

THE SYNTAX OF INTERROGATIVES IN OROMO

BY

Amanuel Alemayehu Ayanso

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
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Acknowledgments

Heaven/God be praised for His priceless gift and help.

I wish to extend my profound appreciation and gratitude to my advisor Dr. Girma A. Demeke for his constant encouragement, patient guidance and insightful comments and suggestions at every stage of the thesis. He is kind and generous in supplying materials. Although I am responsible for any of its shortcoming, this thesis would not have appeared in its present form without his persistent advice and guidance.

My heartfelt thanks also go to all my families. Particularly to my sisters Alemnesh Alemayehu and Tewabich Alemayehu, whom I owe special thanks for their love and financial supports.

I would also like to thank Ato Dabala Goshu and Ato Abebe Kano for reading all the chapters and for commenting on every one of the chapters. Their comments made me see the finding in different angles. Dabala has also helped me with materials.

I also wish to thank all my friends who have helped me in one-way or another while I am working on this paper. Specially to Tadese Sibamo and Gamada Hunde, I have indubitable thanks for their material and moral support.

Symbol and abbreviations

acc	=	accusative case
CP	=	Complementizer Phrase
dat	=	dative case
dir	=	direction
Fm	=	focus marker
foc	=	focus
FocP	=	Focus Phrase
gen	=	genitive case
impf	=	imperfective aspect marker
Inst	=	instrumental case
IP	=	Inflectional Phrase
Mas	=	masculine
neg	=	negative
nom	=	nominative case
pf	=	perfective aspect marker
pl	=	plural
Q	=	Question Affix
ti	=	trace of the moved element
VP	=	Verb Phrase
1s	=	1 st person singular
1pl	=	1 st person plural
2ms	=	2 nd person singular masculine
2p	=	2 nd person
2s	=	2 nd person singular
3fs	=	3 rd person feminine singular
j	=	voiced post alveolar affricative
ʔ	=	Glottal stop
∅	=	zero morpheme
[]	=	enclose members of the same category
↘	=	falling intonation
↗	=	raising intonation
→	=	becomes
*	=	Ungrammatical structure or ill-formed structure

The Abstract

In this paper an attempt has been made to give a fuller description of the structure of interrogative clause in Oromo in the light of Minimalist Program (MP). In so doing, the whole paper is chunked into five chapters including the Summary.

In the first chapter of the paper (introduction) the background, statements of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, methodology, literature review and the theoretical framework adopted for the study were presented in brief.

The second chapter, which I may assume to be the core part of the paper, deals with *wh*-questions. This chapter has three sections: In the first section), six types of *wh*-questions were identified on the bases of formal and functional grounds. In the second section, *wh*-items were discussed. In this section nine *wh*-items were identified out of which six are basic while the remaining three are derived. All the *wh*-items exhibit deferent morphological properties and these were discussed in this section in detail. The last section of this chapter deals with the derivation of *wh*-questions. Here, it is found that the derivation of both single and multiple *wh*-questions does not take place in the overt syntax. The *wh*-phrases are *in-situ* type in Oromo.

In the third chapter, Yes or No questions were discussed. It is observed that there is no overt movement of constituents in the derivation of Yes or No questions. Yes or No questions are assumed to be characterized by question affix and suprasegmental features alternatively.

- ✕ In chapter four, echo questions are treated in brief. The ways echo questions are derived from different clauses are discussed in the chapter.
- ✕ Chapter five deals with summary and the main points raised in each chapter are recapitulated.

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CAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Oromo is grouped in Low Land East Cushitic within the Cushitic family of the Afro-Asiatic phylum (Bender 1976, Baye 1986). The speakers of the language call themselves Oromo and their language *Afan Oromo* 'Mouth of Oromo'. In various works, however, the word Oromo refers to both the language and its speakers. In this study, I adopt the word Oromo to refer to both the language and the people following the written tradition.

Among the eighty or so different ethnic groups that live within the boundary of current Ethiopia, Oromo represent the largest ethnic group both numerically and geographically. Out of the total population, Oromo are about 40-50 percent (Gragg 1976, Heine 1981, Assaffa 1993). According to the 1994 housing and Population Census, Oromo is spoken by a population of over 18,313, 450. It is spoken in the vast areas of Ethiopia stretching from the province of Tigray to the Tana River in Kenya (Ulrich 1980). In Ethiopia, it is spoken in almost all provinces of the country except in Gondor (Wako 1981). Outside Ethiopia, Oromo is spoken in Kenya, Somalia, and Sudan (Kebede 1994, Stroemer 1989, Wako 1981, Abarra 1988). The number of Oromo speakers in Kenya as Stroemer (1989:2) estimated is, 150,000. For the number of Oromo speakers in other countries, however, I have no figure at hand.

Even though Oromo is spoken in a vast area of Ethiopia with relatively larger population and believed to be diversified, its speakers mutually understand one another except in some vocabulary and accentual difference (also in Bender, 1976). As Tasama (1994) puts it, the Oromo represent numerically the most important ethnic group in Northeast Africa, which although stretched out in different geographically distant directions, has maintained strong unitary links

that transcend local adoptions and adaptation. Baxter 1986 (in Tasama 1994:983) clearly states the notion as follows:

There are considerable cultural diversities between different Oromo groups, and Oromo are variously muslims, Christian, Roman Catholics, Lutherans and followers of traditional religion ('Waqefata' monotheism). But underling these diversities are two important shared attributes. First any Oromo speaker, whatever dialect he or she speaks, can be understood immediately by another Oromo. Secondly, Oromo all share common cultural values and modes of thought and feel culturally comfortable with each other.

Oromo is currently in use in different areas of social life such as in education, mass media, office and almost in all activities in the regional state of Oromiya.

The attempts made to study the language are very rare or scanty. The work done on Oromo in general and the study of Oromo syntax in particular is too young. Especially to the best of my knowledge, there is no direct work done on the structure of interrogative clauses. This work, therefore, is aimed at analyzing the syntax of interrogatives in Oromo to fill the gap.

1.2. Statement of the problem

As pointed out above, the syntax of interrogatives in Oromo is not studied directly. Specially, the *wh*-question of Oromo did not call the attention of linguists. This leaves a gap in the syntax of Oromo. Therefore, this thesis treats the syntax of interrogatives in Oromo and gives response to the following questions:

1. What are the constituents of interrogatives in Oromo?
2. Does the word order matter in interpreting interrogatives?
3. What is/are the rule(s) governing interrogative constructions?
4. Is there any movement in the derivation of interrogative construction in Oromo?

5. What are the morphological properties of *wh*-words?
6. Is *wh*-fronting in multiple *wh*-questions subject to superiority condition?

1.3. Objective of the Study

This study is conducted to make a detailed description of the syntax of interrogatives in particular and to look into how the syntax of interrogatives behave in the Minimalist Program in general.

In short, the aim of this research is to make a fuller description of the syntax of interrogatives in Oromo in light of the Minimalist Program (MP).

1.4 Significance of the Study

As stated above the main objective of this study is to make a detailed study of the syntax of interrogatives in Oromo in the light of the Minimalist Program. However, the attempt made in this work is more of description, and thus the out come of the finding may have contribution in many ways. First, it may yield the archived form of the interrogative clauses of Oromo. From this, any one who needs the finding for further study or for pedagogical purposes may benefit. Second, since the study was supported by current theory, any one who is interested in the theoretical aspect of the study would gain much. Finally, the study may contribute to a better understanding of Oromo in particular and the study of Cushitic or Ethiopian languages in general.

1.5 Scope of the Study

The study deals with *wh*-questions, Yes or No questions and Echo-question in detail. The attempt given to indirect questions under this topic is almost none.

The study is based on 'Macha' dialect, which is the variety of the researcher. Nonetheless the findings are believed to be true for most dialects of Oromo.

1.6 Methodology

The methodology employed in conducting this research involves both informants and introspection method. First, secondary data were collected from the earlier work done on the language. Then using the elicitation method primary data were collected from different informants to crosscheck, and to enrich the data. Here, as the researcher is a native speaker of the language, he was also part of the source of data. After the data were collected in these methods, a rough description and analysis was made. After gathering comments on the various drafts, the data were reanalyzed and finalized.

1.7 Literature Review

In this section, works done by some scholars that are directly related to the topic are reviewed.

Nordfeldt (1947) is among those who had treated interrogative pronouns of Oromo. He identified *eeññuu* 'who', *maal* 'what', *isa kam* 'who, which, what' and *inni kam* or *kam inni* 'who, which, what' as interrogative pronouns. Nordfeldt said *eññuu* 'who', *maal* 'what' and *inni kam* 'who, which, what' are absolute interrogative pronouns in Oromo. He further stated that *eeññuu* refers only to person, *maal* refers only to things and *inni kam* 'who, which, what' refers to person, animal and things. Adding to this point, Nordfeldt said all these absolute interrogative pronouns inflect for case and number; *inni kam* also for gender. Moreover, he showed how these absolute interrogative pronouns inflect for the stated grammatical categories.

Baye (1986) in his PHD thesis conducted an extensive research on Oromo syntax. Adopting the theoretical framework of Extended Standard Theory (EST) developed in Chomsky (1970, 1972 ...) and Emonds (1976), Baye studied the phrase structure of Oromo in more detail. Baye stated that typologically Oromo belongs to the class of configurational* languages.

In his work, Baye has observed that non-head elements: complements and specifiers are tightly bound to their heads. Hence, any syntactic rule that operates on any category X^n does not leave the complement or the specifier intact so as to operate only on the head or vice-versa. Rather the rule takes the entire string as its domain of application.

Regarding lexical categories, (on purely formal ground) Baye recognized four major and two minor categories. These major categories are Nominal, Verbal, Adjectival and Adpositional. The minor ones include Specifiers and Particles.

From the positional relations of the head and non-head terms, it may be said that Oromo is a head final language (according to Baye 1986).

Baye further stated that Oromo does not have *wh*-movement (overt) in its syntax. In Oromo, CP. may be used as a landing site for elements, which correspond to *wh*-elements in languages that allow overt *wh*-movement. On the other hand, according to Baye, in predicate nominal clause, Oromo has overt NP movement. This movement includes rising a subject. The subject position is empty before movement and it may be occupied by the subject of the complement clause, as in the corresponding structures in languages like English.

* Configurationality is a feature that distinguishes languages with a fairly rigid word order from those with no such order (Baye 1986).

Baye (1987) also treated interrogative sentences. In the article Baye raised the issue of *wh*-words in connection with relative clauses in Oromo. Here, he proposed *wh*-words as relative pronouns. Repeating the same point raised in Baye (1986), he said that questions are formed with *wh*-phrases *in situ* for Oromo does not have overt *wh*-movement in its syntax. So in relative clauses what moves to CP is a third person pronoun, which is not a *wh*-word in form, though the movement is that of such a form in as much as the landing site is CP.

Taha (1990), who conducted a research on the focus system of Oromo, has also given a look at interrogatives in relation to the focus system in Oromo. According to Taha, *wh*-questions (Q-word questions) universally contain constituents that mark some information gap. Since a Q-word signals such a gap, it is considered a focal element. By using Q-words, a speaker signal what, where and how a thing is done. Thus, Q-word questions help to find out what is 'new' or important to a speaker. In short treating how *wh*-questions and their answers are assigned focus, he forwarded the following points:

1. In answering to the Q-word question, the constituent, which receives focus function, is an element, which provides the requested identity of the question constituents.
2. The relevance of the focus function is also quite clear in case of (pseudo) cleft question and answers. But this follows a different strategy in formulating its question from Q-word question

Interrogative sentences are also treated in *Caasluga Afaan Oromo 'Oromo Grammar'* (1996). As *wh*-questions are used to ask content of something, place, time and so on, in the book, *wh*-questions are treated based on their functions. In addition the different inflectional properties of each *wh*-word in

each functional class and the way *wh*-questions are used in a conversation were discussed in the book. Yes-No questions were also discussed indirectly.

Getachew (2005) has treated interrogative sentences of Oromo in connection to the description of sentence types of Oromo in his book *Furtuu* 'Key'. According to Getachew interrogative sentences are used to specify the role of the subject or the way action stated by the verb is carried out in the sentences. He has also mentioned few examples of interrogative sentences in the book.

