-* in the dependent clauses.

- (82) *yoo inni ni-jir-Ø-a ka jedh-Ø-u taate..*
 if 3SM:NOM V.FOC2-be-3SM-IPFV COMP say-3SM-IPFV possible:3SF
 ‘If he says it is AVAILABLE...’

(82) looks a pragmatically controlled focus marker as it gives an option to the speakers so that they can use the non-focused version of this sentence.

5.2.12 *hinuma*

In addition to *hin-* and *ni-* which occur as a prefix, there is also another free morpheme that is used to focus verbs in Oromo. The morpheme *hinuma* is used to focus an action which is in progress (i.e., a continuously occurring one). Hence, it can be named as a progressive focus (continuous focus). This element looks to be formed through a process of a merger from the prefix verb focus marker *hin-* and the suffix morpheme *-uma*, which focuses subjects and objects.

- (83) *inni amma-s hinuma yaad-Ø-a-a*
 3SM:NOM now-ADD.FOC V.FOC3 think-3SM-IPFV-Q
 ‘Is he STILL THINKING?’

- (84) *ani hinuma=n deem-Ø-a malee hin-haf-Ø-u*
 1S:NOM V.FOC3-1S.AGR go-3SM-IPFV except NEG-absent-1S-NEG-IPFV
 ‘I will never be absent, but I WILL GO’

- (85) *hinuma raf-Ø-a-a*
 V.FOC3 sleep-3SM-IPFV-Q
 ‘Is he still SLEEPING?’

- (86) *yoo deem-uu-s yoo taa'-uu-s hinuma yaad-Ø-a*
 while go-VN-ADD.FOC while sit-VN-ADD.FOC V.FOC3 think-3SM-IPFV
 ‘He WORRIES while walking and sitting’

- (87) *hinuma=n bit-Ø-e*
 V.FOC3-1S.AGR buy-1S-PFV
 ‘I BOUGHT’

Examples (83-87) show the occurrence of the morpheme *hinuma* in different circumstances. For example, (83) and (85) are in the affirmative interrogative form, (84) and (86) are declarative sentences for the future and habitual (continuous) action respectively, while (87) is a description of past action. In (83), (85) and (86) the focus marking morpheme *hinuma* shows a continuous (an ongoing) action. Even (84) shows continuous thinking for the action

of going. It is only (87), which looks not a continuous action. Yet, the morpheme *hinuma* can be labeled as a progressive (continuous) focus marker.

The other important point which is observed from the above examples is the occurrence of two different focus markers per sentence (83 and 86). Usually, different focus markers occur in the subordinate and main clauses, i.e., in (86), it is *-s* that occurs in the subordinate and *hinuma* in the main clause. In (84) and (87) the morpheme *hinuma* can be replaced with the first person singular focus markers (*nan-*, *nin-*, or *hin-*); in (83), (85) and (86) it can be replaced with *hin-* or *ni-*, which may result in the absence of the sense of continuity of an action in both cases. As a result of this, the morpheme *hinuma* can be called a pragmatically controlled one.

The focus marker *hinuma*, which is used to focus verbs that come next to it, shows continuity and certainty of an action. It occurs in the affirmative declarative, interrogative, and exclamatory sentences. Sometimes it occurs before verbal nouns that come immediately before the verb (*hinuma nyaachuu didee* ‘any how, he refused to eat?’). It is used to show also that an action will occur (happen for sure). The following example shows *hinuma* in the interrogative sentence.

- (88) *hinuma dhuf-t-e-e?*
 V.FOC3 come-2S-PFV-Q
 ‘In any case, did you she COME?’

In (88), *hinuma* focuses the verb *dhuf-* ‘come’. Here, the speaker has a presupposed information about the subject of this interrogative sentence. The speaker has already assumed (decided) that the subject of the sentence is in a situation that does not make him to come. Therefore, the action of coming surprises the speaker. With the use of the free element *hinuma*, the focused concept is the action of coming and the ability to come. By producing the constituent ‘*hinuma dhuftee?*’ the speaker wants to say are you able to come? The other presupposition is that are you dare to come, which was understood as impossible for him. Consider also the following example.

- (89) *hinuma=n dhug-aa bul-Ø-e*
 V.FOC3-1S.AGR drink-PROG pass the night-1S-PFV
 ‘Simply, I passed the night DRINKING’

In (89), *hinuma* is used to focus the progressive verb *dhugaa* ‘to drink’ and the continuity of the action of drinking throughout the night. When the element *hinuma* occurs before the progressive verb as in the above one, it functions to explain and focus the continuity of an action. On the other hand, when it comes before a verb, it shows the certainty of the action to happen.

The following example is representative of the Southern Oromo, where the morpheme *hinuma* occurs as *hinum*.

- (90) *duri hinum araar-am-t-an-i*
 past:NOM V.FOC3 reconcile-PASS-2-P-PFV
 ‘In the past, whatever the case, you used to RECONCILE’

(Abdullahi 1996:287)

This verb focus marker shows a continuity of an event and certainty of an action, i.e., an action that will for sure occur. The development of *hinuma* through the combination of *hin-* and *-uma* could be taken as part of the grammaticalization process. The development is not only in the formation of a new element (through merger) but also in a way that it focuses a given element of a sentence (i.e., non-subject focus marker).

5.2.13 *ya*

The focus marking morpheme *ya* appears widely in the Southern Oromo. This morpheme occurs sentence-medially, but very rarely sentence-finally. It is a bit different from the other morphemes in terms of what it foregrounds in a sentence. It has the tendency to focus any possible element that usually follows it. In the majority of the cases, it modifies verbs, modifiers of verbs, and adjuncts; however, sometimes it focuses elements like nouns, pronouns. Hence, it can be taken as a verbal and non-verbal focus marker in the Southern Oromo. It appears in the declarative, imperative, exclamatory, and interrogative sentences. It is independent in terms of its appearance and occurs mainly before the element that is being focused.

- (91) *oromo male abbo biyyiti ya bilisa baate*
 Oromo except exclamation.DM country:NOM V.FOC4 independence achieve:3SF:PFV
 ‘With the exception of the Oromo, ALL OTHERS HAVE achieved FREEDOM’

(Abdullahi 1996:274)

- (92) *bari duri kaan ya haf-Ø-e*
 era:NOM past that.other V.FOC4 ended-3SM-PFV
 ‘The (that) past era has ENDED’

(Abdullahi 1996:275)

- (93) *seeri gadaa-n kaan ya gal-Ø-e*
 rule:NOM gadaa-NOM of / that.other V.FOC4 return-3SM-PFV
 ‘The rule of Gada law has RETURNED’

(Abdullahi 1996:275)

In the above sentences, the morpheme *ya* occurs before the verbs *hafa* ‘ended’, *gale* ‘returned’ and before the noun *bilisa* ‘independence’. Since the non-focused counterparts of the above sentences can also be used, the morpheme *ya* is considered as a pragmatically controlled. Additional examples on the use of the morpheme *ya* are given below.

- (94) *oromoo-n ufi ya dad’abd-e-e?*
 oromo-NOM themselves V.FOC4 incapable:3SF-PFV-Q
 ‘Were the Oromo UNABLE?’

(95) *eertiraan ya bilisoom-t-e*
 Eritrea:NOM V.FOC4 independent:3SF-PFV
 ‘Eritrea became INDEPENDENT’

(96) *foon ya wal irra fix-an-i*
 flesh V.FOC4 each other from finish-2P-PFV
 ‘You have eaten EACH OTHER’s flesh’

(Abdullahi 1996:275 & 289)

In (94), the morpheme *ya* occurs before an interrogative verb, but in (95), it occurs before a declarative verb while in (96) it occurs before a reciprocal word *wal* ‘each other’.

According to Stroomer (1995:73-74), the morpheme *yaa*, which has variants *yaayuu* and *laa*, comes before a verb and a noun phrase to emphasize verbs and noun phrases.

(97) *fooni yaa dhaab-am-ani*
 meat FOC cook-PASS-3P:PAST
 ‘The meat has been COOKED’ (i.e. it is edible)

(Stroomer 1995:74)

5.2.14 *kaa*

The morpheme *kaa*, which occurs as a free form, functions as a focus marker in exclamatory sentences. It can be named as a predicative focus marker as it occurs mostly after copula and finite verbs. Consider the following example in (98 a), which can have different multiple and possible answers as in (b), (c), and (d).

(98) (a) *maal-tu akkana godh-Ø-e?*
 what-SUB.FOC1 like:this make-3SM-PFV
 ‘WHAT made it like this?’

(b) *hattuu-dha kaa*
 thief-CS1 EXC.FOC
 ‘It IS A THIEF!’

(c) *beela-Ø kaa*
 hunger-CS1 EXC.FOC
 ‘It IS HUNGER!’

(d) *loon-i kaa*
 cattle-CS1 EXC.FOC
 ‘It IS CATTLE!’

The elements under (b), (c), and (d) are all possible answers for the question under example (98 a). Note that all the answers end in copular verbs: for example *-dha* as in (b), *Ø* as in (c), and *-i* as in (d). Therefore, the focus marker *kaa* occurs in (b), (c), and (d) after the different forms of the copular suffix *-dha*. Hence, *kaa* can be named as a predicative focus marker since it regularly occurs after the copula even when it is realized as zero form as in (c). The

answers in (b), (c), and (d) are in the exclamatory form with the presence of the focus marker *kaa*. But if *kaa* is removed from the answers, the exclamatory response would have changed into simple declarative form. The other point to be noted here is that although the question is in the perfective aspect reference, the responses serve for both the perfective and imperfective references. The same question in (98 a) may have uncertain responses as in (e), (f), and (g).

(e) *hattuu ta'-Ø-a kaa*
 thief V.COP3.be-3SM-IPFV EXC.FOC
 'It could be a thief!' / 'He will be a thief'

(f) *beela ta'-Ø-a kaa*
 hunger V.COP3.be-3SM-IPFV EXC.FOC
 'It could be hunger!' / 'It could be a hunger'

(g) *loon ta'-Ø-u kaa*
 cattle V.COP3.be-3P-IPFV EXC.FOC
 'It could be cattle!' / 'It will be a cattle'

In (e), (f), and (g), like b-d, which occur after the copular suffixes, the focus marker *kaa* occurs sentence-finally after the verbal copula *ta'*- 'be'.

On the other hand, the response to the question in (99 a) further shows the occurrence of the morpheme *kaa*:

(99) (a) *yoom dhuf-t-e-e?*
 when come-2S-PFV-Q
 'When did you come?'

(b) *dur(i) kaa*
 early EXC.FOC
 'I CAME EARLY!'

The response to the question (99 a) consists of the element *kaa* sentence-finally. The word *dur-* 'early', which occurs before the copular element *kaa* ends in a consonant. The expected copular form which occurs after a word that ends in a consonant is the vowel *-i*, which is at least weakened in this case.

In addition to this, there are also other possible alternative answers to the question under (99 a): *dur-i-n dhuf-e* 'I came early' and *dur(i)* 'early' are some of the possible ones. Of the two forms, the earlier one consists of the inflected verb *dhuf-* 'come' and the latter one consists of the single element *dur(i)* 'early', which are both unfocused in this case. In addition to the copular forms, the focus marker *kaa* occurs with the inflectional verbs as well.

In the yes-no question, the morpheme *kaa* may occur as a focus marker with the yes response. The response no does not occur with the focus marker *kaa*. If the answer to any question can

be yes, then the response, in this case, could be presented with the focused form as in (100 a) below and without focused form as in (100 b).

- (100) (a) *eyyee kaa*
 yes EXC.FOC
 ‘YES!’
- (b) *eyyee*
 yes
 ‘Yes’

The other instance which widens the distribution of this morpheme is its occurrence with imperatives: *afachu kaa* ‘wait’, *deemi kaa* ‘go’, *ka’i kaa* ‘stand up’, *dafi kaa* ‘be quick’, *nyaadhaa kaa* ‘eat’. Here the morpheme *kaa* focuses the elements that exist before it: *afachu*, *deemi*, *ka’i*, *dafi*, and *nyaadhaa*. It also occurs after the presentative copular form: *kunooti kaa* ‘here it is’. The exclamatory form *akkana kaa* ‘it is like this!’ has a literal meaning go on or continue working, proceed in this way.

The exclamatory (predicative) focus marker *kaa* appears as *gaa* in the Eastern Oromo. The morpheme *gaa* focuses responses like yes, but it is not used to focus the response no for a given question. In the Eastern Oromo, as is the case in the other varieties of Oromo, the morpheme *gaa* occurs mostly after copula and main verbs.

- (101) (a) *eenyu-tu kitaaba koo fudhat-Ø-e?*
 who-SUB.FOC1 book mine take-3SM-PFV
 ‘WHO took my book?’
- (b) *hattuu gaa*
 thief EXC.FOC
 ‘THIEF!’ / ‘It is a thief!’

In (101 b), the copula does not appear overtly as the attributive copula does not occur in the Eastern Oromo, or it is just zero where a simple juxtaposition of the subject and the predicate is used instead of it.

Imperative verbs are also focused with the morpheme *gaa*. Consider the following examples:

- (102) (a) *deem-i gaa*
 go-2S.IMP EXC.FOC
 ‘Go’
- (b) *deem-aa gaa*
 go-2P.IMP EXC.FOC
 ‘Go’

The focus marker *gaa* occurs with the affirmative and negative declarative sentences. Its occurrence in the above examples is limited to the sentence-final position (after verbs and copulas). Sometimes, it occurs following the subject of a sentence with the absence of exclamatory sense (see section 6.1.15).

5.2.15 **bee**

The morpheme *bee* is used in the Northern, Southern, Western, Central, and Southeastern Oromo for the sake of predicative focus. The following examples are provided to show its occurrence.

(103) *ishee-n dhuf-t-e bee*
 3SF-NOM come-3SF-PFV PRE.FOC1
 ‘She came’

(104) *ani nyaachuu=n barbaad-Ø-a bee*
 1S:NOM eat:VN-1S.AGR need-1S-IPFV PRE.FOC1
 ‘I need (will need) to eat’

In the above examples (103) and (104), the morpheme *bee* comes last in the word order sequence and is used as a predicative focus marker. It is an optional focus marker because the non-focused counterparts of these sentences can be used with equivalent meaning, but with the absence of emphasis.

5.2.16 **bar**

The other predicative focus marker that exists in the Eastern dialect of Oromo is *bar*, which is rare in the other dialects. The morpheme *bar* usually comes next to the verb in the normal word order and sometimes before the verb in the manipulated word order.

(105) *inni deem-uu-dhaa-fii bar*
 3SM:NOM go-VN-OBJ.FOC1-DAT PRE.FOC1
 ‘He is going to go’

(105) consists of two focus markers: *-dhaa*, which is an object focus marker that comes after words that end in long vowels, and *bar*, which is the subject of discussion under this subsection. With the focus marker *bar* giving focus to the predicate, the sentence declares that the subject ‘he’ in this case is ready to go to a given place. Additional example is given below regarding the use of the morpheme *bar*.

(106) *tee fuudh-Ø-ee bar*
 yours:F take-1S-PFV:CVB PRE.FOC1
 ‘I / he took yours’

This example shows that the morpheme *bar* can occur in the perfective aspect as in (106), and in the imperfective aspect as in (105). The regular place of the morpheme *bar* is at the sentence-final position except for the word order is manipulated for a given specific purpose.

- (107) (a) *cinqq-adh-e* *bar* *an* *kophaa* *koo*
worry-1S.BEN-PFV PRE.FOC1 1S alone mine
‘It is me who worried alone’
- (b) *ani* *kophaa* *koo* *cinqq-adh-ee* *bar*
1S:NOM alone mine worry-1S.BEN-PFV PRE.FOC1
‘I worried alone’

In (107 a), the word order is manipulated and the verb comes at the sentence-initial position. Here the verb is clefted together with the focus marker, i.e., the focus marker *bar* is moved to a sentence-initial position with the verb. But, example (107 b) is the normal word order for this focus marker to occur in. Consider also the following additional example.

- (108) *anaa* *bar*
1S:ABS PRE.FOC1
‘It is me’

In example (108), it is important to note that actually, zero copula exists before the focus marker. In the adjectives like *furdaa bar* ‘it is fat’, the zero copula comes with the adjective, and the morpheme *bar* comes last that focuses the adjective *furdaa* ‘fat’.

5.2.17 *-m*

The use of the morpheme *-m* is mostly observed in the Western dialect of Oromo. When this morpheme is used, the final vowel of any word to which this morpheme is added becomes long. The lengthening that comes with the addition of this morpheme, however, needs further explanation. The morpheme *-m* occurs after a copula¹⁴ and finite verbs. For example, if the final word/element to which this morpheme is added to is a copula *-dha*, then it changes into *-dhaa* by lengthening its final vowel. Similarly, if the other variant of this morpheme *-i* is used, it changes into long *-ii*. On the other hand, words that end in a short vowel¹⁵ also change their final short vowels to long in order to receive the suffix morpheme *-m*. The same process of lengthening of the final vowel of the morpheme *-ti* is expected when the morpheme *-m* is added (after it) at the predicate position. The suffix morpheme *-m* is essentially used with exclamatory sentences. Let us consider the following data that show the distribution and occurrence of this morpheme.

- (109) (a) *inni* *laafaa-dhaa-m*
3SM:NOM soft-CS1-PRE.FOC2
‘He/it is soft!’
- (b) *kuni* *aannan-ii-m*
this:NOM milk-CS1-PRE.FOC2
‘This is milk!’

¹⁴ See chapter six for a discussion regarding the different types of copular construction.

¹⁵ The invariable copular suffix *-dha* realizes as zero morpheme when the word ends in a short vowel.

- (c) *sunni fardaa-m*
 that:NOM horse.CS1-PRE.FOC2
 ‘That is a horse!’

In examples (109 a-c), the morpheme *-m* is added after the copula *-dha* and its different forms of realizations with their final vowels lengthened. In the absence of the focus marker, the above sentences appear as *inni laafaadha* ‘he/it is soft’, *kuni aannani* ‘this is milk’, and *sunni farada* ‘that is a horse’. The elements that are focused with the morpheme *-m* and which normally occur at the predicate position can be in a clefted form as in *laafaadhaam inni* ‘he/it is soft’, *fardaam sunni* ‘that is a horse’, etc.

The use of the suffix morpheme *-m* is further illustrated with the examples that follow:

- (110) (a) *inni nyaat-Ø-ee jir-Ø-aa-m*
 3SM:NOM eat-3SM-CVB AUX-3SM-IPFV-PRE.FOC2
 ‘He ate’ / ‘He has eaten!’
- (b) *isheen nyaat-t-ee tur-t-ee-m*
 3SF:NOM eat-3SF-CVB AUX-3SF-PFV-PRE.FOC2
 ‘She ate’ / ‘She has eaten!’

In (110 a & b), the morpheme *-m* comes after long aspect markers that are used with the verbs of existence and / or auxiliary verbs. A similar case is observed in the use of this morpheme in the following sentence (in the process, the invariable copular suffix *-ti* > *-tii* while adding the morpheme *-m*).

- (111) *mana dhugaatii kee-tii-m*
 house bar yours-CS2-PRE.FOC2
 ‘It is your bar!’

In all the above instances (109-111), the morpheme *-m* occurs after copulas (i.e., after copular suffixes and verbal copulas) whose final vowels become long.

On the other hand, the use of the predicate focus marker *-m* after finite verbs is demonstrated by the following examples:

- (112) (a) *inni laaqana nyaat-Ø-ee-m*
 3SM:NOM lunch eat-3SM-PFV-PRE.FOC2
 ‘He ate lunch!’
- (b) *inni balbala cabs-Ø-ee-m*
 3SM:NOM door break-3SM-PFV-PRE.FOC2
 ‘He broke the door!’
- (c) *inni laaqana nyaat-Ø-aa-m*
 3SM:NOM lunch eat-3SM-IPFV-PRE.FOC2

‘He eats/will eat lunch!’

The perfective and imperfective aspect markers (-*e* and -*a*) become long while adding the focus marker -*m*. These sentences (112 a, b, and c) appear as *inni laaqana nyaate* ‘he ate lunch’, *inni balbala cabse* ‘he broke the door’, and *inni laaqana nyaata* ‘he eats/will eat lunch’ in the unfocused forms.

A predicate which is focused with the morpheme -*m* can be clefted with or without the use of the relativizer *kan*. The following examples are presented to show this process.

- (113) (a) *hoolaa-dhaa-m* *kan* *bit-am-u*
 sheep-CS1-PRE.FOC2 REL buy-PASS-DEP.IPFV
 ‘It is a sheep that is being bought!’
- (b) *aannan-ii-m* *kan* *inni* *dhug-Ø-u*
 milk-CS1-PRE.FOC2 REL 3SM:NOM drink-3SM-DEP.IPFV
 ‘It is milk that he drinks!’
- (c) *sobaa-m* *kan* *inni* *dubbat-Ø-u*
 false-CS1-PRE.FOC2 REL 3SM:NOM speak-3SM-DEP.IPFV
 ‘It is false that he speaks!’ / ‘what he speaks is false!’
- (114) *cab-Ø-ee-m* *balballi*
 break-3SM-PFV-PRE.FOC2 door:NOM
 ‘The door has been broken!’
- (115) *jir-aa-m* *inni*
 V.COP1-IPFV-PRE.FOC2 3SM:NOM
 ‘He is present!’

The morpheme -*m*, which triggers lengthening of the final vowel of any word to which it is added, seems not to be used with the interrogative and imperative sentence types, but used with exclamatory ones. The use of this morpheme changes declarative sentence type into exclamatory form.

5.2.18 *ree*

The morpheme *ree* is used as a focus marker in the interrogative sentences. Every time, it occurs at the sentence-final position. Let us look at the following examples that consist of this morpheme as one of their components:

- (116) (a) *hin-dhuf-t-a-a* *ree?*
 V.FOC1-come-2S-IPFV-Q INT.FOC
 ‘So ... DO YOU COME?’
- (b) *hin-dhuf-t-u-u* *ree?*
 NEG-come-2S-NEG.IPFV-Q INT.FOC
 ‘Don’t you come?’

- (c) *dhuf-Ø-u-u* *ree?*
 come-1S-DEP.IPFV-Q INT.FOC
 ‘So... SHALL I COME?’

The morpheme *ree* exists in examples (a), (b), and (c) of (116) where (a) and (c) are in the affirmative interrogative, but (b) is in the negative interrogative. In the examples mentioned above, the distribution of the morpheme *ree* is restricted to the sentence-final position of the interrogative sentences. The absence of the morpheme *ree* from the above sentences does not make the sentences ungrammatical rather it makes them simply unfocused. In (116 a), there are two focus markers that focus the verb and the predicate (the non-argument).

Additional examples that consist of the morpheme *ree* are given below:

- (117) (a) *maal jet-t-a* *ree?*
 what say-2S-IPFV INT.FOC
 ‘WHAT DO YOU SAY?’
- (b) *eessa* *ree?*
 where INT.FOC
 ‘WHERE IS IT?’
- (c) *yoom-i* *ree?*
 when-Q.CS1 INT.FOC
 ‘When is it, THEN?’

The morpheme *ree* comes consistently with the WH-(question) words in the example a-c of (117). It focuses interrogative sentences that are either negative or affirmative. It is a pragmatically controlled one as it gives an option to the speaker so that he/she uses the unfocused counterparts of the above sentences.

The morpheme *yii* also marks focus in the interrogatives: functionally, it is almost identical to *ree*, and it is a pragmatically controlled one. It occurs widely in the Central, Northern, and Western Oromo, as opposed to *ree*, which occurs across all varieties of Oromo. Sometimes, it occurs as *hii* in the Eastern Oromo. Consider the following example that consists of two focus markers.

- (118) *hin-dhuf-t-a-a yii*
 V.FOC1-come-2S-IPFV-Q INT.FOC
 ‘Do / will you come?’

5.2.19 **-uma**

The morpheme *-uma* functions as a contrastive focus marker with subject noun phrases. The following examples show its occurrence:

- (119) *san-uma* *wayya*
 that-SUB.FOC5 better:3SM:IPFV
 ‘THAT is better’

In example (119), *-uma* occurs in a declarative affirmative sentence. In order for the subject to be focused with the morpheme *-uma*, the verb should occur with the form *wayya* ‘better’, which appears the same with different pronouns (i.e., whether singular or plural and or masculine or feminine). The other verb that fits into the place of *wayya* ‘better’ is *ta’a* ‘be’. It is shown by the following example.

- (120) *tolaa-dhuma* *ta’-Ø-a*
 tolaa-SUB-FOC5 V.COP3.be-3SM-IPFV
 ‘It could be TOLAA’

In (120), the proper noun *Tolaa* does not occur with the nominative marker morpheme. This truth corresponds to the fact that has been established by Baye (1988:383); Debela & Meyer (2003:165) that verbs lose their agreement markers when subjects are focused with the morpheme *-tu*. The same thing also happens when subjects are focused with the morpheme *-uma*.

The morpheme *-uma* occurs with affirmative interrogative sentence as in the following:

- (121) *san-uma* *wayy-Ø-a-a?*
 that-SUB.FOC5 better-3SM-IPFV-Q
 ‘Is THAT better?’

This morpheme has a limited distribution with noun phrases at the subject position. It is a pragmatically controlled focus marker because it is optional to have this morpheme in the above sentences and the sentences are grammatical enough without the use of this morpheme. Therefore, it gives an option to the speakers to choose between the focused and unfocused constituents to be used.

In addition to its occurrence with the subject noun phrases, *-uma* occurs also as a contrastive focus marker with object noun phrases.

- (122) *ganam-uma* *koott-u*
 morning-OBJ.FOC5 come-2S.IMP
 ‘Come in the MORNING’

- (123) *is-uma* *gaafadh-u*
 him-OBJ.FOC5 ask-2S.IMP
 ‘Ask HIM’

- (124) *aannan-uma* *dhug-i*
 milk-OBJ.FOC5 drink-2S.IMP
 ‘Drink MILK’

(122), (123), and (124) are in the affirmative imperative forms where the morpheme *-uma* occurs with the noun phrases that occur at the object position. Hence, the object of the above sentences is contrastively focused as opposed to (any other time, person, and drink respectively in (122-124)). Its occurrence with the imperatives and interrogatives is further illustrated with the examples that follow.

- (125) *nam-uma* *beek-t-u* *waam-i*
 man-OBJ.FOC5 know-2S-IPFV call-2S.IMP
 ‘Call the MAN you know’
- (126) *nam-uma=n* *beek-Ø-u* *waam-Ø-u-u?*
 man-OBJ.FOC5-1S.AGR know-1S-IPFV call-1S-IPFV-Q
 ‘Shall I call the man I know?’

On the other hand, the following examples show the occurrence of the morpheme *-uma* as a contrastive focus marker with object noun phrases in the negative sentences.

- (127) (a) *ani* *balbal-uma* *isaanii* *hin-tuq-n-Ø-e*
 1S:NOM door-OBJ.FOC5 their NEG-touch-NEG-1S-PFV
 ‘I did not touch THEIR DOOR’
- (b) *balbal-uma* *isaanii* *ani* *hin-tuq-n-Ø-e*
 door-OBJ.FOC5 their 1S:NOM NEG-touch-NEG-1S-PFV
 ‘I did not touch THEIR DOOR’
- (c) *balbal-uma* *isaanii* *hin-tuq-n-Ø-e* *ani*
 door-OBJ.FOC5 their NEG-touch-NEG-1S-PFV 1S:NOM
 ‘I did not touch THEIR DOOR’
- (128) (a) *ati* *nam-uma* *beek-t-u* *waam-i*
 2S:NOM person-OBJ.FOC5 know-2S-IPFV call-2S.IMP
 ‘Call the (any) PERSON YOU KNOW’
- (b) *nam-uma* *ati* *beek-t-u* *waam-i*
 person-OBJ.FOC5 2S:NOM know-2S-IPFV call-2S.IMP
 ‘Call the (any) PERSON YOU KNOW’
- (c) *ani* *man-uma* *hin-tur-r¹⁶-Ø-e*
 1S:NOM house-OBJ.FOC5 NEG-present-NEG-1S-PFV
 ‘I was not at HOME’

Examples (127 a) and (128 a & c) follow the normal word order of Oromo, but there is some kind of word order manipulation observed in examples (127 b & c) and (128 b). In (127 &

¹⁶ The negative marker morpheme *-n* (the dependent suffix that is used after the verb with the proclitic *hin-* and which is sometimes addressed as a main clause marker) assimilates totally to the consonant that exists before it in the root and becomes *r*.

128 a), the focus marker *-uma* attached to the object that comes next to the subject in the normal word order. On the other hand, the element which is focused comes to the initial position of the sentence in the examples (127 b & c) and (128 b). In these examples, the focused constituent is clefted to the initial position of the sentences. So, their difference is on the placement of the focused constituent and with the sentence type: examples under (127 b & c) and (128 b) have more exclamatory sense. In the normal everyday conversation, all the above sentences are correct and well-formed.

Example (129 a) below on its part shows the occurrence of this morpheme in jussive construction. Examples (129 b & c), on the other hand, show the occasional realization of the morpheme *-uma* as *-um* in the Southern Oromo. There are also cases where *-uma* itself is maintained and used as a focus marker in the Southern Oromo. Evidently, this morpheme is attached to different word classes such as nouns, prepositions, demonstratives, numerals, reflexive pronouns. There is a tendency of change from *-uma* to *-um* in the Southern Oromo, which is described as shortening or shrinking of the morpheme.

- (129) (a) *ganam-uma* *haa* *deem-n-u*
morning-OBJ.FOC5 *JUS* go-1P-DEP.IPFV
‘Let us go in the MORNING’
- (b) *nam-um* *kan* *kee* *sii* *irraa* *ijjees-Ø-e*
man-OBJ.FOC5 REL yours you from kill-3SM-PFV
‘He killed just YOUR OWN KIN’
- (c) *reef-i* *man-um* *keessatti* *sham-Ø-e*
corpse-NOM house-OBJ.FOC5 in:LOC rot-3SM-PFV
‘The corpse rotted in the HOUSE’

(Abdullahi 1996:273)

The contrastive morpheme *-uma* occurs into two different forms *-uma* and *dhuma*. The allomorphic distribution of this morpheme is stated as follows: *-dhuma* occurs after words that end in long vowels and *-uma* occurs elsewhere, i.e., it occurs after words that end in short vowels and consonants.

- (130) *inni* *laf-uma* *qot-Ø-e*
3SM:NOM land-OBJ.FOC5 farm-3SM-PFV
‘He plagued the FARM’
- (131) (a) *isaan* *aannan-uma* *dhug-an-i*
3P:NOM milk-OBJ.FOC5 drink-3P-PFV
‘They drunk MILK’
- (b) *aannan-uma* *hin-dhug-i-n*
milk-OBJ.FOC5 NEG-drink-IMP-NEG
‘Do not drink MILK’

- (132) *qarshii saddeet-uma fid-i*
 birr eight-OBJ.FOC5 bring-2S.IMP
 ‘Bring EIGHT BIRR’

(130) - (132) show the occurrence of the morpheme *-uma* after words that end in short vowels and consonants. Words that end in short vowels lose their final vowel when they add this morpheme (130).

Examples (133) - (135) are presented to explain the distribution of the allomorph *-dhuma* after words that end in long vowels:

- (133) *dhugaa-dhuma him-i*
 truth-OBJ.FOC5 tell-2S.IMP
 ‘Tell the TRUTH’

- (134) *Tolaa-dhuma gaafadh-u*
 tolaa-OBJ.FOC5 ask-2S.IMP
 ‘Ask TOLAA’

- (135) *dhuguu-dhuma wayya*
 drink-SUB.FOC5 better:3SM:IPFV
 ‘Better to DRINK’

The non-verbal contrastive focus marker *-uma* occurs both in the negative verbal and copular clauses. The examples provided below show the occurrence of the morpheme *-uma* both in the main and subordinate clauses:

- (136) *is-uma ta'-Ø-a malee namni biraa akkana hin-godh-Ø-u*
 3SM.ABS- be- if not person:NOM other like NEG-make-
 OBJ.FOC5 3SM- this 3SM-
 IPFV NEG.IPFV
 ‘It could be HIM, but other people cannot do like this’

- (137) *har'-uma qofa miti yer-uma hunda balleess-i-t-i*
 today-OBJ.FOC5 alone not time-OBJ-FOC5 all wrong-EPEN-3SF-IPFV
 ‘It is not only TODAY, but she does wrong ALWAYS’

- (138) *kun man-uma saa-ti*
 this house-OBJ.FOC5 his-CS2
 ‘This is his HOUSE’

- (139) *sirb-uma sana agar-siis-t-u jechuu-dha*
 song-OBJ.FOC5 that show-CAUS-2P-IPFV means-CS1
 ‘It means you will show JUST THAT SONG’

The focus marking morpheme *-uma*¹⁷ focuses nonverbal constituents. It occurs in the main and subordinate clauses of the affirmative and negative declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory sentences. It can occur twice within a sentence being part of the main and subordinate clauses. On the other hand, when the morpheme *-uma* and *-tu* occur jointly in a single noun phrase, either of the two must have undergone a functional change and appear with a sense of definiteness (see section 5.2.20 below).

5.2.20 Occurrence of *-uma* and *-tu* together

These two morphemes can occur together in a sentence either separately or jointly in a single place. When they occur together, either separately or jointly, *-uma* always comes first and *-tu* follows it. In (140-142) *-uma* and *-tu* occur jointly together in a sentence. As it is observed from the examples, *-uma* comes first being closer to the word that is being modified and the morpheme *-tu* follows it (comes after the morpheme *-uma*). The juxtaposition might be due to an ongoing process of merger of these two morphemes. This could be part of a continuing grammaticalization process that is taking place in Oromo. These morphemes often come together to show stronger certainty. Consider the following data:

(140) *is-uma-tu* *ajjees-Ø-e*
 3SM-DEF-SUB.FOC1 kill-3SM-PFV
 ‘HE killed’ / ‘IT IS HIM who killed’

(141) *waraabeess-uma-tu* *nyaat-Ø-e*
 hyena-DEF-SUB.FOC1 eat-3SM-PFV
 ‘HYENA ate’ / ‘IT IS A HYENA that ate’

(142) *kiyy-uma-tu* *kiyya-Ø*
 mine-DEF-SUB.FOC1 mine-CS1
 ‘MINE is mine’

In the absence of any modifier that modifies the subject noun phrase, the two morphemes come together jointly in a sentence (140-142). When they occur together like this, the morpheme *-tu* still functions as a contrastive focus marker. The morpheme *-uma*, which has been presented previously as a focus marker must have changed its function and appears with a sense of definiteness. Initially, I assumed both *-uma* and *-tu* for marking focus being juxtaposed. Had it been the case, two focus markers would have come one after the other for no reason. Lately, however, I realized the functional change of the morpheme *-uma* when it comes jointly with the morpheme *-tu*. These two morphemes are juxtaposed to express a focused noun phrase that expresses the certainty of the action that has been done by the subject of the sentence. Compare the above examples with the following:

(143) *isa-tu* *ajjees-Ø-e*
 3SM-SUB.FOC1 kill-3SM-PFV
 ‘HE killed’

¹⁷ *-uma* functions as a copula as well (see the discussion in chapter eight).

- (144) *waraabeessa-tu nyaat-Ø-e*
 hyena-SUB.FOC1 eat-3SM-PFV
 ‘HYENA ate’

There is a little difference between the previous examples and the ones that are mentioned in ((143) and (144)). In (140-142), the doer of the action is more definite and more certain as compared to (143) and (144).