To summarize the points raised thus far, we have seen that different scholars have tried to account for interrogatives of Oromo in general and *wh*-questions in particular. However, since their primary objectives were not to account the syntax of interrogatives, their work lack detailed analysis of interrogatives. For instance, if there is overt or covert movement *wh*-phrase in the derivation of interrogatives and if a *wh*-phrase are *in-situ* or in *ex-situ* in the interrogatives were not identified. In addition the single versus multiple *wh*- questions called attention of none of these scholars. In short extensive study had not been made in the syntax of interrogatives in the works reviewed.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

There are a number of assumptions proposed by theoretical linguists to carry out linguistic works at different times. The choice of one framework over another depends on the individual's knowledge (background), the adequacy of the framework to carryout the specific problem at hand and on the recency of the framework. The theoretical framework employed in this thesis is The Minimalist Program (MP) developed by Chomsky (1993, 1995a and b).

In this section the intention is to give an overview of how the theory works, what characterizes the theory and how it differs from its immediate predecessor

(GB) in brief, but not to give a complete representation of the theory*. This section starts by stating the motivation behind the MP and moves onto how it differs from GB. Finally, I will discuss how structure is formed in the MP.

1.8.1 The Motivation

The overall aim of the Minimalist Program (MP) is to understand human language as simple and general as possible- the minimalist framework drive for simplification. In Radford (1997:16) this is stated as follows:

A Theory of grammar, which posits that the internal grammatical structure of words, phrases and sentences in a natural language is determined by innate principles of UG offers the important advantage that it minimizes the burden of grammatical learning imposed on the child. This is vital consideration, since learnability is a criterion of adequacy for any theory of language, i.e. any adequate theory of grammar must be able to explain how children come to learn the grammar of their natural language(s) in such a rapid and uniform fashion.

The Theory of UG developed by Chomsky accounts for all the above facts by posing that there is universal set of innately endowed grammatical principle which determine the nature of grammatical structure and the range of the grammatical operations found in natural languages grammar (Ibid). Since UG principles, which are innately endowed, do not have to be learned by the child, the theory of UG minimizes the learning load placed on the child, and thereby maximizes the learnability of natural languages grammar.

While the desire to 'minimize' was the primary motivating force behind the move from GB to MP, it was not the only one. Results in the fields of

* For the complete account of the Theory any interested person is referred to Chomsky's works (Chomsky 1993,1995a and 1995b).

Psycholinguistics, Computer science, and Semantics also made a move in this direction a highly desirable one (Authier and Reed 1999:52)

Especially, the principles of economy lead to minimalism, (Chomsky 1993, 1995 b). If the linguistic system needs to be as economical as possible, in terms of both how it represent and generates structures clearly the smallest possible set of devices to account for language phenomena should be used. The defining characteristic of MP, economy of representation, requires that representations of syntactic structure contain no more than the required element (Principle of Full Interpretation may be a consequence of this condition).

In sum, the desire to minimize the burden of grammatical learning placed on the children in learning the grammar of their native language(s) and the incapability of GB in offering an account of cross linguistic differences in word order in terms of a small number of universal rules (i.e. GB failed to capture a larger number of generalization) motivated the more recent move from GB to MP. In this instance, however, it is not cross linguistic variation itself that led to the demise of the GB framework, but rather the exact manner in which GB captured those variations (Ibid). In short MP aims at establishing the theory of grammar for human language by postulating only minimal assumptions that are necessary and essential on conceptual ground alone (Ura 2003).

1.8.2 Basic Differences between GB and MP

The MP takes as its point of departure the question of whether the four levels of syntactic representation used in GB are really necessary. The basic hypothesis is that since language is simply a mapping between sound (phonetics and phonology) and meaning (semantics), then the only truly indispensable levels of

grammatical representation are those which interface with physical world of sound (PF) and the world of cognition (LF)[♦] (Authier and Reed 1999).

It is also assumed in MP that there is a single computational system CH_L for human language and only limited lexical variety, where varieties of language are essentially morphological (Chomsky 1994:3). CH_L should be interpreted as mapping some array A of lexical choices to a pair (Π, λ) , a linguistic expression of a particular language L . Where Π is a PF representation and λ is an LF representations each consisting of legitimate object that can receive interpretation (Ura 2003:349). In short, MP makes the quite radical move of entirely eliminating S- and D-structures and replacing the remaining syntactic levels of representation with phonological and semantic interface levels (Ibid).

Another basic difference is, in GB a sentence is judged to be grammatical (i.e. syntactically well-formed), if it only obeys all of the syntactic rule systems (the nine subtheories of GB)^ψ to apply at each levels of syntactic representation, i.e. GB use syntactic rules to determine syntactic well or ill-formedness. In MP, however, one of the primary factors determining grammaticality is the presence of features at PF or LF that are in violation of principle of Full Interpretation. (FI)[♥]. That is, strong features sent to PF unchecked cause derivation to crash and as do uninterpretable features sent to LF (Ibid). A sentence is judged to be

♦ PF representation of a sentence tells us how it is pronounced, and its LF representation describes linguistics aspects of its meaning (Radford 1997b: 70).

ψ The nine sub theories of GB are: X'-Theory, Theta Theory, Quantification Theory, Bounding theory, Case Theory, binding Theory, Control Theory, government Theory, and Morphological Theory (Authier and Reed 1999:28-29).

♥ FI states that every element that appears in the structure must be interpreted in some way, i.e. there are no superfluous elements in the structure of language (Cook and Newson 1996:168).

grammatical if and only if the derivation converges^N at the two interface levels i.e. PF and LF.

One important difference between MP and GB is that in MP structures are built up piecemeal. In GB D-structure was presented as a complete structure and not much was said about the internal operation (Chomsky 1993:21). However, MP emphasis on the internal working of the structure formation process in getting rid of D- and S-structures, i.e. CHL is strictly derivational, but not representational, in that it involves successive operations leading to (Π, λ) . Thus, CHL (computation) typically involve simple steps expressible in terms of natural relations and properties, with the context that made them natural (Ura 2003:349).

Another basic difference is that MP replaces case marking of GB with the notation of checking (Ibid, 333). That is, in the Minimalist assumption all morphological operations are lexical in nature – MP assumes that all lexical emerge from lexicon fully inflected (Authier and Reed 1999). Any syntactic movement, therefore, is not motivated by Morphological Theory, i.e. to get their feature marked, but to get their feature checked with the abstract formal morphological feature present in their respective head position. Syntactic derivation must always proceed 'bottom up', from the smallest syntactic unit to the largest one in binary[#] fashion in MP, while the same thing is carried out in GB in the other way round.

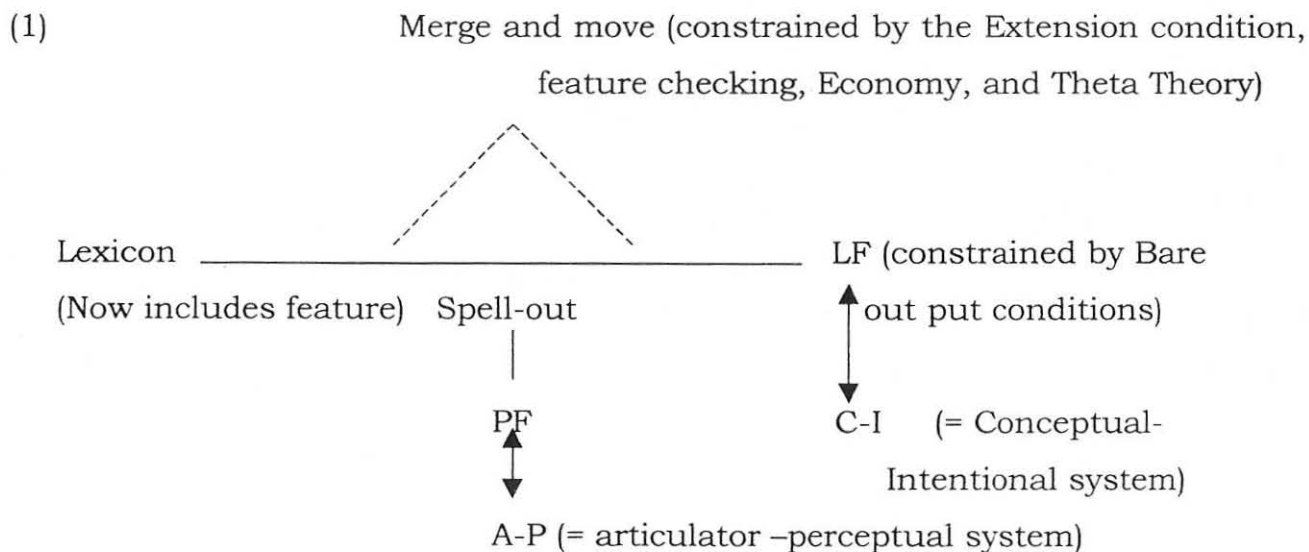
^N A technical term used in the new theory (MP) to mean well-formed or grammatical structure (Radford 1997b).

[#] A term relating to a two –valued properties or relations: It is widely assumed in linguistics that parameters have binary setting, that features have binary values, and that all branching in syntactic structure is binary (Radford 1997b).

In sum, we can summarize the point raised above in such a way that MP differs from GB: a) in making use of two fewer levels of representation, b) in assuming that the two remaining levels are interface levels, c) in making use of a purely derivational approach to structure building, d) in emphasizing the role of formal-morphological feature of the lexicon in the structural building process, f) in eliminating most of the sub-theories and altering the role played by that remaining ones and g) no longer assume that the affixation of inflectional morphemes is affected by syntactic process (Ibid).

1.8.3 Structural Formation in MP

In the preceding section, I have indicated how the notion of GB is different from the framework adopted for this thesis (MP). In this section, I shall proceed into describing the way the framework works. Before we go further, let us consider the MP model represented in Chomsky (1993) cited in Authier and Reed (1999) as in (1):

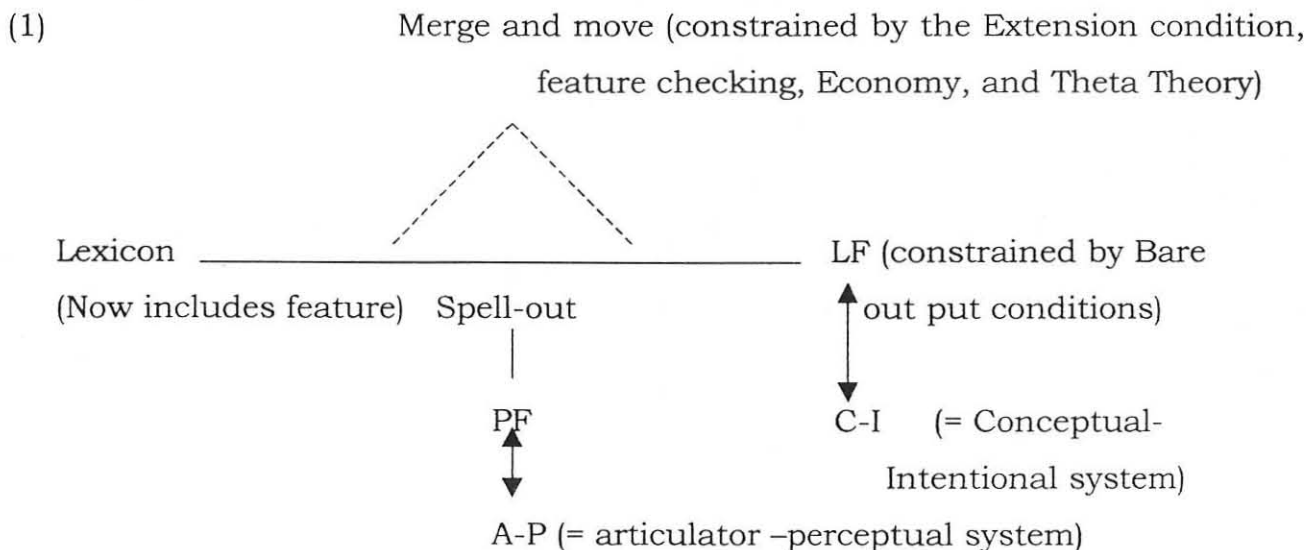


So in the model it is clearly indicated that the theory attempts to reduce the level of representation into two main basic levels.