In the presence of modifiers that modify the subject noun phrase, the situation changes, i.e., the two morphemes do not occur jointly in a single place. Rather, they are attached to different words that exist within the subject noun phrase. The following examples are presented in order to show this fact.

- (145) (a) *laf-uma saanii-tu qot-am-Ø-e*
 land-DEF their-SUB.FOC1 farm-PASS-3MS-PFV
 ‘THEIR LAND was farmed’ / ‘It is their land that was farmed’
- (b) *gaangee-dhuma saanii-tu ajjeef-am-Ø-e*
 mule-DEF their-SUB.FOC1 kill-PASS-3SM-PFV
 ‘THEIR MULE was killed’ / ‘It is their mule that was killed’
- (c) *mucaa-dhuma kee-tu ajjeef-am-Ø-e*
 child-DEF your-SUB.FOC1 kill-PASS-3SM-PFV
 ‘YOUR CHILD was killed’ / ‘It is your child who was killed’

Note that in (145 a-c), the verbs are in the passive form where the morpheme *-uma* is suffixed to the subject nouns and the focus marker *-tu*, on the other hand, occurs with the possessive pronouns that modify the head nouns. The examples are possible and acceptable in the absence of *-uma*, but with the presence of *-tu* (i.e., in such constructions, the morpheme *-uma* does not occur alone in the absence of the morpheme *-tu*). With the absence of the morpheme *-uma*, however, the subjects all remain indefinite and unspecified (uncertain).

Therefore, the occurrence of the morphemes *-uma* and *-tu*, one after the other, is used to explain a sense of definiteness and contrastive focus consecutively. The speaker usually uses such kind of construction to explain certainly about the doer of the action. Additional examples are provided below.

- (146) *nam-uma guddaa-tu dhuf-Ø-e*
 man-DEF big-SUB.FOC1 come-3SM-PFV
 ‘THE BIG or RESPECTED MAN came’ / ‘It is the big or respected man who came’
- (147) *nam-ich-uma furdaa diimaa sana-tu du’-Ø-e*
 man-SIN-DEF fat red that-SUB.FOC1 die-3SM-PFV
 ‘THAT RED FAT MAN died’ / ‘It is the red fat man who died’

- (148) *balbal-uma guddaa-tu cab-Ø-e*
 door-DEF big-SUB.FOC1 break-3SM-PFV
 ‘THE BIG DOOR is broken’ / ‘It is the big door that is broken’
- (149) *mucaa-dhuma sana-tu deebi’ee dhuf-Ø-e*
 child-DEF that-SUB.FOC1 again:CVB come-3SM-PFV
 ‘THAT CHILD came back again’ / ‘It is that child who came back again’
- (150) *nam-uma ati beek-t-u-tu akkana godh-Ø-e*
 man-DEF 2S:NOM know-2S-IPFV-SUB.FOC1 like.this do-3SM-PFV
 ‘IT IS THE MAN WHOM YOU KNOW that did like this’

In the presence of modifiers that specify the subject noun phrase like in the above sentences (146-150), the morpheme *-uma* occurs with the head noun of the subject noun phrase and *-tu* occurs with the modifiers. These two morphemes show a sense of definiteness and contrastive focus within a single sentence being attached to the different parts of a sentence (i.e., to head noun and modifier). The morpheme *-uma*, which has been analyzed as a focus marker previously, has now occurred with a sense of definiteness. On the other hand, the morpheme *-tu*, which is suffixed to the last modifier of the subject noun phrase, serves as a contrastive focus marker.

Sometimes the word order of Oromo is manipulated and becomes flexible. This is observed with the presence *-uma* and *-tu* together in a sentence: *is-uma-tukitaabicha fudhate* ‘it must be him who took the book’ can appear as *kitaabicha isumatu fudhate* or *isumatu fudhate kitaabicha*. Sentences that consist of these morphemes may be preceded by negative copular constructions as a presupposition: *isaan miti; isumatu ajjeese* ‘not them; it must be him who killed’, *leenca miti; waraabeessumatu nyaate* ‘not a lion; it must be hyena that ate’ and etc.

On the other hand, there are cases where these two morphemes may not occur together. For example, it is grammatical to have both of them together in a sentence like in the examples presented above, but not as in the following:

- (151) *ani is-uma=n shakk-Ø-a*
 1S:NOM him-OBJ.FOC5-1S.AGR suspect-1S-IPFV
 ‘I suspect HIM’ / ‘It is him whom I suspect’
- (152) * *ani is-uma-tu shakk-Ø-a*
 1S:NOM him-OBJ.FOC5-SUB.FOC1 suspect-1S-IPFV
 ‘I suspect him’
- (153) *nuti is-uma shakk-i-n-a*
 1P:NOM him-OBJ.FOC5 suspect-EPEN-1P-IPFV
 ‘We suspect HIM’ / ‘It is him whom we suspect’
- (154) * *is-uma-tu shakk-i-n-a*
 him-OBJ.FOC5-SUB.FOC1 suspect-EPEN-1P-IPFV

‘We suspect him’

- (155) * *ani* *isa-tu* *shakk-Ø-a*
1S:NOM him-SUB.FOC1 suspect-1S-IPFV
‘I suspect him’

The above examples ((152), (154), and (155)) show that the two morphemes cannot occur together being juxtaposed at the object position of a sentence for the same purpose or function. The morpheme *-tu* also does not occur at the object position of the sentence with the function of focus. It is only the morpheme *-uma* that occurs at the object position of a sentence to serve a contrastive focus purpose. Their joint occurrence is, therefore, limited only to the subject position of a sentence (either being juxtaposed or being on the head noun and on the modifiers separately). Hence, when these two morphemes occur one after the other (either separately or being juxtaposed), *-uma* has a sense of definiteness while *-tu* serves as a focus marker.

5.2.21 Sentential focus

The morphemes *bee*, *bar*, and *hinuma* can be used as sentential focus markers in Oromo. As it has been indicated above, *bee* and *bar* which are predicative focus markers discussed in sections 5.2.15 and 5.2.16, and *hinuma* which has been explained as verbal focus marker in section 5.2.12, can have an additional function, i.e., sentential focus markers. They can be moved to different parts of a sentence and would have a broader scope and control of focus. They acquire the sentential focus capacity when they occur at the sentence-initial position. Consider the following example.

- (156) *bee* *inni* *nyaat-Ø-e*
S.FOC 3SM:NOM eat-3SM-PFV
‘HE ATE’

The morpheme *bee*, which occurs at the sentence-initial position, has the sentential focus capacity in the above example. Usually, it comes at the sentence-final position with the predicative focus function. Sometimes, it can be moved to the sentence-initial position as in (156) with a wider scope and control of focus over the whole sentence. The following example also shows sentential focus in Oromo.

- (157) *bar* *inni* *deem-Ø-e*
S.FOC 3SM:NOM go-3SM-PFV
‘HE WENT’

The morpheme *bar* occurs at the sentence-initial position in the above example. In this case, it functions as a sentential focus marker. Under normal circumstances, it occurs at the sentence-final position with the having predicative focus function. The morpheme *bar* exists in the Eastern dialect of Oromo while *bee* occurs in the remaining five dialects of Oromo (Northern, Southern, Western, Central, and Southeastern).

The following example is also provided in order to show sentential focus marking in Oromo.

- (158) *hinuma inni dhuf-a-a*
 S.FOC 3SM-NOM come-IPFV-Q
 ‘DOES HE COME?’

The morpheme *hinuma*, which comes at the sentence-initial position, serves as a sentential focus marker as in the above sentence. Normally, it functions as a verbal focus marker, but very rarely can be moved to sentence-initial position and can focus the whole sentence with having a broader scope and control of focus.

5.3 Syntactic means for focusing

Syntactic means is one of the mechanisms that is used to show emphasis or focus. It is about the importance that syntax has in showing focus. It is, therefore, concerned with word order and the way words can be arranged in a sentence for the sake of focus. Hence, this subsection deals with cleft construction, special word order (pseudo-cleft construction), and interrogative pronouns and question words.

5.3.1 Cleft construction

Cleft construction is one of the syntactic mechanisms that shows focus in Oromo. In a cleft construction, the normal word order of a sentence is manipulated to show focus. The element of a sentence that needs to be focused can be moved to the initial position of a sentence. A cleft construction focuses a certain element or part of a sentence. Bare element (i.e., the one without focus morpheme) and the one that bears morphological focus marking morpheme can be moved to the initial part of a sentence (for the sake of focus). Let us consider the following example sentences:

- (159) (a) *kan akkana godh-Ø-e is-uma*
 REL like this make-3SM-PFV 3SM.absolutive-CS3
 ‘(The one) who made it like this is him’
- (b) *is-uma-tu akkas godh-Ø-e*
 3SM-DEF-SUB.FOC1 like that make-3SM-PFV
 ‘IT IS HIM who made it like that’

(159 a & b) are cleft sentences because the basic sentential element that follows the normal word order of Oromo and the one that stands for both is *inni akkana godhe* ‘he made like this’. The elements that are focused and moved to the initial place of the sentence are relativeizer clause as in (a) and a definite focused object pronoun that bears also a morphological focus marking as in (b). Here is an additional example that is similar in its form with example (159): *waraabeessi nama nyaate* ‘the hyena ate a person’ is the basic word order, but both *kan nama nyaate waraabeessuma* ‘the one that ate a person is a hyena’ and *waraabeessumatu nama nyaate* ‘it is a hyena that ate a person’ are cleft constructions.

The following examples are presented to illustrate cleft construction in Oromo further. In the examples that follow, elements under (b) are the ones that are in a cleft construction.

- (160) (a) *caaltuu-n buna bit-t-e*
caaltuu-NOM coffee buy-3SF-PFV
‘Caaltuu bought coffee’
- (b) *buna-Ø kan caaltuun bit-t-e*
coffee-CS1 REL caaltuu:NOM buy-3SF-PFV
‘IT IS COFFEE that Caaltuu bought’
- (161) (a) *caaltuu-n hoolaa bit-t-e*
caaltuu-NOM sheep buy-3SF-PFV
‘Caaltuu bought a sheep’
- (b) *hoolaa-dha kan caaltuun bit-t-e*
sheep-CS1 REL caaltuu:NOM buy-3SF-PFV
‘IT IS A SHEEP that Caaltuu bought’
- (162) (a) *caaltuu-n aannan bit-t-e*
caaltuu-NOM milk buy-3SF-PFV
‘Caaltuu bought milk’
- (b) *aannan-i kan caaltuun bit-t-e*
milk-CS1 REL caaltuu:NOM buy-3SF-PFV
‘IT IS MILK that Caaltuu bought’

Normally, objects of the sentences under (a) are clefted in (b). The clefting is assisted by the copular constructions in some of the examples mentioned above (160-162).

Copular constructions are clefted for the sake of focus in Oromo (in the Eastern and Southern varieties, such clefting can be observed specifically without the use of overt attributive copula *-dha*).

- (163) (a) *hoolaa-n kun kan koo-ti*
sheep-NOM this REL mine-CS2
‘This sheep is mine’
- (b) *(kan) koo-ti hoolaan kun*
REL mine-CS2 sheep:NOM this
‘It is mine, this sheep’
- (164) (a) *ulee-n kun kee-tii-m*
stick-NOM this yours-CS2-PRE.FOC2
‘This stick is yours!’

- (b) (*kan*) *kee-tii-m* *uleen* *kun*
REL yours-CS2-PRE.FOC2 stick:NOM this
‘It is yours, this stick!’
- (165) (a) *inni* *san-uma*
3SM-NOM that-CS3
‘He is all the same’
- (b) *san-uma* *inni*
that-CS3 3SM:NOM
‘It is all the same, as to him’
- (166) (a) *ishee-n* *dheertuu-dha*
3SF-NOM tall-CS1
‘She is tall’
- (b) *dheertuu-dha* *isheen*
tall-CS1 3SF:NOM
‘She is tall’

Prepositional phrases can be clefted in Oromo as demonstrated by the following example:

- (167) (a) *inni* *ulee-dhaa-n* *nama* *rukut-Ø-e*
3SM:NOM stick-OBJ.FOC1-INS person hit-3SM-PFV
‘He hit a man with a stick’
- (b) *ulee-dhaa-n-i* *kan* *inni* *nama* *rukut-Ø-e*
stick-OBJ.FOC1-INS-CS1 REL 3SM:NOM person hit-3SM-PFV
‘It is with a stick that he hit a person’
- (c) *nama-Ø* *kan* *inni* *ulee-dhaa-n* *rukut-Ø-e*
person-CS1 REL 3SM:NOM stick-OBJ.FOC1-INS hit-3SM-PFV
‘It is a person that he hit with a stick’

The postpositional phrase and the object in (167 a) are clefted for the sake of focus.

5.3.2 Special word order

The other important point that can be mentioned from a syntactic point view is a special order of constituents. Here, the elements that are used to focus (different parts or constituents of a sentence) are put in diverse places per sentence, i.e., they may not stand in a fixed place permanently. In Oromo, the connectors (subordinating conjunctions): *waan*, *gatii* (Western), and *sababa* are used interchangeably, and they can come at different parts of a sentence to let words (elements of a sentence) focused.

- (168) *inni* *waan/sababa* *dafee* *rafuuf* *ganmaan* *ka'-Ø-a*
3SM:NOM since early:CVB sleep:CVB:DAT morning:INS stand-3SM-
IPFV
‘Since he sleeps early, he gets up in the morning’

(169) *inni dafee waan/sababa/gatii rafuuf ganamaan ka'-Ø-a*
 3SM:NOM early:CVB since sleep:CVB:DAT morning:INS stand-3SM-IPFV

‘Since he sleeps early, he gets up in the morning’

(170) *waan inni dafee rafuuf ganamaan ka'-Ø-a*
 since 3SM:NOM quick:CVB sleep:CVB:DAT morning:INS stand-3SM-IPFV

‘Since he sleeps quickly, he wakes up in the morning’

The constituent *waan / sababa / gatii* ‘since’ occurs in different places: before the word *dafee* ‘quick/early’ in (168), after it in (169), and at the beginning of the sentence in (170). The subordinate clause is emphasized with the special ordering of the subordinate conjunctions in the above sentences.

The connector *ammoo* also takes different positions and used to focus the word that exists before it in the subordinate clause:

(171) *ani yoo-n haf-Ø-e ammoo maaltu dhuf-Ø-a*
 1S:NOM if-1S. absent-1S- if what:SUB.FOC1 come-3SM-IPFV
 AGR PFV

‘What will happen if I am absent?’

(172) *ani yoo=n haf-Ø-e maaltu ammoo dhuf-Ø-a*
 1S:NOM if-1S. absent-1S- what:SUB.FOC1 if come-3SM-IPFV
 AGR PFV

‘What will happen if I am absent’

(173) *ani yoo=n ammoo haf-Ø-e maaltu dhuf-Ø-a*
 1S:NOM if-1S. if absent-1S- what:SUB.FOC1 come-3SM-IPFV
 AGR PFV

‘What will happen if I am absent?’

5.3.3 Interrogative pronouns and question words

In Oromo, interrogative pronouns can be focused through the use of morphological focus markings. They can also be involved in a cleft construction. The morphological focus marking morphemes that are used to focus interrogative pronouns are *-tu* and *-uma*. Interrogative pronouns (question words) add the focus marking morpheme *-tu* when they appear at the subject position of a sentence and *-uma* at the object position of a sentence. The adverbs *yoom* ‘when’ and *eessa* ‘where’ are not used with the morpheme *-tu*, but add the morpheme *-uma*, i.e., they are focused when they appear at the object position of a sentence. These adverbs tend to occur only at the object position of a sentence, but not at the subject position of a sentence. On the other hand, the pronouns *maal* ‘what’, *kam* ‘which’, *eenyu* ‘who’, and the demonstrative *kana* ‘this’ are used with both focus markers: add the morpheme *-tu* at the subject position and *-uma* at the object position of a sentence.

- (174) (a) *ati yoom-uma dhuf-t-a-a*
 2S:NOM when-OBJ.FOC5 come-2S-IPFV-Q
 ‘WHEN do you come?’
- (b) *ati eess-uma deem-t-a-a*
 2S:NOM where-OBJ.FOC5 go-2S-IPFV-Q
 ‘WHERE do you go?’
- (175) (a) *maal-tu dhuf-Ø-e-e*
 what-SUB.FOC1 come-3SM-PFV-Q
 ‘WHAT came?’
- (b) *kam-tu dhuf-Ø-e-e*
 which-SUB.FOC1 come-3SM-PFV-Q
 ‘WHICH came?’
- (c) *eenyu-tu dhuf-Ø-e-e*
 who-SUB.FOC1 come-3SM-PFV-Q
 ‘WHO came?’
- (d) *kana-tu dhuf-Ø-e*
 this-SUB.FOC1 come-3SM-PFV
 ‘THIS ONE came’

At the object position of a sentence, the above examples appear as in the following:

- (176) (a) *ati maal-uma goo¹⁸-t-e*
 2S:NOM what-OBJ.FOC5 do-2S-PFV
 ‘WHAT did you do?’
- (b) *ati kam-uma fudh-at-t-e*
 2S:NOM which-OBJ.FOC5 take-BEN-2S-PFV
 ‘WHICH did you take?’
- (c) *ati eeny-uma dubbif-t-e-e*
 2S:NOM whom-OBJ.FOC5 greet-2S-PFV-Q
 ‘WHOM did you greet?’
- (d) *kan-uma fudhadh-u*
 this-OBJ.FOC5 take-2S.IMP
 ‘Take THIS’

Interrogative pronouns can be focused in Oromo through morphological focus markings and with the use of stress (high pitch). A question like *eenyu(u)tu dhufe* is grammatical and

¹⁸ The verb root in the 1st singular, 3rd singular masculine, and 3rd plural pronouns is *godh-* ‘do’. On the other hand, 1st & 2nd plural pronouns and 2nd singular & 3rd singular feminine pronouns have *goo-* ‘do’ as a verb root which could be a result of assimilation, i.e., *godh-* > *goot-* where dh > o before alveolar sounds (t and n).

acceptable one as opposed to **eenyu dhufe* ‘who came’, which is ungrammatical. Sometimes, personal pronouns stand to be focused without the use of morphological focus markings (which could be through the use of stress or extra energy). In the imperative and jussive construction, however, the morpheme *-umti* comes with the personal pronouns: *atumti koottu* ‘come’, *innumti haa dhufu* ‘let him come’, etc which occurs in dependent and independent clauses.

In interrogative sentences, interrogative words (pronouns) are moved to the initial part of a sentence for the sake of focus as in the following:

- (177) (a) *kun meeqa?*
 this how much
 ‘How much is it?’
- (b) *meeqa kun?*
 how much this
 ‘How much is this?’
- (178) (a) *inni eessa?*
 he:NOM where
 ‘Where is he?’
- (b) *eessa inni?*
 where he.it
 ‘WHERE is he/it?’
- (179) (a) *beellamni yoom inni?*
 appointment:NOM when he.it
 ‘When is the appointment?’
- (b) *yoom inni beellamni?*
 when he.it appointment
 ‘When is the appointment?’

In (177 & 178 b), a question word with zero copula has been focused and moved to the initial place of the sentences. In (179 b), however, *yoomi* ‘when’ which consists of the copular form *-i* or *yoom inni* ‘when’ can be moved or clefted. In (a), the demonstrative pronoun *inni* stands in place of the copular form *-i*.

5.4 Prosody for focus marking

Stress is used to focus question words, answer to a given question, interrogative pronouns, and any given word that needs to be pronounced loudly. Prosodically, high pitch or extra energy is used to pronounce words and get them focused. Possible answers to a question like *eeyyee* ‘yes’ and *lakki* ‘no’ are focused ones, i.e., responses to a question whether positive or negative and WH words are usually pronounced with extra energy. In Oromo, the corrective focus is expressed with *lakki* ‘no’, as opposed to the neutral negative marker *hin-*. The answer

to WH-questions is not the same in the assertive and contrastive focus. The contrastive focused answer needs to have a corrective focus particle *lakki*.

Consider the following examples.

(180) *qotiyoo-n diimaa kaleessa du'-Ø-e*
 ox-NOM red yesterday die-3SM-PFV
 'The red OX died yesterday'

(181) *qotiyoo diimaa-n kaleessa du'-Ø-e*
 ox red-NOM yesterday die-3SM-FV
 'The RED ox died yesterday'

Any element of the above sentences can be focused through the use of stress or extra energy. For example, the word *qotiyoo* 'ox' can be stressed in (180) if it is the one that is needed to be focused. The word *diimaa* 'red' can also be focused in (181). In addition to this, the whole noun phrase or the subject can be focused in the above examples. Similarly, the word *kaleessa* 'yesterday' and the verb *du'*- 'die' can be focused through the use of stress and or extra energy. Additional example is provided below:

(182) *mucaa diimaa bareedaa kaleessa arg-i-t-e san waam-i*
 child red handsome yesterday see-EEN-2S-PFV that call-2S.IMP
 'Call the red handsome child that you saw yesterday'

Any word that exists in the above example can be focused through the use of stress. The word that can be identified to be focused is always pronounced with extra high energy. From a given sentence, a word that gets focused through stress is identified with the extra high energy applied to a specific word. Therefore, in addition to the morphological and syntactic ways of marking focus, prosody (stress) also plays a crucial role in marking focus in Oromo.

5.5 Types of focus in Oromo

The term focus is used to indicate the kind of information which is considered by the speaker not to be shared by the listener (Hyman & Watters 1984:239). There are two things involved here, i.e., the focused part of an utterance and the presupposition of that utterance. According to Hyman & Watters (1984:237), part of an utterance that is focused is called asserted, while presupposition is unfocused information that is shared between the speaker and the hearer. They have also explained the existence of diverse factors that make the speaker to assume that information is not shared. These diverse factors would result in various types or functions of focus. Mentioning that there is no comprehensive study on the type of focus, they have noted two broad types of focus: assertive versus contrastive focus, which could be subject to additional sub-grouping. Assertive focus is, therefore, explained as "asserted information projected against a neutral background" (Hyman & Watters 1984:239). A neutral background is explained as a situation where a speaker believes that the focused element is not given conflicting value (referent) by the listener. It indicates the absence of conflicting

information between the speaker and the listener. On the other hand, the second speaker expects a non-neutral background in the case of contrastive focus (Hyman & Watters 1984:40). There are also two contexts: conflict because of the utterance of the second speaker disagrees with the assertion (utterance) made by the first speaker, and the second one is conflict because speaker one and two share a knowledge which contradicts. In both cases, contrastive focus is used by the speaker two.

Previous studies of focus in Oromo mention different types of focus. For example, Taha (1990:60-63) mentions five types of focus in Oromo: assertive, counter assertive, exhaustive listing, polar, and counter assertive polar focus. According to Baye (1988:367-374), there are three types of focus in Oromo: presentational, informative, and contrastive focus. On the other hand, Dabala & Meyer (2003:164) say there are mainly two types of focus in Oromo: presentational versus contrastive focus. The present study establishes contrastive, assertive, exclamatory, continuous, additive, interrogative, imperative, predicative, and sentential focus types. The identified types of focus are used for subject, object, verb, non-argument (predicative), and sentence focus function.

5.5.1 Contrastive

Contrastive focus is context-dependent where the context could be a dispute, i.e., a discourse participant considers that something which is different from the information uttered in the discourse is true (Baye 1988:371). Similarly, according to Dabala & Meyer (2003:164), “contrastive focus is involved when the speaker wants to correct the presupposed background knowledge of the hearer” and this presupposed background knowledge between the speaker and the hearer makes presentational and contrastive focus to be different. There are different morphemes that show contrastive focus in Oromo. These morphemes are non-verbal focus markers by their nature. The morphemes *-tu*, *-dhaa*, *-tii*, *-uma/-um*, and *-illee* are the contrastive focus marking morphemes in Oromo. The morpheme *-tu*, which functions as a contrastive focus marker, is added mainly to subject noun phrases and to modifiers that come after the subject noun phrase. Consider the following example.

- (183) *caalaa-tu* *dhuf-Ø-e*
 caalaa-SUB.FOC1 come-3SM-PFV
 ‘It is CAALAA who came’

In (183), the proper noun Caalaa is contrastively focused. It functions to tell that it is Caalaa who came, but not any other person. This contrastive morpheme can be added to modifiers of the subject noun phrase with the same function as in the following:

- (184) *nam-icha* *gabaabaa* *furdaa-tu* *dhuf-Ø-a*
 man-SIN.DEF short fat-SUB.FOC1 come-3SM-IPFV
 ‘IT IS THE SHORT FAT MAN who comes / will come’

The contrastive morpheme *-tu* is added to the last modifier adjective *furdaa* ‘fat’. Usually, when modifiers of the subject noun phrase become numerous in number, the demonstrative

sana ‘that’ or *kana* ‘this’ is used before the verb. In situations like this, it is the demonstrative that carries the focus marker, but not the head of the noun phrase:

- (185) *nam-icha gabaabaa furdaa sana-tu dhuf-Ø-e*
 man-SIN.DEF short fat that-SUB.FOC1 come-3SM-PFV
 ‘IT IS THAT SHORT FAT MAN who came’

The same contrastive property is also observed with the use of the morpheme *-dhaa*, which is added to the object of a sentence.

- (186) *inni ulee-dhaa-n na rukut-Ø-e*
 3SM:NOM stick-OBJ.FOC1-INS me hit-3SM-PFV
 ‘It is WITH A STICK that he hit me’

- (187) *inni eeboo sibiilaa-tii-n ajjees-Ø-e*
 3SM:NOM spear iron-OBJ.FOC2-INS kill-3SM-PFV
 ‘It is WITH A METAL SPEAR that he killed’

In (186), the word *ulee* ‘stick’ is contrastively focused as opposed to any other material which can be used to hit. In a similar manner, a spear that is made of metal is contrastively focused in (187).

The morpheme *-uma* (*-um*) also functions as a contrastive focus marker as in the following.

- (188) *inni bor-uma dhuf-Ø-a*
 3SM:NOM tomorrow-OBJ.FOC5 come-3SM-IPFV
 ‘He comes / will come TOMORROW’

(188) states that he will come tomorrow as opposed to today, the day after tomorrow or any other day. The morpheme *-uma* contrasts tomorrow against any other day. The following additional example shows its contrastive property:

- (189) *har’a miti bor-uma koott-u*
 today to be not tomorrow-OBJ.FOC5 come-2S.IMP
 ‘Not today; come TOMORROW’

In (189), the focused word *boru* ‘tomorrow’ can be alternatively focused with the use of stress. This fact indicates that elements that are focused with stress could also be examples of contrastive focus in Oromo if the presupposed information is denied by one of the participants of the discourse. For example, if the word *diimaa* ‘red’ is pronounced with extra energy in (190) below, the stress makes it to be contrastively focused within the context of question or because of sharing contradicting information between the participants of the discourse.

(190) *gotiyyoo-n diimaa-n du'-Ø-e*
 ox-NOM red-NOM die-3SM-PFV
 'The RED ox died'

(191) *mana kan caaltuu-n bit-t-e*
 house REL caaltuu-NOM buy-3SF-PFV
 'IT IS A HOUSE that Caaltuu bought'

In (191), the word *mana* 'house' is contrastively focused not only with the use of stress, but also with the syntactic means of clefting. This kind of contrastive focus arises due to disagreement of the utterance of the participants of the discourse or could be due to sharing contradicting information.

The morpheme *-illee* is also used as a contrastive morpheme in Oromo not because the participants of the discourse disagree on the utterance, but because they share a knowledge which contradicts.

(192) *mucaa-n¹⁹-illee dhuf-Ø-e*
 child-NOM-SUB.FOC2 come-3SM-PFV
 'EVEN THE CHILD came'

(193) *si dhisii mucaan keet-illee dhuf-Ø-e*
 2S:ABS let alone child:NOM yours-SUB.FOC2 come-3SM-PFV
 'Let alone you; even YOUR child came'

5.5.2 Assertive

As opposed to contrastive focus, presentational focus is not context-dependent because the presupposition is taken as a shared knowledge between the participants of the discourse, i.e., they know what is implicated in the discourse (Baye 1988:367). Similarly, Dabala & Meyer (2003:164) define presentational focus as the one that asserts a certain element of a discourse without having specific prior knowledge set as a presupposition. The assertive focus markers in Oromo are *-uu*, *-oo*, *hin-*, *ni-*, *-tii*, and *ya*. The forms *-uu* and *-oo* are elements that are suffixed to a subject. The morphemes *hin-* and *ni-* are normally verbal focus markers that are added before a verb. The morpheme *hin-* is widely used in most of the Oromo varieties (Northern, Southern, Central, Western, and Southeastern dialects), but the morpheme *ni-* is mainly used in the Eastern Oromo. The other assertive morpheme which is limited to the Eastern dialect of Oromo is *-tii*. The morpheme *ya*, which focuses mainly verbs and other constituents as well, is used in the Southern Oromo.

The following examples consist of the morphemes *-uu* and *-oo*.

(194) *an-uu kana beek-Ø-a*
 1S.NOM-SUB.FOC3 this know-1SM-IPFV
 'Even I know this'

¹⁹ Eastern Oromo has the form *mucaa-llee-n dhuf-Ø-e* 'even the child came' where the nominative marker morpheme occurs after the focus marker.

5.5.3 Continuous / certainty

Since the morpheme *hinuma*, which appears as *hinum* in the Southern Oromo, is used to express the continuity of an action, it can be labeled as a progressive (continuous) focus type. Additionally, it can be used to express the certainty of an action to happen, to be done etc.

(201) *inni hinuma raf-Ø-aa jir-Ø-a*
 3SM:NOM V.FOC3 sleep:3SM-PROG AUX-3SM-IPFV
 ‘He is still SLEEPING’ / ‘He is continuously sleeping’

(202) *inni hinuma dhuf-Ø-a*
 3SM:NOM V.FOC3 come-3SM-IPFV
 ‘He COMES / WILL COME’ / ‘He will certainly come’

The morpheme *hinuma* is used to explain the continuity of the action of sleeping as in the (201), and certainty of the action of coming as in the (202). If someone uses sentences like (202), it means that the expected person will definitely come, but not absent. Usually, when it occurs before a progressive verb (which is supported by an auxiliary verb), it expresses continuous focus. On the other hand, when it comes immediately before the verb it expresses certainty of an action.

5.5.4 Additive

The suffix morpheme *-s*, which is potentially added to any word, is used to show the addition of something. It is used both in the affirmative and negative forms. It has an equivalent meaning with the English word ‘also’.

(203) *inni-s haa dhuf-Ø-u*
 3SM:NOM-ADD.FOC JUS come-3SM-IMP
 ‘Let HIM (also) come’

(204) *rafuu-s rafuu baatuu-s san-uma*
 sleep:VN-ADD.FOC sleep:VN not:VN-ADD.FOC same-CS3
 ‘It is all the same whether he SLEEPS or NOT’

In (203), in addition to the presupposed person who is expected to come, the sentence states the constituent ‘let him also come’. In example (204), it shows an action that remains the same, unchanged, and or unaffected one. Additional example is given below.

(205) *inni dhuf-Ø-u-s dhufuu baat-Ø-u-s hin-raf-n-a*
 3SM:NOM come-3SM-DEP.IPFV- come:VN not-3SM-IPFV- V.FOC1-sleep-
 ADD.FOC ADD.FOC 1P-IPFV
 ‘We will SLEEP whether he COMES or NOT’

5.5.5 Imperative

The morpheme *-tii / -too*, which functions as an object focus marker, is used as an imperative focus type. It occurs with the imperative sentence type that gives an order. Consider the following examples.

(206) *tur-ii-tii* *koott-u*
late-CVB-IMP.FOC come-2S.IMP
'Come LATE'

(207) *dubbis-aa-too* *deem-aa*
read-2P.IMP-IMP.FOC go-2P.IMP
'READ / GREET and go'

In both examples, the morpheme *-tii/-too* is used with the imperative sentence type.

5.5.6 Exclamatory

The morpheme *kaa* is normally used as an exclamatory focus marker, which appears mostly sentence-finally (but possible to occur also elsewhere). It occurs in exclamatory sentences and in the imperative sentences that give order.

(208) *akkasi kaa*
like.that EXC.FOC
'It is like that!'

(209) *koott-u kaa*
come-2S.IMP EXC.FOC
'Please come! (do not stay away)'

(208) and (209) are instances where the morpheme *kaa* is used as a focus marker in the exclamatory and imperative sentences respectively. This morpheme is a pragmatically controlled one in its nature because it is not an obligatorily occurring one. Rather, it is a type of focus that gives an option to the speakers so that they can use non-focused counterparts or equivalents of these sentences. The exclamatory focus *kaa* appears as *gaa* in the Eastern Oromo.

5.5.7 Interrogative

The morpheme *ree* is used as an interrogative focus marker in Oromo. It comes always at the sentence-final position. It is used in the negative and affirmative interrogative sentences.

(210) *hin-deem-t-a-a ree?*
V.FOC1-go-2S-IPFV-Q INT.FOC
'Are you going, then?'/ 'Do you GO'

There are two focus markers in the above sentence: the morpheme *hin-* which looks a grammatically controlled one, and *ree* which is a pragmatically controlled morpheme because its occurrence is optional. The same is observed in the following sentence:

- (211) *hin-deem-t-u-u* *ree*
 V.FOC1-go-2P-IPFV-Q INT.FOC
 ‘Do you GO?’

In addition to the morpheme *ree*, the morpheme *yii*, which occurs mainly in the Central, Western, and Northern Oromo, also functions as an interrogative focus marker.

- (212) *hin-dhuf-t-a-a* *yii*
 V.FOC1-come-2S-IPFV-Q INT.FOC
 ‘Do you COME?’

The morpheme *hii* is also used in the Eastern Oromo.

5.5.8 Predicative

The morpheme *bee* functions as a predicative focus marker when it occurs at the sentence-final position. It is found in the Northern, Southern, Western, Central, and Southeastern Oromo. (See also the discussion under section 5.2.21 and 6.1.16).

- (213) *ani* *deem-Ø-e* *bee*
 1S:NOM go-1S-PFV PRE.FOC1
 ‘I went’

The morpheme *bar* functions as a predicative focus marker in the Eastern Oromo when it occurs at the sentence-final position. (See section 6.1.17 for its occasional occurrence at the sentence-initial and medial positions).

- (214) *deem-Ø-e* *bar*
 go-3SM-PFV PRE.FOC1
 ‘I/he went’

The morpheme *-m*, which is mainly used in the Western dialect of Oromo, is also termed as a predicative focus. It is used only with exclamatory sentences.

- (215) *mucaa-n* *koo* *barsiisaa-dhaa-m*
 son-NOM mine teacher-CS1-PRE.FOC2
 ‘My son is a teacher!’

5.5.9 Sentential

The morphemes *bee*, *bar*, and *hinuma* are termed sentential focus markers as they have the capacity of control over the whole sentence. The following examples are given to show their occurrence at sentence-initial position with a wider scope and control.

(216) *bee ani kaleessa dhuf-Ø-e*
 S.FOC 1S:NOM yesterday come-1S-PFV
 ‘I CAME YESTERDAY’

(217) *bar tolaa-n deem-Ø-e*
 S.FOC tolaa-NOM go-3SM-PFV
 ‘TOLAA WENT’

(218) *hinuma tolaa-n fiig-aa deem-Ø-e*
 S.FOC tolaa-NOM run-PROG do-3SM-PFV
 ‘TOLAA WENT RUNNING’

In (216 – 218) the morphemes *bee*, *bar*, and *hinuma* occur at the sentence-initial position and are used as sentential focus markers.