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So in the model it is clearly indicated that the theory attempts to reduce the level of representation into two main basic levels.

Having observed the sketch of the MP model, I shall derive back to the way it works. There is syntactic mechanism that forms the structure that appears at the interface level– Computational System (Ibid, 318). The syntactic system (also known as the computational system) consists of just seven mechanisms: merge, move, the extension condition, a set of new economy condition principles, spell-Out, feature checking and the reformulated version of theta theory (Ibid).

Merge and move are the structural-building process of MP while the rest are considered as the triggering force and constraints in the computational system in general. There is a consideration of what constitutes a legitimate object at each representational level, which possibly have their foundation in the interpretive components themselves. Ideally the grammar should consist of only the bare minimum conditions (Cook and Newson 1996).

The process of structural building that constitutes LF and PF representation start from the lexicon. We start selecting a set of lexical items from which the Structural Description (SD) is to be built (Chomsky 1995b). This set of lexical items is called a Numeration. The types of categories that may undergo merge are determined by the *c*- and *s*-selection properties of the lexical items, which they dominate (Authier and Reed 1999:58). The head of the category that project becomes the label of the complex formed. In other words, a phrase structure is formed in a bottom-up fashion by a uniform operation called “merge” which combines two elements say α and β , and project one of them as the head $k=\{\gamma, \{\alpha,\beta\}\}$, where $\gamma \in \{\alpha,\beta\}$ [▲] (Chomsky 1994, in Fukui 2003).

▲ The schema state that merge forms a new object K by combining two objects α , and β and specifies one of them as the projecting element (hence the head of K . Merge applies recursively to form a new structure (Fukui 2003).

The computational system can form as many separate sets as it likes, but at some point in the derivation it must combine these sets in the appropriate way to form a single tree, otherwise a single SD has not been formed and the result will be ungrammatical (Ibid). The ultimate SD formed will only be grammatical if each element from the Numeration is used the required number of items, that is to say items can not be left in the Numeration unused if grammatical sentence is to result.

After this, the computation splits the partially formed SD at a point known as Spell-Out, after which the computational system proceeds to form two independent representations with quite different properties (i.e. PF and LF). Spell-Out applies to structure S already formed. It strips away from S those elements relevant only to Π leaving residue S_L , which is mapped to λ by syntactic operations. The sub system of CHL that maps S to Π is called the 'phonological component' and the sub system of CHL that maps S to λ is called 'the covert component'. The pre-Spell-Out component is called the 'overt component'. In this system, therefore, there is no direct relation between Π and λ (Chomsky 1995a in Ura 2003:349).

During the Spell-Out wrong information is not allowed to appear at each interface levels—semantic information is not allowed to appear at PF and phonetic information is not allowed to appear at LF. A derivation converges if such conditions are met otherwise it crashes (Ibid). So PF representation that contains semantic information crashes, causing the SD to be ungrammatical; an LF representation that contains phonetic information crashes, again causing the SD to be ungrammatical. The Spell-Out is confined to splitting the derivation in the appropriate way (Ibid).

The wrong information is eliminated before they arrive at LF and PF via the mechanism of Checking. Checking is assumed to take place whenever an item

bearing a feature moves into the 'checking domain' of a head bearing a matching feature. A checking domain of a head is in its Spec position, any position adjoined to it, or any position adjoined to the maximal projection of the head (Authier and Reed, 1999). If strong features are unchecked before the Spell-Out, they remain so at the PF interface and will cause a derivation to crash (Marantz, 1995).

The interface conditions become even more general and thus more explanatory, if they are taken to instantiate the Principle of Full Interpretation. Each representation at LF and PF can only contain elements, which are interpreted at these levels with no superfluous elements allowed. In short the computation (derivation) converges at one of the interface levels, if it forms an interpretable representation in this sense, and converges if it converges at both interface levels; otherwise it crashes (Chomsky 1995b: 390).

Since MP is transformational, movement operation is part of the computational system (Cook and Newson, 1996:323). The computational system move element about in the structure. This may indeed be part of the structural formation process as elements may be moved in to structural position created by the process itself (Ibid).

Movement is a constrained operation and needs to be kept local following Relativized Minimality of Rizzi (1990) or Minimal Link Condition (MLC) of Chomsky (1995) that only accept movement into the nearest relevant position; α must make the 'shortest move' (Chomsky, 1995b; 401).

There are two other major constraints on the move operation. One, which delays movement for as long as possible, which is called procrastinate. I.e. Procrastinate demands that movement to wait until after Spell-Out as long as waiting is compatible with convergence (Marantz 1995:360). According to the

principles of procrastinate covert movement is less costly than overt movement. This means that overt movement is not allowed unless the derivation would otherwise crash. A derivation crashes at same interface levels (either PF or LF), if there are some features present that is not interpretable at that level. For example, if a case feature is present at LF, the derivation crashes and if a strong feature is present at PF, the derivation crashes (Chomsky 1993 in Collins 2003:55). The principal motivation for procrastinate is to describe the difference between languages as to whether movement occurs overtly or not (Collins 2003: 55).

The other economic principle is called 'Greed' which allow movement of element only if it satisfies some properties of the moved element- Movement can not be made to satisfy the properties of element that become relate to the moved element by the movement process; move raises α to the position β only if morphological properties of α itself would not otherwise be satisfied in the derivation (Chomsky 1995b: 400). Movement is not optional in the MP and overt movement is always forced by strong feature. For example overt *wh*-movement in English is assumed to be forced by strong *wh*-feature in C (Marantz 1995: 378).

Lasnik (1995, in Radford 1997) on the other hand suggests that movement is driven by a principle which he terms as enlightened self-interest which specify that constituents move in order to check features carried by other constituents so that movement is motivated by a form of altruism. The natural implementation of the altruism is to suppose that the question affix Q which occupies the head C position of an interrogative CP carries an interrogative specifier feature, and that (correspondingly) *wh*-operators like 'who' carry an interrogative head feature. Thus it is assumed that *wh*-operator move to Spec-CP in order to check the interrogative specifier feature carried by Q (Radford 1997).

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In short, the computational system starts off with a Numeration of the lexical items from which the SD is to be formed. Then by the operation of Merge and Move, SDs are built up piecemeal, with the move operation being constrained by Minimal Link Condition, Procrastinate and Greed (Cook and Newson 1996). The whole system is in a sense 'driven' by the lexical items and their morphology; operations are driven by morphological necessity: certain features must be checked in the checking domain of the head, or the derivation will crash (Chomsky 1993:32 in Cook and Newson 1996).

The process proceeds to a point at which the derivation splits into phonetically and semantically relevant information: Spell-Out. From there two separate representations are formed (i.e. PF and LF). The computational system continues to form structure after Spell-Out, but if the end point of these operations do not confirm to a Full Interpretation condition, the derivation crashes. If these conditions are met at both LF and PF the derivation converges (Cook and Newson 1996).

To sum up the points raised thus far under this section, I have pointed the force behind MP, the characteristic difference between MP and GB and how MP Works. Since the Theory is in progress, MP will achieve its high standard syntactic theory in its standard of explanation, accuracy, and in its account for other fields of studies such as psycholinguistics, semantics and computer science. As Chomsky himself points out, the new picture formed under Minimalist assumptions is not only conceptually better, but is also empirically more adequate, as under these assumptions many problems that arose in the GB framework are given satisfactory solutions (Chomsky 1993).

CHAPTER TWO

Wh-Interrogatives

2.1 Types of Wh-Interrogatives

Question in a natural language can be classified into a number of types. One of these types is *wh*-interrogative. *Wh*-interrogatives are so called because (in English) they typically involve the use of an interrogative word beginning with *wh* (e.g. who, why, what, when, where, which, but also how) (Radford 1981, Cook and Newson 1996). Although the term *wh* seems originated from English interrogative words. It is used in syntax to refer to interrogative words equivalent to the above mentioned English type words of any language. The usage of *wh*-item and *wh*-questions in reference to Oromo or any other language, therefore, is to mean interrogative items equivalent to the above English words and questions formed involving such items. As mentioned in the introductory chapter of this thesis my focus of investigation with regard to Oromo *wh*-questions focuses on main clauses. Hence the so-called indirect questions, i.e. embedded *wh*- questions of the sort presented in (1) will not be dealt with in this thesis for the reason mentioned already.

- (1) meetii-n eessa deem-t-a na-n jet-t-e
Meti-nom where go-2s-impf me-acc say -3pfs- pf
'Meti asked me, "where are you going?'

In (1) the *wh*-question, *eessa deemta* 'Where are you going?' is subordinated in the sentence *meetiin na-n jettee* 'Meti asked me'.

The type of the response or information the speaker needs in uttering a particular question differs based on what particular *wh*- word he has included in the sentence. Based on this, we can classify *wh*-questions in different classes. In the following sections, I shall discuss this point.

2.1.1. Subject Interrogative

In Oromo we use *eeñnu* and *maal* to ask for the subject. Consider the examples in (2):

- (2) a. *eeñnu d'uf-e*
who came-pf
'Who came?'
- b. *Č aalaa d'uf-e*
Chala come-f
'Chala came'
- c. *maal-tu Č'ab- e*
what-foc break-pf
'What is it break?'
- d. *muka-tu Č'ab- e*
tree -Fm break-pf
'It is tree that is broken.'

In (2) *eñnu* 'who' and *maal* 'what' are used to ask the subject who has done action specified by the verbs *d'uf-* 'come' and *ñaat-* 'eat'. The response for such question can be given as in (b) and (d) respectively. In example (b) *Č'aalaa*-is the nominal and direct response to (a).

It is stated in Nordfeldt (1947) that *eñnu* 'who' refers only to person while *maal* 'what' refers only to things. Thus for *wh*-question (a) and (c) above response as in (3a) and (3b) respectively, cannot be accepted.

- (3) a. **saree d'uf-e*
dog come-pf
'A dog came'
- b. *? Č'aalaa cab-e*
Chala break-pf

In (3a) and (3b) *saree* and *Čaalaa* were given as the response to the *wh*-questions in (2a) and (2c), respectively. However the responses are proper as the direct response to their respective questions. However if we are not sure of who is doing something, we use only *maal*. In this case (3b) can be an acceptable construction.

There is another point we should note here. As we can see from (2c), *maal* is inflected for focus. This is obligatory, i.e. we cannot use the absolutive *maal* as the subject of *wh*-question.

In the same way *eeññu* can also be inflected for focus, if we need it for pragmatic purpose as in (4a). The attachment is not obligatory, however. The response given should also correspond to the focused question like in (4b).

- (4) a. *eeññu* -tu d'uf-e
 who-Fm come-pf
 'Who is that came?'
- b. *Čaalaa*- tu d'uf-e
 Ch-Fm come-pf
 'It is Chala who came.'

The difference between (4a) and (2a) is only in focus- i.e. in (4a) *eeññu* 'who' is marked for focus while in (2a) *eeññu* 'who' is unmarked (see section. 2.2 on focus).

2.1.2. Temporal interrogative

Temporal interrogative is used to ask for a time of an action. In Oromo, *yoom* 'when' is used to ask for the time of the action/state. Consider (5):

(5) a. *yoom deem-t-a*
when go- 2ps-Im
'When do you go?'

b. *bor-an deem-a*
tomorrow -1s go- Im
'I will go tomorrow'

In (5a) above, *yoom* 'when' is used to ask for the time of the action and the response *bor* 'tomorrow' as in (b) or any other element that has temporal adverb function can be given as the response. This temporal interrogative word and its response are canonically placed immediately before their respective verbs as can be observed from the examples in (5). In these examples, the subjects *ati* 'you' and *ani* 'I' were dropped in (5a) and (5b) respectively from their base positions¹.

2.1.3. Locative Interrogative

The locative interrogative (as its name indicates) is used to ask for the specification of a place. In Oromo *eesssa* 'where' is used to interrogate for location. Consider (6):

(6) a. *eessa deem-t-e*
where go-2s - pf
'Where did you go?'

b. *baalee-n deem-e*
Bale-1s go-pf
'I went to Bale.'

¹ In Oromo it is possible to have a clause with out surface subject. According to Baye (1986) since Oromo has subject referring clitics or affix in its verb, a clause without a structural subject is permissible. Therefore the presence or absence of overt subject does not violate the grammaticality of a clause in Oromo

In (6), *eessa* 'where' is used to question the location where somebody went and the response is given like in (6b) above. In the same way, if one needs to know the source of something, the construction as in (7) below can be used.

- (7) a. *eessa-a bit-t-e*
where- from buy- 2ps-pf
'From where did you buy?'
- b. *eessa-a d'uf-t-an*
where from come-2p-pl
'From where did you come (pl)?'

In (7a) *eessa-a* 'where-from' is used to question the source of the action under consideration. Here *eessa-a* 'where-from' is different from the general locative adverb interrogative word *eessa* 'where' in that it has long vowel, which indicate direction.

2.1.4. Manner Interrogative

In Oromo *akkam-itti* 'what-manner' is introduced in sentences to question for the manner of the action. Consider (8) below:

- (8) a. *akkam-itti deem-e ?*
How-manner go-pf
'In what manner did he go?'
- b. *haala gaarii-n deem-Ø-e*
Condition good-foc go-3ms-pf
'He went in a good condition.'

Here *akkam* 'how' is inflected for manner (see section on morphology(2.2)). In fact the *wh*-question in (8a) can have different interpretations like 'why did he

go?’ assuming that he is not supposed to go. So, if this point is considered, the question can be responded by specifying the reason of his going rather than in the specified way (8b).

2.1.5. Instrumental Interrogative

In Oromo *maal* ‘what’ along with its postpositionall clitics *-n* is used to question the means or with what the action is done or will be done. See the examples in (9):[♦]

- (9) a. *maali-i-n d’uf-t-an*
what-by come- 2p- pl
‘By what did you come?’
b. *luka-a-n d’uf-n-e*
foot- by come-1ppl- pf
‘We came on foot.’

In (9a) *maalii-n* ‘what-by’ questions the means with/by what the action of coming took place. *maalii-n* is placed immediately before the verb *d’uf* ‘come’ and following the subject, which is phonologically empty from its position. In this case, if the vowel ‘i’ in *maaliin* is short it designate first person singular like *maali-n* ‘what I’.

2.1.6. Reason Interrogative

In Oromo *maali-f* ‘why-for’ question for the specification of reason. Following are some examples:

[♦] The vowels ‘i’ and ‘a’ are used here in the data (9a and b) as epenthetic

- (10) a. *tolaa-n maali-f d'uf-e*
 T-nom why -for come- pf
 'For what did Tola come?'
- b. *tolaa-n barumsaa-f d'uf-e*
 T- nom education-for come-pf
 'Tola came to learn.'

As the example in (10) shows *maali-f* 'why for' questions for what reason the action of coming took place. The reply for this question can be as in (b) *barumsaa-f* 'lesson for'.

The interrogative of reason can be constructed in the above way placing the interrogative word in the complement position of the verb. So, if one seeks for reason the above specified way is the common way of questioning in Oromo, i.e. placing *maali-f* 'why for' immediately before the verb and after the subject.

In the above discussion we may also observe an interesting fact with regard to the *wh*-items. That is the *wh*-items attach Focus markers and first person singular clitics and inflect for different grammatical functions. In the following section, I shall address this fact.

2.2 The Morphology of *wh*-Words

The word morphology in linguistics is used in reference to the study of the internal structure of words (Katamba 1993:3). Morphological processes fall into two broad categories; inflectional and derivation morphology. Inflectional morphology deals with syntactically determined affixation process while derivational morphology is used to create lexical items (Ibid 47 & 205).

In practice, however, there is no always unanimity in the classification of the processes as inflectional or derivational. There is no general agreement on which process is derivational or which process is inflectional. Moreover, what is treated as derivation in one language may be inflectional in another language and vice versa (ibid. 206).

Despite the above discussion, I shall treat some inflectional and derivational properties of *wh*-words based on the distinction made by Katamba (1993). The attempt is made because of two main reasons. This involves both empirical and theoretical. Theoretically (MP assumptions)- lexical items are enumerated from the lexicon fully inflected with the inflectional affixes. The functional nodes in the syntax are not associated with affixes (nor with any phonological content what so ever), but simply with certain features- Tense, Case, and Agreement features among others (Marantz 1995:366). Empirically, it adds additional information to the morphology of Oromo. Moreover it plays a pivotal role in the derivation of *wh*- questions i.e. it gives a clear picture to the derivation of *wh*-question as we shall discuss in a moment.

2.2.1 The *wh*- items

There are six basic *wh*-items in Oromo. These are listed in (11).

(11) <i>maal</i>	‘what’
<i>kam</i>	‘which’
<i>eeññu</i>	‘who’
<i>eessa</i>	‘where’
<i>yoom</i>	‘when’
<i>meek’a</i>	‘how much or how many’

The six *wh*- items listed in (11) above are in their absolutive form. They can attach some inflectional and derivational affixes. Below, I shall account for some of the inflectional and derivational properties of these *wh*-items.

2.2.1.1 Some Inflections and Derivations

As I tried to point out above, *wh*-items exhibit different morphological properties like nouns and adjectives do in Oromo (Baye, 1981). I examine each of the *wh*-items in turn.

A) *eeññu* ‘who’

eeññu ‘who’ can change its shape for various grammatical interpretations. Consider (12)[♥]:

(12)		Singular	plural	gloss
	nom	eeññu	eeññu-faa	‘who’
	acc.	eeññuu-n	eeññuu-n-faa	‘whom’
	gen	eeññuu-f	eeññu-faa-f	‘for whom’
	dat	eeññu-tti	eeññu-faa-tti	‘to whom’
	foc	eeññu-tu	eeññu-faa-tu	‘who(focused)’
	person	eeññu-n	eeññu-faa-n	‘who I’

As we can see from (12), the *wh*-item *eeññu* ‘who’ inflects for accusative, genitive, dative, number and marked for focus and person. One peculiar feature we can see in the case of *eeññu* is, it marks morphologically accusative case and unmark nominative case. In other nouns, however, nominative case

[♥] In Baye 1981 *-f* is used as dative case marker, and *-itti* is identified as a definite marker, which is morphologically conditioned, i.e. attached to feminine gender. But I argue that *-f* is genitive case marker (benefactive case) and *-itti* as dative case marker according to my present analysis.

is morphologically marked while accusative case is unmarked morphologically (Baye, 1981). In this marking of accusative we can get another *wh*-item *eeññuu-n* 'whom'. In this regard, therefore it is also possible to regard this morpheme as a derivational morpheme than as inflectional only .

In other case when *eeññu* is marked for focus, it is used only as a subject. In Taha (1990) this is stated that *-tu* is attached to *wh*-words or other nouns whose status are nominative or subject, i.e. we cannot find *wh* -items with *-tu* with non nominative DP/ NP. If we attach *-tu* to a DP in non-subject position the sentence would be ungrammatical (cf. section 2.3).

According to Baye (1988) *-tu* is selected to show a contrastive focus function while in Taha (1990) it is used having an assertive function.

eeññu can also attach another focus marker. Consider (13)[⊗]:

- (13) a. *eeññu-d'a kan d'uf-e*
 who-Fm that come-pf
 'who is that came?'
- b. *Č'aalaa-d'a kan d'uf-e*
 Chala-Fm that come-pf
 'It is Chala who come.'

In the above example, *-d'a* shows that the category to which it is attached is focused. It restricts the person who came among others. *-d'a* can co-occur with *-tu* in the same constituents or in the same sentence. Consider (14):

- (14) a. *eeññu-d'a-tu d'uf-e*
 who -Fm-Fm come-pf
 'Who is he that came?'

[⊗] when the *wh*-item is the subject of a relative clause it can not the focus marker *-tu* but an other focus marker *-d'a*.

B. *kam* ‘which’

kam ‘which’ inflects for nominative, accusative, genitive, dative, number and marked for focus and person. Consider (16)[⊕]:

(16)		Singular	plural	gloss
	nom	<i>kam</i>	<i>kam-faa</i>	‘which’
	acc	<i>kam-ii-n</i>	<i>kam-ii-n-faa</i>	‘which’
	gen	<i>kam-ii-f</i>	<i>kam-faa-f</i>	‘for which’
	dat.	<i>Kam-itti</i>	<i>kam-faa-tti</i>	‘to which’
	foc.	<i>Kam-tu</i>	<i>kam-faa-tu</i>	‘which one’
	person	<i>kam-an</i>	<i>kamfaa-n</i>	‘which I’

From *kam* ‘which’, we can derive another *wh*-item ‘How’ by prefixing *akka*. Consider (17):

(17) *akka* + *kam* → *akkakam* → *akkam* ‘How’

In Oromo *akkam* is used more frequently in formal greeting as in (18):

- (18) a. *akkam* ? ‘How are you?’
 b. *akkam bul-t-e* ‘How was the night?’
 how night-2s-pf
 c. *akkam bul-t-an* ? ‘How was the night?’
 how night-2p-pl

[⊕] the vowel ‘ii’ in data (16) is considered as epenthetic

C) *eessa* 'where'

As stated above *eessa* refers only to a place. It also inflects for cases and attaches focus and person markers as in the following examples:

(19)		Singular	plural	gloss
	nom	<i>eessa</i>	<i>eessa-faa</i>	'where'
	acc.	<i>eessa</i>	<i>eessa-faa</i>	'where'
	gen	<i>eessaa-f</i>	<i>eessa-faa-f</i>	'for where'
	dat.	<i>eessa-tti</i>	<i>eessa-faa-tti</i>	'to where'
	foc.	<i>eessa-tu</i>	<i>eessa-faa-tu</i>	'where particular'
	person	<i>eessa-n</i>	<i>eessa-faa-n</i>	'where I'

We can see from the given examples that in the genitive case, the vowel *a* in *eessa* gets long. Because when this vowel becomes long in this condition, it also reflects the direction as in the examples in (20):

- (20) a. *eessa-a*
where-from
'From where'
- b. *eessa-an*
where -dir
'Which way'

So from this example we can deduce that the genitive case incorporates ablative case (i.e. source and direction) along with itself.

D) *maal* 'what'

Like other *wh*-items we have seen above, *maal* also inflects for different grammatical categories and suffixes focus and person markers. Consider (21) below:

(21)	Singular	plural	gloss
nom	maal	maal-faa	'what'
acc.	maal	maal-faa	'what'
gen.	maal-iif	maal-faa-f	'for what'
dat	maal-itti	maal-faa-tti	'to what'
foc.	maal-tu	maal-faa-tu	'what particular'
Inst.	maal-iin	maal-fa-iin	'by or with what'
Person	maal-in	maal-fa-in	'what I'

The example in (21) shows *maal* does not inflect for nominative and accusative. The nominative and the accusative of *maal* are the absolute form. We can use *maal* as subject only when it marked for focus (the point mentioned earlier). In the case of instrumental case, if we need to know the specific means by which the action is made, it is possible to add the focus marker *-d'a* like *maali-d'a-n* 'by what particular tool'.

We can also get another *wh*-item 'why' using *maal* as the base and attaching *-(i)f* like as in (22)⁺:

(22)	maal-if
	what-for
	'Why/what for'

E) *yoom* 'when'

We use *yoom* only to refer to 'time'. *yoom* also inflects for different grammatical categories and attach person marker as in (23) which also appear in singular and plural form.

⁺ The genitive (benefactive) case marker *-f* sometimes overlap with *-(i)f* which is used for as derivational morpheme in the specified way.