5.6 Summary

In Oromo, focus is realized morphologically, syntactically, and prosodically. The morphological focus markings are the different morphemes that appear either before or after the focused element. Syntactically, cleft construction (which puts the focused element to the initial position of a sentence) is used in order to show focus. Pseudo cleft construction or special order of constituent is also used to show focus in Oromo. Stress is the prosodic means to realize focus. Focus, which is realized through stress, is indicated with the use of extra high energy in pronouncing words that are needed to be focused. In addition to this, focus morphemes that develop out of the copular morphemes manifest themselves through vowel length (see the discussion on grammaticalization).

The focus marking morphemes that have been identified in Oromo are: *-tu/-t*, *-illee*, *-uu*, *-oo*, *-dhaa*, *-tii*, *-tii*, *-tii/-too*, *-s*, *hin-*, *ni-*, *hinuma/hinum*, *ya*, *kaa/gaa*, *bee/bar*, *-m*, *ree/yii/hii*, *-uma/-um*, and *umatu* or (*-uma* & *-tu* together). The morphemes *-tu*, *-uma*, and *hinuma* appear rarely as *-t*, *-um*, and *hinum* in the Southern Oromo. On the other hand, *kaa* appears as *gaa* in the Eastern Oromo. The morpheme *bar*, which appears dominantly in the Eastern Oromo, has an equivalent form *bee* in the other varieties. Similarly, the interrogative morpheme *ree* has an alternative forms *yii* mostly in the Northern, Central, and Western Oromo and *hii* in the Eastern Oromo. The morpheme *hinuma/hinum* looks a new development in Oromo and could be formed from *hin-* and *-uma*, which are used separately as a verbal and subject/object focus markers from a synchronic point of view. This tendency of merger is also partly observed with the morpheme *-umatu*, which is analyzed in this paper as *-uma* and *-tu* as the process of merger does not look complete yet.

The types of focus that have been identified in Oromo are: contrastive, assertive, continuous, additive, imperative, exclamatory, interrogative, predicative, and sentential. The majority of the morphemes fall into the category of assertive and contrastive focus type. The identified

types of focus have the subject, object, verb, non-argument (predicative), and sentential function.

The scope of focus is on one of the following constituents of Oromo sentences: the subject, the object, the verb, the predicate, and the sentence. The morphemes that are used exclusively to focus the subject are *-tu/-t*, *-uu*, and *-oo*. The morphemes that are used to focus the object only are *-tii/-too*, *-dhaa*, *-tii*, and *-tii* (E). The morphemes *-illee*, *-s*, and *-uma* are used to focus both the subject and the object. Verbs are focused with *hin-*, *ni-* (in the Eastern Oromo), *hinuma* (*hinum* in the Southern Oromo), and *ya* (in the Southern Oromo). On the other hand, *kaa* (*gaa* in the Eastern Oromo), *ree* (*yii* in the Northern, Central, and Western and *hii* in the Eastern Oromo), *bee* (*bar* in the Eastern Oromo), and *-m* in the Western Oromo are used to focus the predicate. In addition to this, *bee*, *bar*, and *hinuma* are used to focus a sentence.

Focus, in Oromo, is controlled either pragmatically or syntactically. In the pragmatically controlled focus, the speaker determines the constituents of the language that show focus, or it is determined by the actual discourse situation. On the other hand, in the syntactically controlled focus, the speaker does not control the elements that bear focus; rather it is controlled by the grammar itself (see also Hyman & Watters 1984:239). For example, in the sentence *inni hindhufa* ‘he comes / will come’, the morpheme *hin-* is obligatory, and it does not give an option to the speaker so that he/she can use the non-focused counterpart of this sentence. In a similar example, (*inni nidhufa* ‘he comes / will come’) the morpheme *ni-* is a syntactically controlled one, as opposed to Griefenow-Mewis (2001:110) who claims the morphemes *-tu* and *ni-* not to be obligatory in Oromo. On the other hand, the morpheme *-uma* appears to be a pragmatically controlled one in sentences like *inni man-uma ijaare* ‘it is a house that he built’. This one gives an option to the speakers so that they can use the non-focused counterpart of this sentence: *inni mana ijaare* ‘he built a house’ which is a grammatical and acceptable one except for the absence of the focus marker from the element *mana* ‘house’ in the latter case.

From a comparative point of view, almost all varieties of Oromo have identical type and number of focus markers, with some minor differences. The scope, control, and realization of focus remain identical among the six dialects of Oromo. As opposed to the other dialects, the Eastern Oromo has a different verb focus marker *ni-*, which occurs consistently as *hin-* in the other varieties of Oromo. Written Oromo, however, uses mainly *ni-* as verbal focus marker (Griefenow-Mewis 2001:110). The predicate focus marker *bar* is mainly a typical feature of the Eastern dialect. The assertive object focus marking morpheme *-tii* is also the other typical feature of Eastern Oromo only. The predicative focus marker *-m* is mainly observed in the Western Oromo. The first person singular pronoun is consistently focused with the element *nin-* in the Eastern Oromo as opposed to *nan-*, which occurs in the Northern, Central, and Western Oromo. On the other hand, the morpheme *hin-* is used to focus first person singular pronoun in the Southern and Southeastern dialects of Oromo. The verb focus markers *hin-* and *ni-* and the focus markers for the first person singular pronoun *nan-*, *nin-*, and *hin-* are obligatorily used in the imperfective aspect reference. The morpheme *ya*, which is mainly a verb focus marker, is a typical feature of the Southern Oromo.

Most of the focus marking morphemes that have been identified are commonly shared among the six dialects of Oromo. There is a general tendency of shortening morphemes and words in the Southern Oromo. For example, the words *mana* ‘house’, *lafa* ‘earth’, *gaara* ‘mountain’, and *ilma* ‘child’ in the other Oromo varieties appear as *man* ‘house’, *laf* ‘earth’, *gaar* ‘mountain’, and *ilm* ‘child’ in the Southern Oromo.

In Oromo, there is a general pattern of having one focus marker per sentence. However, this may not be a regularly occurring one in every possible construction of Oromo sentence. For instance, a sentence in the imperfective aspect as in (214) consists of a pragmatically controlled object focus marker and a syntactically controlled verb focus marker. In addition to this, when a sentence is composed of different clauses, two different focus markers may occur (in the independent and dependent clauses) as in the following sentence:

- (219) *yoo deem-uu-s yoo taa'-uu-s hinuma yaad-Ø-a*
 while go-VN-ADD.FOC while sit-VN-ADD.FOC V.FOC3 think-3SM-IPFV
 ‘He WORRIES while he goes and sits’

A transitive sentence as in (220) can consist of two pragmatically controlled focus markers:

- (220) *inni ulee-dhaa-n ni-rukut-Ø-a*
 3SM:NOM stick-OBJ.FOC1-INS V.FOC2-hit-3SM-IPFV
 ‘He will HIT WITH A STICK’

Interrogatives in the imperfective are obligatorily focus marked with *ni-* in the Eastern Oromo and *hin-* in the other varieties of Oromo. In addition to the obligatory morpheme, they may contain additional focus marker *ree* (*yii/hii*), which is a pragmatically controlled one.

- (221) *hin-deem-t-a-a ree?*
 V.FOC1-go-2S-IPFV-Q INT.FOC
 ‘Do you GO?’

On the other hand, the same focus marker can occur twice in the dependent clause of Oromo sentence:

- (222) *inni nyaat-Ø-uu-s dhug-Ø-uu-s san-uma*
 3SM:NOM eat-3SM-VN-ADD.FOC drink-3SM-VN-ADD.FOC that.same-CS3
 ‘He is the same whether he EATS and DRINKS’ / ‘does not show change’

Interrogative pronouns can be focused with the use of morphological focus marking morphemes and through the use of stress. It has also been observed that a given constituent can be focused with the use of a morpheme and stress as well.

Chapter Six

Forms of focus marking in Oromo

6.1 Introduction

The present chapter deals with focus elements in terms of where they occur in a sentence, how they function being moved to another place of a given sentence, in which dialect (s) they occur, and the role they play for grammatical correctness of a given sentence. The different focus marking forms in Oromo are *-tu*, *-illee*, *-uu*, *-oo*, *-s*, *-uma*, *-dhaa*, *-tii*, *-tii* (E), *-tii* / *-too*, *hin-*, *ni-*, *hinuma*, *ya*, *kaa* (*gaa*), *bee*, *bar*, *-m*, and *ree/ yii/hii*.

6.1.1 *-tu*

The form *-tu* is used to focus subject of a sentence. It occurs in the six dialects of Oromo, i.e., Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western, Central, and Southeastern. Consider the following example which is taken from the Western Oromo and representative of all the dialects.

- (223) *caalaa-tu* *mana* *ijaar-Ø-e*
caalaa-SUB.FOC1 house build-3SM-PFV
'IT IS CAALAA who built a house'

In the above example, the morpheme *-tu* occurs with the subject noun phrase (proper noun). It focuses Caalaa as opposed to any other person for building a house. The absence of the focus marker from the above example produces the constituent **caalaa mana ijaare* which appears to be not only unfocused but also ungrammatical (it does not give the meaning 'it is Caalaa who built a house'). In the unfocused structure, the subject of the sentence should occur with the nominative marker morpheme in order to be meaningful and grammatical. For example, *caalaa-ni mana ijaare* 'caalaa built a house', the subject appears to be with the nominative marker morpheme to produce a grammatical but unfocused sentence.

On the other hand, the constituent **caalaa manatu ijaare* does not give the meaning 'it is Caalaa who built a house' or even 'Caalaa built a house'. It is simply an ungrammatical and unacceptable sentence based on the everyday conversation of Oromo. Similarly, the constituent **caalaa mana ijaaretu* does not give meaning with the focus marker appearing with the verb. However, there are cases like *caalaa isa mana ijaareetu du'e* 'it is Caalaa who built a house that died' can be acceptable and grammatical when the dependent clause is used as a modifier of the subject noun is focused with the form *-tu*.

The constituent *caalaatu leenca ajjeese* 'it is Caalaa who killed a lion', is a grammatical and focused sentence. Rarely, some people may say *caalaa leencatu ajjeese* here the gloss appears to be 'It is a lion that killed Caalaa'. But, based on my data, I have confirmed that the form *-tu* occurs with the subject noun phrases (see also the discussion under section 5.2.1).

Let us also see the following example which is taken from the Central Oromo and representative of all the dialects of Oromo except for the Eastern one.

- (224) *tolaa-tu* *hin-deem-n-a* *jedh-Ø-e*
 tolaa-SUB.FOC1 V.FOC1-go-1P-IPFV say-3SM-PFV
 ‘IT IS TOLAA who said LET US GO’

In (224), the form *-tu* appears at the subject position of a sentence and focuses Tolaa contrastively as opposed to any other person for saying let us go. The absence of the form *-tu* from the above sentence yields **tolaa hindeemna jedhe* which is ungrammatical. Similarly, the absence of the verb focus marker *hin-* from the above sentence produces **tolaatu deemna jedhe* which is also ungrammatical in Oromo. Changing the order of the focus markers gives the constituent **tolaahin tudeemna jedhe* which is also an impossible and ungrammatical sentence in Oromo. The constituent **tolaani deemna jedhe* is also ungrammatical.

On the other hand, *tolaan hindeemna jedhe* ‘Tolaa said let us go’ is a possible and grammatical sentence with the absence of the focus marker *-tu*, but the subject appears with the nominative marker morpheme. The following viewpoints are important in relation to the above point. The nominative marker and the subject focus form *-tu* operate at different levels of grammar (Baye 1988:383) and nominative case marking morphemes are weak and disappear when the subject is focused (Tosco 1994:229). Additionally, according to (Griefenow-Mewis 2001:41), a base which is a form (of a noun, adjective, and pronoun) that carries no case suffix is used for a focused subject.

The equivalent Eastern Oromo example which corresponds to the above one is the following.

- (225) *awwal-tu* *ni-deem-n-a* *jedh²¹-Ø-e*
 awwal-SUB.FOC1 V.FOC1-go-1P-IPFV say-3SM-PFV
 ‘IT IS AWWAL who said LET US GO’

The constituent *awwal nideemna jedhe* ‘Awwal said let us go’ is a possible sentence with the absence of the subject focus marker but with the presence of the nominative marker morpheme. Note that the nominative marker morpheme that is added after words that end in a voiced alveolar nasal is zero morpheme (Griefenow-Mewis 2001:41-42). The same rule applies to words that end in other consonants. And that is why the above sentence would be an acceptable one without the subject focus marking form. On the other hand, *awwal deema jedhe* is an unacceptable and ungrammatical construction with the absence of the subject and the verb focus markers. The form *-tu* occurs sometimes as *-t* in the Southern Oromo (see also section 5.2.1).

6.1.2 *-illee*

The form *-illee* is used to focus subject and object of a sentence. It is found in the Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western, Central, and Southeastern dialects of Oromo. The following examples are provided to show where it occurs in a sentence.

²¹ The voiced alveolar implosive /d/ alternate with the voiceless glottal stop ʔ intervocalically in the Eastern Oromo.

- (226) *mucaan-illee* *laaqana* *nyaat-Ø-e*
 child:NOM-SUB.FOC2 lunch eat-3SM-PFV
 ‘EVEN THE CHILD ate lunch’

In the above example, the form *-illee* occurs at the subject position of a sentence which is taken as representative of four dialects of Oromo except for the Southern and Eastern Oromo which appears as *mucaa-llee-n laaqana nyaate* ‘even the child ate lunch’. The nominative marker morpheme occurs after the form *-illee* in the Southern and Eastern dialects, but before the form *-illee* in all the remaining four dialects (i.e., Northern, Western, Central, and Southeastern). The constituent *mucaan laaqana nyaate* ‘the child ate lunch’ is a possible and grammatical structure in Oromo with the absence of the subject focus form but with the presence of the nominative marker morpheme. The subject is unfocused in the latter case. On the other hand, *mucaa laaqana nyaate* (without the nominative marker morpheme and the subject focus form *-illee*) is ungrammatical construction in Oromo.

The form *-illee* occurs also with the object of a sentence as demonstrated by the following example:

- (227) *mucaa-n* *laaqana-llee* *nyaat-Ø-e*
 child-NOM lunch-OBJ.FOC4 eat-3SM-PFV
 ‘The child ate EVEN LUNCH’

Example (227) is representative of all the dialects of Oromo. The absence of the form *-illee* from (227) does not make the sentence ungrammatical rather it becomes an unfocused one as in: *mucaan laaqana nyaate* ‘the child ate lunch’. The absence of the nominative focus marker also produces a constituent **mucaa laaqanallee nyaate* which is an ungrammatical and unacceptable one. On the other hand, since the form *-illee* is a non-verbal focus marker, there is no constituent like **mucaan laaqana nyaateellee* as a grammatical and complete structure in Oromo. However, in the constituent *mucaan laaqana nyaateellee ture* ‘the child has even eaten lunch’, the form *-illee* attached to the converb *nyaatee*, which precedes the verb *ture* and is taken as the part of the object nun phrase. The *-illee / -llee* distinction is stated as follows: *-illee* occurs after words that end in a consonant while *-llee* occurs after words that end in a vowel.

6.1.3 *-uu*

This is a form that is used to focus subject of a sentence. It does not occur with the object of a sentence and a verb. It is found in the Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western, Central, and Southeastern Oromo. It is an assertive focus marker that occurs with the affirmative and negative sentences. The following example, which is taken from the Western Oromo, is provided as a representative of the other dialects of Oromo as well.

- (228) *inn-uu* *magaalaa* *deem-Ø-e*
 caalaa:NOM-SUB.FOC3 city go-3SM-PFV
 ‘EVEN HE went to a city’

In the above example, the form *-uu* is used to focus the subject of the sentence. The pronoun he is assertively focused as opposed to any other person (pronoun). In this example, the subject pronoun *inni* loses the final *-i* while adding the focus form *-uu*. This happens due to the phonological rule of Oromo that does not allow sequences of two vowels one after the other. On the other hand, it has also a sense of losing the nominative focus marking morpheme while adding the focus form *-uu*. The absence of the focus form *-uu* produces **inn magaalaa deeme*, which needs the final nominative marker morpheme *-i* and should appear as *inni magaalaa deeme* ‘he went to a city’ which is grammatical, but the subject remains unfocused in the latter case. It is also impossible to move the focus form to the object of the sentence which produces ungrammatical construction **inn magaalauu deeme*. Similarly, it is impossible to attach the form *-uu* to the verb of the sentence which produces the following ungrammatical and phonologically unacceptable constituent **inni magaalaa deemeuu*.

The following example, which is taken from the Southern Oromo, demonstrates further the use and occurrence of the form *-uu* in the negative construction:

- (229) *nam-uu* *magaalaa hin-deem-n-Ø-e*
 people-SUB.FOC3 city NEG-go-NEG-3SM-PFV
 ‘EVEN PEOPLE (themselves) do not go to a city’

In (229), the form *-uu* occurs with a negative sentence and the subject loses the nominative marker morpheme while adding the form *-uu*. The absence of the form *-uu* produces the element **nam magaalaa hindeemne* which is ungrammatical unless the nominative marker is added to it as in *namni magaalaa hindeemne* ‘people do not go to a city’ which is grammatical, but unfocused in this case. The constituents **namni magaalauu hindeemne* and **namni magaalaa hindeemneuu* are also ungrammatical and phonologically unacceptable as they do not obey the phonological structure and rule of Oromo. In the Northern, Western, Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Oromo, the above example sometimes occurs as *namnuu magaalaa hindeemne* ‘even people (themselves) do not go to a city’ with both the nominative marker morpheme and the focus form *-uu* occurring together.

6.1.4 -oo

The form *-oo*, which is found in the Western dialect of Oromo, occurs at the subject position of a sentence. The following examples are taken from the Western Oromo in order to show its position within a sentence.

- (230) *an-oo* *maqaa isaa hin-waam-n-Ø-e*
 1S:NOM-SUB.FOC4 name his NEG-call-NEG-1S-PFV
 ‘EVEN I did not call his name’

In (230), the subject of the sentence is focused with the form *-oo*. The final vowel of the subject pronoun (*ani*) has been lost while adding the form *-oo*. With the absence of the focus marker, the above sentence appears as *ani maqaa isaa hinwaamne* ‘I did not call his name’ with the subject pronoun unfocused. The form *-oo* does not occur with the rest of the

constituents of the above example. For example, **ani maqaaoo isaa hinwaamne*, **ani maqaa isaaoo hinwaamne*, and **ani maqaa isaa hinwaamneoo* are ungrammatical, not meaningful, and do not follow the phonological structure of Oromo.

The form *-oo* can be used with the affirmative sentences as in the following:

- (231) *caaltuun-oo* *bishaan waraab-d-ee* *dhuf-t-e*
 caaltuu:NOM-SUB.FOC4 water fetch-3SF-PFV:CVB come-3SF-PFV
 ‘EVEN CAALTUU came having fetched water’

In (231), the form *-oo* occurs with the subject proper noun following the nominative marker morpheme. The absence of the form *-oo* results in unfocused but grammatically acceptable structure *caaltuun bishaan waraabdee dhufte* ‘Caaltuu came having fetched water’. The following structures are ungrammatical and unacceptable **caaltuun bishaan waraabdeeo dhufete* and **caaltuun bishaan waraabdee dhufteoo*.

On the other hand, object nouns that end in a vowel do not accept this morpheme. For example **caaltuun manaoo ijaarte* is ungrammatical. The verb also cannot carry this form: **caaltuun mana ijaarteoo*. It is only the subject that can carry the form *-oo*: *caaltuunoo mana ijaarte* ‘even Caaltuu built a house’.

6.1.5 -s

The form *-s* is found in all varieties of Oromo, i.e., Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western, Central, and Southeastern. It is used to focus subject and object of a sentence. The following example, which is taken from the Central Oromo, is provided in order to show the occurrence and use of this form at the subject position of a sentence.

- (232) *ani-s* *lafa qot-Ø-e*
 1S:NOM-ADD.FOC land plough-1S-PFV
 ‘I ALSO plowed a land’

In (232), the subject of the sentence is focused with the form *-s*. The use of this sentence shows that there is a presupposed information that someone has plowed his land/farm. The absence of the form *-s* from the above sentence does not make the sentence ungrammatical rather it makes it unfocused as in the following: *ani lafa qote* ‘I plowed a land’.

Since the form *-s* occurs also at the object position of a sentence, the above example would have the following form:

- (233) *ani* *lafa-s* *qot-Ø-e*
 1S:NOM land-ADD.FOC plough-1S-PFV
 ‘I plowed ALSO LAND’

In (233), the form *-s* is appended to the word *lafa* ‘land’ which occurs at the object position of the sentence. The use of the above structure presupposes that the speaker has already done some other activity in addition to farming a land. The absence of the form *-s* from the above

sentence results in a grammatical, but unfocused structure *ani lafa qote* ‘I plowed a land’. The addition of the form *-s* to the verb results in unfinished and ungrammatical construction **ani lafa qotes*. On the other hand, the structure *ani lafa qotes qotuu baadhees hiyyummaa keessaa hinbahu* ‘whether I also plowed a land or not I will not get out of poorness’ is possible.

6.1.6 *-uma*

The form *-uma* is found in the six dialects of Oromo (Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western, Central, and Southeastern). It is used to focus subject and object. The following example is provided to show its occurrence at the subject position.

- (234) *kan-uma* *wayya*
 this-SUB.FOC5 better:3SM:IPFV
 ‘THIS is better’

In (234), the word *kana* ‘this’ drops its final vowel and adds the form *-uma*. In this case, it is the subject that is being focused. The absence of the form *-uma* from the above structure produces a grammatical constituent *kana wayya* ‘this is better’ with the subject of the sentence being unfocused. The constituent **kana wayyauma*, however, is not a grammatically accepted construction. It occurs also as in the following: *kanuma ta’a* ‘it could be this’ with the subject being focused. The absence of the form *-uma* from the subject produces *kana ta’a* ‘it could be this’ where the subject appears unfocused. Attaching the form *-uma* to the last element produces the following ungrammatical structure **kana ta’auma*. The form *-uma* has a limited distribution at the subject position.

The form *-uma* occurs also at the object position. The following example is presented to show its occurrence at the object position of a sentence.

- (235) *mucaa-n* *man-uma* *jir-Ø-a*
 child-NOM house-OBJ.FOC5 exist-3SM-IPFV
 ‘A child exists AT HOME’ / ‘It is AT HOME that the child exists’

In (235), the word *mana* ‘house’ which exists at the object position of the sentence drops its final vowel and adds the form *-uma*. Hence, house is contrastively focused as opposed to any other place (for the existence of the child). The absence of the form *-uma* from the above example produces grammatical structure *mucaan mana jira* ‘a child exists at home’ with the object of the sentence being unfocused. Attaching the form *-uma* to the subject and verb yields constituents **mucaanuma mana jira* and **mucaan mana jirauma* which are ungrammatical.

The form *-uma* occurs at the subject position of a sentence together with the form *-tu*. The following example shows this point.

- (236) *tolaa-dhuma-tu* *mana* *ijaar-Ø-e*
 tolaa-DEF-SUB.FOC1 house build-3SM-PFV
 ‘IT MUST BE TOLAA who built a house’

In (236), *-uma* and *-tu* occur together at the subject position of the sentence being juxtaposed. In cases like this two focus markers may not serve the same function occurring one after the other. Hence, *-uma* functions as a definiteness marker, while *-tu* functions as a contrastive focus marker. The nominative marker morpheme drops out from the subject noun Tolaa while adding the forms *-uma* and *-tu*. The absence of the forms *-uma* and *-tu* from (236) makes **tolaa mana ijaare* which appears to be ungrammatical not because the focus and definiteness markers are gone, but due to the absence of the nominative marker morpheme. Therefore, in order to be grammatical, the sentence should occur with the nominative marker morpheme in the absence of the definiteness and focus forms as in *tolaan mana ijaare* ‘Tolaa built a house’. Suffixing the forms *-uma* and *-tu* to the object and the verb of the sentence produces the following ungrammatical constructions: **tolaa manadhumatu ijaare* and **tolaa mana ijaaredhumatu*.

When modifiers of the subject noun phrase exist, the forms *-uma* and *-tu* do not occur together being juxtaposed. Rather, *-uma* is attached to the head of the noun phrase that exists at the subject position while *-tu* is suffixed to the modifier(s) of the subject noun phrase.

- (237) *fard-uma* *diimaa-tu* *du’-Ø-e*
 horse-DEF red-SUB.FOC1 die-3SM-PFV
 ‘IT IS THE RED HORSE that died’

In (237), the head of the subject noun phrase *farda* ‘horse’ loses its final vowel and adds the form *-uma* which functions as a definiteness marker. The modifier of the head noun *diimaa* ‘red’ carries the form *-tu* which functions as a subject focus marker. The absence of the form *-uma* from the above example results in *farda diimaatu du’e* ‘it is a red horse that died’ with no definiteness sense. The absence of the form *-tu* makes ungrammatical construction: **farduma diimaa du’e*. On the other hand, neither **farda diimaatu du’euma* nor **fardauma diimaa du’etu* is taken as a grammatical and complete structure in Oromo. If a verb *du’-* ‘die’ comes as a modifier (part of modifiers) of the subject noun phrase it can carry the form *-tu*: *farduma diimaa kaleessa du’etu boru gatama* ‘It is the red horse that died yesterday would be dumped tomorrow’. Here, the form *-tu* occurs with the word *du’e* ‘died’ preceding the word *boru* ‘tomorrow’ which functions as the object of the sentence. Therefore, the form *-tu* is attached to the last modifier of the subject noun phrase.

The constituent *farda diimaa kaleessa du’etu boru gatama* ‘it is a red horse that died yesterday will be dumped tomorrow’ is acceptable with no definiteness sense in the absence of the form *-uma*. It yields unacceptable construction in the absence of the form *-tu* (with the main verb appearing in passive form): **farduma diimaa kaleessa du’e boru gatama*. **fardatu diimaa kaleessa du’euma boru gatama*, **farduma diimaa kaleessa du’e borutu gatama*, and

**farduma diimaa kaleessa du'e boru gatamatu* are ungrammatical and incomplete constructions.

6.1.7 -*dhaa*

The form *-dha* is used to focus the object of a sentence. It is found in the Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western, Central, and Southeastern Oromo. It appears in three phonologically conditioned allomorphs. These are *-dha* which occurs after words that end in a long vowel, *-ii* which occurs after words that end in a consonant, and *-aa* which occurs after words that end in a short vowel *a*. The following example which is taken from the Central Oromo is representative of the rest of the Oromo varieties.

- (238) (a) *caaltuu-n ubboo-dhaa-n bishaan waraab-d²²-e*
caaltuu-NOM pot-OBJ.FOC1-INS water fetch-3SF-PFV
‘IT IS WITH A POT that Caaltuu fetched water’
- (b) *inni funyaan-ii-n afuura baafat-Ø-e*
3SM:NOM nose-OBJ.FOC1-INS breathe take out-3SM-PFV
‘IT IS WITH A NOSE that he breathed’
- (c) *wayyeessaa-n miilaa-n dhuf-Ø-e*
wayyeessaa-NOM foot:OBJ.FOC1-INS come-3SM-PFV
‘IT IS WITH A FOOT that Wayyeessa came’

In (238), the words *ubboo* ‘pot’, *funyaan* ‘nose’, and *miila* ‘foot’ carry the morpheme *-dhaa* and its allomorphs. The absence of the allomorphs from the above example results in *caaltuun ubboon bishaan waraabde* ‘Caaltuu fetched water with a pot’ with the object of the sentence unfocused. But in the latter two cases, the absence of the allomorphs produces the following ungrammatical and phonologically impossible structures **inni funyaann afuura baafate* and **wayyeessaan miilan dhufe*. Gemmination and/or cluster of two consonants are not allowable sequences at the word-final position. The addition of the instrumental case also needs lengthening of word-final vowel (which functions as object focus marker).

Attaching the allomorphs to the different elements that exist within the sentences produces the following ungrammatical constructions. In (a), **caaltuu-dhaa-n ubboon bishaan waraabde*, **caaltuun ubboon bishaan-dhaa waraabde*, and **caaltuun ubboon bishaan waraabde-dhaa*. In (b), **inni-ii funyaann afuura baafate*, **inni funyaann afuura-ii baafate*, and **inni funyaann afuura baafate-ii*. In (c), **wayyeessaa-a-n miilan dhufe* and **wayyeessaan miilan dhufe-a*.

6.1.8 -*tii*

The form *-tii* is found in all the varieties of Oromo, i.e., Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western, Central, and Southeastern. It is a contrastive focus marker that is attached to genitive

²² *Waraabte* becomes *waraabde* where *t* partially assimilates to the preceding voiced bilabial stop and becomes *d*.

constructions that occur at the object position of a sentence. The following example, which is taken from the Western Oromo, is provided in order to show its occurrence (being representative of all the varieties of Oromo).

- (239) *inni baala mukaa-tii-n dallaa ijaar-Ø-e*
 3SM:NOM leaf wood:GEN-OBJ.FOC2-INS fence build-3SM-PFV
 ‘IT IS WITH A LEAF OF A WOOD that he built a fence’

In (239), the form *-tii* is attached to a genitive noun. The absence of the form *-tii* from the above example yields the following grammatical, but unfocused structure *inni baala mukaan dallaa ijaare* ‘he built a fence with a leaf of a wood’. The following ungrammatical sentences will be produced if the form *-tii* is attached to the other members of the example (239). These are: **innitii baala mukaan dallaa ijaare*, **inni baalatii mukaan dallaa ijaare*, **inni baala mukaan dallaatii ijaare*, and **inni baala mukaan dallaa ijaaretii*.

The following example, which is taken from the Southern Oromo, is also provided as an additional example.

- (240) *galgaloo-n eeboo koo-tii-n bineensa ajjees-Ø-e*
 galgaloo-NOM spear mine-OBJ.FOC2-INS wild animal kill-3SM-PFV
 ‘IT IS WITH MY SPEAR that Galgaloo killed a wild animal’

In (240), the form *-tii* is attached to the possessive pronoun *koo* ‘mine’. The absence of the form *-tii* results in an unfocused, but grammatically acceptable sentence: *galgaloon eeboo koon bineensa ajjeese* ‘Galgaloo killed a wild animal with my spear’. Attaching *-tii* to the other members of the above example results in the following ungrammatical structures: **galgaloo-tii-n eeboo koon bineensa ajjeese*, **galgaloon eeboo-tii koon bineensa ajjeese*, **galgaloon eeboo koon bineensa-tii ajjeese*, and **galgaloon eeboo koon bineensa ajjeese-tii*.

6.1.9 *-tii*

The form *-tii* is an assertive focus marker that is found in the Eastern Oromo. It is attached to converbs and verbs that show progressive action. The converbs and the verbs that show progressive action normally occur preceding auxiliary verbs, i.e., at the object position of a sentence. The following example is provided to show its occurrence.

- (241) *ani deem-ee-tii=n jir-Ø-a*
 1S:NOM go-PFV:CVB-OBJ.FOC3-1S.AGR AUX-3SM-IPFV
 ‘I have GONE’

In (241), the form *-tii* occurs with the converb that exists preceding the auxiliary verb. The absence of the form *-tii* from the above sentence makes a grammatical, but unfocused structure: *ani deemeen jira* ‘I have gone’. On the other hand, attaching the form *-tii* to the subject and the verb produces the following ungrammatical constructions: **anitii deemeen jira* and **ani deemeen jiratii*.

The following example is added in order to show the occurrence of the form *-tii* with a verb that shows progressive action.

- (242) *ani deem-aa-tii=n jir-Ø-a*
 1S:NOM go-PROG-OBJ.FOC3-1S.AGR AUX-1S-IPFV
 ‘I am GOING’

In (242), the form *-tii* occurs with the progressive verb preceding the auxiliary verb. The absence of the form *-tii* from (242) results in a grammatical, but unfocused structure *ani deemaan jira* ‘I am going’. If the form *-tii* is attached to the subject and the auxiliary verb, then the following ungrammatical structures would appear **anitii deemaan jira* and **ani deemaan jiratii*.

6.1.10 *-tii / -too*

The form *-tii / -too* is found in all the varieties of Oromo, i.e., Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western, Central, and Southeastern. It is attached to imperative constructions that occur preceding the main verb. The following example is taken from the Northern Oromo which is representing all the other varieties of Oromo.

- (243) (a) *ati daf-ii-tii koott-u*
 2S:NOM quick-2S.CVB-IMP.FOC come-2S.IMP
 ‘Come QUICKLY’
- (b) *isin daf-aa-too koott-aa*
 2P:NOM quick-2P.CVB-IMP.FOC come-2P.IMP
 ‘Come QUICKLY’

In the above example, the form *-tii / -too* is attached to the word that exists preceding the verb. The form *-tii* is normally used with singular while *-too* is used with the plural affirmative imperative construction. The absence of the form *-tii / -too* produces unfocused but grammatical structures: *ati dafii koottu* ‘come quickly’ and *isin dafaa koottaa* ‘come quickly’. Attaching the form *-tii / -too* yields ungrammatical incomplete structures: in (a) **ati-tii dafii koottu*, **ati dafii koottu-tii* and in (b), **isin-too dafaa koottaa* and **isin dafaa koottaa-too*. On the other hand, in the presence of another imperative verb that comes last, the following are possible structures: *ati dafii koottuutii hojjadhu* ‘come quickly and work’ and *isin dafaa koottaatoo hojjadhaa* ‘come quickly and work’.

In the jussive and negative imperative constructions, the form *-too* is used both in the singular and plural forms. The following examples are provided to show this fact.

- (244) (a) *inni lafa barbaad-ee-too haa qot-Ø-u*
 3M:NOM land search-CVB-IMP.FOC JUS plow-3SM-IMP
 ‘Let him SEARCH for a land and plow’

- (b) *isaan lafa barbaad-an-ii-too haa qot-an-i*
 3P:NOM land search-3P-CVB-IMP.FOC JUS plow-3P-IMP
 ‘Let them SEARCH for a land and plow’
- (c) *inni lafa barbaad-ee-too hin-qot-i-n*
 3SM:NOM land Search-CVB-IMP.FOC NEG-plow-IMP-NEG
 ‘Let him not SEARCH for a land and plow’
- (d) *isaan lafa barbaad-an-ii-too hin-qot-i-n*
 3P:NOM land Search-3P-CVB-IMP.FOC NEG-plow-IMP-NEG
 ‘Let them not SEARCH for a land and plow’

The absence of the form *-too* from (244) makes the following grammatical, but unfocused structures: *inni lafa barbaadee haa qotu* ‘let him search for a land and plow’, *isaan lafa barbaadani haa qotani* ‘let them search for a land and plow’, *inni lafa barbaadee hinqotin* ‘let him not search for a land and plow’, and *isaan lafa barbaadani hinqotin* ‘let them not search for a land and plow’.

Attaching the form *-too* to the subject of (a-d) yields ungrammatical sentences: **innitoo lafa barbaadee haa qotu*, **isaantoo lafa barbaadani haa qotani*, **innitoo lafa barbaadee hinqotin*, and **isaantoo lafa barbaadani hinqotin*. Similarly, elements **inni lafattoo²³ barbaadee haa qotu*, **isaan lafattoo barbaadani haa qotani*, **inni lafattoo barbaadee hinqotin*, and **isaan lafattoo barbaadani hinqotin* are ungrammatical. The jussive *haa* also does not carry the form *-too*. For example, in (a) attaching *-too* yields the ungrammatical form **inni lafa barbaadee haatoo qotu*. Similarly, ungrammatical constructions will be produced if *-too* is added to the jussive *haa* in b, c, and d.

Adding the form *-too* to the verb of (244 a-d) produces the following incomplete structures in Oromo: **inni lafa barbaadee haa qotuu²⁴too*, **isaan lafa barbaadani haa qotaniitoo*, **inni lafa barbaadee hinqotiniitoo*, **isaan lafa barbaadani hinqotiniitoo*. On the other hand, if a final verb is added to the previous incomplete structures, we would have the following complete and grammatical sentences. *inni lafa barbaadee haa qotuutoo jiraatu* ‘let him search for land and live on farming’, *isaan lafa barbaadani haa qotaniitoo jiraatani* ‘let them search for land and live on farming’, *inni lafa barbaadee hinqotiniitoo callisee haa taa’u* ‘let him sit idle instead of searching for land and plow’, and *isaan lafa barbaadani hinqotiniitoo callisanii haa taa’ani* ‘let them sit idle instead of searching for land and plow’.

6.1.11 *hin-*

The form *hin-* is a verbal focus marker that is found in the Northern, Southern, Western, Central, and Southeastern Oromo. The following example, which is taken from Northern Oromo, is provided to show its occurrence.

²³ *-too* in this case is not the one that indicates any form of possession.

²⁴ The final vowel of the word *qotu* ‘plow’ becomes long while adding the form *-too*.

- (245) *isaan hin-deem-Ø-u*
 3P:NOM V.FOC1-go-3P-IPFV
 ‘They GO’ / ‘They WILL GO’

In (245), the form *hin-* is used as a verbal focus marker. The absence of *hin-* from the above example produces ungrammatical constituent **isaan deemu*. Attaching the form *hin-* to the subject of the above sentence results in **hinisaan deemu*, which is ungrammatical and unacceptable. The form *hin-* is a syntactically controlled one in the imperfective intransitive sentences.

The first person singular pronoun is focused with the form *nan-* in the Northern, Western, and Central Oromo as demonstrated by the following example:

- (246) *ani nan-deem-Ø-a*
 1S:NOM V.FOC1-go-1S-IPFV
 ‘I GO’ / ‘I WILL GO’

The nonexistence of the form *nan-* in the above example creates a constituent **ani deema*, which is not acceptable one. Prefixing the form *nan-* to the subject of the above sentence creates also an ungrammatical structure **nanani deema*.

In the Southern and Southeastern Oromo, the form *hin-* is regularly used as a verbal focus marker with all the personal pronouns including first person singular pronoun. Consider the following example.

- (247) *ani hin-deem-Ø-a*
 1S:NOM V.FOC1-go-1S-IPFV
 ‘I GO’ / ‘I WILL GO’

The absence of *hin-* from the above example forms the constituent **ani deema*, which is not acceptable construction. Putting the form *hin-* before the subject of (247) produces ungrammatical construction **hinani deema*. The element *hindeema* could mean either ‘I go’ / ‘I will go’ or ‘he goes’ / ‘he will go’ in the Southern and Southeastern Oromo. Hence, in order to get the intended gloss and or meaning the subject of the sentence must be given or one has to get it from the context in which it is used.

6.1.12 *ni-*

The form *ni-* is a verbal focus marker that is found in the Eastern Oromo. The following example is provided in order to explain its occurrence.

- (248) *isaan ni-deem-Ø-u*
 3P:NOM V.FOC1-go-3P-IPFV
 ‘They GO’ / ‘They WILL GO’

The use of the form *ni-* in the imperfective aspect reference is an obligatory one especially with the intransitive verb in use. If the form *ni-* is taken out from the above example, it appears as **isaan deemu* which is not normally used. Prefixing the form *ni-* to the subject of (248) creates ungrammatical structure **niisaan deemu*.

The first person singular pronoun is focused with *nin-* in the Eastern Oromo. Consider the following example.

- (249) *ani nin-deem-Ø-a*
 1S:NOM V.FOC1-go-1S-IPFV
 ‘I GO’ / ‘I WILL GO’

The absence of the form *nin-* from the above example creates **ani deema* which is not normally used. Attaching the form *nin-* before the subject of (28) creates ungrammatical constituent **ninani deema*.

6.1.13 *hinuma*

The form *hinuma* is found in the six dialects of Oromo, i.e., Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western, Central, and Southeastern. Under normal circumstances, the form *hinuma* is used to focus verbs (a progressive action or the one that occurs continuously). The following example which is taken from the Central Oromo is presented as a representative of the other dialects of Oromo as well.

- (250) *bultoo-n lafa hinuma qot-aa ool-Ø-e*
 bultoo-NOM land V.FOC3 farm-PROG spend-3SM-PFV
 ‘Bultoo SPENT THE DAY FARMING’

In (250), the form *hinuma* (which occurs preceding a progressive verb) focuses the continuous action of farming throughout the day. The absence of the form *hinuma* from (250) creates a grammatical, but unfocused structure *bultoon lafa qotaa oole* ‘Bultoo spent the day farming’. The form *hinuma* is, hence, a pragmatically controlled focus marker. The form *hinuma* can be moved back to the beginning of a sentence creating the following fairly acceptable and grammatical sentences that have the same meaning with example (250). These are *bultoon hinuma lafa qotaa oole* ‘Bultoo spent the day farming’ and *hinuma bultoon lafa qotaa oole* ‘Bultoo spent the day farming’. The fact that it moves back shows the additional scope and control that the form *hinuma* has. Most importantly, when it is able to be moved to a sentence-initial position, it would have the potential of having sentential focus capacity. It is only at the sentence-final position that the form *hinuma* does not occur in the above sentence. If it is placed sentence-finally it creates ungrammatical structure **bultoon lafa qotaa oole hinuma*. The form *hinuma* appears as *hinum* in the Southern Oromo.

6.1.14 *ya*

The form *ya* occurs in the Southern Oromo. It focuses mainly verbs. In addition to verbs, it focuses other elements like nouns and pronouns. Consider the following example.

- (251) *biiyti* *ya* *gudd-at-t-e*
country:NOM V.FOC4 grow-BENE-3SF-PFV
‘A country GREW’

In (251), the form *ya* is used as a verbal focus marker. The absence of *ya* from (251) does not create ungrammatical sentences rather makes unfocused constituent *biiyti guddatte* ‘a country grew’.

6.1.15 *kaa*

The form *kaa* is found in the Northern, Southern, Western, Central, and Southeastern Oromo. It is used to focus mainly exclamatory sentences. In addition to this, it can be used with the imperative constructions that give an order. The form *kaa* occurs dominantly at the sentence-final position. Consider the following example.

- (252) *inni* *haa* *deem-Ø-u* *kaa*
3SM:NOM JUS go-3SM-IPFV EXC.FOC
‘Let him go!’

In the above example, the presence of the form *kaa* sentence-finally makes the sentence have an exclamatory sense. The absence of the form *kaa* from the above example creates unfocused sentence *inni haa deemu* ‘let him go’ with the absence of exclamatory sense. The form *kaa* can be moved next to the subject *inni kaa haa deemu* ‘let him go’ with the absence of the exclamatory sense. On the other hand, placing it sentence-initially and preceding the verb creates ungrammatical structures **kaa inni haa deemu* and **inni haa kaa deemu*.

In the Eastern Oromo, *gaa* is used instead of *kaa*. The following example is provided in order to show the occurrence of this form.

- (253) *inni* *ganama* *deem-Ø-e* *gaa*
3SM:NOM morning go-3SM-PFV EXC.FOC
‘He went in the morning!’

In (253), the form *gaa* occurs sentence-finally and has exclamatory reading. The absence of the form *gaa* produces grammatical declarative but unfocused constituent *inni ganama deeme* ‘he went in the morning’ with the absence of exclamatory sense. The constituent *inni gaa ganama deeme* ‘he went in the morning’ is also grammatical but does not have the exclamatory sense. On the other hand, **gaa inni ganama deeme* and **inni ganama gaa deeme* are unacceptable ones. The use of the form *gaa* is also observed rarely in the Central Oromo.

6.1.16 *bee*

The form *bee* is used as a predicative focus marker in the Northern, Southern, Western, Central, and Southeastern dialects of Oromo. The following example which is taken from the Central Oromo is presented in order to show the occurrence of this form.

- (254) *caaltuu-n buna bit-t-e bee*
 caaltuu-NOM coffee buy-3SF-PFV PRE.FOC1
 ‘Caaltuu BOUGHT COFFEE’

In (254), the form *bee* comes last next to the verb and gives emphasis to the predicate of the sentence. Without the use of the form *bee* the sentence becomes *caaltuun buna bitte* ‘Caaltuu bought coffee’ which is grammatical but unfocused. The form *bee* can be moved to different places of the sentence. In the constituents *caaltuun buna bee bitte* ‘Caaltuu bought coffee’ and *caaltuun bee buna bitte* ‘Caaltuu bought coffee’ the form *bee* focuses elements that precede it. Occasionally, it occurs sentence-initially with the potential of giving emphasis to the whole sentence. For example, in the sentence *bee caaltuun buna bitte* ‘Caaltuu bought coffee’ the form *bee* comes sentence-initially and focuses the whole sentence.

6.1.17 *bar*

The form *bar* is found in the Eastern Oromo. Normally, it occurs at sentence-final position (i.e., next to a verb or copular element). In addition to sentence-final position, it can be moved to other places of a sentence. Consider the following example that consists of the form *bar* at the sentence-final position.

- (255) *ani magaalaa deem-Ø-e bar*
 1S:NOM city go-1SM-PFV PRE.FOC1
 ‘I WENT TO A CITY’

In (255), the form *bar* comes last next to the verb. The absence of the form makes a grammatical but unfocused constituent *ani magaalaa deeme* ‘I went to a city’. On the other hand, the form *bar* is free to be moved to other places of the sentence with a wider scope and control of elements that fall under focus. For example: *ani magaalaa bar deeme* ‘I went to a city’, *ani bar magaalaa deeme* ‘I went to a city’, and *bar ani magaalaa deeme* ‘I went to a city’. When it comes to the sentence-initial position it plays the role of being a sentential focus marker. When it occurs at the sentence-medial position, it focuses the element that precedes it. At the sentence-final position, it has the scope and control over the predicate of the sentence.

6.1.18 *-m*

The form *-m* is found in the Western dialect of Oromo. It comes last in the normal word order of Oromo (next to a verb and a copula). Hence, it is used to focus a predicate. The use of the form *-m* changes a declarative sentence into an exclamatory sentence. Consider the following example.

- (256) *dabalaa-n balbala cuf-Ø-ee-m*
 dabalaa-NOM door shut-3SM-PFV-PRE.FOC2
 ‘Dabalaa SHUT A DOOR!’

In (256), the form *-m* comes sentence-finally and focuses the predicate. The final vowel of a word becomes long whenever the form *-m* is suffixed to it. Likewise, in (256) the final vowel

of the verb becomes long while adding the morpheme *-m*. The absence of the form *-m* from the above sentence produces a grammatical declarative sentence *dabalaan balbala cufe* ‘Dabalaa shut a door’ with the absence of the exclamatory sense. The addition of the form *-m* to the object and to the subject makes the following constituents ungrammatical **dabalaan balbalam cufe* and **dabalaanm balbala cufe*. The verb that carries the suffix *-m* can be clefted as in *cufeem dabalaan balbala* ‘Dabalaa shut a door!’

6.1.19 *ree*

The form *ree* is used to focus interrogative sentences. It is found in all the dialects of Oromo, i.e., Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western, Central, and Southeastern. The following example which is taken from Southeastern Oromo is provided as representative of the other varieties.

- (257) *qaasiim-Ø kaleessa mana-barumsaa dhuf-e-e ree*
 qaasiim-NOM yesterday school come-PFV-Q INT.FOC
 ‘DID QAASIIM COME to school yesterday?’

In (257), the form *ree* occurs sentence-finally. It questions the presupposed (anticipated) information that *Qaasiim* comes to school. The absence of the form *ree* from the above sentence does not make ungrammatical sentence rather produces unfocused interrogative sentence *qaasiim kaleessa mana-barumsaa dhufee* ‘did *Qaasiim* come to school yesterday?’ The form *ree* is used only at the sentence-final position. If it is moved to other places of the sentence, the following ungrammatical structures will be created: **qaasiim kaleessa mana-barumsaa ree dhufee*, **qaasiim kaleessa ree mana-barumsaa dhufee*, **qaasiim ree kaleessa mana-barumsaa dhufee*, and **ree qaasiim kaleessa mana-barumsaa dhufee*.

6.1.20 *yii*

The form *yii* is also used to focus interrogative sentences. It is found in the Northern, Western, and Central, and as *hii* in the Eastern Oromo. It has an identical function with the form *ree*. The following example is given to show where it occurs in a sentence.

- (258) *ati laaqana nyaat-t-e-e yii*
 2S:NOM lunch eat-2S-PFV-Q INT.FOC
 ‘DID YOU EAT lunch?’

The absence of the form *yii* from the above sentence results in a grammatical but unfocused interrogative sentence *ati laaqana nyaattee* ‘did you eat lunch?’ If the form *yii* is moved to other places of the sentence the following ungrammatical constructions will be produced: **ati laaqana yii nyaattee*, **ati yii laaqana nyaattee*, and **yii ati laaqana nyaattee*.

6.2 Summary

The focus marking forms in Oromo are: *-tu*, *-illee*, *-uu*, *-oo*, *-s*, *-uma*, *-dhaa*, *-tii*, *-tii* (E), *-tii /-too*, *hin-*, *ni-*, *hinuma*, *ya*, *kaa* (*gaa*), *bee*, *bar*, *-m*, and *ree/yii/hii*. The forms *-tu*, *-uu*, and *-oo* are used to focus exclusively subject of a sentence. *-dhaa*, *-tii*, *-tii* (E), and *-tii /-too* are used to focus object of a sentence. On the other hand, *-illee*, *-s*, and *-uma* are used to focus both the

subject and object of a sentence. The forms *hin-*, *ni-*, *hinuma*, and *ya* are used to focus a verb. *kaa* (*gaa*), *bee*, *bar*, *-m*, and *ree/yii/hii* are used to focus predicate of a sentence. In addition to this, *hinuma*, *bar*, and *bee* are used to focus a sentence. The focus marking forms that are found in the six dialects of Oromo, i.e., in the Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western, Central, and Southeastern are: *-tu*, *-illee*, *-uu*, *-s*, *-uma*, *-dhaa*, *-tii*, *-tii / -too*, *hinuma*, and *ree*. The forms *hin-*, *bee*, and *kaa* are found in five of the dialects, i.e., in the Northern, Southern, Western, Central, and Southeastern Oromo. *ni-*, *bar*, *-tii*, and *gaa* are found in the Eastern Oromo. Sometimes, the form *gaa* alternates with *kaa* in the Central Oromo. *yii* is found in the Northern, Central, and Western Oromo. The forms *-oo* and *-m* are found only in the Western dialect of Oromo. The form *ya* is found in the Southern Oromo.

The absence of the forms (from a given sentence) creates unfocused structures in the majority of the cases. Sometimes, the sentences appear to be ungrammatical without the focus forms. Most of them cannot be used in other sentence positions except for the specified sentence positions. Only some can be moved to other sentence positions. Only *bar*, *bee*, and *hinuma* have a wider control and scope of focus in Oromo (can be moved and used in different sentence positions i.e., including sentence-initial position). Hence, they have sentential focus capacity as well.

Chapter Seven

The pragmatics of focus marking in Oromo

7.1 Introduction

Focus is defined as information that the speaker considers the listener does not share with him (Hyman & Watters 1984:237). There are four parameters of focus that are known for affecting grammar: realization, type, scope, and control of focus (Hyman & Watters 1984:238). Focus is marked morphologically, syntactically, and prosodically. There are various reasons or factors that make the speaker consider information is not shared. These factors or reasons result in different types (functions) of focus. Although a complete study of types focus does not exist, Hyman & Watters (1984:239) recognized two broad categories of focus, i.e., contrastive and assertive focus which can be subdivided further.

“Assertive focus can be defined as asserted information projected against a neutral background” (Hyman & Watters 1984:239). This indicates that there is no conflict between the speaker and the listener over information. A neutral background is expected to occur in the assertive focus. There is no neutral background in the case of contrastive focus. There are two contexts here: conflict due to the utterance of speaker two contradicts with the speaker one and because both speakers share a knowledge that contradicts (Hyman & Watters 1984:240). The scope of focus can be on the subject, object, or the predicate (Hyman & Watters 1984:241). Focus is controlled pragmatically (where the speaker decides elements that carry focus markers) and grammatically (where focus marking is determined by the grammar itself, not by the speaker) (Hyman & Watters 1984:243).

7.1.1 Contrastive focus

Contrastive focus is used in order to correct the presupposed information (Dabala & Meyer 2003:164). Similarly, according to Baye (1988:371), contrastive focus is explained as a context-dependent where the context could be a dispute, i.e., a discourse participant thinks that information which is uttered by either of the participants is not true, but considers something which is different from what is uttered is correct. The contrastive focus marking morphemes in Oromo are: *-tu*, *-dhaa*, *-tii*, *-uma*, and *-illee*. Consider the following example.

(259) *qotiyyoo diimaa-tu du'-Ø-e*
ox red-SUBJ.FOC1 die-3SM-PFV
'IT IS A RED OX that died'

In (259), the subject noun phrase, i.e., a red ox is contrastively focused as opposed to any other ox. The sentence could be uttered to correct (in response to) what has already been said by either of the participants of the discourse. For example, someone would have said *qotiyyoon gurraachi du'e* 'a black ox died'. The other discourse participant disputes the presupposed information (what has already been said) and would say *lakki; qotiyyoo diimaatu du'e* 'no; it is a red ox that died'. The previous information, i.e., what has already been uttered by the first speaker, has been disputed by the second speaker through the use of the

utterance in (259). Hence the morpheme *-tu* is used contrastively in order to correct the presupposed information. The scope of the form *-tu* remains to be on the subject noun phrase, i.e., it goes as far as the last modifier of the subject noun phrase goes.

The following example is provided to show contrastive focus marking with the use of the form *-uma* which is used to focus both the subject and object of a sentence.

- (260) *kan-uma wayya*
 this-SUB.FOC5 better:3SM:IPFV
 ‘THIS is better’

In (260), the subject of the sentence is contrastively focused with the form *-uma*. The use of this sentence is a result of a dispute over the presupposed information of the discourse. One of the discourse participants could have said *sana wayya* ‘that is better’. Speaker two (the other discourse participant) would utter sentence (260) at the dissatisfaction of what has already been said, i.e., in order to dispute the presupposed information. It is also used in a situation where the first speaker is unable to make a decision on which one is better (this or that). In addition to this, it can also be used in a situation where there is a question as to which one is better. The absence of the form *-uma* from the above sentence produces grammatical but unfocused structure. This fact makes it be not obligatorily used (it is a pragmatically controlled focus marker). The scope of the form *-uma* in the above sentence is on the subject of the sentence. Consider the following example where the form *-uma* has control over the object of a sentence.

- (261) *dhaabaa-n bun-uma bit-Ø-e*
 dhaabaa-NOM coffee-OBJ.FOC5 buy-3SM-PFV
 ‘Dhaabaa bought COFFEE’

The object of the sentence is contrastively focused with the form *-uma* in the above example. The presupposed information is that Dhaabaa bought something other than coffee, but the other discourse participant would utter sentence (261) since he or she knows that Dhaabaa bought certainly coffee, not anything else. The context in which this sentence is used is a situation in which there is a dispute over the presupposed information or it could be to correct the presupposed information. The dispute is exactly on what Dhaabaa has bought and has been corrected with the use of example (261). One may use the unfocused counterpart of this sentence which is grammatical enough because the form *-uma* is not an obligatorily used form. As a matter of fact, this is one of the pragmatically controlled focus markers in Oromo.

The other contrastive focus marker is *-illee* which is used to focus both the subject and the object of a sentence. The example that follows is given to show subject focus marking with the morpheme *-illee*.

- (262) *dabalaa-n-illee mana ijaar-Ø-e*
 dabalaa-NOM-SUB.FOC2 house build-3SM-PFV
 ‘EVEN DABALAA built a house’

The focus marker *-illee* is used to focus the subject of the sentence in (262). The form *-illee* is used as a contrastive focus marker because the discourse participants share a knowledge that contradicts. The presupposed information could be speaker one might have uttered that someone other than Dabalaa built a house. Then the second speaker utters example (262) because speaker one does not know that Dabalaa built a house (they simply share different information). The other context where the above sentence could be used is that Dabalaa is someone who was not expected to build a house. When an unexpected person (the one who is undermined) does something new the above sentence or a similar one can be used. This is one of the pragmatically controlled focus markers as it is not obligatorily used. The following example shows that *-illee* has control over the object of a sentence.

- (263) *dabalaa-n mana-llee ijaar-Ø-e*
 dabalaa-NOM house-OBJ.FOC4 build-3SM-PFV
 ‘Dabalaa built EVEN A HOUSE’

The object focus marker appears as *-llee* after words that end in a vowel as in the above example. Discourse participants use the above structure because they share different information. Speaker one knows that Dabalaa has improved his life having made different life activities, but does not know the extent. Speaker two utters sentence (263) to show the extent of improvement to the level of building a house. It is not an obligatorily used one; the sentence is grammatical, but unfocused without the use of the form *-llee*.

The form *-dhaa* which is used to focus the object of a sentence is also a contrastive focus marker. Consider the following example.

- (264) *caalaa-n qawwee-dhaa-n leenca ajjees-Ø-e*
 caalaa-NOM gun-OBJ.FOC1-INS lion kill-3SM-PFV
 ‘IT IS WITH A GUN that Caalaa killed a lion’

In the above example the object of the sentence *qawwee* ‘gun’ is contrastively focused as opposed to any other material that is used to kill a lion. In the presupposed information it could have been mentioned that Caalaa killed a lion with a spear or used any other material. In that sense, the second speaker utters sentence (264). That means there is a dispute over the presupposed information. Hence, example (264) is used in order to correct the presupposed information. The morpheme *-dhaa* is not an obligatorily used morpheme rather it is a pragmatically controlled one. Its absence, however, makes the sentence unfocused.

The morpheme *-tii*, which occurs in all the varieties of Oromo as an object focus marker that is suffixed to a genitive and or possessive construction, is also a contrastive focus marker. Consider the following example.

- (265) *inni qawwee koo-tii-n leenca ajjees-Ø-e*
 3SM:NOM gun mine-OBJ.FOC2-INS lion kill-3SM-PFV
 ‘IT IS WITH MY GUN that he killed a lion’

The form *-tii* contrastively focuses the object of the sentence, i.e., my gun as opposed to any other material which is used to kill a lion and as opposed to any other gun which is possessed by someone else. There is a dispute over the presupposed information in a sense that it could have appeared as ‘he used somebody else’s gun to kill a lion’. The other possible context in which this kind of utterance may be used is a question, i.e., people may ask with what did he kill a lion? Speaker two answers the question and or corrects the presupposed information and would utter the sentence in (265). The above sentence is grammatical enough without the use of the focus form *-tii*. Therefore, this focus marker is a pragmatically controlled one.

7.1.2 Assertive focus

It is a situation where there is no conflict between the speaker and the listener over the presupposed information, i.e., there is a neutral background in the case of assertive focus (Hyman & Watters 1984:239). Assertive focus gives emphasis to a certain element of a discourse without setting any presupposed information (Dabala & Meyer 2003:164). Similarly, according to Baye (1988:367), assertive focus is not context-dependent as participants of the discourse (speaker and listener) know the information in the discourse, i.e., the presupposed information is taken as part of information that both (discourse participants) share. The assertive focus marking morphemes in Oromo are: *-uu*, *-oo*, *hin-*, *ni-*, *-tii* (E), and *ya*. The following examples consist of the morphemes *-uu* and *-oo*.

(266) *tolaa-n-uu* *magaalaa* *deem-Ø-e*
 tolaa-NOM-SUB.FOC3 city go-3SM-PFV
 ‘Even TOLAA went to a city’

(267) *isheen-oo* *kaleessa* *deem-t-e*
 3SF.NOM-SUB.FOC4 yesterday go-3SF-PFV
 ‘Even SHE went’

The morphemes *-uu* and *-oo* are added to the subjects of the above sentences as an assertive type. Example (266) & (267) are grammatical in the absence of both forms. Hence, they are pragmatically controlled morphemes. Consider also the following example which consists of the morpheme *hin-*.

(268) *inni* *hin-deem-Ø-a*
 3SM:NOM V.FOC1-go-3SM-IPFV
 ‘He GOES’ / ‘He WILL GO’

The morpheme *hin-* occurs in the Northern, Southern, Western, Central, and Southeastern Oromo. The above example, which is taken from the Central Oromo, is representative of the mentioned varieties of Oromo. It is the verb that is assertively focused in this case. There is no conflict or dispute over the presupposed information between the participants of a discourse because the presupposed information is a shared one between the speaker and the listener. Hence, both participants of the discourse know that he goes or will go to a given place. This focus marker appears to be an obligatorily used one if the sentence is in the imperfective aspect reference and in the intransitive form. Therefore, the morpheme *hin-* is a

syntactically controlled focus marker as in the above example because it does not give an option so that the non-focused counter part can be used.

Consider the following example which consists of the morpheme *ni-* as an assertive focus marker.

- (269) *inni* *ni-dhuf-Ø-a*
 3SM:NOM V.FOC2-3SM-IPFV
 ‘He COMES’ / ‘He WILL COME’

The focus marking morpheme *ni-* occurs in the Eastern Oromo. In (269) the verb is assertively focused with the form *ni-*. Discourse participants do not dispute over the presupposed information because both of them know the background information about the discourse. It is a syntactically controlled focus marker as it is one of the obligatorily used morphemes with the intransitive verb form is used in the imperfective aspect reference. It does not give an option to the speaker so that he/she can use the non-focused counterpart of the above structure.

The following example, on the other hand, shows the other assertive focus marker in Oromo.

- (270) *isaan* *got-an-ii-tii* *jir-Ø-u*
 3P:NOM plough-3P-CVB-OBJ.FOC3 AUX-3P-IPFV
 ‘They have PLOWED’

The morpheme *-tii*, which is attached to verbs and converbs that show progressive action, is found in the Eastern variety of Oromo. No dispute over the presupposed information and there is also no attempt to correct the presupposed information as both discourse participants know or share information. In the above example, both discourse participants know that the action of plowing has already been completed by the doer of the action. It is the converb that occurs before the auxiliary verb that carries the assertive focus marking morpheme *-tii* in (270). It is a pragmatically controlled one as it gives an option to the speakers so that they can use the non-focused counterpart of the above sentence.

An additional example of the assertive focus marker is given below.

- (271) *inni* *ya* *dhuf-Ø-e*
 3SM:NOM V.FOC4 come-3SM-PFV
 He CAME’

In (271), the verb is assertively focused with the morpheme *ya*. Since discourse participants share information regarding the point mentioned, there is no dispute over the presupposed information. The speaker also does not try to correct the presupposed information. The morpheme *ya* is an optionally used one and it is a pragmatically controlled focus marker that occurs in the Southern Oromo.

7.1.3 Additive focus

Focus particles that include elements under their scope are additive (König 1991:33). In Oromo, the morpheme *-s* is an additive focus marker as it shows the addition of something. It occurs in the six dialects of Oromo. The following example shows that the form *-s* focusing the subject of a sentence.

- (272) *inni-s* *magaalaa* *dhuf-Ø-e*
3SM-ADD.FOC city come-3SM-PFV
'HE ALSO came to a city'

In (272), the subject of the sentence is focused with the form *-s* which is an additive focus marker. The sentence indicates that someone other than the one mentioned in the sentence also came to a city. That is why it is called an additive focus marker as the subject of example (272) is not the only person who came to a city, but there is at least a person who has already come. The above sentence is a grammatical one without the use of the morpheme *-s*, but loses the additive sense. As a result of this, it is a pragmatically controlled focus marker. The following example shows that the additive focus marker that occurs at the object position of a sentence.

- (273) *caalaa-n* *har'a-s* *hin-dhuf-n-Ø-e*
caalaa-NOM today-ADD.FOC NEG-come-NEG-3SM-PFV
'Caalaa did not come ALSO TODAY'

The additive focus marker *-s* occurs at the object position of a sentence, i.e., it is the object of the sentence that is focused in this case. The use of the above sentence indicates that Caalaa has not been absent just for a single day only. Rather, it shows that Caalaa was absent at least yesterday or even for some repeated days before today. He was expected to come to a given place (it could be to school, market place, home, etc), but did not come also today. The morpheme *-s* is a pragmatically controlled focus marker as the sentence appears to be grammatical enough without the use of it, but with the absence of the additive sense.

7.1.4 Interrogative focus

The particles *-ree* (or *-yii*), which come after the predicate, are used in Oromo to emphasize a question (Gragg 1976:191-192; Griefenow-Mewis 2001:62). The morpheme *ree*, which occurs in all the dialects of Oromo as an interrogative focus marker, is presented in the following example.

- (274) *dhaabaa-n* *qormaata* *darb-Ø-e-e* *ree*
dhaabaa-NOM examination pass-3SM-PFV-Q INT.FOC
'Did Dhaabaa pass the examination?'

The morpheme *ree* comes last in the above sentence. It gives emphasis to an interrogative sentence that asks whether Dhaabaa passed the examination or not. The speaker asks this question with an emphasis in order to know either of the following points: to know whether

Dhaabaa passed the examination or not and to confirm his failure which has already been anticipated as a presupposed information. In the absence of the form *ree* the above sentence remains a grammatical one but appears to be unfocused. The form *ree* is a pragmatically controlled focus marker in Oromo.

The following example, on the other hand, is provided to show the use of the morpheme *yii* which occurs normally in the Northern, Western, and Central Oromo.

- (275) *mucaa-n dhuf-Ø-e-e yii*
 child-NOM come-3SM-PFV-Q INT.FOC
 ‘Did the child come?’

In (275), the form *yii* is used to focus an interrogative sentence. In the use of the form *yii*, there is no strong anticipation for his absence. The speaker asks the above question to know whether the child comes or not. It is not an obligatorily used morpheme as the sentence is grammatical one in the absence of this morpheme, but appears unfocused. The morpheme *yii* occurs as *hii* in the Eastern Oromo.

7.1.5 Imperative focus

The suffixes *-i (-u)* and *-aa* are used to generate imperatives (Griefenow-Mewis 2001:71). The morpheme *-tii / -too* which occurs with the imperative constructions is named as an imperative focus marker. The following examples are provided to show the occurrence of this morpheme.

- (276) (a) *ati tur-ii-tii koott-u*
 2S:NOM late-2S.CVB-IMP.FOC come-2S.IMP
 ‘Come LATE’
- (b) *isin tur-aa-too koott-aa*
 2P:NOM late-2P.CVB-IMP.FOC come-2S.IMP
 ‘Come LATE’

In (276), the sentences in (a) and (b) are focused with the morpheme *-tii / -too*. The difference between the two is that the former one normally occurs with a singular subject while the latter occurs with a plural subject. The sentences are grammatical but unfocused in the absence of the form *-tii / -too*. It is a pragmatically controlled one as it gives an option to the speakers so that they can use unfocused forms of the above structures.

7.1.6 Predicative focus

The morphemes *bee*, *bar*, and *-m* are named as predicative focus markers in Oromo. The particles *-ka* and *-m* are used for emphasis after predicates (Gragg 1976:193). Despite its occurrence at the predicate position, *kaa* is treated as an exclamatory focus in the present paper. The following example presents the morpheme *bee* as a predicative focus marker.

- (277) *tolaaa-n kaleessa dhuf-Ø-e bee*
 tolaa-NOM yesterday come-3SM-PFV PRE.FOC1
 ‘Tolaa CAME YESTERDAY’

The form *bee*, which occurs in the Northern, Southern, Western, Central, and Southeastern Oromo varieties, occurs sentence-finally in the above example, i.e., it is the predicate that is being focused in this case. However, *bee* can be moved to different parts of a sentence (see section 6.1.16 for further discussion). The morpheme *bee* is a pragmatically controlled one. The above sentence becomes grammatical, but unfocused without the use of the form *bee*. It occurs with the imperfective aspect reference as in *tolaan har’a dhufa bee* ‘Tolaa comes / will come today’.

The following example, on the other hand, presents the morpheme *bar* as a predicative focus marker.

- (278) *inni dhuf-Ø-e bar*
 3SM:NOM come-3SM-PFV PRE.FOC1
 ‘He CAME’

In (278), the morpheme *bar*, which occurs in the Eastern Oromo, comes sentence-finally. It is a predicative focus marker that corresponds to the morpheme *bee* that has been discussed above. For other occurrences it has in a sentence, see section (6.1.17). The sentence in (278) is grammatical, but unfocused without the use of the morpheme *bar*. It is a pragmatically controlled focus marker as it is not an obligatorily used one.

The following example also shows the use of the morpheme *-m* as a predicative focus marker.

- (279) *tolaa-n barsiisaa-dhaa-m*
 tolaa-NOM eacher-CS1-PRE.FOC2
 ‘Tolaa IS A TEACHER!’

In (279), the morpheme *-m* comes sentence-finally as a predicative focus marker in the Western Oromo. Example (279) becomes unfocused grammatical declarative sentence without the use of the form *-m*. Hence, the addition of the form *-m* to a sentence changes a declarative sentence to the one that has an exclamatory sense. The addition of the suffix *-m* triggers the final vowel of a copula or a verb to become long. Unlike the other two predicative focus markers, the form *-m* comes only at the sentence-final position.

7.1.7 Exclamatory focus

The form *kaa*, which occurs in the Northern, Southern, Western, Central, and Southeastern Oromo, is used to focus exclamatory sentences. It is also used to focus imperative sentences. In connection with the latter point, (Griefenow-Mewis 2001:64) mentions that the particle *-kaa* is used as a focus marker in an imperative sentence or in a dialogue. Under normal circumstances, the form *kaa* occurs sentence-finally. In a similar manner, Gragg (1976:193) mentions that *-ka* occurs after predicates. Rarely, however, *kaa* can be placed next to the

subject of a sentence. The exclamatory sense is drawn only when it occurs at the sentence-final position. The following example is presented to show the occurrence of the form *kaa*.

- (280) *inni mana ijaar-Ø-e kaa*
 3SM:NOM house build-3SM-PFV EXC.FOC
 ‘He BUILT A HOUSE!’

In (280), the morpheme *kaa* occurs sentence-finally with an exclamatory reading. Without the form *kaa*, the above sentence becomes a grammatical declarative sentence *inni mana ijare* ‘he built a house’. It is the presence of the form *kaa* at the sentence-final position that makes the sentence to have an exclamatory sense. Sometimes, the constituent *inni kaa mana ijaare* ‘he built a house’ is possible, but with less sense of exclamation.

The following example, on the other hand, shows the use of the form *gaa* in the Eastern Oromo.

- (281) *barsiisaa-n dhuf-Ø-e gaa*
 teacher-NOM come-3SM-PFV EXC.FOC
 ‘A teacher CAME!’

In (281), the morpheme *gaa* comes sentence-finally and the constituent has an exclamatory sense. The sentence becomes a grammatical declarative sentence without the use of the form *gaa*: *barsiisaan dhufe* ‘a teacher came’. Its occurrence at the sentence-final position makes the sentence to have an exclamatory reading. The form *gaa* can be moved next to the subject of the sentence: *barsiisaan gaa dhufe* ‘a teacher came’ which has a less sense of exclamation. The form *gaa* alternates with *kaa* in the Central Oromo, dominantly, however, *kaa* is used.