23)	Singular	plural	gloss
	nom yoom	yoom-faa	'when'
	acc. yoom	yoom-faa	'when'
	gen yoom-ii-f	yoom-faa-f	'for whene'
	dat yoom-itti	yoom-faa-tti	'to when'
	person yoom-i-n	yoom-faa-n	'when I'

Unlike other *wh*-items that we have seen above, *yoom* inflects only for few functional categories: genitives, datives and number. It does not mark focus morphologically like other *wh*-items in the singular case. However, when *yoom* is pluralized it can attach focus marker. Consider (24):

- (24) yoom-faa-tu
 When-pl-Fm
 'When particular days'

E) meek'a 'How much or How many'

The *wh*-item *meek'a* is used only to denote quantity. It can change its shape by inflecting for various functional categories and by attaching focus marker and person marker like other *wh*-items. Consider (25):

(25)	Singular	plural	gloss
	acc meek'aa-n	meek'a-faa-n	'with how much/many'
	gen meek'aa-f	meek'a-faa-f	'for how much/many'
	dat meek'a-tti	meek'a-faa-tti	'to how much /many'
	foc meek'a-tu	meek'a-faa-tu	'how much/many'
	person meek'a-n	meek'a-faa-n	'how much/many I'

When one needs to ask time both the accusative and dative forms can be used for they have similar meaning in this case. For example:

- (26) a. saʔa meekʼaa-n dʼuf -t-an
 hour how much-at come-2p-pl
 'At what time did you come?'
- b. saʔa meekʼa-tti dʼuf-t-an
 hour how much -at come- 2p-pl
 'At what time did you come?'

In (26), however, there is pragmatic difference between the two. The example in (26b) is more emphasized than in (26a). That is to say a speaker utters the (b) example in order to get information on the exact time of the action, while in the (26a) the need for the exact time is not necessity.

To summarize the points raised thus far, I have identified nine (9) *wh*-items of Oromo. Six are basic while the other three: *maalif* 'why', *eeññuun* 'whom' and *akkam* 'how' are derived from *maal* 'what' *eeññu* 'who' and *kam* 'which' respectively. We have also noticed that the six absolute or basic *wh*-items can inflect for various grammatical or functional categories. From these none of the *wh*-items inflect for nominative case while all inflect for genitive, dative, number, person and focus. From the six absolute *wh*-items *eeññu*, *kam* and *meekʼa* inflect for accusative while *eessaa*, *maal* and *yoom* do not inflect for accusative case.

2.2.2 Some more points on focus

In the preceding section we have observed that *-tu* is used to mark contrastive focus in each *wh*-item without any restrictions. We have also note that *-dʼa* can also incorporate *-tu* to give more emphases to the constituents to which they are attached. However, there is another focus marker, which appear with every *wh*-item in the absolute case. Observe the following examples in (27):

- (27) a. eeñnu + -uma → eeñnuma ‘who + particular’
 b. maal + -uma → maaluma ‘what + particular’
 c. eessa + -uma → eessuma ‘where + particular’

In Taha (1990:69), this focus marker is used as having restricted function. That means the focus marker *-uma* is used to restrict a proposed set of information to one or more correct values among the set.

As we can observe from (28) below this focus marker can appear with other focus markers discussed earlier *-tu* and *-d’a* within a single constituent to make the information carried by the constituent more restrict. For example:

- (28) a. eeññ-uma-tu
 who -Fm-Fm
 ‘Who particular’
 b. eeññ-d’-uma
 who-Fm-Fm
 ‘Who particular’
 c. eeññ-d’-uma-tu
 who-Fm-Fm-fm
 ‘Who particular’

We can notice from (28) that the focus markers can appear in pair or /and in triple within a single constituents. From semantic or pragmatic point of view the number of focus markers are symmetric with focus prominence. That is to say a constituent with a triple focus marker more prominent to a constituent with double focus marker and a constituent with double focus marker is more prominent to a constituent with a single or no focus marker. In other word focus prominence decreases as we reduce the number of focus markers.

Regarding their order, *-d'a* always precede *-uma* and *-uma* always precedes *-tu* as in the example (28c). Any other order results an ungrammatical structure. The focus makers are ordered in hierarchical way.

2.3. Derivation of *wh*- Questions

We have seen in section 1.8.3 that one of the points of departure of MP from GB is, in its approach to syntactic structure. GB strongly supports representational approach whereas MP supports derivational approach to syntactic structure. According to Authier and Reed (1999:52), a derivational approach to syntax is one in which all syntactic principles and parameters apply in tandem as the structural process proceeds.

In the following section I shall account for the derivation of *wh*-questions. In so doing, I shall begin with the derivation of single *wh*-question and move on to multiple *wh*-questions. In this case, however, I am not going to give the fuller account of the derivation of *wh*-questions I am after. Rather I shall consider some of the factors that contribute to the grammaticality or non-grammaticality of the *wh*- questions.

2.3.1. Single *wh*-Questions

2.3.1.1. The Unmarked Position of single *wh*-Phrase

Oromo has an SOV word order in its basic sentences and is grouped as configurational (Baye 1986). In this type of languages the *wh*-phrase is expected to be *in situ* in the canonical position associated with its grammatical function (Kiss 1995 in Girma 2005a). Let us consider examples in (29):

- (29) a. *eeññu* -tu d'uf-e
 who-Fm come-pf
 'Who is that came?'
- b. *maal* bit-t-e
 what buy- 2ps-Pf
 'What did you buy?'
- c. *leelloo-n eeññu-tti t'alayaa* ergi-t-e
 Lelo -non who-dat letter send-3pfs-pf
 'To whom did Lelo send a letter?'

In (29), *eeññu*, *maal* and *eeññu* are Subject, Direct Object and Indirect Object respectively. It is clear from (30) below that all the *wh*-phrases respect their unmarked declarative clause positions. Consider also (30):

- (30) a. *tolaa*-tu d'uf-e
 T-Fm come-pf
 'It is Tola who came.'
- b. *kitaaba-n* bit-e
 book-1s buy-pf
 'I bought a book.'
- c. *leelloo-n gaaddise-tti t'alayaa* ergi-t-e
 L-nom Gaddise-dat letter send- 3pfs-pf
 'Lelo sent a letter to Gaddise.'

The examples in (30) are direct response to the *wh*-question in (29) in the same order. (30a) corresponds to (29a), (30b) to (29b) and (30c) to (29c). To put it in other way as the response to the *wh*-question in (29), in (30a-c) *tola* 'Tola', *kitaaba* 'book' and *gaaddise* 'Gaddise' are subject, Direct Object and Indirect Object following the same order that we find in the corresponding *wh*-phrases in (29a-c) respectively.

In other words, the nominative, accusative and dative of the *wh*-phrases in Oromo are expressed in their respective grammatical positions. In addition in (29a) the subject focus marker *-tu* is attached to *eeñnu*, which is in the structural subject position. This tells us that *eeñnu* is in its base position. Thus, from this fact *wh*-phrases in Oromo are clearly in-situ in the unmarked cases.

2.3.1.2 Factors that allow *wh-in situ*

There are various factors that allow *wh-in-situ*. Among these, the different interpretations of *wh*-phrase in different contexts are one. According to Huang (1995, in Watanabe 2003), *shenme* (Chinese word) can be interpreted as a *wh*-phrase, a universal quantifier, a negative polarity item, or an existential quantifier depending on the context in which it appears. In the same way *wh*-item with out any visible additional morphological element can serve as quantifiers in many languages such as Russian (Zauitnevich 2000) and Chinese (Hoh and Chiang 1990, in Girma 2005b). Grima (2005b), however, says Amharic *wh*-words need a morphological element in order to be used as quantifier.

In Oromo, similar to Amharic, the *wh*-items need obligatory morphological element in order to function as a quantifier. Consider (31):

- (31) a. *eeñnu-illee/iyyuu* 'whoever, anybody or everybody'
 b. *maal -illee/iyyuu* 'whatever'
 c. *yoom- illee/iyyuu* 'whenever'
 d. *eessa- illee/iyyuu* 'wherever'
 e. *meeek'a -illee/iyyuu* 'what so ever the price/number'
 f. *kam- illee/iyyuu* 'whichever'

We can see in (31) that *-illee* or *-iyyuu*[♦] is used as quantificational element. This quantificational element can also be used with marked *wh*-words as in (32):

- (32) a. eeññuu-n-illee/iyyuu ‘whomever’
 b. eeññu-tti-illee/iyyuu ‘to whomever’
 c. eessa-tti-llee/iyyuu ‘to wherever’
 d. eessa-faa-tti-illee /iyyuu ‘to wherever (pl)’

Regarding its attachment, *-illee* or *-iyyuu* can be attached to any *wh*-item whether it is marked or unmarked.

Watanabe (1992a, in Watanabe 2003) claim that the existence of morpho-syntactic property, namely, the indeterminate elements, which receive various quantificational interpretations governed by morphosyntactic environments, allow *wh-in-situ* in Chinese and Japanese. Based on this claim, I argue that the presence of the quantificational element discussed above and the existence of inflectional and derivational morphemes in the *wh*-items in Oromo which is partially or totally governed by morphosyntactic requirement also allow the *wh-in-situ* in Oromo. Since the claim lack depth and detailed analyses, however, I recommend further research to be made on this area.

On the basis of the above claim, therefore, we can say that the interpretation of *wh*-questions in Oromo is made at LF (post Spell-Out). In Oromo movement of *wh*-phrase to check off the [+WH] features may wait until after LF obeying procrastinate[•]. Thus we can assume the following schematic representation for

♦ *-illee* and *-iyyuu* are used alternatively as quantificational element in Oromo. It is not clear whether they belong to different dialects of Oromo or interpreted as synonymous.

• Procrastinate says, if you can wait you must wait. (Cook and Newson 1996:357).

wh-phrases of Oromo like Chinese *wh*-phrases: [Cp Op_x [IP...wh_(x)...]](cf. Watanabe 2003:215). The schema presupposes that Oromo belongs to *wh-in-situ* languages.

However, there is a case where a *wh*-phrase in Oromo exhibits movement. I shall consider the point shortly.

2.3.1.3 On Wh- Movement

In this section, I shall look at *wh*-movements more closely examining some sentences with *wh*-word. How they work and what their limitations are.

Wh-movement is called operator movement because it applies to expressions, which contain (e.g. Interrogative) operator of some kind and operator beginning with *wh* in particular (Radford 1997). So let us assume following Cook and Newson (1996:206) that the *wh*-movement operates under the following principle;

1. Principle of movement: move α - (i.e. move any element any where) in *wh*-movement α =a *wh*-phrase which move from an A-position to the non A-position of spec CP leaving *wh*-trace (variable).
2. The *wh*-criteria: all [+ WH] complementizers must contain a [+WH] element.
3. The double Filled Comp Filter: The C-system may not contain both a *wh*-item and complementizer.

Now let us take some Oromo sentences with *wh*-phrase and see how the above points operate. Consider (33):

(33). a. *tolaa-n maal bit-e?*

T-nom what buy -pf

'What did Tola buy?'

If we examine the example in (33) on the bases of principle 1 above, we can get the following as (34) below:

- (34) a. * [maali [tolaa-n ti bit-e?]]
 what T- nom buy- pf

In (34) *maal* ‘what’ is moved to the spec-CP leaving a trace behind its base position. However, in Oromo *wh*-question with the structure (34) above is ungrammatical in every respect. So principle 1 that works for languages like English (VO languages) does not generate grammatical sentences in Oromo. For more convenience let us take some more examples:

- (35) a. Č’aalaa-n eessa d’eem-e
 Ch.- nom where go - pf
 ‘Where did Chala go?’
 b. * eessa Č’aalaa-n ti deem-e?
 Where Ch-Nom go- pf
 c. hawwii-n maali -f d’uf-t-e?
 H- nom what for come- 3pfs- pf
 ‘Why did Hawi come?’
 d) * maali- f hawwii-n ti d’uf-t-e
 Why- for H-nom come- 3pfs- pf

Similar to (34,) structures in (35b) and (35d) are both ungrammatical. What we can understand from examples (34) and (35b) and (35d) is, that overt *wh*-movement is impossible in Oromo regardless of principle 1.

Chomsky (1986), in Collins, (2003:49) claimed that Move-alpha is applied only when a failure to apply it would lead to structure that violate a grammatical condition (cf. Last Resort). In other words in the Minimalist Framework Last Resort is defined as, “a step in a derivation is legitimate only if it is necessary

for convergence” (Chomsky 1995b). Based on this claim we can say that since the examples in (34) and (35a&c) are already well formed interrogative structures of Oromo before the application of Move-alpha, the application of Move-alpha is not necessary for the derivation to converge.