7.1.8 Continuous focus

The form *hinuma* which focuses a progressive action is labeled as a continuous focus. Consider the following example.

- (282) *tolaa-n hinuma raf-aa jir-Ø-a*
 tolaa-NOM V.FOC3 sleep-PROG AUX-3SM-IPFV
 ‘Tolaa is STILL SLEEPING’

In (282), the morpheme *hinuma* occurs preceding a progressive verb. It focuses the continuous (progressive) action of sleeping. The form *hinuma* is a pragmatically controlled focus marker because its absence from the above sentence creates a grammatical sentence: *tolaan rafaa jira* ‘Tolaa is sleeping’. In the absence of the form *hinuma*, there is no point that shows whether the action of sleeping is continuously occurring (the one which has already been started as far back in time) or not. The form *hinuma* occurs also in other places of a sentence including sentence-initial position (see also the discussion in section 6.1.13).

7.1.9 Sentential focus

The morphemes *bee*, *bar*, and *hinuma* are termed as sentential focus markers as they have wider control over any possible sentence. Consider the following examples.

(283) *bee ani fix-Ø-e*
S.FOC 1S:NOM finish-1S-PFV
'I FINISHED'

(284) *bar inni bishaan waraab-Ø-e*
S.FOC 3SM:NOM water fetch-3SM-PFV
'HE FETCHED WATER'

(285) *hinuma inni sirbaa bul-Ø-e*
S.FOC 3SM:NOM sing:PROG spend the night-3SM-PFV
'HE SPENT THE NIGHT SINGING'

The morphemes *bee*, *bar*, and *hinuma* come at the sentence-initial position and play a role of focus over the whole sentence.

7.2 Summary

In Oromo, the focus markers have the following pragmatic reading: contrastive, assertive, additive, interrogative, imperative, predicative, exclamatory, continuous, and sentential. The morphemes *-tu*, *-dhaa*, *-tii*, *-uma*, and *-illee* are contrastive while *-uu*, *-oo*, *hin-*, *ni-*, *-tii* (E), and *ya* are assertive. The morpheme *-s* is additive, *-tii* / *-too* is imperative, *hinuma* is continuous, and *ree/yii/hii* are interrogative focus markers. On the other hand, the forms *kaa* and *gaa* are exclamatory and *bee*, *bar*, and *-m* are predicative. Additionally, *bee*, *bar*, and *hinuma* are used as sentential focus markers.

Chapter Eight

Copula

8.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a comparative description of copula in the Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western, Central, and Southeastern dialects of Oromo. The presentation begins with a description of copula suffixes and a particle copula, which do not inflect. Verbal copulas, which inflect as opposed to the copula suffixes and a particle copula, are presented next. The copula suffixes used in Oromo are: *-dha*, *-ti*, and *-uma*. The Eastern and Southern dialects use a simple juxtaposition of the subject and the predicate instead of the morpheme *-dha*. The negative particle copula is an invariant *miti*. Additionally, the following verbal copulas are used in Oromo: *jir-* in the present tense, *tur-* in the past tense, and *ta'* in the future tense.

A copula is a word or an element that links the subject of a sentence with a predicate. The fact that a copula is an element that exists at the predicate position without having meaning on its own makes it to be different from full verbs, which are meaningful and form predicate on their own (Pustet 2003:6). Pustet states further that semi-copulas and auxiliaries also take part in forming predicate but differ from copulas and full verbs in that they have meaning, but they do not form a predicate on their own.

Regarding the typology of predicate nominal construction, Payne (1997:114-119) identifies three types of languages. These are languages without a copula, languages that use a copula in the present and non-present tenses, and languages that use a copula only in the non-present tenses. The first group, i.e., languages without overt copula use a simple juxtaposition of the subject and the predicate (noun phrases put one after the other). In the second group, i.e., in the languages that use a copula in the present and non-present tenses, a copula would appear in four different ways: a copula could be a verb, a pronoun, an invariant particle, and a derivational operation. In the third group, a copula appears in the past and future tenses in the form of a morpheme or a verb. From the morphosyntactic point of view, adjectives also follow a similar or identical pattern just like predicate nominals.

From a typological point of view, Oromo uses a copula in the present and non-present tenses and zero copulas as there are some varieties of Oromo that do not use a copula suffix *-dha*, instead use a simple juxtaposition of the subject and the predicate; while others use it. In the nominal predication, varieties that do not use *-dha* maintain lengthening and short vowel *a*; there is no devoicing of clause-final *a*. On the other hand, several varieties of Oromo use verbal copulas that serve in the present and non-present tenses. Based on my data, I have never seen and experienced any variety of Oromo that uses a copula only in the non-present tenses, but not in the present. When a copula is a derivational operation, a verb that is formed from a noun (through a derivational operation) can be used as a predicate nominal clause (Payne 1997:118). In Oromo, the suffixes *-oom*, *-eess*, and *-at* derive verbs from nouns and or

adjectives (see Griefenow-Mewis 2001:85-88) that can form a predicate nominal clause. For example, in *inni namoome* ‘he became a human being’ and *inni gabroome* ‘he became a slave’, the words *namoome* ‘became a human being’ and *gabroome* ‘became a slave’ are verbs which are formed from the nouns *nama* ‘human being’ and *garba* ‘slave’ through the derivational affix *-oom* and now functioning as predicate nominal clause in Oromo.

Referring to a copula which is used in the present and non-present tenses, Oromo uses a verb, a particle, and suffixes as a copula. In addition to this, it uses a simple juxtaposition of a subject and a predicate as a copula. Therefore, the copulas in Oromo can be grouped into two types: verbal and non-verbal (Crass et al. 2005:4). Verbal copulas are roots that inflect for different grammatical categories. The non-verbal copula consists of a particle copula and suffixes that do not inflect and zero copulas. In Oromo, zero copula stands for the one that does not use a copula instead uses the simple juxtaposition of the subject and the predicate. It also stands for one of the variants of the morpheme *-dha* that appears as zero morpheme after words that end in short vowels.

The connection among demonstratives, copulas, and focus markers has been explained in terms of the grammaticalization process in Ethiopian languages (Crass & Meyer 2007:7&8). According to them, the fact that demonstratives can grammaticalize into copulas shows the connection between them. Usually, copulas can also grammaticalize into focus markers. But the grammaticalization of focus markers to copula looks rare. However, the connection between copula and focus is not quite obvious just like the connection between demonstrative and copula. Regarding the elements that function as a copula, Crass et al. (2005:5) state that the Cushitic languages use particle copulas predominantly while a verbal copula is used in Ethiopian Semitic languages.

8.2 Copula suffixes and a particle copula in Oromo

This sub-section describes copula suffixes and a particle copula in Oromo. It also gives a comparative analysis of the copular constructions. There are three affirmative copula suffixes in Oromo. These are: *-dha* CS1, *-ti* CS2, and *-uma* CS3. The negative particle copula *miti* NEG.PARCOP is a free morpheme. Zero morpheme (\emptyset), which exists as a copula as a result of the simple juxtaposition of the subject and the predicate, is represented as CS4. In the discussion, however, I present CS4 next to CS1 just for the sake of simplicity.

8.2.1 -dha

In Oromo, *-dha* is used as a copula suffix in the present tense. Distributionally, the morpheme *-dha* exists mainly in the Northern, Western, Central, and Southeastern Oromo. This morpheme occurs in three phonologically determined forms *-dha*, *-i*, and \emptyset that occur in complementary distribution (Crass et al. 2005:19). Hence, *-dha* occurs after words that end in a long vowel, *-i* occurs after words that end in a consonant, and \emptyset occurs after words that end in a short vowel. The examples that follow show the occurrence of *-dha*, *-i*, and \emptyset respectively.

- (286) (a) *ani oromoo-dha*
 1S:NOM Oromo-CS1
 ‘I am Oromo’
- (b) *lakkoofsi kun sagal-i*
 number:NOM this nine-CS1
 ‘This number is nine’
- (c) *ani nama-Ø*
 1S:NOM human being-CS1
 ‘I am a human being’

In (286 a-c), the allomorphic variants, which are phonologically conditioned, are also labeled as CS1 in the gloss.

In the interrogatives, the final vowels of the copular forms turn out to be long. This is clearly observed for the allomorphs *-dha* and *-i*, but not for the zero morph. When the word ends in a short vowel the final vowel of the word becomes long as the copula is not physically observed. There is no devoicing of word-final short *a* in the declarative sentences of a copula clause. In the interrogatives, on the other hand, word-final short *a* becomes long as a result of zero morpheme. So, the final vowel that turns to long as in (287 c) below plays the role of a morpheme. Note that in (287 a & b), the final vowel of the copular forms becomes long in the interrogatives. However, this is not the case, in example (287 c), where the final vowel of the word itself changes into long.

- (287) (a) *inni barsiisaa-dha-a*
 3SM:NOM teacher-CS1-Q
 ‘Is he a teacher?’
- (b) *kuni sagal-i-i*
 this:NOM nine-CS1-Q
 ‘Is this (it) nine?’
- (c) *ani nama-Ø-a*
 1S:NOM human being-CS1-Q
 ‘Am I a human being?’

8.2.2 Zero

Typologically, there are languages that do not use a copula but employ a simple juxtaposition of the subject and the predicate. The Eastern and Southern varieties of Oromo also turn to follow this pattern in not having the morpheme *-dha* in particular. As it is mentioned above (see section 8.2.1), the morpheme *-dha* is widely used as an affirmative copula suffix in most of the Oromo varieties except for the Eastern and Southern Oromo. Instead of the copula suffix *-dha*, the Eastern and Southern Oromo use a simple juxtaposition of the subject and the predicate.

- (288) *biyti ho'ituu-Ø*
 country:NOM hot-CS4
 'The country is hot'

In (288), the subject *biyti* 'country' and the predicate *ho'ituu* 'hot' are put together without the use of overt copula. This specific example is more representative of the Eastern dialect of Oromo as I have taken it from this variety. Additional example is given below:

- (289) *namichi xun jabaa-Ø*
 man:DEF.SIN this strong-CS4
 'This man is strong'

Equative sentences of the following type are widely used in the Eastern Oromo instead of the overt use of the affirmative attributive copula *-dha*.

- (290) *xun bishaan kurshaashaa*
 this water dirty
 'This is dirty water'

(Owens 1985:98)

- (291) *hidhii-n diim-tuu*
 lip-NOM red:F
 'A lip is red'

(Owens 1985:100)

Owens (1985:79-80) explains that the subject and the nominal predicate are juxtaposed in the present tense of the equative sentences.

- (292) (a) *xun bishaan*
 this water
 'This is water'
- (b) *isaan shan*
 they five
 'They are five'
- (c) *ishii-n obboleettii tiyya*
 3SF-NOM sister my
 'She is my sister'
- (d) *waan-tii tun mudhii-n cit-tuu*
 thing-NOM this middle-INS cut-F
 'This thing is cut in the middle'
- (e) *sun qumbii adii*
 that tusk white
 'That is a white tusk'

(Owens 1985:80)

(293) also confirms the absence of the copula suffix *-dha* from the Southern Oromo (note that the other four Oromo varieties use the copula *-dha* in common). Southern Oromo shows similarity with the Eastern one in terms of expressing the attributive copula through a simple juxtaposition of subject and predicate in the present tense.

(293) *waaqoo-n qaroo-Ø dureessa-llee-Ø*
wako-NOM knowledgeable-CS4 rich-OBJ.FOC4-CS4
'Wako is knowledgeable; he is even rich'

(294) *innii nama dureessa*
3SM:NOM man rich
'He is a rich man'

(Appleyard 2012:241)

In the nominal predication (copulaless construction), an optional subject is juxtaposed with a nominal predicate, which appears in the absolutive form (Sasse 2007:31). The following are additional examples from the Southern Oromo:

- (295) (a) *kunini nam-a*
this-SUBJ man-ABS
'This is a man'
- (b) *hayyuu-ni nam-a durees-a*
chief-SUBJ man-ABS rich-ABS
'The chief is a rich man'

(Sasse 2007:31)

8.2.3 *-ti*

There has been a long-standing disagreement among scholars on the real status of the morpheme *-ti* in Oromo. However, the morpheme *-ti* occurs robustly as a copula suffix in all varieties of Oromo. Even people who have argued for its copular status in Oromo state its distribution only as a genitive copula. Nevertheless, it occurs with the presentative demonstratives as well. The following examples show the occurrence of this morpheme as a copula suffix in genitive construction:

- (296) (a) *manni kun koo-ti*
house:NOM this mine-CS2
'This house is mine'
- (b) *kitaabni kun kan koo-ti*
book:NOM this REL mine-CS2
'This book is mine'

- (c) *kuni man-uma saa-ti*
 this:NOM house-OBJ.FOC5 his-CS2
 ‘This is his house’
- (d) *afaanni hambaa bara bara-a-ti*
 language:NOM heritage time time-GEN-CS2
 ‘Language is a lifetime heritage’

The use of the copular suffix *-ti* with the different personal pronouns is shown in the following table:

Table 10 The use of the copula suffix *-ti* with the possessive pronouns

(a)	<i>manni</i>	<i>kun</i>	<i>kan</i>	<i>kiyya / koo-ti</i>	‘This is my house’
(b)	<i>manni</i>	<i>kun</i>	<i>kan</i>	<i>keenya</i>	‘This is our house’
(c)	<i>manni</i>	<i>kun</i>	<i>kan</i>	<i>kee-ti</i>	‘This is your house’
(d)	<i>manni</i>	<i>kun</i>	<i>kan</i>	<i>keessan-i</i>	‘This is your house’
(e)	<i>manni</i>	<i>kun</i>	<i>kan</i>	<i>saa-ti</i>	‘This is his house’
(f)	<i>manni</i>	<i>kun</i>	<i>kan</i>	<i>shee-ti</i>	‘This is her house’
(g)	<i>manni</i>	<i>kun</i>	<i>kan</i>	<i>saanii-ti</i>	‘This is their house’

The above table shows that the copular suffix *-ti* is used with the possessive pronouns. There are cases, however, where the morpheme *-ti* does not occur with possessive pronouns (i.e., it does not appear physically and can be considered as zero morpheme). For example, it does not occur totally with first person plural pronoun form *keenya* ‘ours’ and with first person singular pronoun *kiyya* ‘mine’. On the other hand, it occurs as *-i* in the second person plural pronoun form. The words that it does not occur with end in a short vowel and a consonant, but the words that receive the morpheme *-ti* end in a long vowel. Therefore, it tends to develop phonologically conditioned allomorphic variants that occur in a complementary distribution.

A copula suffix *-ti* does not occur only with possessive constructions, i.e., its occurrence is not limited to the genitive constructions only. It appears with the presentatives and occurs both in the distal and proximal cases as in the following:

- (297) *bunni kunoo-ti*
 coffee:NOM here-CS2
 ‘Here is the coffee’

- (298) *horii-n kuunnoo-ti*
 cattle-NOM there-CS2
 ‘The cattle are there’

- (299) *daa'imni tunoo-ti*
 kid:NOM here-CS2
 ‘Here is the kid’

- (300) *daa'imni tuunnoo-ti*
 kid:NOM there-CS2
 'The kid is there'

In examples (297-300), the copula suffix *-ti* occurs with the proximal and distal presentatives. The form *kunoo* 'here' shows proximal and *tunoo* also shows the same except for having diminutive sense. The words *kuunnoo* and *tuunnoo* 'there' also show distal presentative with the second one having a diminutive sense. Normally, the forms *kunoo* 'here' and *kuunnoo* 'there' are used with the masculine and *tunoo* 'here' and *tuunnoo* 'there' are used with the feminine.

The appearance of this morpheme is further observed in exclamatory sentences as in the following:

- (301) *kunoo-ti kaa*
 here-CS2 EXC.FOC
 'Here is it!' It means like 'ops!'

The following instances are a little bit different from the examples given above, but consist of the copula suffix *-ti*:

- (302) *inni tolaa ida'ee-ti*
 3SM:NOM tolaa ida'ee-CS2
 'He is Tolaa Ida'ee'
- (303) *fiigichi maaraatoonii dorgommii kiloomeetira afurtamii-lamaa-ti*
 race:DEF.SING marathon competition kilometer forty-two-CS2
 'The marathon race is a competition of forty-two kilometers'

The environment in (304) is also different in terms of its use because the morpheme *-ti* occurs in the affirmative declarative sentence:

- (304) *mammaaks-i bifa dubbii-ti*
 proverb-NOM type speech-CS2
 'The proverb is a type of speech'

Despite the different claims established so far in the literature, the morpheme *-ti* is used as a copula suffix in the genitive construction, exclamatory and declarative sentences, and in the presentatives as well. In the majority of the cases, however, it occurs in the genitive construction.

8.2.4 *-uma*

From a functional point of view, *-uma* is used as a copula and focus marker (see chapter five for the discussion of *-uma* as a focus marker). In this subsection, however, the copular usage of this morpheme is discussed with a major emphasis. The copula suffix *-uma* is firmly used

across the different varieties of Oromo. The following sentences show the use and occurrence of the copula suffix *-uma*.

- (305) (a) *nam-ni* *nam-uma*
 human being-NOM human being-CS3
 ‘A human being is just a human being’
- (b) *fardi* *fard-uma*
 horse:NOM horse-CS3
 ‘A horse is a horse’
- (c) *barri* *bar-uma*
 year:NOM year-CS3
 ‘A year is a year’

Examples (305 a-c) show the existence of this morpheme in Oromo sentences that give a definition on a circular basis. Since the sentences are in the affirmative declarative form, this fact confirms the occurrence of the copula suffix *-uma* in the affirmative declarative constructions. On the other hand, the following examples show the occurrence of this morpheme with a copular function being suffixed to the word *sana* ‘that’.

- (306) (a) *nyaat-Ø-uu-s* *dhug-Ø-uu-s* *san-uma*
 eat-3SM-VN-ADD.FOC drink-3SM-VN-ADD.FOC that-CS3
 ‘He/it is all the same whether he eats or drinks’
- (b) *raf-Ø-uu-s* *rafuu* *baat-Ø-uu-s* *san-uma*
 sleep-3SM-VN-ADD.FOC sleep:VN ifnot-3SM-VN-ADD.FOC that-CS3
 ‘It is all the same whether he sleeps or not’
- (c) *inni* *san-uma*
 3SM:NOM that-CS3
 ‘He/it is the same’

The copula suffix *-uma* occurs in two different forms, which are both phonologically conditioned: *-dhuma*, which occurs after words that end in a long vowel and *-uma*, which occurs in an elsewhere distribution (i.e., after words that end in a consonant and a short vowel).

- (307) (a) *barsiisaa-n* *barsiisaa-dhuma*
 teacher-NOM teacher-CS3
 ‘A teacher is a teacher’
- (b) *aannanni* *aannan-uma*
 milk:NOM milk-CS3
 ‘Milk is milk’

Example (307 a) shows the occurrence of the morpheme *-dhuma* after a word that ends in a long vowel. In all the other cases, for example, when the word ends in a consonant (as in b of 307) and in a short vowel (as in example 305 & 306), the morpheme remains *-uma*.

On the other hand, the following examples show the use and occurrence of the morpheme *-uma* in the greeting words and / or expressions.

(308) (a) *akkam?*
 how (are you)
 ‘How are you?’ / ‘How is it?’

(b) *fayy-uma*
 fine-CS3
 ‘Just fine’

(c) *nag-uma*
 fine-CS3
 ‘Just fine’

The question in (308 a) can have either of the answers under (b) or (c) where both of them consist of the copula suffix *-uma*. Rarely, the answer may consist of the responses that exist under (b) & (c) together. In Oromo, word-final vowels usually deleted when the words add a morpheme of any type. The same process of deletion of word-final vowels is observed from the words *fayyaa* ‘health / fine’ and *nagaa* ‘peace / fine’ while they add the copular morpheme *-uma*. In the interrogatives both forms may be used interchangeably to ask and give answer:

(309) (a) *fayy-uma-a*
 fine-CS3-Q
 ‘Fine / are you fine?’

(b) *nag-uma*
 fine-CS3
 ‘Fine’ / ‘I am fine’

(310) (a) *nag-uma-a*
 fine-CS3-Q
 ‘Fine / are you fine?’

(b) *fayy-uma*
 fine-CS3
 ‘Fine’ / ‘I am fine’

The forms that are in (309 b & 310 b) are responses to the questions that are in (309 a & 310 a). The form *naguma* ‘fine’ can serve as a response to both questions in (309 a) and (310 a). Similarly, the form *fayyuma* ‘fine’ serves as a response to the questions (309 a) and (310 a).

In the Western variety of Oromo in particular, question like *fayyaadhaa* ‘how are you?’ is more common than the forms in (309 a) & (310 a). The response to such questions would have the answer *fayyaadha* ‘fine’. Similarly, *nagayaa* ‘how are you?’ is used in the Eastern and Southern dialects of Oromo where the suffix *-yaa* corresponds to the forms *-dhaa* and *-umaa*.

The copular morpheme *-uma* occurs with numerals, especially with number one, to explain the similarity of things as in the following example.

- (311) *hunduu tokk-uma*
 all one-CS3
 ‘All are the same’

Maaloodha(a) ‘what is it?’ is very common in the Western dialect as opposed to *maalinni* ‘what is it?’ in all the other varieties of Oromo. In this case, *-dha(a)* of the Western dialect corresponds to *inni* of the other varieties. This fact shows the possible development of demonstratives into copula (as it exists elsewhere) in all the other varieties of Oromo, except for the Western Oromo.

According to Griefenow-Mewis (2001:55), although the development is not yet complete, the particle *-uma* is becoming a focus marker. She does not, however, clearly state the source of development, i.e., whether it is from a copula or not. For the details on the development of focus markers out of copula, see the discussion on grammaticalization in chapter nine. Based on the discussion set above, however, the copula suffix *-uma* firmly occurs in all of the varieties of Oromo. It functions mainly as a definite copula as in *tokkuma* ‘one / the same’, *isuma* ‘it is definitely him’, as a demonstrative copula as in *sanuma* ‘the same’ and serves in circular definitions as in *namni namuma* ‘human being is a human being’.

8.2.5 A negative particle copula *miti*

The free morpheme *miti* is used as a negative particle copula in all the varieties of Oromo, with little difference in a form in the Southern and sometimes in the Eastern Oromo. Crass et al. (2005:20) explain it as an invariant negative present tense copula in the Western dialect. Example sentences that constitute this morpheme are given below:

- (312) (a) *inni oromoo miti*
 3SM:NOM oromo NEG.PARCOP
 ‘He is not Oromo’
- (b) *ani nama(a) miti*
 1S:NOM huma being NEG.PARCOP
 ‘I am not a human being’
- (c) *kun kan boorana qofaa miti*
 this REL borana alone NEG.PARCOP
 ‘This is not of the Borana’s only’

In the interrogatives, it appears with the final long vowel. The following are examples that show the occurrence of this morpheme in questions:

- (313) (a) *ani nama(a) miti-i*
 1S:NOM human being NEG.PARCOP-Q
 ‘Am I not a human being?’
- (b) *kun qotiyoo miti-i*
 this ox NEG.PARCOP-Q
 ‘Is it not an ox?’

This morpheme occurs invariably with different subjects across the different Oromo dialects, i.e., the particle copula *miti* is invariable across number, gender, and person. For example, in the following sentences, it occurs as *isheen dureessa(a) miti* ‘she is not rich’, *isaan dureessa miti* ‘they are not rich’, *inni dureessa miti* ‘he is not rich’ and etc with the subjects in the third person singular masculine and feminine and plural forms.

In the Eastern Oromo and sometimes in the Southern, the negative particle copular morpheme appears as *miyii* in the interrogative form.

- (314) *inni nama miyii*
 3SM:NOM human being NEG.PARCOP:Q
 ‘Is he not a human being?’

In addition to the negative interrogative particle copula *mitii*, the Southern Oromo uses the suffix *-yyuu* in the interrogatives. An example that consists of this morpheme is given below:

- (315) *lama-yyuu*
 two-NEG.PARCOP:Q
 ‘Is that two?’ / ‘It is two, right?’

On the other hand, Sasse (2007:36) lists several negative morphemes in Oromo and states that the negative morpheme is invariable for person and occurs after the predicate noun that carries a high tone on its final long vowel. The following example is specific to the Borana (Southern) dialect, where the morpheme *niiti* is used as a negative particle copula.

- (316) *nyeencaa niiti*
 lion to be not
 ‘It is not a lion’

(Sasse 2007:36)

Although the analysis is questionable Owens (1985:80) mentions that the negative equative suffix in the Eastern Oromo as *mihi* (M) and *miti* (F) through mentioning the following examples:

(317) (a) *xun binensaa-mihi*
 this animal-NEG
 ‘This is not an animal’

(b) *isii-n intala arkee-miti*
 3SF-NOM girl saw-NEG
 ‘She is not the girl who he saw’

(Owens 1985:80-81)

8.3 Derivational operation used as a copula

A derivational operation functions as a copula when a verb that is formed from a noun serves as a predicate nominal clause (Payne 1997:118). In Oromo, the suffixes *-oom* and *-eess* derive verbs from nouns and adjectives and the autobenefactive suffix *-at* derives verbs from adjectives (see Griefenow-Mewis 2001:85-88) that can form a predicate nominal clause.

8.3.1 *-oom*

The morpheme *-oom* derives verbs, out of nouns and adjectives, which can function as a predicate nominal clause. Here are examples.

(318) (a) *inni nam-oom-Ø-e*
 3SM:NOM human being-DO1-3SM-PFV
 ‘He became a human being’

(b) *isheen garb-oom-t-e*
 3SF:NOM slave-DO1-3SF-PFV
 ‘She became a slave’

(c) *isaan nu-tti fir-oom-an-i*
 3P:NOM 1P.ABS-LOC relative-DO1-3P-PFV
 ‘They became a relative to us’

In (318 a-c), the elements *namoom* ‘he became a human being’, *garboomte* ‘she became a slave’, and *firoomani* ‘they became relative to us’ are verbs that are derived from nouns *nama* ‘human being’, *garba* ‘slave’, and *fira* ‘relative’. These predicate nominals became verbs grammatically because of the inflectional information they express and the position they have in the clause (Payne 1997:118). The derived predicate nominals can also be in the form of causatives: *namoomse* ‘I / he made to be a human being’, *gabroomse* ‘I / he enslaved / cause someone to be a slave’, and *firoomse* ‘I / he caused or made someone to be a relative’.

(319) (a) *inni goww-oom-Ø-e*
 3SM:NOM fool-DO1-3SM-PFV
 ‘He became a fool’

(b) *isheen hiyy-oom-t-e*
 3SF:NOM poor-DO1-3SF-PFV
 ‘She became poor’

(c) *ati haar-oom-t-e*
 2S:NOM new-DO1-2S-PFV
 ‘You are renewed’

In (319 a-c), the derived verbs that are used as a predicate nominal clauses are formed from the adjectives *gowwaa* ‘fool’, *hiyyeessa* ‘poor’, and *haaraa* ‘new’ respectively through the use of the derivational morpheme *-oom*. The causative verb forms *goww-oom-s-Ø-e* ‘I / he made someone a fool’, *isheen hiyy-oom-s-i-t-e* ‘she made someone poor’, and *ati haar-oom-s-i-t-e* ‘you renewed’ also fit into the above predicate nominal clause slot.

8.3.2 -eess

The derivational suffix morpheme *-eess* derives causative verbs from nouns and adjectives. The resulting derived causative verbs can also function as a predicate nominal clause. The following examples help to know more about this process.

(320) (a) *kanniisni damm-eess-Ø-e*
 bee:NOM honey-DO2-3SM-PFV
 ‘The bee made honey’

(b) *roobni karaa dhoqq-eess-Ø-e*
 rain:NOM road mud-DO2-3SM-PFV
 ‘The rain made the road muddy’

(c) *rakkinni yeroo qormaata-a dheer-eess-Ø-e*
 problem:NOM time exam-GEN long-DO2-3SM-PFV
 ‘The problem has lengthened the time of the examination’

(d) *aduun lafa diim-eess-i-t-e*
 sun:NOM land red-DO2-EPEN-3SF-PFV
 ‘The sun has reddened the land’

In (320 a-d), the derived verbs that are used as a predicate nominal clause are formed from the nouns *damma* ‘honey’ and *dhoqqee* ‘mud’ and from the adjectives *dheeraa* ‘long’ and *diimaa* ‘red’ through the addition of the derivational suffix *-eess*.

8.3.3 -at

The derivational suffix *-at* derives verbs from adjectives. The verbs that are derived in such a process can function as a predicate nominal clause. The following examples are provided to

show how the predicate nominals become verbs grammatically because of the inflectional information they express and due to their position in the clause.

- (321) (a) *mucaan gudd-at-Ø-e*
 boy:NOM big-DO3-3SM-PFV
 ‘The boy became big’ / ‘The boy grew’
- (b) *tolaan furd-at-Ø-e*
 tolaa:NOM fat-DO3-3SM-PFV
 ‘Tolaa became fat’
- (c) *lafti diim-at-t-e*
 earth:NOM red-DO3-3SF-PFV
 ‘The earth became red’

In (321 a-c), the derived verbs, which are functioning as a predicate nominal clause, are formed from the adjectives *guddaa* ‘big’, *furdaa* ‘fat’, and *diimaa* ‘red’.

8.4 Verbal copulas

This sub-section deals with a comparative description of the verbal copulas in Oromo. There are three verbal copulas in the Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western, Central, and Southeastern dialects of Oromo. These are *jir-* in the present tense, *tur-* in the past tense, and *ta’-* in the future tense. The verbal copulas, as opposed to the copular suffixes and a particle, inflect for different grammatical categories of number, gender, and person. Globally, there are many features that can distinguish copular verbs: they tend to be irregular, can be members of the same semantic class, and they tend to function as auxiliaries in other instances; if a language develops auxiliaries, copular verbs are the first verbs that can develop into auxiliaries (Payne 1997:117). In the discussion, I present *jir-* first, then *tur-*, and *ta’-*. In the gloss, *jir-* is presented as V.COP1, *tur-* as V.COP2, and *ta’-* as V.COP3.

8.4.1 *jir-*

The verbal copula *jir-*, which is used with the reference of the present tense, occurs across the different varieties of Oromo. The root *jir-* is also used as an existential verb that shows the presence of something. On the other hand, when it is used with other inflectional verbs, it would be a helping verb, which is considered as an auxiliary verb. The following examples demonstrate that this verbal copula inflects for number, gender, and person:

- (322) (a) *inni mana jir-Ø-a*
 3SM:NOM house V.COP1-3SM-IPFV
 ‘He is at home’
- (b) *isin mana jir-t-u*
 2P:NOM house V.COP1-2P-IPFV
 ‘You are at home’

- (c) *isheen mana barumsaa jir-t-i*
 3SF:NOM school V.COP1-3SF-IPFV
 ‘She is at school’

Sometimes the verbal copula *jir-* grammaticalizes and appears in a shortened and assimilated form. This happens usually with different persons like *dhufanii-ru*, ‘they have come’, *dhufee-ra* ‘he has come / I have come’, *dhuftee-tti* ‘she has come’, *dhufnee-rra* ‘we have come’, *dhuftee-tta* ‘you have come’, *dhuftanii-ttu* ‘you (pl) have come’, etc. Forms like *-ra* and *-ru* are the shortened forms of the copular verb *jir-* (*dhufee jira* > *dhufeera* ‘he has come/ I have come’ and *dhufanii jiru* > *dhufaniiru* ‘they have come’); while forms like *-tti*, *-rra*, *-ttu*, and *-tta* are the shortened and assimilated versions of the copular verb *jir-* (*dhuftee jirti* > *dhufteerti* > *dhufteetti* ‘she has come’, *dhuftee jirta* > *dhufteerta* > *dhufteetta* ‘you have come’ and etc where in both cases the sequence *rt* > *tt*). For more examples and discussion on the grammaticalization of the copular verb *jir-*, see the discussion under the subsection 9.2.6 and table 14.

See also the following example.

- (323) *inni biyya alaa jir-Ø-a*
 3SM:NOM country outside V.COP1-3SM-IPFV
 ‘He is abroad’

The above example appears as *isaan biyya alaa jiru* ‘they are abroad’ and *isheen biyya alaa jirti* ‘she is abroad’ with third person plural and singular feminine pronouns. Obviously, this morpheme inflects for number, person, and gender and carries different suffixes based on the grammatical features used. In addition to its copular function, the root *jir-* shows the presence of something and labeled as an existential verb.

- (324) *inni ana waliin jir-Ø-a*
 3SM:NOM 1S:ABS with V.COP1-3SM-IPFV
 ‘He is with me’
- (325) *namni qaroon jir-Ø-a*
 person:NOM knowledgeable:NOM V.COP1-3SM-IPFV
 ‘There is a knowledgeable person’

8.4.2 *tur-*

The root *tur-* is used as a verbal copula in the past tense. The use of this verbal copula is shown in the following examples:

- (326) *inni mana tur-Ø-e*
 3SM:NOM house V.COP2-3SM-PFV
 ‘He was at home’
- (327) *ati as tur-t-e*
 2S:NOM here V.COP2-2S-PFV

‘You were here’

- (328) *kaleessa tur-Ø-e*
yesterday V.COP2-3SM-PFV
‘It was yesterday’

As seen above, the verbal copula *tur-* inflects for person, number, and gender. Additional examples are given below.

- (329) *isheen as tur-t-e*
3SF:NOM here V.COP2-3SF-PFV
‘She was here’

- (330) *isaan as tur-an-i*
3P:NOM here V.COP2-3P-PFV
‘They were here’

- (331) *nuti as tur-r²⁵-e*
1P:NOM here V.COP2-1P-PFV
‘We were here’

- (332) *inni magaalaa tur-Ø-e*
3SM:NOM city V.COP2-3SM-PFV
‘He was in the city’

In all the examples mentioned above, the verb consists of different grammatical features that agree with the subject. Similarly, there are examples that constitute this verbal root: *isaan kaleessa as tur-an-i* ‘they were here yesterday’, *isheen kaleessa as tur-t-e* ‘she was here yesterday’, and etc. Note also that the verb root *tur-* can function as an existential verb. When the verbal root *tur-* is used with another inflectional verb in a sentence, then it would be an auxiliary verb that serves as a helping one.

8.4.3 *ta’-*

The root *ta’-* is used as a verbal copula of the future tense. It occurs well across the different dialects of Oromo and inflects for number, gender, and person. Some examples are given below.

- (333) *inni mana ta’-Ø-a*
3SM:NOM house V.COP3-3SM-IPFV
‘He will be at home’

- (334) *isheen barsiistuu taa-t-i*
3SF:NOM teacher:F V.COP3-3SF-PFV
‘She will be a teacher’

²⁵ The first person plural number marker *n* completely assimilates to the preceding sound and becomes *r*.

- (335) *godaansi boru ta'-Ø-a*
 movement:NOM tomorrow V.COP3-3SM-IPFV
 'The movement will be tomorrow'

In example (334), the verbal root *ta'*- becomes *taa-* with the third person singular feminine subject, where the glottal stop completely assimilated to the preceding vowel. The same process of assimilation is observed when the first person plural subject is used. The verbal copula *ta'*- can be used in combination with the verb roots *jir-* & *tur-*: *inni mana jira ta'a* 'he may be at home', *inni mana ture ta'a* 'he might be at home'. See additional example below.