2.3.1.3.1 Factors Triggering *wh*-movement

There are several factors that trigger *wh*-movement. One suggestion is that the complementizer system contains an abstract interrogative feature that forces *wh*-element to move to it (Cook and Newson 1996:201). According to the same source, features are not equally strong or weak. The basic difference between strong and weak features is that strong features always trigger overt, visible movement. Weak features also trigger movement but this movement is covert (Radford 1997a).

Oromo in this respect can be assumed to be having covert *wh*-movement, which is triggered by the weak *wh*-feature like in Chinese. In Chinese and similar languages, we can say that an interrogative C has a weak *wh*-feature (ibid). Indeed overt *wh*- movement seems to be absent in Oromo.

When we come to English, however, it has strong *wh*-feature at the Spec-C position. Thus English needs obligatory *wh*-movement to its Spec-CP (Radford 1997b). For example the *wh*-question of English pre and post move are presented in (36) below:

(36) a. pre move=your name is what?

b. post move= what_i is your name t_i?

As can be seen from the above example *wh*-phrase must move from A- position to the non A-position leaving its trace like in the (36b) above. When we come back to Oromo, there is *wh*-movement from A- position to non-A-position for

checking not a *wh*-feature but for checking another feature. If there is *wh*-movement in Oromo to sentence initial position, there must be a reason other than *wh*-feature checking that we shall discuss below.

2.3.1.3.2 Focus triggered movement

According to Taha (1990) there are reasons why we bring a phrase or a word to sentence initial positions in Oromo. Consider the following examples:

- (37) a. Č'aalaa-n yoom d'uf-e
Ch-nom when come- pf
'When did Chala come?'
- b) yoom d'uf- e Č'aalaa-n
when come- pf Ch – nom
'When did Chala come?'

In (37a) the *wh*-phrase is in-situ while in (37b) it is in ex-situ. Consequently, the speaker signals different information when he utters the questions. In (37a) the *wh*-phrase is focus neutral (contrastive focus). In (37b), however, the *wh*-phrase is the object of the contrastive focus. So in (37b) what the speaker wants to know is when the action of coming took place rather than who came. Therefore, what we understand from the above particular example is, the *wh*-phrase fronting in Oromo is because of contrastive focus. This is also the case in other Ethiopian languages such as Amharic. What is new in Oromo is focus can also be marked morphologically as we have discussed in section 2.2.

In section 2.2.2 we have noticed that morphologically multiple focus markers are possible in Oromo. These focus markers are ordered somewhat in hierarchical way. Based on this, I assume that the attachment is made via

successive cyclic movement of the constituent bearing the feature to each focus head as in (38):

- (38) [FocP³[Foc⁰ -tu][FocP² [Foc⁰-uma][FocP¹[Foc⁰-d'a][NP[N⁰ → eeñnu]]]]]
 [FocP³ eeñnu-d'-uma-tu i][FocP² ti [FocP¹ ti][ti]]]]

2.3.1.3.3 Some more points

In *wh*-phrase fronting, there is peculiar feature in Oromo as opposed to some other languages having *wh*-phrase *in situ*. In Chinese as suggested by Roberts (1997) fronting of *wh*-items is possible. In Oromo fronting of a *wh*-item results in ungrammatical sentence like (39) below:

- (39) a margee-n yoom d'uf-t-e?
 M- nom When come- 3pfs-pf
 'When did Merge come?'
 b. * yoom margee-n d'uf-t-e?
 When M- nom come-3pfs- pf



In (39b) the *wh*-item *yoom* 'when', is fronted in isolation and resulted in ungrammatical sentence. The ungrammaticality of (39b) above can be accounted for in terms of pied piping- a process by which a moved constituent (or set of feature) drags one or more other constituents (or a set of features) along with it when it moves (Radford 1997b). Let us also consider the example in (40):

- (40) [ati [sangaa kam [bit-t-e]]]
 you ox which boy-2ps-pf
 'Which ox did you buy?'

Based on pied piping metaphor, therefore, we cannot move the *wh*-item in isolation. If we move the *wh*-item alone, it would result an ill-formed sentence like in (41):

(41) * [CP kam [IP ati [sangaa ti [bit-t-e]]]]
 which you ox buy- 2pf- pf

To use the pied-piping metaphor stated above, when the *wh*-determiner *kam* ‘which’ moves to Spec-Foc, its complement *sangaa*-‘ox’ has to be pied piped along with the moved *wh*-determiner as in (42):

(42) [FocP sangaa kami bit-t-ej [IP ati ti tj]
 ox which buy-2ps-pf you
 ‘Which ox did you buy?’

In the same way in (39b) when the *wh*-phrase moves, it should drag the verb along with itself. That is because, since the *wh*-item is the complement of the verb the relation between the two is very local and we cannot separate them. Any operation that affects one also affects the other.

The *wh*-phrase fronting in Oromo involve the entire VP if the *wh*-phrase is the complement of the verb. The same thing holds true also to Amharic (cf. Grima 2005)). Applying the same procedure, therefore, the sentence in (39b) above would be corrected like in (43):

(43) yoom d’uf-t-e margee-n
 When come- 3fs- pf M -nom
 ‘When did Marge come?’

In short, based on the principles of structural dependency, (Cook and Newson 1996), when a *wh*-phrase fronting is needed knowing the *wh*-item alone is not

enough but the knowledge of the properties of the whole clause in fronting is crucial.

2.3.2 Multiple Wh- phrases

In the above sections, I claimed that *wh*-phrases are *in-situ* in Oromo; i.e. there is no obligatory *wh*-movement in the derivation of *wh*-questions. Moreover, I stated that the fronting of a *wh*-phrase is only because of contrastive focus. In this section, I proceed to see if the same thing is at work in the case of multiple *wh*-questions. To begin with, consider (44):

- (44) a. eeññu eeññuu -f maal bit-e
 who who-for what buy-pf
 b. eeññuu -f eeññu maal bit-e
 who-for who what buy-pf
 c. maal bit- e eeññuu-f eeññu
 what buy-pf who-for who

Lit. 'Who bought what for whom?'

As we can see in (44a), there are three *wh*-phrases in a single *wh*-question namely *eeññu*, *eeññuu-f* and *maal*. All the *wh*-phrases are in their base positions. However, any of the *wh*-phrases can be fronted in this language if it is focused as in (44b) and (c). Let us also observe the corresponding declarative response to the above *wh*-questions.

- (45) a. tolaa-n bulaa-f kop'ee bit-e
 Tola -nom Bula-for shoes buy-pf
 b. bulaa-f tolaa-n kop'ee bit-e
 Bula-for tola-nom shoes buy-pf

- c. kop'ee bit-e bulaa-f tolaa-n
 shoes buy-pf Bula Tola-nom
 Lit. 'Tola bought a shoe for Bula.'

We can see from (45) that the constituent order varies as the order of the *wh*-phrases in the corresponding *wh*-questions varies. The order, however, varies depending on the way the speaker want to hear from the hearer. In this case if we have hypothetical wh_1 , wh_2 and wh_3 with the order: $wh_1 > wh_2 > wh_3$, we can say, wh_1 is the most prominent whereas wh_3 is the least. Any order difference made to the given order brings difference in the pragmatic information. Similar operation holds in Amharic (cf. Girma 2005b).

In the above section, we have seen that the fronting or inversion of a *wh*-phrase is because of focus. From this particular example in (45) it seems that the economy principle is inoperable in Oromo. According to Radford (1997:144), the economy principle in multiple *wh*-question determined that only one *wh*- operator will be moved into Spec-CP in a multiple *wh*-question structure. Consider the following examples of English sentences:

- (46) a. you think who will say What?
 b. Who_{t2} do_i you_i think t₂ will say what?
 c.* what_{t3} do_i you_i think who will say t₃?

The *wh*-question in (46c) above is not possible English ways of interrogative construction. This is in light with the economic principle that states that economic consideration favor shorter movement over longer ones (ibid). Since in example (46) 'Who' is closer to CP than 'what', CP lures the nearest *wh*-operator into Spec-CP. In other words since ' Who' is nearer to CP in (46) than 'What', it is 'Who' which must move to Spec-CP, not 'What'.

The ungrammaticality of (46c) can be best explained in terms of Relativised Minimality of Rizzi (1990) or the Minimal Link Condition (MLC) of Chomsky and Lasnik (1993 in Watanabe 2003). In the framework of Chomsky (1995a), MLC is incorporated into the definition of movement operation, and furthermore, movement is characterized in terms of attraction[♦]. Observe (50) below:

(47) K attracts F if F is the closest feature that can enter into a checking relation with K (cf. Watanabe, 2003)

The movement of 'what' in (46c) is blocked by this definition only if 'who' has the closest feature that can enter into a checking relation with the head that is supposed to check the relevant feature of 'what'. Thus, since 'who' has the closest feature with the head of CP, the movement of 'what', crossing over 'who' is blocked in the principled fashion.

In Oromo, the movement of a *wh*-phrase crossing over another *wh*-phrase is possible. That is to say, any *wh*- phrase can be fronted crossing another based on what the speaker wants to signal. In short, if we have a hypothetical *wh*₁, *wh*₂ and *wh*₃-phrases the orders in (48) are possible.

- (48)
- | | | | | | |
|----|-----------------|---|-----------------|---|-----------------|
| 1. | WH ₁ | > | WH ₂ | > | WH ₃ |
| 2. | WH ₂ | > | WH ₁ | > | WH ₃ |
| 3. | WH ₂ | > | WH ₃ | > | WH ₁ |
| 4. | WH ₁ | > | WH ₃ | > | WH ₂ |
| 5. | WH ₃ | > | WH ₂ | > | WH ₁ |
| 6. | WH ₃ | > | WH ₁ | > | WH ₂ |

As far as I am concerned, any of the above *wh*- phrase order does not violate the grammar of Oromo. In this case the order is not haphazard. The order

♦ Attraction involves movement of a set of grammatical features carried by a head on their own without movement of the corresponding Phonetic feature (Radford 1997b: 230).

should keep Focus prominence hierarchy (FPH) (Girma 2005b). The most prominent *wh*-phrase is placed syntactically in the highest position. In other word free words order is not tolerated in Oromo.

As we have mentioned earlier *wh*-movement (fronting) seems to diverge from the economic principle in Oromo unlike English or VO languages in general. It is also stated above that overt *wh*- movement is triggered or motivated by the need to check the strong [+WH] feature of CP (Also in Radford, 1997; 136). Watanabe (2003: 210) also stated that movement obeys subadjacency, i.e. whether it applies in overt syntax or at LF, and that only one *wh*-feature is required to be raised to Spec of an interrogative CP. Since in Oromo a *wh*-phrase is fronted not because of checking *wh*-feature. It is rather moved to check strong focus feature, therefore, I also assume that it might be equally economical if in a multiple *wh*-question any *wh*-phrase is fronted overtly crossing over another *wh*-phrase for checking the strong focus feature (i.e. for pragmatic reason) and still generate a well-formed grammatical structure of the language.

Generally, in Oromo the superiority condition seems inoperable. This is also true for Amharic. According to Girma (2005b) any *wh*-phrase can be fronted based on the emphasis that the speaker wants to assign to each *wh*- phrase. But since the superiority condition stated for languages like English (Chomsky 1973, in Girma 2005) and for language like Oromo (OV languages) is not the same (for fronting is made basically for different purposes according to the languages) the fronting of a *wh*-phrase does not violate the superiority condition in languages like Oromo.

To summarize the points raised under this section, we have observed that in both single and multiple *wh*-questions, *wh*-phrases respect their canonical positions in the unmarked cases. Based on this, I have argued that the *wh*-

phrases in Oromo are in-situ in both single and multiple *wh*-questions. This means that there is no obligatory *wh*-phrase movement in the derivation of *wh*-questions. If the *wh*-phrases are subjected to focus, however, the fronting of a *wh*-phrase to a sentence initial position is possible. In this, fronting of *wh*-phrase, we have also observed that one *wh*-phrase can cross over another and still generate a grammatical structure of the language. Here I argued that since the fronting is made not to check [WH] feature, the process is not in violation of economic condition.

Chapter Three

Yes or No Questions

In the preceding chapter we have seen one type of question. In this chapter we shall consider Yes or No question.

Yes or No questions are so-called because they permit 'Yes' and 'No' (or their counterparts in other languages) as appropriate replies (Radford 1981). Consider the question and its reply in (49):

- (49) a. tulluu-n barataa-d'a-a
T-.nom student-is -Q
'Is Tullu student?'
- b. eeyyee/lakki
"Yes/No."

In (49) the question in (49a) is replied as in (49b) using *eeyyee* 'Yes' or *lakki* 'No' as its appropriate reply. Of course speaker (b) does not have to reply to such question only in this way. He might reply *tarii* 'may be', *natti hin fakkaatu* 'I don not think so', *waa'uu* 'no /nothing'. All these are possible ways of replying to such types of questions depending on the knowledge or the information the hearer has on the proposed question. But, according to Radford (1981), at least he has the option of replying using 'Yes' or 'No'. This is the main reason why it is called 'Yes' or 'No' questions.

3.1 The derivation of Yes or No questions

On the derivation of Yes or No questions, I do not have much to say. That is the derivation of Yes or No questions is almost the same with the derivation of *wh*-questions, we have seen earlier.

The derivation of Yes or No questions does not take place in the overt syntax. Consider (50):

- (50) a. tolaa-n d'eeraa-d'a-a
T.-nom tall -is -Q
'Is Tola tall?'
- b. dasoo-n haad'a kee-ti-i
D-nom mother your is -Q
'Is Daso your mother?'

In both (50a) and (50b) above every thing is in place. No constituent changed its place for the formation of the interrogative. That is, every constituents of the sentence remains in place as in their declarative counterparts in (51):

- (51) a. tolaa-n d'eeraa-d'a
T.-nom tall-is
"Tola is tall."
- b. dasoo-n haad'a kee-ti
D-nom mother your -is
'Daso is your mother.'

As one can observe from both (50) and (51), the constituents order in both cases are the same and similar. On the bases of these analyses we can say that there is no auxiliary inversion or do insertion as in English in the derivation of Yes or No questions in Oromo. Consider the English example in (52):

- (52) a. [IP It is raining.]
b. [CPs [IP it ti raining?]]
c. [IP I like to study syntax].
d. [CP Do [IP you like to study syntax?]]

We can observe from (52) that the Yes or No question in (b) and (d) are derived from (a) and (c) counter parts through auxiliary inversion and do insertion respectively. In Oromo constituents are in-situ. According to the assumption in MP; therefore, the Yes or No question in Oromo can be interpreted at LF (after Spell-Out). There is no such syntactic mechanism in Oromo (a point left for further analyses). In other words there is no visible movement in the derivation of questions of this type in Oromo. Every thing will be completed at LF (in the covert syntax). I claim, therefore, that the Yes or No questions in Oromo is simply an IP sentence following Grimshaw's (1990) proposal in Roberts (1997).

However, there is a possibility for order difference in the constituents of Yes or No question. One of the initiations for the order difference is focus prominence. I shall consider the point shortly.

3.2 On the properties of Yes or No questions

3.2.1. Constituent Fronting

In the Yes or No questions, order difference in the constituents is possible even though its interpretation is made at LF. To put the notion on the concrete bases, consider the following example.

- (53) a. [IPdame-n reʔee k'al-e-e]
 Dame-nom goat-pf-Q
 b . (FocP reʔee k'al-e-ei [IP dame-n ti])
 goat slaughter Dame-nom
 lit. 'Did Dame slaughter a goat?'

As we can see in (53) *reʔee k'al-e* 'goat slaughtered' moved to sentence initial position. When the speaker utters (a) and (b) he signals different information. In example (a) the increment of information lays on the NP *dame* 'Dame'.

However in (b), the increment of information is on VP *re?ee k'ale* 'goat slaughtered'. We can also note from this example that the increment of information corresponds to higher position in syntactic structure. Thus on the bases of this we can say that the movement of a constituent to the sentence initial position is because of focus.

The importance of this information is relative to the speaker's pragmatic knowledge or the speaker's experience in the actual world. According to Taha (1990), the increment of information, which the speaker signals either structurally or contextually to the most important information, is because of focus. Adding to this point, Taha (1990) says the increment of information may be any thing from specific lexical item to the entire sentence or the sentence operators.

In addition to structural focus marking we can also focalize a constituent morphologically in the construction of Yes or No questions. The more frequent focus marker in this case is *-tu*, which is attached to the subject to restrict its gap. Consider (54):

- (54) a. *K'aanfee-tu sa?a bit-e-e*
K-Fm cow but-pf-Q
'Is it Kanfe who bought a cow?'

In (54) focus marker *-tu* is used to focalize the subject *k'aanfe* 'Kanfe'. When the speaker produces the sentence he wants to know if it is *Kanfe* but no body else who has bought a cow, i.e. to restrict *Kanfe* among others. The type of focus is assertive and the function of this focus marker is completion (Taha 1990).

3.2.1.1 Two or more focus markers

In the above sections we have observed that the fronting of constituents in the Yes or No question in Oromo is because of focus, which is marked either syntactically or morphologically. In the morphological focus marking I have identified *-tu* as focus marker. In further analysis, however, I identified more than one focus marker (cf. section 2.2) within a single constituent as we can easily recognize from the following examples.

- (55) a. [_{FocP} Č'aalaa-d'a-tu d'uf-e-e]
Chala-Fm-Fm come-pf-Q
b. [_{FocP} Č'aalaa-d'-uma-tu d'uf-e-e]
Chala-Fm-Fm-Fm come-pf-Q
Lit. 'Is it Chala who came?'

We can observe from the examples in (55) that there are successive markers of focus within a single constituent namely NP Č'aalaa 'Chala'. This means that there are double and triple focus markers within a single category NP in (62a & b) respectively. In Taha (1990) and Baye (1988) each focus marker is identified separately. What is 'new' in this study is only the successive occurrence of each focus marker. This is not limited to the above data. We can also find the same thing in other constituents. In this case the attachment of each focus marker is not expected to happen simultaneously. I assume that the attachment is made via successive cyclic movement of the NP to each target focus marker in each focus head as in (56):

- (56) [_{FocP}³ Č'aalaa-d'-uma-tu [_{FocP}² ti [_{FocP}¹ ti [NP ti]]]]

3.2.1.2 Some more points on fronting

In the above section, we have observed that the fronting of constituents to a sentence initial position is because of focus prominence. In this fronting, one interesting feature we can observe is that, if the constituent in the complement position is moved to the sentence initial position, it must pied-pipe the verb as we have noticed in the case of *wh*-fronting earlier. Consider (53) repeated in (57) for ease:

- (57) a. [IP dame-n re?ee k'ale-e-e]
 Dame -nom goat slaughter-pf-Q
 'Did Dame slaughter a goat?'
- b. [FocP re?ee kal-e-ei [IP dame-n ti]]
 goat slaughter-pf-Q Dame-nom
 'Did Dame slaughter a goat?'
- c. * [FocP re?eei [IP dame-n ti k'al-e-e]]
 goat Dame-nom slaughter-pf-Q

The ungrammaticality of (57c) can be explained based on pied-piping metaphor. That is in (57c) *re?ee* 'a goat' is moved to the sentence initial position in isolation from the verb complement position. But since the pied piping of the verb is necessary in the move, separating it from its complement causes the derivation to crash. The complement along with its verb must move to sentence initial position like in the (57b) example. In this case the head verb and the complement together seem to act as a single unit.

3.2.2 The question affix

We have seen above that there is no overt (PF) movement in the derivation of Yes or No question in Oromo. Apart from this, however, there are some

properties of Yes or No questions that we observe in the overt syntax. To begin with let us consider the examples in (58):

- (58) a. dammee-n bareed-duu-d'a.
Damme-nom beautiful-3pfs-is
'Damme is beautiful.'
- b. saree-n bofa ñaat-t-e
dog-nom snake eat-3pfs-pf
'A dog ate snake.'

When we change the above declarative sentence in to its Yes or No question counter part we can get (59):

- (59) a. dammee-n bareed-duu-d'a-a.
Deme-nom beautiful-3pfs-is-Q
'Is Damme beautiful?'
- b. saree-n bofa ñaat-t-e-e
dog-nom snake eat-3pfs-pf-Q
'Did a dog eat snake?'

Indeed we can see the same constituent order in both declarative and interrogative sentences of (58) and (59) above respectively. This tells us the LF interpretation of Yes or No question in Oromo. One different point we can observe is, in the case of declarative sentence in (58) the vowel in the final constituent is short while the same vowel is long in integrative counterpart the vowels of the auxiliary *-d'a* and perfect marker *-e* respectively; that is what differentiates declarative from interrogative sentence in Oromo. The lengthening of the vowels is made purely on the bases of syntax and its attachment can be accounted via derivational processes as in (60):

(60) [QP [Q° -a [VP [V° -d'a]]] → [QP -d'a-a [VP ti]][♦]

Here we can assume that the final vowel (the lengthened) is interpreted as a question affix like *ka/no* in Japanese (Cheng 1991 in Watanabe 2003) and *wāy* in Amharic (Girma 2005b).

If the assumption made above is valid, lack of overt movement in the derivation of Yes or No questions in Oromo is because of economy. Since the question suffix is sufficient to indicate that the clause is a question (Baltin 2003). Chomsky (1986 cited in Collins 2003:49) states that move-alpha is applied only when a failure to apply it lead to a structure that violate a grammatical condition. In (59) since all the conditions for the Yes or No questions derivation is satisfied at LF (may be by assumed question affix) there is no need for the overt auxiliary movement.

3.2.3 The role of suprasegmental features

In the preceding section we have observed that lengthened vowel at the end of the verb or final constituent is assumed to be question affix and indicates that the sentence is interrogative. There is one more feature that can be used alternatively to mark Yes or No questions. I shall discuss this feature below.

According to Wako (1981), Abarra (1988), Llonet (1988) in addition to vowel length and consonant gemination, the role of other suprasegmental features is significant in bringing semantic or syntactic distinction in Oromo. Anderson (1978), Gandour (1978) and Alemayehu (1987, in Habte 2003) state that, a language is said to be 'intonational language', if pitch is used to signal semantic and/or syntactic distinction at phrase or sentence level. Here pitch

[♦] The derivation of other Yes or No question can be made through the same procedure.

variation operates beyond word levels at larger syntactic levels as to the above scholars. Oromo as pitch-accent or intonational language (cf. Habte 2003), Owens (1985) cited in Kebede (1994:30) employ suprasegmental feature in its syntax to differentiate declarative sentence from its interrogative counterpart. According to my analyses, if a sentence ends up with a falling intonation, it is an indicator of declarative sentence as the examples in (61) may indicate.

- (61) a. tolaa-n bareed- aa -d'a . ↘
 T-nom handsom-mas- is
 'Tola is handsom.'
- b. sangaa-n an-i kaleessa bit-e furd-aa-d'a ↘
 ox -nom I-nom yesterday buy-pf fat-mas -is
 'An ox I bought yesterday is fat.'

When the speaker utters the above sentences as declaratives or statements he does it with a falling intonation. In relation to this Wako (1981:49) says: a falling pitch which occur at the end of statement or at the end of a question sentence with question words (*wh*-items) signals the end of an utterance. From this we can understand that the falling pitch indicate the sentence is declarative or statement, if *wh*-phrase is not introduced.

On the other hand, the rising intonation indicates the utterance is question. Consider the following in (62):

- (62) a. mana k'abd-a ↗
 house have-2s mas
 'Do you have house?'
- b. kaleessa gal-t-e ↗
 yesterday backhome-2s-pf
 'Did you come back home yesterday?'

We can observe from (62) that, Yes or No questions in Oromo are also characterized by intonation. Wako (1981:49) also says a rising pitch, which occurs at the end of a question sentence without question word signals a question and the end of an utterance.