- (336) *inni yeroo kana mana ta'-Ø-a*
 3SM:NOM now this house V.COP3-3SM-IPFV
 'He will be at home by now'

In a similar construction with the above one, the following also show the use of the verbal copula *ta'*- and how it inflects: *nuti boru yeroo kana mana taana* 'tomorrow, we will be at home by now', *isheen yeroo kana mana taati* 'she will be at home by now', *ani yeroo kana manan ta'a* 'I will be at home by now', *isaan yeroo kana mana ta'-u* 'they will be at home by now' etc.

With the focused verb, the copular verb *ta'*- may not be inflected for number, person, and gender where it can be addressed as an auxiliary verb because it is used with other inflectional verb. For example, consider the following:

- (337) *inni hin-dhuf-Ø-a ta'-Ø-a*
 3SM:NOM V.FOC1-come-3SM-IPFV V.COP3.AUX-3SM-IPFV
 'He will be coming'

In (337), if different pronouns with diverse number and gender are used as a subject of the sentence, the copular (auxiliary) verb would still remain in the third person singular masculine pronoun form, which is unchanged with different subject forms. So, it appears as *isaan hindhufu ta'a* 'they will be coming / they may come', *isheen hindhufti ta'a* 'she will be coming / she may come', *nuti hindeemna ta'a* 'we will be going / we may go' etc.

8.5 Summary

From a typological point of view, Oromo can be grouped mainly as a language that uses a copula in the present and non-present tenses. The elements that are used as a copula in Oromo are verbs, suffixes, a particle, derivational operations, and zero copulas. The copulas in Oromo, therefore, can be grouped as verbal and non-verbal. The verbal copulas are different from the non-verbal ones because they inflect for person, number, and gender. A particle copula and copula suffixes, on the other hand, do not inflect for different grammatical categories. Zero copulas in Oromo manifest themselves through a combined use of the subject and the predicate and, on the other hand, there is an additional zero morpheme in use,

which is one of the realizations of the morpheme *-dha* that occurs after words that end in a short vowel.

There are three affirmative copula suffixes in Oromo. These are *-dha*, *-ti*, and *-uma*. The copula suffix *-dha* occurs in three different forms: *-dha* which occurs after words that end in a long vowel, *-i* which occurs after words that end in a consonant, and \emptyset which occurs after words that end in a short vowel. The copula suffix *-dha* is widely used in the Northern, Western, Central, and Southeastern dialects of Oromo. A simple juxtaposition of the subject and the predicate is used in the Eastern and Southern Oromo instead of the copula suffix *-dha*.

The morpheme *-ti*, which has been the subject of debate in Oromo literature, is confirmed now to be a copula that is used not only in the genitive construction but also in presentatives as well. Although the allomorphic development does not look complete, the copula suffix *-ti* also tends to occur in three different forms. These are *-ti* which occurs after words that end in a long vowel, \emptyset which occurs after words that end in a short vowel, and *-i* which occurs after words that end in a consonant. The genitive and presentative copula suffix *-ti* occurs in all varieties of Oromo.

The other copula suffix, which is used in Oromo, is *-uma*. This morpheme occurs in two different forms: *-dhuma* which occurs after words that end in a long vowel and *-uma* which occurs in an elsewhere distribution (i.e., after words that end in a consonant and a short vowel). The morphemes *-uma* and *-ti* occur across the six dialects of Oromo. The morpheme *-dha*, on the other hand, is common to the Northern, Western, Central, and Southeastern dialects. A simple juxtaposition of the subject and the predicate is a commonly shared feature between the Eastern and Southern dialects which is normally used instead of *-dha*. The Northern, Central, Western, and Southeastern Oromo have all the three affirmative copula suffixes, i.e., *-dha*, *-uma*, and *-ti*.

The negative particle copula *miti* is an invariable free morpheme that occurs in all the varieties of Oromo. Occasionally, an alternative form *niiti* is used in the Southern Oromo. In the interrogatives, the morpheme *miti* sometimes appears as *miyii* in the Eastern and Southern Oromo. In addition to this, *-yyuu* is used in the Southern Oromo for interrogative constructions. A derivational operation that is used as a copula employs the morphemes *-oom*, *-eess*, and *-at* to derive verbs from nouns and or adjectives that are used in the predicate nominal clause. The verbal copulas that are used in Oromo are three in number. These are *jir-* which is used in the present tense, *tur-* in the past tense, and *ta'* in the future tense. The verbal copulas, which are extensively used in all the varieties of Oromo, inflect for different grammatical categories.

Chapter Nine

Grammaticalization of copulas to focus markers

9.1 Introduction

The term Grammaticalization, which is considered as a young sub-field of linguistics, was coined in 1912 by Antoine Meillet (Narrog & Heine 2012:1-2). According to Heine & Kuteva (2004:2), “Grammaticalization is defined as the development from lexical to grammatical forms and from grammatical to even more grammatical forms”. As a theoretical framework, grammaticalization theory deals with language use in space and time, i.e., the origin and development of grammatical forms. The main aim of grammaticalization theory is to give a description of how grammatical elements occur and develop across space and time and to explain why they are ordered the way they are. The four major mechanisms that are involved in grammaticalization, according to Heine & Kuteva (2004:2), are desemanticization, extension, decategorialization, and erosion. Out of the four mentioned mechanisms, three of them involve a loss of properties whereas only one of them involves a gain of properties. The three mechanisms that involve loss of properties are desemanticization which is also called semantic bleaching, i.e., a loss in meaning, decategorialization which is a loss in morphosyntactic properties, and erosion (phonetic reduction) which is a loss in phonetic substance. Extension is, however, a gain property of function and or use in a new context.

Henok (2010:12-15) gives a very clear example and explanations regarding the four mentioned mechanisms and notes that there is a question whether the mechanisms are unique to grammaticalization or independent changes as part of the process of language change in general. He explains the four processes with just a single English word ‘will’ as follows: the word *will*, which shows future tense currently in English had a lexical verb meaning ‘want’, has now grammaticalized into a future marker (I want that I go > I will go); this is an example of semantic bleaching where the word *will* changes its original lexical meaning and becomes a future tense marker. In earlier times, the word *will* was inflected for tense and number, but now it inflects for tense only (*will* vs. *would*); decategorialization, as a mechanism, explains that lexical forms can lose some or all of the inflectional features they had while grammaticalized. Under normal circumstances, verbs inflect for grammatical categories like tense, aspect, mood, and agreement, but when grammaticalized they may lose these inflectional features in their new grammaticalized form. In constructions like ‘I’ll go’ and ‘I won’t come’, the word *will* has become shorter and shorter which turns out to be a good example of erosion. In phonetic erosion, which is a loss of phonological substance, a lexical morpheme can lose its autonomy, i.e., develops into a clitic, then to an affix, and later perhaps to the extent of becoming zero. The grammaticalization of the word *will* might have occurred first in the context of first person and the reanalysis might have spread to second and third person contexts. This can be taken as an example of extension where the possibility of the form being used is expanded.

Since grammaticalization needs specific context so as to occur, it can be explained as a result of a reinterpretation that can be brought by context (Heine & Kuteva 2004:2). Therefore, in grammaticalization, context plays an important role in the loss and gain of properties. The four mentioned mechanisms of grammaticalization are firmly used as a fundamental framework for explaining the development of grammaticalization process in the present study, i.e., used in order to describe the development of copula to focus markers in different contexts. The phonetic reduction of the existential verb *jir-* ‘to exist’ can be well-explained in terms of one of the mechanisms of grammaticalization called erosion.

From the wider Ethiopian context, there are some studies of grammaticalization on Ethio-Semitic, Cushitic, and Omotic languages. In his study of the grammaticalization of the affirmative copula markers of *-tte* and *-kko* in the Omoto subgroup (languages), Henok (2010:69) finds out the following path of development of grammaticalization taken by the morphemes: existential verbs > locative copula > copula > focus. Similarly, Crass & Meyer (2007:7) in their discussion of deictics, copula, and focus in the Ethiopian convergence area have discussed the relationship among demonstratives, copulas, and focus markers and generally found out that demonstratives can grammaticalize into copulas and copulas would, in turn, develop into focus markers. Although the grammaticalization of focus markers into copula is reported to be rare, Meyer (2007:175-192) finds out that a copula develops out of focus marker in Wolane and Silt’e, which are both East Gurage languages. Sasse (2007:27-52), in his analysis of nominal and adjectival predication in Lowland East Cushitic, points out that although focus markers usually develop out of copula he indicates the possibility of the reverse path of development as well.

Abinet (2016), “grammaticalization in Ethiosemitic with comparisons to Oromo”, deals with the grammaticalization of body part terms, similatives, allatives, and demonstratives in eighteen languages. Out of the vast discussion, chapter four of his study deals with the grammaticalization of (human and animal) body part terms in Oromo. In the analysis, Abinet (2016) indicates (with several examples) that body part nouns in Oromo grammaticalize into markers of spatial, temporal, and logical relations.

Debela (2010) deals with the semantics of eight Oromo (front and back) adpositions based on cognitive linguistics. Chapter eight of his study deals with the grammaticalization path of the front and back adpositions. In his discussion, Debela (2010) indicates that human body part terms and relational nouns grammaticalize into adpositions.

In Oromo, copulas can grammaticalize into focus markers, i.e., copulas can function as focus markers within the context of emphasis (focus). Note from the discussion above that the grammaticalization of focus markers into copula is reported to be rare (occurs only in a few languages of the world). As the following discussion on grammaticalization further reveals, in Oromo, copulas can develop into a source marker (ablative case). Existential verbs which are used as auxiliary verbs can also be used as a copula.

9.2 Grammaticalization of copulas into focus markers

9.2.1 *dha* (d̥a) > *dhaa* (d̥a:)

From the discussion in chapter eight, it has been known that the morpheme *-dha* is the affirmative copula suffix that is used in the present tense in most of the dialects of Oromo, except for the Eastern and Southern ones (see the discussion in chapter eight). On the other hand, there is an instance where the morpheme *-dhaa* (d̥a:) is used as a focus marker from the discussion we have seen back in chapter five (see section 5.2.5).

In their discussion of focus phenomena in Wellega Oromo, Dabala & Meyer (2003:171-172) claim that the morpheme *-dha* is used as a focus marker in the Western (Wellega) Oromo when the noun of a direct object ends in short vowel *a*, in a consonant, and in a few unpredictable cases. The following example is an instance where the noun of the direct object ends in a voiced alveolar nasal consonant *n*:

- (338) *inni bishaan-dha fid-a*
he:NOM water-FOC bring-3SM:IPFV
'He brings WATER'

(Dabala & Meyer 2003:272)

On the other hand, Dabala & Meyer (2003:272) claim that the morpheme *-dhaa* does not function as a focus marker; they consider the morpheme *-dhaan* as an instrumental marker as seen in (339) below.

- (339) *inni bor dheeboo-dhaan leenca-dha ajjees-a*
he:NOM tomorrow spear-INS lion-FOC kill-3SM:IPFV
'He will kill THE LION by (the) spear tomorrow'

(Dabala & Meyer 2003:272)

However, according to Baye (1988) & Gobena (2017), the morpheme *-dhaan* can be analyzed into *-dhaa* which is a copula and or focus marker, and *-n* which is taken as an instrumental marker.

Incidentally, focus through the morpheme *-dha* looks very specific to the Western dialect only (i.e., it does not occur in the other dialects of Oromo). In examples like (340) below, if the morpheme *-dha* is taken as a copula it would look like functional overuse of the copula even in the absence of words that end in long vowels. Recall the previous discussion that the copula *-dha* occurs after words that end in a long final vowel. As in (340) below, however, the normal copula expected to occur is \emptyset after words that end in a short final vowel.

- (340) *farda-dha*
horse-FOC
'it is a horse'

Gobena (2017:136)

In his discussion of instrumental case (marker), Gobena (2017:118) presents a similar case with example (339) above and analyzes the morpheme *-dhaa* as a copula and describes the final *-n* as an instrumental marker.

- (341) *?eeboo-dhaa-n*
 spear-COP-INS
 ‘with a spear’

(Gobena 2017:118)

In addition to this, he presents the morpheme *-tii* as a copula.

Opposed to the two views presented above, Baye (1988:376-377) argues that the copula *-dha* can be included into prepositional phrases in order to show focus and the syntactic and pragmatic functions it has (i.e., *-dha* belongs to the syntactic and pragmatic levels of grammar).

- (342) *tulluu-n ulee-dha-n nama rukut-e*
 tulluu-NOM stick-FOC-with man hit-3SM-PFV
 ‘It is with a stick that Tulluu hit a man’

(Baye 1988:376)

Of the previous discussions on the status of the morpheme *-dhaa*, I have the same opinion with the latter one (based on the discussion in 5.2.5) that explains it as a focus marker when it occurs in a prepositional phrase. Hence, when it occurs in prepositional phrases, it should be transcribed or spelled orthographically with long final vowel.

The present tense affirmative copula suffix *-dha* develops functionally into a focus marker that serves in the object of a sentence (most often in the prepositional phrase) and appears with the form of *-dhaa*. Consider the following examples that are presented in order to show the reanalyzed form of the copular morpheme *-dha*.

- (343) *caalaa-n albee-dhaa-n hoolaa qal-Ø-e*
 caalaa-NOM knife-OBJ.FOC1-INS sheep slaughter-3SM-PFV
 ‘It is with a knife that Caalaa slaughtered a sheep’

- (344) *caaltuu-n ulee-dhaa-n mucaa rukut-t-e*
 caaltuu-NOM stick-OBJ.FOC1-INS child hit-3SF-PFV
 ‘It is with a stick that Caaltuu hit a child’

- (345) *isaan eeboo-dhaa-n leenca ajjees-an-i*
 3P:NOM spear-OBJ.FOC1-INS lion kill-3P-PFV
 ‘It is with a spear that they killed a lion’

In the above sentences (343-345), the focus marker (*-dhaa*) is an optional one, i.e., it does not have any linking function as a copula. Rather, it appears with a function of focus. The

sentences can have the following form without the focus marker and are still grammatical and meaningful enough:

- (346) *caalaa-n albee-n hoolaa qal-Ø-e*
 caalaa-NOM knife-INS sheep slaughter-3SM-PFV
 ‘Caalaa slaughtered a sheep with a knife’
- (347) *caaltuu-n ulee-n mucaa rukut-t-e*
 caaltuu-NOM stick-INS child hit-3SF-PFV
 ‘Caaltuu hit a child with a stick’
- (348) *isaan eeboo-n leenca ajjees-an-i*
 3P:NOM spear-INS lion kill-3P-PFV
 ‘They killed a lion with a spear’

Since *-dha* appears as *-i* when the word ends in a consonant, it would also have the following form in its function of focus:

- (349) *nuti bishaan-ii-n fuula dhiq-an²⁶-n-e*
 1P:NOM water-OBJ.FOC1-INS face wash-BEN-1P-PFV
 ‘It is with water that we washed our face’
- (350) *ati sa’aatii sagal-ii-n mana dhuf-t-e*
 2S:NOM o’clock nine-OBJ.FOC1-INS home come-2S-PFV
 ‘It is at nine o’clock that you came home’
- (351) *ishee-n ilkaan-ii-n harka koo ciniin-t-i*
 3SF-NOM teeth-OBJ.FOC1-INS hand my bite-3SF-IPFV
 ‘It is with a tooth that she bites / will bite my hand’

Unlike the former examples, here in examples (349-351), the focus marker does not appear optional due to the phonological reason i.e., Oromo does not allow word-final cluster and gemination. If we take the focus marker out of the above examples (349-351), the words that bear the focus markers would end in a geminate and cluster consonants like *nn* and *ln* sequences which are impermissible clusters (sequences).

Additional examples are given below.

- (352) *isin harka-a-n nama waam-t-u*
 2P:NOM hand-OBJ.FOC1-INS person call-2P-IPFV
 ‘It is with a hand that you call a person’
- (353) *gammachuu-n miila-a-n gara manaa deem-Ø-e*
 gammachuu-NOM foot-OBJ.FOC1-INS to house:GEN go-3S-PFV

²⁶ *dhiqat-n-e* becomes *dhiqanne* ‘we washed’ where *t* of the stem completely assimilates to the following sound and becomes *n*.

‘It is with a foot that Gammachuu went home’

- (354) *ishee-n tola-a-n mana koo fudh-at-t-e*
3SF-NOM free-OBJ.FOC1-INS house my take-BEN-3SF-PFV
‘It is for free that she took my house’

The focus marker in example (352-354) looks not optional because the instrumental marker -*n* seems to occur always after words that end in long vowels (see also Gobena 2017:118). However, as opposed to (352 & 353), example (354) can occur without the focus and instrumental markers and would appear as:

- (355) *ishee-n tola mana koo fudhat-t-e*
3SF-NOM free house my take-2SF-PFV
‘She took my house for free’

The last vowel in the copular construction becomes long when it is used in the focused form. The process looks like: *dha* > *dhaa* (cf. 343-345), *i* > *ii* (cf. 349-351), and (Ø) *a* > (a)*a* (cf. 352-354). Note that when the word ends in a short final vowel, the copular form that is attached to the word is zero morpheme. When elements like this change their function into focus, the copular form lengthens the final short vowel of the word, but not the zero morpheme that is attached to the word.

This grammatical development is described in terms of the four mechanisms that have been discussed at the beginning of this chapter as follows. The change of the copula from *-dha* into the focus marker *-dhaa* shows desemanticization or loss and or change of meaning (i.e., from copula to focus). The same development applies to the allomorphs *-i* > *-ii* and Ø or *a* > *aa*, which can be addressed as semantic bleaching. Decategorialization wise, which is a loss of morphosyntactic property, this morpheme changes from having a syntactic function (copula which functions as a linker) into a pragmatic one (focus). In its reanalyzed form, it does not have a linking function anymore. The copular morphemes (copula suffixes) are labeled differently in the literature, i.e., there is no agreement on how to address them in the literature. Some call them particle copulas, others name them clitic copulas, others put them as enclitic suffixes, and even others claim for their independent use. All these proposals show that the forms have undergone some kind of change and are in the process of losing their autonomy. In its changed form (when used as a focus marker), the morpheme *-dhaa* becomes clearly a real suffix which can show some kind of phonetic erosion (i.e., develops perhaps from being free or a particle to clitic copulas and then to suffixes or invariable copula suffixes). The development from the copular use into focus marker, which is definitely serving in a new context, can also be attributed to the process of grammaticalization in terms of extension. The development must have started somewhere in a limited context, possibly with a certain environment, and must have extended into the other (broader) environments as well.

9.2.2 *-ti > -tii*

The morpheme *-ti* has been identified as a copula in Oromo (see 8.2.3). Its use in the object position, on the other hand, changes its function from copula to focus, i.e., it grammaticalizes from being a copula into a focus marker.

In his discussion of copular construction, Gobena (2017:118) presents the morpheme *-tii* as copula by mentioning the following examples:

- (356) *kophee namaa-tii-n deem-i*
shoe man:GEN-COP-INS go-2S:IMP
'Go in someone's shoes'

Gobena (2017:118)

- (357) *kun mana abbaa koo-ti(i)-ti*
this:NOM house father my-COP-COP
'This is the house of my father'

Gobena (2017:136)

Note that in both examples (356 & 357), the morpheme *-tii* which occurs with long final *ii* is glossed as a copula. In both cases, the sentences can appear meaningful and grammatical even in the absence of this morpheme. The other most important point to be raised here is that what would be the importance of having two copular morphemes in a given sentence as in the example (357) above? Of course the final morpheme *-ti* is a copula and has a linking function. Had *-ti(i)* been a copula, the constituent **kun mana abbaa koo-ti(i)* 'this is the house of my father' would have been acceptable and a complete sentence. However, it is not a finished and grammatical one as it stands (with the final morpheme occurring with long *ii*). Therefore, this constituent needs something (either affirmative or negative copula that finishes or links it). Sentences like (358 & 359) below are grammatical without having the morpheme *-tii* as their component:

- (358) *kophee namaa-n deem-i*
shoe man:GEN-INS go-2S:IMP
'Go in someone's shoes'

- (359) *kun mana abbaa koo-ti*
this:NOM house father my-CS2
'This is my father's house'

Hence, the optional occurrence of the morpheme *-tii* in sentences (358 & 359) is an indication of its functional change (from copula to focus).

In the following examples the morpheme *-ti* functions as a copula, i.e., it links the subject with the predicate:

(360) *kun ulee koo-ti*
 this:NOM stick my-CS2
 ‘This is my stick’

(361) *kun albee koo-ti*
 this:NOM knife my-CS2
 ‘This is my knife’

(362) *kun eeboo koo-ti*
 this:NOM spear my-CS2
 ‘This is my spear’

The morpheme *-ti* which occurs in the examples (360-362) changes its function and appears as a focus marker when it occurs at the object position as in the following sentences:

(363) *ishee-n ulee koo-tii-n na rukut-t-e*
 3SF-NOM stick my-OBJ.FOC2-INS me hit-3SF-PFV
 ‘It is with my stick that she hit me’

(364) *ati albee koo-tii-n hoolaa qal-t-e*
 2S:NOM knife my-OBJ.FOC2-INS sheep slaughter-2S-PFV
 ‘It is with my knife that you slaughtered a sheep’

(365) *duulaa-n eeboo koo-tii-n leenca ajjees-Ø-e*
 duulaa-NOM spear my-OBJ.FOC2-INS lion kill-3SM-PFV
 ‘It is with my spear that Duulaa killed a lion’

As the copular morpheme *-ti* is the one that occurs with the genitive constructions, the morpheme *-tii* is also a focus marker that occurs after genitive nouns and possessive pronouns (for further examples on possessive pronouns, see also table seven in section 5.2.6). The instrumental marker morpheme occurs after possessive pronouns (cf. example 363-365) and after those that do not show genitive constructions (cf. examples in 9.2.1) above.

Consider also the following examples.

(366) *ani bun-ni kunoo-tii=n jedh-Ø-e*
 1S:NOM coffee-NOM here-OBJ.FOC2-1S.AGR say-1S-PFV
 ‘I said here is the coffee’

(367) *manni kun kee-tii-m*
 house:NOM this yours-CS2-PRE.FOC2
 ‘It is yours that this house is’

In (366), the focus marker *-tii* occurs with the presentative, not with genitive nouns. Example (367) is the one in a genitive exclamatory construction where the copula *-ti* > *-tii* due to the addition of the predicative focus marker *-m*. More examples, which are similar to (367), can be provided and explained further for their copular function in section 9.2.5 below.

9.2.3 The development of ablative

Ablative, i.e., a movement from a place or source, is formed in Oromo through suffixing *-dhaa* to nouns that end in a long vowel, suffixing *-ii* to nouns that end in a consonant, making short final vowels long, and suffixing *-tii* to a genitive construction (Griefenow-Mewis 2001:48-49; Gobena 2017:118). This point gives a clear and straightforward indication that ablative case also emanates from copular forms.

- (368) *adaamaa-dhaa dhuf-Ø-e*
 adaamaa-ABL come-3SM-PFV
 ‘He came from Adaamaa’

(Gobena 2017:118)

- (369) *inni mana namaa²⁷-tii dhuf-e*
 he:NOM house man:GEN-from come-3SM-PFV
 ‘He came from someone’s house’

(Lloret 1988:133)

The above two examples provide a clue for the development of the source marker out of the copular morphemes. Recall also that one of the copular morphemes in Oromo is *-dha* that has allomorphic variants *-dha* which occurs after words that end in a long vowel, *-i* which occurs after words that end in a consonant, and *Ø* that occurs after words that end in a short final vowel. In addition to this, *-ti* is a copula that comes with genitive constructions. The two copular morphemes: *-dha* > *-dhaa* and *-ti* > *-tii* to indicate ablative case or source. The following examples are also provided in order to strengthen the above point.

- (370) *caaltuu-n magaalaa-dhaa buna bit-t-e*
 caaltuu-NOM city-ABL coffee buy-3SF-PFV
 ‘Caaltuu bought coffee from a market or city’

- (371) *isaan baadiyyaa-dhaa dhuf-Ø-u*
 3P:NOM countryside-ABL come-3P-IPFV
 ‘They come / will come from a countryside’

- (372) *nuti jimmaa-dhaa gara finfinnee deem-n-e*
 1P:NOM jimmaa-ABL to finfinnee go-1P-PFV
 ‘We went from Jimmaa to Finfinnee’

²⁷ Tone is not taken with the example and according to Lloret *ti + ’* represents genitive at the level of deep structure.

Since the source nouns in (370-372) end in long vowels, the ablative morpheme added to them is *-dhaa*.

Additional examples are presented below:

- (373) *barsiisaa-n manaa dhuf-Ø-a*
 teacher-NOM house:ABL come-3SM-IPFV
 ‘A teacher comes / will come from home’
- (374) *tolaa-n biyyaa dhuf-Ø-e*
 tolaa-NOM country:ABL come-3SM-PFV
 ‘Tolaa came from home country’
- (375) *caaltuu-n lagaa bishaan waraab-d²⁸-e*
 caaltuu-NOM river:ABL water fetch-3SF-PFV
 ‘Caaltuu fetched water from a river’

In (373-375), since the words that bear the source marker end in short vowels, the ablative morpheme is indicated by making the final short vowel long.

- (376) *hurrii-n kun bishaan-ii dhuf-Ø-a*
 fog-NOM this water-ABL come-3SM-IPFV
 ‘This fog comes from a water’
- (377) *aannan loon-ii dhug-i*
 milk cattle-ABL drink-2S.IMP
 ‘Drink cattle’s milk’
- (378) *foolii-n kun midhaan-ii dhuf-Ø-a*
 smell-NOM this food-ABL come-3SM-IPFV
 ‘This smell comes from a food’

As the words *bishaan* ‘water’, *loon* ‘cattle’, and *midhaan* ‘grain/food’ end in a consonant, the ablative marker morpheme which is added to them is *-ii*. Obviously, this point has got a direct correspondence with the copular morpheme *-i* which occurs after words that end in a consonant. This process can be described as a copular morpheme *-i > ii* which shows ablative or source.

- (379) *caaltuu-n mana koo-tii deem-t-e*
 caaltuu-NOM house my-ABL go-3SF-PFV
 ‘Caaltuu went from my house’

²⁸ *waraabte* becomes *waraabde* ‘she fetched’ where *t* assimilates to the preceding consonant and becomes *d* which is partial assimilation of voicing.

(380) *tolaa-n biyya alaa-tii dhuf-Ø-e*
 tolaa-NOM country foreign-ABL come-3SM-PFV
 ‘Tolaa came from a foreign country’

(381) *isaan mana tolaa-tii dhuf-an-i*
 3P:NOM house tolaa-ABL come-3P-PFV
 ‘They came from Tolaa’s house’

In the genitive construction, the ablative is marked through the use of the morpheme *-tii* which is also the case in the examples (379-381). The copular morpheme *-ti* > *-tii* in order to show a source. Consider also the following data that show the development of the ablative marker out of the copula *-uma*.

(382) *inni adaamaa-dhumaa dhuf-Ø-e*
 3SM:NOM adaamaa-ABL come-3SM-PFV
 ‘He came (definitely) from Adaamaa’

(383) *ishee-n man-umaa dhuf-t-e*
 3SF-NOM home-ABL come-3SF-PFV
 ‘She came (exactly) from home’

The grammaticalization of the copula markers into ablative can be addressed in terms of the four mechanisms of desemanticization, extension, decategorialization, and erosion as follows. The developmental change of the copula markers into ablative can be described in terms of the change and or loss of meaning. The path of grammaticalization taken from copula into the ablative case can be explained as a case of semantic bleaching. There is also a change from a syntactic function of linker into an ablative case which is a loss of one of the morphosyntactic properties and gains another one. The ablative marker morpheme is a suffix that does not have full autonomy on its own. The developed morphemes are now serving in a new context which is assumed to be started in a certain bounded context and broadened to their present use and context gradually.

9.2.4 *-uma* > *-umaa*

Just like the morphemes *-dha* and *-ti*, which grammaticalize into focus markers, *-uma* also develops into a focus marker through vowel length. The morpheme *-umaa* has allomorphic variants: *-dhumaa* which occurs after words that end in a long final vowel and *-umaa* which occurs after words that end in a short final vowel and after words that end in a consonant. The later environmental distribution can be stated as an elsewhere distribution.

(384) *ishee-n sagal-umaa-n mana dhuf-t-i*
 3SF-NOM nine-OBJ.FOC5-INS house come-3SF-IPFV
 ‘It is at nine that she comes / will come home’

(385) *tulluu-n qawwee-dhumaa-n leenca ajjees-Ø-e*
 tulluu-NOM gun-OBJ.FOC5-INS lion kill-3SM-PFV
 ‘It is with a gun that Tulluu killed a lion’

(386) *isaan hark-umaa-n nama rukut-Ø-u*
 3P:NOM hand-OBJ.FOC5-INS man hit-3P-IPFV
 ‘It is with a hand that they hit / will hit a man’

The copula marker *-uma* changes its function and serves as a focus marker through vowel length. Note that in example (384), where the word *sagal* ‘nine’ ends in a consonant, the focus marker appears as *-umaa* where *-ii* is also possible to come in place of it. In the case of (386), the word *harka* ‘hand’ ends in a short final vowel and the final vowel drops out while taking the morpheme *-umaa* as a focus marker. Since the word *qawwee* ‘gun’ ends in a long final vowel in (385), the focus marker that comes after it is *-dhumaa*.

The use of the morpheme *-umaa* as a focus marker is the one that serves in a new context where a copula changes its original meaning and functions as a focus marker. This point can be related to semantic bleaching where a certain element loses or changes from one function and can be used in the other one (as in copula to focus). When a copula marker changes into a focus marker, it loses its former morphosyntactic linking function and changes into a focus marker which can be a pragmatic one. The reanalyzed form does not stand alone; rather it is a dependent suffix that shows a loss of autonomy. It is believed that any change begins somewhere with a limited or bounded small context and then broadens and expands through time to different wider contexts. In a similar manner, the new context where the morphemes are serving now is the one that could have been developed in a certain context and expanded gradually to the present form.

9.2.5 Copular suffixes with final long vowels

A copula can grammaticalize into a focus marker in Oromo (see the above discussion). The suffix morpheme *-m* is mentioned in the literature as the one that serves for emphasis and foregrounding (Gragg 1976:193; Appleyard 2012:241). Based on the data that are provided below, the addition of this morpheme to any word triggers lengthening of the final element to which it is added. As it is suffixed to the final elements of Oromo sentences, it lengthens the final vowel of any possible element that comes at the sentence-final position (i.e., copulas, main verbs, and auxiliary/existential verbs). When it is added to copula suffixes, it produces the ones with a long vowel which are similar to the object focus markers in form, however, serve as a copula here.

(387) *hoolaa-n kun kee-tii-m*
 sheep-NOM this yours-CS2- PRE.FOC2
 ‘This sheep is yours!’

In (387), the copular suffix *-ti* changes into *-tii* because of the addition of the predicative focus marker morpheme *-m*. Despite occurring with a long final vowel, the morpheme *-tii*, in

the above sentence, functions as a copula due to its position and the linking function it has. A corresponding unfocused declarative sentence to the above one is *hoolaan kun keeti* ‘this sheep is yours’, where the copula appears with a short final vowel (*-ti*). On the other hand, *hoolaan kun keetii* ‘is this sheep yours?’ is a possible interrogative sentence without the use of the final focus marker. However, example (387), which appears in the exclamatory form, does not have an interrogative sense at all.

Additional examples are given below.

(388) *abbaa-n koo jabaad-dhaa-m*
 father-NOM my strong-CS1-PRE.FOC2
 ‘My father is strong!’

(389) *konkolaataa-n kun keenyaa-m*
 car-NOM this ours-CS1-PRE.FOC2
 ‘This car is ours!’

(390) *inni kan barbaad-Ø-u aannan-ii-m*
 3SM:NOM REL want-3SM-DEP.IPFV milk-CS1-PRE.FOC2
 ‘What he wants is milk!’

In (388-390), the predicative focus marker *-m* is added after the copula *-dha* and its different forms of realizations (*-dha*, \emptyset , and *-i*). It is the addition of the morpheme *-m* at the predicate position that changes the final short vowels of the copula to long. The focused sentences are in the exclamatory form which seems to be a result of the declarative sentences due to the addition of the focus marker *-m*. In the unfocused forms, they appear as: *abban koo jabaadha* ‘my father is strong’, *konkolaataan kun keenya* ‘this car is ours’, and *inni kan barbaadu annani* ‘what he wants is milk’.

Further example on the copulas with the final long vowel is given below:

(391) *namichi kan-umaa-m*
 man:SIN.DEF this-CS3-PRE.FOC2
 ‘This is the man!’

(392) *namichi dheeraa-dhumaa-m*
 man:SIN.DEF tall-CS3-PRE.FOC2
 ‘The man is tall!’

In (391 and 392), the morpheme *-uma* > *-umaa* and *-dhuma* > *-dhumaa* due to the addition of the focus marker *-m* at the sentence-final position. In the unfocused forms, the sentences would appear in the declarative form as: *namichi kanuma* ‘this is the man’ and *namichi dheeraadhuma* ‘the man is tall’.

9.2.6 Existential verbs (auxiliary verbs) functioning as a copula

Out of the three types of verbs in Oromo, i.e., action / stative, auxiliary, and copula, auxiliaries are used essentially as helping verb, but can also be considered as the main verb when there is no other action verb in a sentence (Gobena 2017:128). According to him, the aspect of the following sentences (393 & 394) is determined by the inflectional form of the action verb i.e., by the converb *bulee* ‘spend a night’, but not by the final vowels of the auxiliaries. It is also important to note that the auxiliary verb *jir-* has the meaning ‘exist’.

(393) *fufaa-n mana bul-ee jir-Ø-a*
 fufaa-NOM home spend night-CVB:PFV AUX-3SM
 ‘Fufaa has spent the night at home’

(394) *fufaa-n mana bul-ee tur-Ø-e*
 fufaa-NOM home spend night-CVB:PFV AUX-3SM
 ‘Fufaa had spent the night at home’

(Gobena 2017:131)

It is not known what the final vowels of the auxiliaries are actually standing for in the above two examples. They are also not glossed. However, since both *jir-* and *tur-* ‘exist with the present and past reference’ inflect for different grammatical categories, the final vowels must have a function and should be glossed as well. A closer examination of these vowels indicates that they stand for aspect. For a better understanding of this issue see table four and five and compare them with the following ones.

Table 12 Conjugation of the verb *tur-* ‘exist in the past reference’

1S	<i>ani</i>	<i>mana-n</i>	<i>tur-Ø-e</i>	‘I was at home’
1P	<i>nuti</i>	<i>mana</i>	<i>tur-r²⁹-e</i>	‘We were at home’
2S	<i>ati</i>	<i>mana</i>	<i>tur-t-e</i>	‘You were at home’
2P	<i>isin</i>	<i>mana</i>	<i>tur-t-an-i</i>	‘You were at home’
3SM	<i>inni</i>	<i>mana</i>	<i>tur-Ø-e</i>	‘He was at home’
3SF	<i>ishee-n</i>	<i>mana</i>	<i>tur-t-e</i>	‘She was at home’
3P	<i>isaan</i>	<i>mana</i>	<i>tur-an-i</i>	‘They were at home’

Table 13 Conjugation of the verb *jir-* ‘exist in the present reference’

1S	<i>ani</i>	<i>mana-n</i>	<i>jir-Ø-a</i>	‘I am at home’
1P	<i>nuti</i>	<i>mana</i>	<i>jir-r³⁰-a</i>	‘We are at home’
2S	<i>ati</i>	<i>mana</i>	<i>jir-t-a</i>	‘You are at home’
2P	<i>isin</i>	<i>mana</i>	<i>jir-t-u</i>	‘You are at home’
3SM	<i>inni</i>	<i>mana</i>	<i>jir-Ø-a</i>	‘He is at home’
3SF	<i>ishee-n</i>	<i>mana</i>	<i>jir-t-i</i>	‘She is at home’
3P	<i>isaan</i>	<i>mana</i>	<i>jir-Ø-u</i>	‘They are at home’

²⁹ *tur-n-e* changes into *turre* ‘we were’ which shows the complete assimilation of the alveolar nasal to the preceding alveolar trill.

³⁰ *jir-n-a* becomes *jirra* ‘we exist’ where *n* completely assimilates to the preceding *r*.

There are three verbal copulas in Oromo that inflect for grammatical categories of person, number, and gender. These are *jir-* for the present tense, *tur-* for the past tense, and *ta'-* for the future tense (see also the discussion on verbal copulas in section 8.4). In addition to the function they have as auxiliary verbs, these verbal copulas are also used as an existential verb as they show the existence and or presence of something. According to Payne (1997:117 & 119), copulas develop historically out of verbs and copular verbs are the number one candidate to develop into auxiliary verbs. Hence, the path of grammaticalization would be: existential verbs > copulas > auxiliary verbs. The verbal copulas are different from action verbs because they do not have action semantics and do not form predicates on their own as opposed to the inflectional verbs which do form predicates on their own.

Consider the following examples.

(395) *caalaa-n mana jir-Ø-a*
 caalaa-NOM home V.COP1.exist-3SM-IPFV
 'Caalaa is at home'

(396) *tulluu-n mana tur-Ø-e*
 tulluu-NOM home V.COP2.be-3SM-PFV
 'Tulluu was at home'

(397) *inni barsiisaa ta'-Ø-a*
 3SM:NOM teacher V.COP3.be-3SM-IPFV
 'He will be a teacher'

(398) *barumsi boru jalqab-am-a ta'-Ø-a*
 education:NOM tomorrow start-PASS-IPFV AUX-3SM-IPFV
 'Education will (perhaps) start tomorrow'

The actual use of these three elements (*jir-*, *tur-* and *ta'-*) shows that they are used as an existential verb, verbal copula, and auxiliary verb. They are used as an auxiliary, which is a helping one, in the presence of another (action) verb in a sentence as in (398) above. Considering the fact that exists elsewhere and based on their synchronic use, existential verbs must have evolved into copular verbs in Oromo. The grammaticalization of these existential verbs to verbal copulas and then to auxiliaries is further seen in the following examples especially when *jir-* 'exist' is used with another action verb in a sentence. It shows a firm development of erosion, which is one of the mechanisms of grammaticalization that erodes or reduces a phonetic element. *jir-* 'exist' which is a (stem) free element loses its autonomy and becomes a suffix in this case.

Table 14 Grammaticalization of the auxiliary verb *jir-* ‘exist’

Person	Action verb or converb	Auxiliary		Reanalyzed form 1		Reanalyzed form 2	Gloss
1S	<i>deem-ee-n</i>	<i>jir-Ø-a</i>	>	<i>deemee(n)ra</i>	>	<i>deemeera</i>	‘I have gone’
1P	<i>deem-n-ee</i>	<i>jir-n-a</i>	>	<i>deemneerna</i>	>	<i>deemneerra</i>	‘We have gone’
2S	<i>deem-t-ee</i>	<i>jir-t-a</i>	>	<i>deemteerta</i>	>	<i>deemteetta</i>	‘You have gone’
2P	<i>deem-t-an-ii</i>	<i>jir-t-u</i>	>	<i>deemtaniirtu</i>	>	<i>deemtaniittu</i>	‘You have gone’
3SM	<i>deem-ee</i>	<i>jir-Ø-a</i>	>	<i>deemeera</i>	>	<i>deemeera</i>	‘He has gone’
3SF	<i>deem-t-ee</i>	<i>jir-t-i</i>	>	<i>deemteerti</i>	>	<i>deemteetti</i>	‘She has gone’
3p	<i>deem-an-ii</i>	<i>jir-Ø-u</i>	>	<i>deemaniiru</i>	>	<i>deemaniiru</i>	‘They have gone’

In the above table, the sequence *rt* > *tt* in the second singular and plural as well as in the third singular feminine where the trill *r* completely assimilates to the following voiceless alveolar stop. Similarly, *rn* > *rr* in the first person plural form where the voiced alveolar nasal completely assimilates to the preceding voiced alveolar trill. On the other hand, the first person agreement marker *n* deletes in the reanalyzed form of the first person singular pronoun.

9.3 Summary

It has been discussed that copulas can grammaticalize into focus markers in Oromo. For example, the attributive copula *-dha* develops into the (object) focus marker. The allomorphic variants of this focus marker follow the same pattern as in the copular form. For instance, *-dha* > *-dhaa* after words that end in a long vowel. Similarly, *i* develops into *-ii* after words that end in a consonant, and *Ø* (*a*) becomes *-aa* after words that end in a short final vowel. In a similar pattern, the copula *-uma* develops into a focus marker *-umaa* which occurs after words that end in a consonant and a short vowel, and its variant *-dhumaa* occurs after words that end in a long vowel. The genitive and presentative copula *-ti* also develops into a focus marker *-tii*. On the other hand, the ablative develops out of a copula, i.e., copulas can grow into ablative markers. Existential verbs (*jir-*, *tur-*, and *ta’-*), which can be used as verbal copulas, can also be used as auxiliary verbs.

Hence, the developments that are seen in Oromo are: copulas can grammaticalize into focus markers and ablative markers and existential verbs grammaticalize into verbal copulas which can be used as auxiliaries. These changes have been characterized in terms of the four mechanisms of grammaticalization. In the process, the reanalyzed forms have shown desemantization which is a loss and or change of meaning (from a copula to focus). This is known as semantic bleaching. Most of the changes have also shown a loss of morphosyntactic property in their reanalyzed form which is known as decategorialization. This is mainly seen when copulas that function as linkers change into focus markers. The reanalyzed forms have also lost their autonomy in the sense that they have shown the characteristics of phonetic erosion. All the reanalyzed forms are now serving in a new context (it is a pragmatic/syntactic use serving in a new context). The developments must have started in a certain limited context and would have finally extended into a wider context now.

Chapter Ten

Summary and conclusion

10.1 Summary

The present study has been a comparative description of focus and copula among six Oromo dialects, i.e., Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western, Central, and Southeastern. It consists of ten chapters. Basic concepts about the language Oromo have been introduced. Previous studies of focus and copula in Oromo have also been indicated with some observable gaps. In addition to this, statement of the problem which states the existing research gap that the present study fills and the research questions that the present study answers have been discussed. The main objective of the study, which compares and describes focus and copula among six Oromo dialects together with the specific objectives, is also stated as an introductory point. The scope of the study which is limited to the treatment of focus and copula in six Oromo dialects that are spoken in Ethiopia has also been presented along with the significance that the present study has.

An eclectic framework that consists of the theory of information structure, the theory of functional grammar, and grammaticalization theory has been used as a theoretical framework within which the facts of the present study have been explained. The theory of information structure is used as one of the elements of the framework because the present study compares and describes focus as part of information structure across six dialects of Oromo. It also gives a comparative analysis of focus and copula in terms of the structural function they have. The development of copula to focus has been explained within the grammaticalization theory.

Cross-linguistic generalizations of focus and copula are stated within the general typological review. It explains facts about focus and copula from a global perspective. The connection between focus and copula has been explained in terms of the normal development trend that shows the grammaticalization of copula into focus. Rarely, focus markers can develop into a copula. Demonstratives can also grow into copula globally. The literature review on Oromo consists of general descriptive works that touch upon focus and copular constructions. The review on the specific study of focus and copula presents studies that have been made specifically either on copula or focus in Oromo. There are a handful of studies that have been made either on focus or copula in Oromo. The few existing studies of focus and copula in Oromo have been made mainly based on the Western dialect. The literature review section winds up through summarizing, showing gaps, contradictions, and unclear points based on the previously existing studies.

Since the present study is empirical in nature, two types of qualitative data (free text vs. elicitation and introspection) have been used as a methodological principle followed in the study. Informants were selected based on non-random sampling from whom data has been collected. Introspection, overheard sentences, and the texts (studies) that have been consulted for data collection are indicated within the methodology section. The six field sites selected for the present study are Fiche, Dembidollo, Diredawa, Yabello, Kamise, and Robe /

Shashemene. An overview of the grammatical structure of Oromo, which consists of mainly phonological, morphosyntactic, and dialectical outline, has also been presented.

In the data presentation and interpretation section, first, a comparative description of focus has been dealt with. In Oromo, focus is marked morphologically, syntactically, and prosodically. Morphologically, focus is marked through different morphemes; syntactically, it is marked with cleft construction and through manipulating the word order, and prosodically by the means of stress. The focus marking morphemes in Oromo are: *-tu*, *-illee*, *-uu*, *-oo*, *-dhaa*, *-tii*, *-tii* (E), *-tii / -too*, *-s*, *hin-*, *ni-*, *hinuma*, *ya*, *kaa / gaa*, *bee*, *bar*, *-m*, *ree/yii/hii*, and *-uma*. These morphemes can be classified into different types based on the property and function they have. The identified focus marking morphemes are used to focus the subject, the object, the verb, the predicate (non-argument), and the sentence. The morphemes *-tu*, *-illee*, *-uu*, *-oo*, *-uma*, and *-s* are used to focus the subject. The object is focused with the morphemes *-dhaa*, *-tii*, *-tii* (E), *-tii / too*, *-s*, *-illee*, and *-uma*. The morphemes *hin-*, *ni-*, *hinuma*, and *ya* are used to focus the verb while *kaa / gaa*, *bee*, *bar*, *-m*, and *ree/yii/hii* are used to focus the predicate (non-argument). Additionally, *bee*, *bar*, and *hinuma* are used to focus a sentence. The forms, *-illee*, *-s*, and *-uma* are used to focus both the subject and the object. Contrastive, assertive, imperative, additive, continuous, exclamatory, predicative, interrogative, and sentential focus types are identified.

The morpheme *-tu* is used to emphasize the subject noun phrase (it does not occur with the object noun phrases). It occurs with declarative, interrogative, and exclamatory sentence types in their affirmative and negative forms. The morpheme *-tu* appears with action and copular verb constructions. It does not, however, occur with negative copular constructions. The presence of modifiers and the number of occurring modifiers determine the exact place of the morpheme *-tu* within the subject noun phrase. In the absence of any modifier that modifies the subject noun phrase, it occurs with the head noun of the subject noun phrase. In the presence of modifiers, it does not occur with the head noun rather it occurs with the modifier. When several modifiers exist, the morpheme *-tu* is suffixed to the last modifier of the subject noun phrase. Sometimes, it occurs as *-t* in the Southern Oromo. Subjects lose the nominative case marker when they are focused with the form *-tu*, i.e., one occurs in the absence of the other. In copular constructions, adjectives agree with the focused subjects in terms of number and gender (Crass et. al. 2005:20).

The contrastive subject focus marker *-illee* occurs in the main and dependent clauses. It occurs in two different forms: *-illee* which occurs after words that end in a consonant and *-llee* which occurs after words that end in a vowel. In addition to subjects, the morpheme *-illee* focuses objects. Hence, it occurs in the subject and object of declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory sentences in the affirmative and negative construction types. The morpheme *-dhaa*, which is used to focus objects, occurs in the affirmative and negative declarative, interrogative, exclamatory, and imperative sentence types. It appears in three phonologically conditioned forms: *-dhaa* which occurs after words that end in a long vowel, *-ii* which occurs after words that end in a consonant, and vowel length which occurs after words that end in a short vowel. In most cases, the morpheme *-dhaa* is followed by the instrumental marker *-n*.

The form *-tii*, which is very similar functionally to the morpheme *-dhaa*, is also used to focus the object of a sentence. Some speakers of the Western dialect use *-tii* instead of *-dhaa* or interchangeably. The form *-tii* is a pragmatically controlled morpheme as it gives an option to the speakers so that they can use the non-focused counterparts of emphasized sentences. It occurs in the imperative, declarative, interrogative, and exclamatory sentence types. In a modified noun phrase, the modifier(s) carry this morpheme. As opposed to *-dhaa*, *-tii* emphasizes genitive and source objects. On the other hand, like the morpheme *-dhaa*, *-tii* also occurs in three forms: *a* (*aa*) which occurs after words that end in a short vowel *a*, *-ii* which occurs after words that end in a consonant, and *-tii* which occurs after words that end in a long vowel. In the Eastern Oromo, there is an assertive object focus marker *-tii* which occurs in the affirmative and negative declarative and interrogative forms. It is attached to a converb or verbal noun and usually occurs before the existential (copular) verb *jir-*.

The morpheme *-tii / -too* is used to focus objects in the imperative construction type (either in the affirmative or negative form). It is used with the second person pronouns and occurs in the main and subordinate clauses. It is a pragmatically controlled one as it gives an option to the speakers so that they can use unfocused forms where necessary. The *-tii / -too* alternation is explained as *-tii* occurs with singular pronouns in the affirmative imperative and exclamatory forms while *-too* occurs with plural pronouns usually in the negative jussive sentence type. The morpheme *-s* also focuses subjects and objects. At the object position, it is attached to verbal nouns in the dependent and independent clauses. Verbs change into verbal nouns through a regular addition of *-uu* and then add *-s*. The additive focus marker *-s* occurs in the affirmative and negative declarative, interrogative, exclamatory, jussive, and imperative sentences.

The form *hin-* is used as an assertive verb focus marker in the Northern, Southern, Western, Central, and Southeastern dialects. It is used in the declarative, interrogative, and exclamatory sentences, but not in the imperative and jussive sentences (the verbs of imperative and jussive sentences are not focused morphologically with *hin-*). This morpheme is used with the affirmative forms but not with the negative constructions. There is another morpheme *hin-* which functions as a negative marker. The focus marker *hin-* is produced with extra energy (high pitch) as opposed to the negative marker (Baye 1988:369; Dabala & Meyer 2003:166). In the declarative and interrogative sentences with the imperfective aspect reference, the focus marker *hin-* is obligatorily used and totally controlled by the grammar but not by the pragmatics.

The morpheme *ni-* is used as a verbal focus marker in the Eastern Oromo. It is obligatorily used in the imperfective aspect reference. The morpheme *hinuma*, which is used as an assertive verb focus marker, shows progressive (continuous) focus. It occurs in the affirmative declarative, interrogative, and exclamatory sentences. Usually, it occurs with the type of affirmative constructions. The morpheme *hinuma* must have been formed from the prefix *hin-* and the suffix *-uma* through a process of merger. In the Northern, Western, and Central Oromo, the first person singular pronoun is focused with *nan-*. On the other hand, *hin-* is used to focus all pronouns including first person singular pronoun in the Southern and Southeastern Oromo; while *nin-* is used to focus first person singular pronoun in the Eastern

Oromo. The morphemes *nan-*, *nin-*, and *hin-* are grammatically controlled focus markers in the imperfective aspect reference, because they do not give an option to the speakers so that they can use non-focused alternative forms.

In the Southern Oromo, the morpheme *ya* is used to focus mainly verbs, nouns, adjuncts, and reciprocal words at the sentence-medial and rarely final positions. It is independent in its appearance and occurs before or after the element that is being focused. It occurs in the declarative imperative, exclamatory, and interrogative sentences.

The morpheme *kaa/gaa* functions as a focus marker in exclamatory sentences. It is named as an exclamatory (predicative) focus marker as it occurs usually after a copula and finite verbs. Imperative verbs that give order are also focused with this morpheme. It also occurs with negative and affirmative declarative sentences. The morpheme *bee* is used as a predicative or non-argument focus marker in all the varieties of Oromo except for the Eastern variety. It occurs normally after verbs and copulas in the affirmative and negative sentence types. It is a pragmatically controlled one with the alternative form *bar* in the Eastern Oromo. The morpheme *-m* functions as a predicative focus marker that occurs with exclamatory sentences in the Western Oromo. The interrogative focus marker morpheme *ree* has an alternative form *yii* mainly in the Northern, Central, and Western and *hii* in the Eastern Oromo. It consistently occurs at the sentence-final position.

The form *-uma* is used to focus a subject in the affirmative declarative and interrogative sentences. It is also used to focus objects in the affirmative declarative, interrogative, jussive, exclamatory, and imperative. In addition to this, it occurs at the object position with the negative verbal and copular clauses. The morpheme *-uma* occurs in two different forms: *-dhuma* which occurs after words that end in a long vowel and *-uma* which occurs in an elsewhere distribution, i.e., occurs after words that end in a short vowel and consonant. It occurs in the main and subordinate clauses. Sometimes, the morpheme *-uma* and *-tu* occur either separately or jointly being juxtaposed within the subject noun phrase. In cases like this, only the morpheme *-tu* functions as a focus marker; *-uma* serves as a definiteness marker.

From a syntactic point of view, cleft constructions are used to show focus in Oromo. The normal word order is manipulated and the element that is emphasized comes to the initial position of a sentence. Any part of a sentence including the verb can be moved or clefted. The object of a sentence and copular verbs are the ones that are dominantly clefted. Interrogative words can also be moved to the initial part of a sentence for the sake of focus. Interrogative pronouns and question words are focused morphologically and syntactically. The morphological focus marking morphemes that occur with interrogative pronouns are *-tu* and *-uma*. At the subject position they are focused with *-tu* and with *-uma* at the object position. Interrogative pronouns are obligatorily focused either through morphological focus markings or through stress. Stress is used to focus constituents of a sentence, question words, answer to a given question, and interrogative pronouns. Answers like *eeyyee* ‘yes’ and *lakki* ‘no’ are focused ones. In Oromo, the connectors: *waan*, *gatii*, *sababa*, and *ammoo* can come at different parts of a sentence to let the sentences or constituents focused.

The identified types of focus in Oromo are: contrastive, assertive, imperative, additive, predicative, exclamatory, continuous / certainty, interrogative, and sentential. Hence, the contrastive focus marking morphemes are: *-tu*, *-dhaa*, *-tii*, *-illee*, and *-uma / -um*. The assertive focus markers are *-uu*, *-oo*, *hin-*, *ni-*, *ya*, and *-ti*. The other types are: imperative *-tii / -too*, additive *-s*, continuous *hinuma*, exclamatory *kaa /gaa*, predicative *bee*, *bar*, and *-m*, interrogative *ree/yii/hii*, and sentential *bee*, *bar*, and *hinuma*.

In addition to the morphological and syntactic ways, focus realizes through prosodic means. The scope of focus is on one of the following constituents: the subject, the object, the verb, the predicate (non-argument), and the sentence. Focus is either pragmatically or syntactically controlled in Oromo. In a pragmatically controlled, focus is determined by the actual discourse situation while in a syntactically controlled focus is determined by the grammar. From a comparative point of view, the Northern, Central, and Western Oromo show more similar focus patterns especially in having *nan-* as a first person singular focus marker in common. This occurs as *nin-* in the Eastern and *hin-* in the Southern and Southeastern Oromo. Eastern Oromo in particular possesses the verb focus marker *ni-*, the object focus marker *-tii*, and the predicate focus marker *bar* alone. There is a general tendency of shortening words or morphemes in the Southern Oromo: *-uma* > *-um*, *hinuma* > *hinum*, *-tu* > *-t* and etc.

Globally, there is a general tendency of having a single focus marker per sentence. In Oromo, however, one or more than one focus markers can occur per sentence, usually depending on the number of clauses that exist in a sentence. Two focus markers of the same or different types can occur in the main and subordinate clauses. The same focus marker may occur twice in the dependent clause and followed by a different one in the main clause. Interrogative sentences may contain obligatory focus marker(s) *hin-/ni-* and optional *ree*.

Oromo is a language that uses a copula in the present and non-present tenses. The elements that are used as a copula in Oromo are copula suffixes, a particle copula, derivational operation, verbs, and simple juxtaposition of the subject and the predicate. The affirmative copula suffixes are: *-dha*, *-ti*, and *-uma*. The only negative particle copula is *miti*. The derivational morphemes *-oom*, *-eess*, and *-at* form verbs out of nouns and adjectives that are used in the predicate nominal clause. The verbs that are used as a copula are *jir-* in the present tense, *tur-* in the past tense, and *ta'-* in the future tense. The Eastern and Southern Oromo do not use the morpheme *-dha*, but a simple juxtaposition of the subject and the predicate is employed. The copula in Oromo can be grouped as verbal and non-verbal. The verbal copulas are verbs of existence that inflect for different grammatical categories. The non-verbal copulas consist of copula suffixes, a particle, and zero copulas that do not inflect.

Copula suffixes show two independent developments in Oromo. Copula markers grammaticalize into focus markers. For example: *-dha* > *-dhaa*, *-ti* > *-tii*, and *-uma* > *-umaa*. Additionally, copulas can also grammaticalize into source (ablative) markers: *-dha* > *dhaa* after words that end in a long vowel, *-ti* > *-tii* after a genitive noun, *-uma* > *-umaa* which has allomorphic variants *-dhumaa* which occurs after words that end in a long vowel and *-umaa* which occurs after words that end in a consonant and a short vowel. In both cases of focus

and ablative or source marker, the morpheme *-dhaa* has allomorphic variants: *-ii* which occurs after words that end in a consonant, *aa* which occurs after words that end in a short vowel, and *-dhaa* which occurs after words that end in a long vowel. Existential verbs can develop into verbal copulas in Oromo. The verbal copulas are *jir-*, *tur-*, and *ta'*, which are used in the present, past, and future references respectively, can also be used and develop into auxiliary verbs, i.e., existential verbs > verbal copulas > auxiliary verbs. The grammaticalized forms are characterized in terms of the four mechanisms of grammaticalization. These are desemanticization which is a loss of meaning, decategorialization which is a loss of morphosyntactic property, erosion which is a loss of autonomy, and extension which is a gain function of expansion.

10.2 Conclusion

The present study has comparatively described focus and copula among six dialects of Oromo, i.e., Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western, Central, and Southeastern. It has been identified in Oromo that focus is realized morphologically, syntactically, and prosodically. It has also been recognized that focus is controlled either pragmatically or syntactically. The identified types of focus are: contrastive, assertive, imperative, additive, predicative, exclamatory, continuous, interrogative, and sentential. The scope of focus is on the subject, object, verb, predicate, and sentence. The focus marking morphemes that have been identified in Oromo are: *-tu*, *-illee*, *-uu*, *-oo*, *-dhaa*, *-tii*, *-tii* (E), *-tii / -too*, *-s*, *hin-*, *ni-*, *hinuma*, *ya*, *kaa/gaa*, *bee*, *bar*, *-m*, *ree/yii/hii*, and *-uma*. Most of the focus marking morphemes are commonly shared among the six dialects of Oromo with very little variation. In addition to the morphological means, focus in Oromo is marked syntactically through cleft construction. Prosodically, it is marked with stress. Opposed to the general tendency that exists elsewhere in the world, one and more than one focus markers occur per sentence in Oromo (there is a co-occurrence of morphemes in a single sentence). Here there are two systems that are mixed, i.e., morphosyntactic and pragmatically determined ones. Usually, this could happen as the morphosyntactical system loses its pragmatic power (due to obligatoriness), a new pragmatic system has been added and now they co-occur.

Oromo uses a copula in the present and non-present tenses. The elements that are used as a copula in Oromo are copula suffixes, a particle copula, derivational operation, verbs, and a simple juxtaposition of the subject and the predicate. The affirmative copula suffixes are: *-dha*, *-ti*, and *-uma*. The only negative particle copula is *miti*. The derivational morphemes that are used to drive verbs that are used in the predicate nominal clause are *-oom*, *-eess*, and *-at*. The verbs that are used as a copula are *jir-* in the present tense, *tur-* in the past tense, and *ta'* in the future tense. The Eastern and Southern Oromo do not use the morpheme *-dha*, instead a simple juxtaposition of the subject and the predicate is used. The copula in Oromo can be grouped as verbal and non-verbal. The verbal copulas are verbs of existence that inflect for different grammatical categories. The non-verbal copulas consist of the copula suffixes, a particle, and zero copulas that do not inflect.

The connection between focus and copula is explained in terms of grammaticalization process. There are two independent developments regarding copulas in Oromo: copulas can

grammaticalize into focus markers and into source (ablative) markers. Existential verbs can grammaticalize into verbal copulas which in turn develop into auxiliary verbs. Hence, copula, focus, and source markers are highly interrelated in Oromo.

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Appendix 1

Informants

No.	Name	Gender	Age	Educational background	Specific area
(1)	Tesfaye Megersa	Male	60	B.A.	Dembidollo (Western)
(2)	Sisay Fayyera	Male	35	B.A.	Dembidollo (Western)
(3)	Gamtesa Banti	Male	35	M.A.	Dembidollo (Western)
(4)	Jirata Raso	Male	55	B.A.	Dembidollo (Western)
(5)	Caltu Badhane	Female	50	12 complete	Dembidollo (Western)
(6)	Nagash Hunde	Male	63	M.A.	Fiche (Central)
(7)	Bifa Telila	Male	35	Ph.D. candidate	Fiche (Central)
(8)	Soreti Ayano	Female	49	No formal education	Fiche (Central)
(9)	Awwal Said	Male	35	M.A.	Diredawa (Eastern)
(10)	Kemer Aliyi	Male	30	B.A.	Diredawa (Eastern)
(11)	Adam Mohammad	Male	37	B.A.	Diredawa (Eastern)
(12)	Mohammad Aliyi	Male	65	12 complete	Diredawa (Eastern)
(13)	Wako Kana	Male	22	B.A.	Yabello (Southern)
(14)	Hukka Dabbaso	Male	21	B.A.	Yabello (Southern)
(15)	Galgalo Bobba	Male	63	Grade 6	Yabello (Southern)
(16)	Kana Hukka	Male	58	No formal education	Yabello (Southern)
(17)	Ahmad Mahammud	Male	43	Ph.D. candidate	Robe (Southeastern)
(18)	Kasim Ali	Male	53	elementary complete	Robe (Southeastern)
(19)	Husen Mohammad	male	35	B.A.	Robe (Southeastern)
(20)	Muna Abdulkadir	Female	55	12 complete	Shashemene (Southeastern)
(21)	Mohammad Ahmed	Male	60	Grade 8	Kamise (Northern)
(22)	Muktar Usman	Male	45	12 complete	Kamise (Northern)
(23)	Nesru Zeynu	Male	36	B.A.	Kamise (Northern)

Appendix 2

Words that end in a consonant

No.	Word	Gloss	As in
(1)	<i>aannan</i>	milk	<i>isheen aannan dhugde</i> ‘she drunk milk’
(2)	<i>akkam</i>	how	<i>akkam jirta</i> ‘how are you?’
(3)	<i>bishaan</i>	water	<i>isheen bishaan waraabde</i> ‘she fetched water’
(4)	<i>daran</i>	very / better than / worse than	<i>mucaan daran cimaadha</i> ‘the boy is very strong’
(5)	<i>dur</i>	early	<i>inni dur na beeka</i> ‘he knows me before’
(6)	<i>firfir</i>	shiver	<i>garaa koo firfir na goote</i> ‘you shivered me’
(7)	<i>foon</i>	meat	<i>caalaan foon bite</i> ‘Caalaa bought meat’
(8)	<i>funyaan</i>	nose	<i>funyaan hinfuunfata</i> ‘a nose smells’
(9)	<i>halkan</i>	night	<i>halkan walakkaa dhufe</i> ‘he came at mid night’
(10)	<i>iftaan</i>	a day after tomorrow	<i>iftaan koottu</i> ‘come a day after tomorrow’
(11)	<i>ilkaan</i>	teeth	<i>namni ilkaan 32 qaba</i> ‘human being has 32 teeth’
(12)	<i>kudhan</i>	ten	<i>nama kudhan waami</i> ‘call ten people’
(13)	<i>loon</i>	cattle	<i>loon t’iqqoo qaba</i> ‘he has a few cattle’
(14)	<i>maal</i>	what	<i>maal barbaadda</i> ‘what do you want?’
(15)	<i>midhaan</i>	grain (food)	<i>tolaan midhaan facaase</i> ‘Tolaa sowed grain’
(16)	<i>nadheen</i>	lady	<i>inni nadheen jaalata</i> ‘he likes lady’
(17)	<i>ol</i>	up	<i>gaaratti ol bahi</i> ‘climb on to the mountain’
(18)	<i>qoraan</i>	fire wood	<i>qoraan guuraa jirti</i> ‘she is collecting firewood’
(19)	<i>sadan</i>	the three (triple)	<i>namoota sadan waami</i> ‘call the three people’
(20)	<i>saddeet</i>	eight	<i>qarhii saddeet naaf kenni</i> ‘give me eight birr’
(21)	<i>sagal</i>	nine	<i>yeroo sagal carraaqi</i> ‘try nine times’
(22)	<i>shan</i>	five	<i>inni yeroo shan dhufe</i> ‘he came five times’
(23)	<i>surur</i>	feeling bad	<i>surur na jedhe</i> ‘I felt bad’
(24)	<i>torban</i>	week	<i>torban har’aa koottu</i> ‘come a week from today’
(25)	<i>udaan</i>	waste matter	<i>daa’imni udaan haggaa jira</i> ‘the kid is defecating’
(26)	<i>yoom</i>	when	<i>yoom dhufta</i> ‘when do you come?’

Appendix 3

Collected texts

No.	Type	Quantity	Approximate number of sentences
(1)	Tale	30	589
(2)	Proverb	300	300
(3)	War song	16	192
(4)	Riddle	25	50
(5)	Overheard sentences	400	400

Overheard sentences

- (1) *sii-tu naa dawaa-Ø*
 2S-SUB.FOC1 for me medicine-CS4
 ‘You are my medicine’
 (cf. section 5.2.1 & 8.2.2)
- (2) *hin-barreess-i-n-e-e yii*
 NEG-write-EPEN-NEG-PFV-Q INT.FOC
 ‘Didn’t you write?’
 (cf. section 5.2.18)
- (3) *ol deeb’-Ø-ee-tii=n jir-Ø-a*
 up return-3SM-CVB-OBJ.FOC3-1S.AGR AUX-3SM-IPFV
 ‘He returned back up’
 (cf. section 5.2.7 & 8.4.1)
- (4) *hin-kukut-Ø-aa-m*
 V.FOC1-interrupt-3SM-IPFV:CS1-PRE.FOC2
 ‘It interrupts!’ ‘It breaks repeatedly!’
 (cf. section 5.2.10, 5.2.17 & 9.2.5)
- (5) *kuma sadii-dhaa-m*
 thousand three-CS1-PRE.FOC2
 ‘It is three thousand!’
 (cf. section 5.2.17 & 9.2.5)
- (6) *akkasii miyii*
 like that isn’t it
 ‘Isn’t it like that?’
 (cf. section 8.2.5)
- (7) *kana naa kenn-i je’-Ø-a bar*
 this for me give-IMP say-Ø-IPFV PRE.FOC1
 ‘He is saying ‘give me this’’
 (cf. section 5.2.16)

- (8) *seeraa-n-i-s* *seena-n-i-s* *finfinnee-n* *kan* *oromoo-ti*
law-INS-EPEN- history-INS-EPEN- finfinnee- REL oromoo-
ADD.FOC ADD.FOC NOM CS2
‘Be it in law or history, Finfinnee belongs to the Oromo’
(cf. section 5.2.9 & 8.2.3)
- (9) *dafii-tii* *koott-u*
quick-IMP.FOC come-2S.IMP
‘Come quickly’
(cf. section 5.2.8)
- (10) *lafti* *laf-uma*
land:NOM land-CS3
‘A land is a land’
(cf. section 8.2.4)
- (11) *biyyi* *biyy-uma*
country country-CS3
‘A country is a country’
(cf. section 8.2.4)
- (12) *sareen* *saree-dhuma*
dog:NOM dog-CS3
‘A dog is a dog’
(cf. section 8.2.4)
- (13) *inni* *farsoo-dhuma* *dhug-Ø-e*
he:NOM local beer-OBJ.FOC5 drink-3SM-PFV
‘He drunk local beer’
(cf. section 5.2.19)
- (14) *inni* *barsiisaa-dhuma* *gaarii-dha*
he:NOM teacher-OBJ.FOC5 good-CS1
‘He is a good teacher’
(cf. section 5.2.19 & 8.2.1)
- (15) *namni* *kun* *dheeraa-dha*
person:NOM this tall-CS1
‘This person is tall’
(cf. section 8.2.1)
- (16) *inni* *kun* *aannan-i*
he / it:NOM this milk-CS1
‘This is milk’
(cf. section 8.2.1)
- (17) *kun* *nama-Ø*
this human being-CS1
‘This is human being’
(cf. section 8.2.1)

- (18) *koott-u kaa*
 come-2S.IMP EXC.FOC
 ‘Come!’
 (cf. section 5.2.14)
- (19) *ani hinuma=n bit-Ø-e*
 1S:NOM V.FOC3-1S. AGR BUY-1S-PFV
 ‘I bought’
 (cf. section 5.2.12)
- (20) *deem-i kaa*
 go-2S.IMP EXC.FOC
 ‘Go!’
 (cf. section 5.2.14)
- (21) *anaa-f kirstoos jireenya koo-ti*
 1S:GEN:BENE Christ life mine-CS2
 ‘For me, Christ is my life’
 (cf. section 8.2.3)
- (22) *ani qotuu nan-barbaad-Ø-a*
 1S:NOM farm:VN V.FOC1-need-1S-IPFV
 ‘I need / want to farm’
 (cf. section 5.2.10)
- (23) *ani qotuu nin-barbaad-Ø-a*
 1S:NOM farm:VN V.FOC2-need / want-1S-IPFV
 ‘I need / want to farm’
 (cf. section 5.2.11)
- (24) *ani hin-barbaad-Ø-a*
 1S:NOM V.FOC1-need / want-1S-IPFV
 ‘I need / want’
 (cf. section 5.2.10)
- (25) *inni afaan-uma oromoo qofa dubbat-Ø-a*
 3SM:NOM language-OBJ.FOC5 oromoo only speak-3SM-IPFV
 ‘He speaks only afan Oromo’
 (cf. section 5.2.19)
- (26) *yoom dhuf-t-a ree*
 when come-2S-IPFV INT.FOC
 ‘When do you come?’
 (cf. section 5.2.18)
- (27) *eeyyee kaa*
 yes EXC.FOC
 ‘Yes!’
 (cf. section 5.2.14)

- (28) *ni-kireeff-am-a*
 V.FOC2-rent-PASS-IPFV
 ‘It would be rented’
 (cf. section 5.2.11)
- (29) *aadaan keenya ibsituu eenymmaa keenyaa-ti*
 culture:NOM our light:VN being our-CS2
 ‘Our culture is an indicator of our being’
 (cf. section 8.2.3)
- (30) *ani nan-dhug-Ø-e*
 1S:NOM V.FOC1-drink-1S-PFV
 ‘I drunk’
 (cf. section 5.2.10)
- (31) *ana-tu dhug-Ø-e*
 1S:ABS-SUB.FOC1 drink-1S-PFV
 ‘It is me who drunk’
 (cf. section 5.2.1)
- (32) *na-tu dhug-Ø-e*
 1S:ABS-SUB.FOC1 drink-1S-PFV
 ‘It is me who drunk’
 (cf. section 5.2.1)
- (33) *yoom dhuf-Ø-u ree*
 when come-1S-IPFV INT.FOC
 ‘When do I come?’
 (cf. section 5.2.18)
- (34) *nam-icha guddaa dheeraa sana-tu dhuf-Ø-e*
 person-DEF.SIN big tall that-SUB.FOC1 come-3SM-PFV
 ‘It is that big tall man who came’
 (cf. section 5.2.1)
- (35) *isaan hinuma wal arrabs-Ø-u*
 3P:NOM V.FOC3 each other insult-3P-IPFV
 ‘They insult each other’
 (cf. section 5.2.12)
- (36) *amma kaa*
 now EXC.FOC
 ‘Now!’
 (cf. section 5.2.14)
- (37) *maal jet-t-a ree*
 what say-2S-IPFV INT.FOC
 ‘What do you say?’
 (cf. section 5.2.18)

- (38) *nuti is-uma shakk-i-n-a*
 1P:NOM 3SM:ABS-OBJ.FOC5 suspect-EPEN-1P-IPFV
 ‘We suspect him’ / ‘It is him whom we suspect’
 (cf. section 5.2.19)
- (39) *ati is-uma gaafadh-u*
 2S:NOM 3SM-OBJ.FOC5 ask-2S.IMP
 ‘(You) ask him’
 (cf. section 5.2.19)
- (40) *biiti bal’oo-Ø*
 country:NOM wide-CS4
 ‘The country is wide’
 (cf. section 8.2.2)
- (41) *eenyu-tu dhuf-e-e*
 who-SUB.FOC1 come-PFV-Q
 ‘Who came?’
 (cf. section 5.3.3)
- (42) *ati eess-uma deem-t-a-a*
 2S:NOM where-OBJ.FOC5 go-2S-IPFV-Q
 ‘Where do you go?’
 (cf. section 5.3.3)
- (43) *namicha gurraacha san-tu nama gaarii-dha*
 man-DEF.SIN black that-SUB.FOC1 person good-CS1
 ‘That black man is a good person’
 (cf. section 5.2.1 & 8.2.1)
- (44) *inni kun kophee-dha*
 he / it:NOM this shoe-CS1
 ‘This is a shoe’
 (cf. section 8.2.1)
- (45) *maal-uma goot-a*
 what-OBJ.FOC5 do-2S.IMP
 ‘What do you do?’
 (cf. section 5.3.3)
- (46) *eeny-uma-tu si kenn-a-a*
 who-SUB.FOC5-SUB.FOC1 2S:ABS give-IPFV-Q
 ‘Who will give you?’
 (cf. section 5.2.20)
- (47) *hattuu-dhuma-tu fudhat-Ø-e*
 thief-SUB.FOC5-SUB.FOC1 take-3SM-PFV
 ‘It is a thief who took it’
 (cf. section 5.2.20)

(48) *kan-uma qofa-tu jir-a*
 this-SUB.FOC5 alone-SUB.FOC1 exist-IPFV
 ‘It is only this one that exists’
 (cf. section 5.2.20 & 8.4.1)

(49) *jireenyi bay’ee gaarii-dha*
 life:NOM very good-CS1
 ‘Life is very good’
 (cf. section 8.2.1)

(50) *lafti kun gadhee miti*
 land:NOM this bad NEG.PARCOP
 ‘This land is not bad’
 (cf. section 8.2.5)

Proverbs with focus and / or copula

(1) *ijoollee fi saree-tu ollaa walitti naq-Ø-a*
 children and dog-SUB.FOC1 neighbor to one another quarrel-3SM-IPFV
 ‘It is a dog and children that bring quarrel to neighbors’
 (cf. section 5.2.1)

(2) *yaa’a qallat-t-e kophee-dhaa-n cheh-an-i*
 river thin-3SF-PFV shoe-OBJ.FOC1 cross-3P-PFV
 ‘It is with a shoe (on a foot) that a small / tiny river can be crossed’
 (cf. section 5.2.5)

(3) *namni ittoo-dhaa-n nyaat-Ø-u saree quba hin-qab-Ø-u*
 person:NOM sauce-OBJ.FOC1-INS eat-3SM-IPFV dog finger NEG-have-3SM-IPFV
 ‘A person who eats with a sauce does not remember a dog / a rich person may not remember the pain of poor’
 (cf. section 5.2.5)

(4) *bitaaa- kor-an-i-s mirgaa-n kor-an-i-s walgayiin koor-uma*
n
 left- climb-3P- right:GEN- climb-3P- reach up saddle-
 NOM EPEN.PFV- NOM EPEN.PFV- ADD.FOC CS3
 ADD.FOC
 ‘Whether climbed through left or right, the reach up is just a sadder’
 (cf. section 5.2.9 & 8.2.4)

(5) *tan taa’-Ø-u-tti waaqni dhiyoo-dha*
 REL sit-3SM-IPFV-LOC God:NOM near-CS1
 ‘The one who does not work considers that everything is easy’
 (cf. section 8.2.1)

(6) *balaballi fi ijoollee-n nam-uma ilaal-t-i*
 door:NOM and children-NOM people-OBJ.FOC5 stare-3SF-IPFV
 ‘A door and children stare at people’
 (cf. section 5.2.19)

- (15) *namni ni-yaad-Ø-a; waaqa-tu iddoo-n gah-Ø-a*
human being:NOM V.FOC2-think-3SM-IPFV God-SUB.FOC1 place-INS take-3SM-IPFV
‘Human being plans, but it is God who finishes it’
(cf. section 5.2.11 & 5.2.1)
- (16) *ijoollee-dhaa-f abbaa ishii qofa-tu goota itti fakkaat-Ø-a*
children-OBJ.FOC1- father hert alone- hero for seem-3SM-
DAT SUB.FOC1 IPFV
‘It is only their father that looks a hero for children’
(cf. section 5.2.1 & 5.2.5)
- (17) *namni waan-uma facaas-Ø-e mur-at-a*
person:NOM thing-OBJ.FOC5 sow-3SM-PFV harvest-BEN-IPFV
‘It is what he plants that a person harvests’
(cf. section 5.2.19)
- (18) *obboleessi namaa utubaa-dha*
brother:NOM person:GEN pillar-CS1
‘A brother is pillar for a person’
(cf. section 8.2.1)
- (19) *obboleessi dhugaa kan gaafa rakkoo-ti*
brother:NOM true REL time trouble-CS2
‘A true brother is the one who stands with you in the time of trouble’
(cf. section 8.2.3)
- (20) *rooba-tu galaana fid-Ø-a*
rain-SUB.FOC1 ocean bring-3SM-IPFV
‘It is a rain that brings / makes an ocean’
(cf. section 5.2.1)
- (21) *waaq-ni ijoollee ulee-dha*
God-NOM children stick-CS1
‘It is a stick that children fear (consider as a God)’
(cf. section 8.2.1)
- (22) *saree-tu saree beek-Ø-a*
dog-SUB.FOC1 dog know-3SM-IPFV
‘It is a dog that knows a dog’
(cf. section 5.2.1)
- (23) *sodaataa-tu lama bul-a*
coward-SUB.FOC1 two live-3SM-IPFV
‘It is a coward who lives longer’
(cf. section 5.2.1)
- (24) *warra akka walii-tu mana walii dhaq-Ø-a*
people like similar-SUB.FOC1 house each other go-3SM-IPFV
‘It is a similar people who live together’
(cf. section 5.2.1)

(25) *saree fi ijoollee abbaa-tu ofitti kaas-Ø-a*
 dog and children onself-SUB.FOC1 to oneself stand-3SM-IPFV
 ‘It is oneself that turns the attention of a dog and children to himself’
 (cf. section 5.2.1)

Sample of tales collected from different areas (most of them are commonly shared stories among the different dialects). But, here 1-6 represent Western, Central, Southern, Southeastern, Eastern, and Northern respectively.

1) A wise ape

yeroo durii keessa leenca qamalee fi sardiida ta'-an-ii walitti
 time early in lion ape and rabbit be-3P-PFV:CVB together

firoom-an-ii jiraachaa tur-an-i. osoo waliin jiraachaa jir-an-ii
 relative-3P-PFV:CVB live:PROG AUX-3P-PFV while together living exist-3P-PFV:CVB

sardiid-ni leenca-tti siq-uu-dhaa-n qamaleen kophee hodh-uu
 rabbit-NOM lion-to getting closer-VN-OBJ.FOC1-INS ape-NOM shoe make-VN

waan beek-t-uu-f kophee naaf hodh-Ø-i jedh-ii-tii
 since know-3SF-VN-DAT shoe for me make-3SM-IMP say-IMP-OBJ.FOC2

ajaj-Ø-i jech-uu-dhaa-n leenca-tti him-t-e. kana booda
 order-3SM-IMP say-VN-OBJ.FOC1-INS lion-to tell-3SF-PFV this after

leenc-i-s kan sardiid-ni jet-t-ee-n-i kana dhagay-Ø-ee
 lion-EPEN-ADD.FOC REL rabbit-NOM say-3SF-CVB-EPEN-PFV this hear-3SM-PFV:CVB

gara qamalee deem-uu-dhaa-n kophee hodh-uu hin-beek-t-a waan
 to ape go-VN-OBJ.FOC1-INS shoe make-VN V.FOC1-know-3SF-IPFV since

ta'-ee-f mee kophee naaf hojjadh-u jedh-ee-n-i beek-uu-llee
 be-PFV:CVB-DAT DM shoe for make-2S.IMP say-CVB-EPEN-PFV know-VN-SUB.FOC2

nan-beek-Ø-a hodh-uu-f gogaa sardiidaa na barbaachisa
 V.FOC1-know-1S-IPFV make-VN-DAT leather rabbit:GEN 1S.ABS needed

leenc-i aar-Ø-ee eenyu abbaa saa koott-u na-tti
lion-NOM angry-3SM-PFV:CVB who father him come-2S.IMP 1SABS-to

agarsiis-i. eessa jir-Ø-a jennaan fuu-t-ee-too garba
show-1S.IMP where be-3SM-IPFV say:PROG take-3SF-PFV:CVB-IMP.FOC lake

guddaa tokko bira qamalee-n leenca geess-i-t-e. achumaan eessa
big one near ape-NOM lion take-EPEN-3SF-PFV after that where

jedh-Ø-ee gaafannaan kunoo goftaa koo bishaan kana keessa kan
say-3SM-PFV:CVB ask:PROG here lord my water this in REL

isin fakkaatu hin-mul'at-Ø-a; gadi hin-laal-t-an-i-i jet-t-ee-n-i
2P look like V.FOC1-see-3SM-IPFV down NEG-see-2-P-PFV-Q say-3SF-CVB-EPEN-PFV

yeroo kana leenci dhuguma itti fakkaat-Ø-ee gadi yoo jedh-Ø-u
time this lion-NOM true to look-3SM-PFV:CVB down while say-3SM-DEP-IPFV

gaadidduu isaa bishaan keessatti arg-Ø-a. oggaa arg-Ø-u
shadow 3SM.ABS:GEN water in:LOC see-3SM-IPFV while see-3SM-DEP-IPFV

dhuguma edaa leenca kan biraa-tu irraa fudhat-Ø-e. gooy
true DM lion REL other-SUB.FOC1 from take-3SM-PFV INTRJ

nan godh-Ø-aa-f jedh-Ø-ee daf-Ø-ee utaal-Ø-ee
V.FOC1 make-1S-IPFV-BENE say-3SM-PFV:CVB quick-3SM:PFV: jump-3SM-PFV:CVB
CVB

garba keessa seen-Ø-ee achumaan bah-uu dadhab-Ø-e. qamalee-n
lake in enter-3SM-PFV:CVB after that out-VN unable-3SM-PFV ape-NOM

waa diina ishee malaan ajjeef-t-ee haala kanaan jiraat-t-e
all enemy her wisely kill-3SF-PFV:CVB situation this live-3SF-PFV

jedh-am-a.
say-PASS-IPFV

Once upon a time, a lion, an ape, and a rabbit were living together peacefully. A rabbit told the lion that an ape knows how to make a shoe and let her do it for you. Having this information, a lion said to the ape that since you know how to make a shoe please make it for me. The ape replied ‘yes I know, but I need rabbit’s skin to make a shoe’ (she said like this because she has known that the rabbit advised a lion). After this, a lion killed the rabbit and skinned it out, and gave the leather to the ape. After some time, the lion asked the ape that ‘I have given you the leather that you needed, therefore, why don’t you make my shoe?’ She said ‘Mr. Lion yes you have given me the leather, however, while I was trying to smoothen it in the water someone who looks like you has taken the leather away from me’. The lion said ‘who is he?’ Please show me. Then, the ape took him to a big lake. The lion was angry and asked where he is? She said please look down into the water, there is an animal which looks like you. While the lion was seeing into the water he has seen his picture in the water. He considered it for real (he believed that another lion has taken the leather) and jumped into the water and was unable to get out of it. So, an ape wisely killed all her enemies and lived this way.

2) The two neighbors

<i>jara</i>	<i>lama-tu</i>	<i>ollaa</i>	<i>walii</i>	<i>tur-an-i.</i>	<i>haa-ta'u- malee</i>	<i>baay'ee</i>			
people	two- SUB.FOC1	neighbour	one another	be-3P- PFV	however	very			
<i>wal</i>	<i>hin-jaalat-an-i</i>	<i>tur-an-i.</i>	<i>jara</i>	<i>lamaan</i>	<i>keessaa</i>	<i>tokko</i>	<i>imaltuu</i>		
eachother	NEG-like-3P- PFV	AUX-3P- PFV	people	of two	from	one	travel		
<i>ogгаа</i>	<i>deem-Ø-ee</i>	<i>gal-Ø-u</i>	<i>saree-n</i>	<i>isaa</i>	<i>isa</i>	<i>waliin</i>			
while	go-3SM- PFV:CVB	enter-3SM- DEP.IPFV	dog- NOM	his	3SM.ABS	together			
<i>tur-t-e.</i>	<i>nam-ich-i</i>	<i>ollaa-n</i>	<i>isaa</i>	<i>kan</i>	<i>isaa-n</i>	<i>wal</i>			
be-3SF-PFV	person-SIN.DEF-NOM	neighbor- NOM	his	COM	3SM.ABS- INS	eachother			
<i>hin-jaal-an-n-e</i>	<i>sun</i>	<i>karaa-tti</i>	<i>itti</i>	<i>dhuf-Ø-e.</i>	<i>nam-ich-i</i>				
NEG-like-3P-NEG- PFV	that	street- LOC	to	come-3SM- PFV	person-SIN.DEF- NOM				
<i>sun-i-s</i>	<i>nama</i>	<i>saree</i>	<i>ofii</i>	<i>waliin</i>	<i>deem-Ø-u</i>	<i>kana</i>	<i>arrabs-uu</i>		
that-EPEN-ADD.FOC	person	dog	self	together	go-3SM-DEP.IPFV	this	insult-VN		

barbaad-Ø-ee *akkas* *jedh-ee-n-i.* *namana* *eessaa*
 want-3SM-PFV:CVB like this say-CVB-EPEN-PFV person where:GEN

deem-t-a; *si* *wallaal-Ø-ee-n-i* *saree* *kee* *kuunno* *gamas-itti*
 go-2S-IPFV 2S.ABS forget-1S-CVB-EPEN-PFV dog yours there there-LOC

beek-Ø-e *jedh-ee-n-i.* *abbaa-n* *imalt-ichaa-s*
 know-1S-PFV say-CVB-EPEN-PFV father-NOM travel-SIN.DEF:GEN-ADD.FOC

saree-tu *saree* *beek-Ø-a* *jedh-ee* *deebii* *deebis-ee-f* *jedh-am-a.*
 dog-SUB.FOC1 dog know-3SM-IPFV say-PFV:CVB answer answer-CVB-BEN say-PASS-IPFV

There were two people who were neighbors. However, they do not like each other. Either of the neighbors was coming back home from a long journey with his dog. The other person meets him on the street. The second person wants to insult the man who is going home with his dog and said ‘hey where are you going?’; ‘I recognized your dog from a distance, but not you’. The first person who is going back home answered that ‘it is a dog that recognizes a dog’.

3) A hero man and his wife

dur *booran(a)* *keessa-tti* *nam-icha* *tokko-t* *baay’ee* *goota-Ø.*
 early boorana in-LOC man-DEF.SIN one-SUB.FOC1 very hero-CS1

haadha-manaa *qab-Ø-a.* *arba* *ajjeesaa* *jir-a.* *arbi* *ammoo* *bay’ee*
 wife has-3SM-IPFV elephant kill:PROG AUX-IPFV elephant-NOM while very

guddaa-Ø; *nama* *rakkis-Ø-a.* *inni* *ammoo* *ajjeesaa* *jir-Ø-a.* *namni*
 big-CS1 person problem-3SM-IPFV he:NOM while kill:PROG AUX-3SM-IPFV people:NOM

cufti *itti* *bahee* *daawwat-Ø-e.* *maaliif* *namni* *kun* *nam(a)* *tokko-Ø;*
 all to out:CVB see-3SM-PFV because person:NOM this person one-CS1

kophaa saa arba ajjeesaa jir-Ø- yeroo amma namni hundi itti
 alone his elephant kill:PROG AUX- while now people:NOM all:NOM to
 3SM-
 IPFV

bahee dawwat-Ø-e kanatti haati-manaa isaa jechuu-Ø haati-manaa
 out:CVB see-3SM-PFV this:LOC wife his say-CS1 wife

namicha kanaa dhuf-t-e. abbaa-manaa ta'uu saa isheen
 man:DEF.SIN this come-3SF-PFV husband be:VN his 3SF:NOM

hin-bar-r-e. fiigaa dhuf-t-ee wayyoo namni akkana goota
 NEG-know-NEG-PFV run:PROG come:3SF:PFV:CVB oh person:NOM like this hero

kuni ilm(a) tokko odoo narraa dhalch-Ø-ee jet-t-e. goota waan ta'eef
 this son one if from birth-3SM- say-3SF- hero because be.CVB
 me PFV:CVB PFV

fee-t-e jechuu-Ø. inni abbaa- kee-ti jedh-an-ii itti
 need-3SF- say:VN-CS1 3SM:NOM husband yours-CS2 say-3P- to
 PFV PFV

himnaan arbi edaa illeessaa-n qixxee-Ø jet-t-e.
 tell:PROG elephant:NOM oh rabbit:OBJ.FOC1- equal-CS1 say-3SF-
 INST PFV

Once upon a time, there was a hero person in Borana who has a wife. He was killing an elephant which is a very big animal and difficult to do so. The crowd was out there and saw his deed because this person was killing an elephant alone. While the crowd was seeing this situation, suddenly his wife came and said ‘oh, I wish this hero person could have a son from me’. She does not recognize that he is her husband, but longing for him because he is a hero. Eventually, the crowd told her that he is her husband. Then, she said ‘oh an elephant is equivalent to a rabbit’.

4) A fox and a hyena

yeroo durii jeedala fi waraabeessa-tu wajjin jiraataa tur-an-i.
 time early fox and hyena-SUB.FOC1 together living AUX-3P-PFV

yeroo wajjin jiraataa tur-an-i kana hoolota waliin hor-at-an-ii
 time together living AUX-3P-PFV this sheep together herd-BEN-3P-
 PFV:CVB

dabaree dabaree-dhaa-n eegaa tur-an-i. jeedalli yeroo
 turn turn-OBJ.FOC1-INS look after.PROG AUX-3P-PFV fox:NOM time

dabaree isii hoolaa qal-at-t-ee waan nyaat-t-uu-f lakkoofsi
 turn her sheep slaughter-BEN-3SF-PFV:CVB while eat-3F-VN-BENE number:NOM

hoolotaa haphataa deemaa tur-Ø-e. waraabeessi garuu dhimma
 sheep dwindling:PROG go:PROG AUX-3SM-PFV hyena:NOM however case

kana hin-xinxal-l-Ø-e. jeedalli carraa arg-at-t-e hunda itti
 this NEG-think-NEG-3SM-PFV fox:NOM opportunity get-BEN-3SF-PFV all with

fayyadam-t-ee hoolota kanneen qal-at-t-ee nyaachuu waan
 use-3SF-PFV:CVB sheep those slughter-BEN-3SF-PFV:CVB eat:VN since

itti fuf-t-ee-f lakkoofsi hoolotaa daran xiqaachaa
 to continue-3SF-PFV:CVB-CON number:NOM sheep:GEN very decrease:PROG

deem-Ø-e. waraabeessi-s lakkoofsi hoolotaa xiqaachaa
 go-3SM-PFV hyena:NOM-ADD.FOC number:NOM sheep:GEN decrease:PROG

deemaa jiraachuu waan hub-at-Ø-ee-f gaaf(a) tokko akkana
 go:PROG exist:VN since observe-BEN-3SM-PFV:CVB-CON day one like this

jedh-Ø-ee gaafat-Ø-e. lakkoofsi hoolota keenya baay'ee
 say-3SM-PFV:CVB ask-3SM-PFV number:NOM sheep our very

hir'at-ee-ra; maal-tu kana fid-Ø-e-e? jeedalli-s
 decrease-PFV:CVB-AUX what-SUB.FOC1 this bring-3SM-PFV-Q fox:NOM-ADD.FOC

akkana jechuu-dhaa-n deebif-t-ee-f-i. ati maaliif
 like this say:VN-OBJ.FOC1-INS answer-3SF-PFV:CVB:BENE-CS1 2S:NOM why

gubbaa-dhaa gadi ilaal-t-a; gadi jedhii ilaal-i jet-t-ee-n-i.
 above-ABL down see-2S-IPFV down say:CVB see-2S.IMP say-2SF-CVB-EPEN-PFV

waraabeessi *akk-uma* *jeedalli* *jet-t-ee-n-i* *gadi* *jedh-Ø-ee*
 hyena:NOM like-OBJ.FOC5 fox:NOM say-3SF-CVB-EPEN-PFV down say-3SM-PFV:CVB

yeroo *ilaal-Ø-u* *luka* *lamaanii-fi* *harka* *lamaan* *hoolotaa*
 time see-3SM-DEP.IPFV leg two-and hand both sheep:GEN

ilaaluu-dhaa-n *hoolota* *baay'ee* *waan* *itti* *fakkaat-ee-f* *lakkoofsi*
 see:VN-OBJ.FOC1-INS sheep many since to look-PFV:CVB-DAT number:NOM

hoolotaa *hin-hir'-an-n-e* *jedhee* *aman-Ø-e.* *akkasumas*
 sheep NEG-decrease-BEN-NEG-PFV say:CVB believe-3SM-PFV on the other hand

gaafa *tokko* *jarreen* *lamaanuu* *hoolota* *isaanii* *keessaa* *muraasa*
 day one party:NOM both:SUB.FOC3 sheep their from some

qal-at-an-ii *nyaachuu-dhaa-f* *waliigaltee* *erga* *taasis-an-ii*
 slaughter-BEN-3P-PFV:CVB eat:VN-OBJ.FOC1-BENE agreement after make-3P-PFV:CVB

booda *jeedalli* *kooluun* *lukkuu* *ittii-n* *qalachuu-dhaa-f* *nu*
 after fox:NOM feather:NOM chicken with- slaughter:VN-OBJ.FOC1- 1P.ABS
 INS BENE

fayyada *jet-t-ee* *waraabeessa* *amansiif-t-ee* *erga* *irraa* *baaf-t-ee-n-i*
 help say-3SF- hyena convince-3SF- after from pick-3SF-CVB-
 PFV:CVB PFV:CVB EPEN-PFV

booda *isaaf* *kooluu* *lukkuu* *kenn-i-t-ee-fi* *ofii-f*
 after for him-BENE feather chicken give-EPEN-3SF-PFV:CVB-CON self-BENE

garuu *harka-tti* *kooluu* *lukkuu* *keessaa* *albee* *sifa* *qabu* *dhoys-i-t-ee*
 however hand- feather chicken from knife sharp have hide-EPEN-3SF-
 LOC PFV:CVB

qab-at-t-ee-n *qal-at-t-ee* *foon* *hanga* *raraan* *isii* *dandahe*
 hold-BEN-3SF- slaughter-BEN-3SF- meat up to belly:NOM her able
 PFV:CVB-INS PFV:CVB

nyaat-t-e. *yeroo* *isiin* *haala* *kanaan* *soorat-t-u* *waraabeessi*
 eat-3SF-PFV time/while 3SF:NOM way with feed-3SF-IPFV hyena:NOM

garuu kooluun lukkuu qaluufii did-Ø-ee baay'ee
 however feather:NOM chicken slaughter:BENE:CVB unable:3SM- very
 PFV:CVB

rakkataa tur-Ø-e. gooda foon isaa nyaachuu-dhaa-f
 problem:PROG AUX-3SM-PFV share meat his eat:VN-OBJ.FOC1-BENE

hin-milkoof-n-Ø-e.
 NEG-fortunate-NEG-3SM-PFV

Once upon a time, a fox and a hyena were living together. They were herding sheep together and looking after them in turn. While the fox was looking after the sheep since she slaughters and eats the sheep their number becomes decreasing. However, the hyena has never thought of this. Because the fox has used every opportunity she has got in order to slaughter and eat the sheep, their number decreased enormously. One day, as the hyena observed the number of the sheep is decreasing, he asked like this ‘the number of our sheep has decreased’; ‘how does this happen’? The fox answered like this ‘why do you look at them from above’? ‘Look at them from below’. As he is told by the fox, while he gets down and looked at the sheep, he has seen the front and back legs of the sheep and assumed that they are many in number and believed that their number is not decreasing. One day, both of them agreed to slaughter and eat some of their sheep. After this, the fox has convinced the hyena that a feather of a chicken helps to slaughter. She gave him a feather but used a sharp hidden knife for herself in order to slaughter and eat until she gets full. While she was feeding herself like this, the hyena was facing a problem because the feather of a chicken was unable to slaughter for him. He was not fortunate to eat his own share.

5) A lion and hippo

dur leenca fi roobbii-tu bishaan dhuguu laga bu'-an-ii
 early lion and hippo- water drink:VN river go-3P-
 SUB.FOC1 PFV:CVB

achi-tti wal arg-an-ii ana-tu dura dhug-Ø-a
 there-LOC each other see-3P-PFV:CVB 1S:ABS-SUB.FOC1 first drink-1S-IPFV

ana-tu dura dhugaa-rra-tti wal lol-an-i. lola
 1S:ABS-SUB.FOC1 first drink-on-LOC each other quarrel-3P-PFV quarrel

isaanii xana xeessa-tti wal injifachuu dadhab-an-ii gidduu-tti
 their this in-LOC each other win:VN unable-3P-PFV:CVB middle-LOC

ol jeʔ-an-ii yemmuu laal-an-i allaattii xan du'-Ø-e
 up ward say-3P-PFV:CVB while see-3P-PFV scavenger REL die-3SM-PFV

nyaachuu-dhaa-f akka qophooy-t-ee eeggachuu-tti jir-t-u
 eat:VN-OBJ.FOC1-BENE like ready-3SF-PFV:CVB wait:VN-LOC AUX-3SF-IPFV

arg-an-i. xana booda lola isaanii dhaab-an-ii irbaata allaattii
 see-3P-PFV this after quarrel their stop-3P-PFV:CVB dinner scavenger

ta'uu-rra wal dhiisuu wayya jeʔ-an-ii diina badii isaanii
 be:VN-from each other stop:VN better say-3P-PFV:CVB enemy disaster their

eegg-at-Ø-u jalaa bah-an-i jeʔ-am-a.
 wait-BEN-3SM-IPFV from out-3P-PFV say-PASS-IPFV

Once upon a time, a lion and hippo meet at a river and fought on who should drink first. They were unable to defeat one another. When they see upward, in the middle of their fight, they saw a scavenger that was ready and waiting for the dead body to be eaten. After this, they agreed and stopped their fight which enabled them to escape from the enemy that was waiting for their disaster.

6) An ox and a donkey

yeroo tokko harree fi qotiyoo- hin-ban-n-a jedh-an-ii karaa
 time one donkey and ox-NOM V.FOC1- getaway-1P- say-3P- journey
 n IPFV PFV:CVB

calqab-an-ii otoo deem-an-uu harree-n fura argat-t-e. harreen
 start-3P-PFV:CVB while go-3P-VN donkey-NOM grass find-3SF-PFV donkey-NOM

erga fura argat-t-ee dheed-d-ee quuf-t-ee
 after grass find-3SF-PFV:CVB graze-3SF-PFV:CVB enough-3SF-PFV:CVB

booda qotiyyoo-dhaa-n garaa-tu na dhukub-Ø-e ka'-ee=n
 after ox-OBJ.FOC1-INS stomach-SUB.FOC1 1S:ABS sick-1S-PFV stand-PFV:CVB-1S.AGR

iyya jet-t-ee-n-i. lakki lakki hin-iyy-i-n waraabeessi nu
 sigh say-3SF-CVB-EPEN- no no NEG-sigh- hyena-NOM 1P:ABS
 PFV 2S.IMP.EPEN-NEG

dhagah-Ø-a jedh-ee=n qotiyyoo- harree-n-i-s lakki ani
 hear-3SM-IPFV say-PFV:CVB-1S.AGR ox-NOM donkey-NOM-EPEN-ADD.FOC no 1S:NOM

nan-iyi-Ø-a jet-t-ee did-d-e. qotiyyoo-n iyy-i maal-tu
 V.FOC1-sigh-1S-IPFV say-3SF-PFV:CVB refuse-3SF-PFV ox-NOM sigh-2S.IMP what-SUB.FOC1

na dhibe jedh-ee-n-i. yeroo kana iyya ishii gadhiif-t-e. obbo
 1S:ABS worry say-CVB-EPEN-PFV time this sigh her release-3SF-PFV mr.

waraabeessi iyy-icha dhagah-Ø-ee dhuf-Ø-e. achuumaan adde
 hyena:NOM sigh-DEF.SIN hear-3SM-PFV:CVB come-3SM-PFV after that madam

harrree luka kee tokko fid-i jedh-Ø-ee-n-i. isheen-i-s
 donkey leg your one bring-2S.IMP say-3SM-CVB-EPEN-PFV 3SF:NOM-EPEN-ADD.FOC

obbo qotiyyoon haa keenn-Ø-u jet-t-ee-n-i. qotiyyoon
 mr. ox-NOM JUSS give-3SM-IPFV say-3SF-CVB-EPEN-PFV ox:NOM

did-Ø-ee akkamitti deem-t-a jedh-Ø-ee-n-i? ishee-n-i-s
 refuse-3SM-PFV:CVB how go-2S-IPFV say-3SM-CVB-EPEN-PFV 3SF-NOM-EPEN-ADD.FOC

luka sad-ii-n hin-deem-Ø-u-u jet-t-ee-n-i.
 leg three-OBJ.FOC1-INS NEG-go-1S-DEP-IPFV-Q say-2S-CVB-EPEN-PFV

waraabeessi erga nyaat-Ø-ee fix-Ø-ee booda amma-s
 hyena:NOM after eat-3SM-PFV:CVB finish-3SM-PFV:CVB after now-ADD.FOC

luka kee tokko fid-i jedh-Ø-ee-n-i. ishee-n-i-s
 leg your one bring-2S.IMP say-3SM-CVB-EPEN-PFV 3SF-NOM-EPEN-ADD.FOC

obbo qotiyyoon haa kenn-Ø-u jet-t-ee-n-i. qotiyyoon did-Ø-ee
 mr. ox:NOM JUSS give-3SM-IPFV say-3SF-CVB-EPEN-PFV ox:NOM refuse-3SM-PFV:CVB

akkamitti deem-t-a jedh-Ø-ee-n-i? harree-n-i-s akka
 how go-2S-IPFV say-3SM-CVB-EPEN-PFV donkey-NOM-EPEN-ADD.FOC like

namaa-tti *luka* *lamaa-n* *hin-deem-u-u* *jet-t-ee-n-i.*
human:GEN-LOC leg two:OBJ.FOC1-INS NEG-go-DEP.IPFV-Q say-3SF-CVB-EPEN-PFV

qotiyyoon *kenn-i* *kaa;* *maal-tu* *na* *dhib-Ø-e*
ox:NOM give-2S.IMP EXC.FOC what-SUB.FOC1 1S:ABS worry-3SM-PFV

jedh-Ø-ee-n-i. *yeroo* *kenn-i-t-uu-f* *amma-s*
say-3SM-CVB-EPEN-PFV time give-EPEN-3SF-VN-BENE now-CON.ADD.FOC

waraabeessi *erga* *nyaat-Ø-ee* *fix-Ø-ee* *booda* *luka* *kee*
hyena:NOM after eat-3SM-PFV:CVB finish-3SM-PFV:CVB after leg your

lachuu *naa* *kenn-i* *jedh-ee-n-i.* *harreen-i-s*
both for me give-2S.IMP say-CVB-EPEN-PFV donkey:NOM-EPEN-ADD.FOC

obbo *qotiyyoon* *haa* *keen-Ø-u* *gaafa* *jet-t-u* *inni* *did-Ø-e.*
mr. ox:NOM JUSS give-3SM-IPFV while say-2S-IPFV 3S:MOM refuse-3SM-PFV

harreen *deem-uu* *dhadhab-d-ee* *jenn-aa-n* *waraabeessi*
donkey:NOM go-VN unable-3SF-PFV:CVB say-OBJ.FOC1-INS hyena:NOM

ach-uma-tti *gadi* *fudh-at-ee* *nyaat-Ø-e.* *kana* *booda* *obbo*
there- down take-BEN-PFV:CVB eat-3SM-PFV this after mr.
OBJ.FOC5-LOC

waraabeessi *akka* *harreen* *naaf* *kenn-i-t-e* *ati-s*
hyena:NOM like donkey:NOM for me give-EPEN-3SF-PFV 2S:NOM-ADD.FOC

dafii *lukawwan* *kee* *naa* *kenn-i* *jedh-Ø-ee* *qotiyyoo-dhaa-n*
quick legs yours for me give-2S.IMP say-3SM-PFV:CVB ox-OBJ.FOC1-INS

gaafat-Ø-e. *qotiyyoon* *hin-kenn-Ø-u* *maal* *taa-t-a* *jedh-Ø-ee*
ask-3SM-PFV ox:NOM NEG-give-1S-DEP.IPFV what be-2S-IPFV say-3SM-PFV:CVB

itti *utaal-Ø-ee* *gaaf-aa-n* *dhah-Ø-ee* *ajjeess-Ø-e*
to jump-3SM-PFV:CVB horn-OBJ.FOC1-INS hit-3SM-PFV:CVB kill-3SM-PFV

jedh-am-a.
say-PASS-IPFV

Once upon a time, an ox and a donkey agreed to get away and started a long journey. On their way, the donkey got grass. After having grazed the grass and gotten full, the donkey said to the ox ‘since my stomach is sick, I am going to sigh’. The ox said ‘no, no, do not sigh because the hyena would hear’. But, the donkey disagreed and still wanted to sigh. At her refusal, the ox said ‘you can do it but I do not care’. Then the donkey sighed loudly. Having noticed her voice, Mr. hyena came. ‘Madam donkey, give me one leg’, said the hyena. She replied ‘let the ox would give you’. The ox refused and asked her ‘how do you walk’? She said ‘don’t I walk with three legs? After having finished eating on the first leg, the hyena said again ‘give me another leg’. She replied ‘let the ox would give you’. The ox refused and asked her ‘how do you walk’? She answered ‘I would walk with two legs like a human being’. After having finished feeding itself on the second leg, asked for the remaining two legs. The donkey again said ‘let the ox would give it to you’, but the ox refused. Finally, since the donkey was unable to walk, the hyena finished eating the donkey. After this, the hyena said to the ox ‘just like what the donkey did, you have to give me one leg’. Then the ox refused and jumped to the hyena and killed it with his horn.