In sum, in this chapter, we have observed that the Yes or No questions in Oromo are interpreted at LF (i.e. in the covert syntax) waiting after the point of spell-Out. In addition, we have observed that in the construction of such question the sentence final vowel gets long to mark that the sentence is interrogative in the non-*wh*-question. Here I argued that the lengthened vowel could be considered as a question affix like those languages having overt question particles such as Japanese (Cheng 1991 in Watanabe 2003) and Amharic (Girma 2005b). Since this question affix is enough to indicate that the clause is a question, the overt movement of the auxiliary is blocked obeying economic condition of procrastinate and Greed. In addition, we have also observed that rising intonation alternatively signals a question in non *wh*-questions following Wako's (1981:49) proposal and this study. In short the Yes or No questions in Oromo are characterized either by question affix or rising intonation*.

* It seems that a raising intonation and the question affix appear together. I argue that the Yes or No questions in Oromo are characterized either by raising intonation or by question affix. It is the effect of the raising intonation that seem as if the vowel is lengthened, when the raising intonation is employed which is not the case however.

CHAPTER FOUR: Echo-Questions

Another typological division between questions of natural language is between echo and non-echo questions. Echo questions are questions that involve one person echoing the speech of another (Radford 1981). In this chapter, I shall examine questions of this sort very briefly.

An echo question can be constructed from different types of sentence. I shall consider some of these below.

4.1 Echo-question from statements

An echo-question can be constructed from their statement counterpart as in (63):

(63) a. *konkolaataa-n bit-e*

car -1ps buy-pf

'I bought a car.'

b. *konkolaataa-n bit-e-e*

car- 1sg buy-pf-Q

'I bought a car?'

Lit. "Did you mean 'I bought a car'?"

The statement in (63a) and the echo question in (63b) are similar in many cases. For instance, there is no word order difference in both sentences. Yet there are some points that distinguish echo questions from statement eventhough both have more in common. As we can observe from (63b) the perfective marker in the statement is short while it is long in the echo question. Let us also consider some more examples.

- (64) a. kuyyee-n barat-tuu-d'a
 K.-nom student -3fs -is
 'Kuye is student.'
- b. kuyyee-n barat-tuu-d'a-a
 K.-nom student-3fs-is -Q
 'Kuye is student?'

We can also see from the example in (64) that the vowel the auxiliary *-d'a* in (64a) and (64b) are short and long respectively. If we examine more examples of this sort we can also observe the same thing. Thus, what we understand from these is that, echo questions from statements are characterized by the question affix to signal that the clauses are questions like we have observed for Yes or No questions in preceding chapter. I.e. when we utter the example in (63a and 64a) we simply utter them with a falling intonation. But their echo question counter parts (63b and 64b) are uttered either by using a raising intonation or the assumed question affix. Another important point is when we echo statement we can also utter it with rising pitch or intonation if question affix is not introduced.

As we can clearly see from the examples provided, structurally echo questions share more common feature with Yes or No question. I shall discuss their differences in section 4.2.

On the other hand, we can also echo statement using Yes or No questions as in (65):

- (65) a. sayyoo-n deem-a
 Sayo- 1sg go -impf
 'I go (will go) to Sayo.'

- b. sayyoo-n deem-a-a
Sayo-1s go -impf-Q
'I (will) go to Sayo?'

Here speaker (b) is echoing statement made by (a) using Yes or No question. We can also echo statement, using *wh*-question.

- (66) a. leenc'a d'uf-e
lion come-pf
'A lion came.'
b. maal-tu d'uf-e-e
what-Fm come-pf-Q
'What came?'

In (66), the statement by (a) is echoed by (b) using *wh*-question. As we can observe from the example *leenc'a* 'lion' in (a) is un-marked morphologically for focus while *maal* 'what' is marked for focus morphologically for the same reason we have mentioned in (section 2.2). Moreover the perfective marker in the echo *wh*-question became long to distinguish it from its non-echo counterparts.

4.2 Echo question from Yes or No questions

In the same way, we have seen above for statement, it is also possible to echo Yes or No question like in (67):

- (67) a. jaboo-n barat-tuu-da-a
Jabo-nom student-3fs-Q
'Is Jabo student?'

- b. jaboo-n barat-tuu-da-a
 Jabo-nom student-3fs-Q
 'Is Jabo student?'

We cannot see clear difference in their structure between echo and non-echo Yes or No questions of (67). However, in this kind of echo questions the speaker often use *yi* at the end of the utterance to signal that the question is an echo as in (68)[▲]:

- (68) a. tolaa-n barataa-d'a-a
 T - nom student-is-Q
 'Is Tola student?'
 b. tolaa-n barataa-da-a yi
 T - nom student is -Q
 'Tola is student?'

We can see from (68) that *yi* is used to distinguish echo Yes or No question from its non-echo Yes or No question counter parts.

We can also echo Yes or No question in (67) using echo *wh*-question when we are not certain about what/who Jabo is on what is specified. Therefore, when we echo (67a) above using echo *wh*-question we can get (69):

- (69) jaboo-n maal-oo- d'a-a
 Jabo -nom what-is-Q
 'What did you say Jabo is?'

[▲] *yi* sometimes seems as if it appears with non echo Yes or No questions. However, the appearance of this particle/affix happens when the listener fail to recognize the speech and the speaker re utter his own speech.

It is clear from (69) that the *wh*-item *maal* ‘what’ has suffixed *-oo* which has the meaning of what about like in *caalaa-n -oo* ‘what about Chala’

4.3 Echo question from *wh*-question

In the same way we echo statements and Yes or No questions, we can also echo *wh*-questions. Consider (70):

- (70) a. *tulluu-n eessa deem-e*
Tullu-nom where go-pf
‘Where did Tullu go?’
b. *tulluu-n eessa deem-e-e*
Tullu-nom where go-pf-Q
‘Where did Tullu go?’

In (70) the speaker (b) echoed the non-echo *wh*-question in (a). The echo *wh*-question is different from its non-echo *wh*-question in that it has a question affix. Echo *wh*-question is characterized by question affix.

4.4 Echo question from Imperatives

In Oromo echoing from imperatives is also possible. Consider (71):^Ω

- (71) a. *na-n hin-tuk’i-n*
I-acc Foc- touch -neg
‘Do not touch me!’
b. *na-n hin tuk’i-n-ii*
I-acc Foc-touch-neg-Q
‘You mean ‘do not touch me?’’

^Ω the prefix *hin-* is treated here as a verbal focus marker

In (71) speaker (b) is echoing imperative made by speaker (a). We can also echo imperative in (71a) by using echo *wh*-question like in (72):

(72) maal na hin god'i-n-ii
what me neg-do-neg-Q
'Do not do me what?'

As we can see from the examples, even though the imperative does not have vowel at the end of the sentence or verb, long or double 'i' is inserted in the echo counter part. If the last constituent ends with consonant, long 'i' is inserted as the question affix to signal that the sentence is a question in non *wh*-question.

To sum up the discussion made under this chapter, in Oromo echo questions from statements, imperatives and *wh*-questions are characterized by the proposed question affix while echo Yes or No questions are characterized by suffixation of -yi to the end of the utterances. In addition echo questions can be characterized by rising intonation, if question affix is not introduced as we have observed for Yes or No questions.

CHAPTER FIVE

Summary

In this chapter, I shall recapitulate the core points discussed throughout the preceding chapters.

The main theme of the thesis is to give a fuller account of the description of the syntax of interrogative clauses in Oromo. The discussion was made in the light of Minimalist Program (MP). The whole thesis is divided into four basic chapters.

In the first chapter of the thesis, introduction, the background, statements of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, methodology, literature review and the theoretical framework adopted for the finding were presented in brief. Under the literature review only some of the works that have direct relevance to the study were reviewed. In the theoretical framework the theoretical framework adopted for the study (MP) was discussed in terms of what motivated the theory, how it is different from its immediate predecessor (GB) and how the theory works were presented in brief. For the fuller account of the theory, however, any interested person is referred to Chomsk's work.

In the second chapter of the thesis, *wh*-questions were discussed in more details. This chapter has three sections. These include: types of *wh*-questions, *wh*-items and derivations of *wh*-questions. In section 2.1 six types of *wh*-questions are presented based on formal and functional grounds. These include: subject interrogatives, temporal interrogative, locative interrogative, manner interrogative, instrumental interrogative and reason interrogative.

In section 2.2, *wh*-items were discussed. In this case, six basic and three derived *wh*-items were distinguished. These *wh*-items were observed to exhibit different morphological properties. Each *wh*-item inflects for case, person, number and focus. These were discussed in depth.

In section 2.3, the derivation of *wh*-questions were considered. It was discussed that there is no overt movement of *wh*-phrase in the derivation of *wh*-question in Oromo. The derivation of *wh*-question takes place in covert syntax at LF obeying the economic conditions of procrastinates and Greed. There is no obligatory movement of *wh*-phrase in Oromo. For pragmatic purpose, however, *wh*-phrase can move to sentence initial position. This is mainly for checking the strong focal feature at CP/FocP that need obligatory overt movement of *wh*-phrase to its focus-bearing node. In this movement one *wh*-phrase can cross another *wh*-phrase violating superiority condition. In this case I argued that since the movement is note triggered by strong [WH] feature the movement does not violet the economic condition stated. Another interesting point is when the *wh*-phrase in the complement position move it must pied pipe the verb without which the movement result ungrammatical structure of the language.

It was also observed that morphologically multiple focus markers are possible within a single *wh*-phrase. The focus markers are ordered in hierarchical way and its derivation is assumed to be made through successive cyclic movement of the head phrase to each corresponding focus bearing node.

In the third chapter of the thesis, Yes or No questions were discussed. Under this chapter the derivation of Yes or No questions and some properties of Yes or No questions were discussed in detail. Regarding the derivation of Yes or No questions it is assumed that it is similar to the derivation of *wh*-questions. That is, there is no overt movement of constituents or do insertion in the

derivation of Yes or No questions or there is no such thing in Oromo. The derivation of Yes or No questions in Oromo is made in the covert syntax at LF. The role of focus in initiating overt constituent movement was also discussed in the chapter.

It was also observed that Yes or No questions in Oromo are characterized by overt question affixes. In this case the lengthened vowel at the end of the verb or at the end of the final constituent in the structure is considered to be triggered by syntax and assumed to be question particle that signal the structure is interrogative rather than statement or imperative where *wh*-phrase are not introduced. Alternatively Yes or No questions are characterized by suprasegmental features. The rising intonation is used to signal the clause in interrogative where there is no question particle or Q-words.

In chapter four of the thesis, echo questions were discussed in brief. Echo question in Oromo can be derived from statement, Yes or No questions, *wh*-questions and imperatives. Echo Yes or no questions are considered to be characterized by *-yi* while other echo questions are characterized by the assumed question affix.

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Declaration

I the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my work and all sources of materials used for this thesis have been duly acknowledged.

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THE SYNTAX OF INTERROGATIVES IN OROMO

BY

Amanuel Alemayehu Ayanso

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF MASTERS OF ARTS IN LINGUISTICS**



**July 2006
Addis Ababa**

THE SYNTAX OF INTERROGATIVES IN OROMO

By

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF MASTERS OF ARTS IN LINGUISTICS**

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Acknowledgments

Heaven/God be praised for His priceless gift and help.

I wish to extend my profound appreciation and gratitude to my advisor Dr. Girma A. Demeke for his constant encouragement, patient guidance and insightful comments and suggestions at every stage of the thesis. He is kind and generous in supplying materials. Although I am responsible for any of its shortcoming, this thesis would not have appeared in its present form without his persistent advice and guidance.

My heartfelt thanks also go to all my families. Particularly to my sisters Alemnesh Alemayehu and Tewabich Alemayehu, whom I owe special thanks for their love and financial supports.

I would also like to thank Ato Dabala Goshu and Ato Abebe Kano for reading all the chapters and for commenting on every one of the chapters. Their comments made me see the finding in different angles. Dabala has also helped me with materials.

I also wish to thank all my friends who have helped me in one-way or another while I am working on this paper. Specially to Tadese Sibamo and Gamada Hunde, I have indubitable thanks for their material and moral support.

Symbol and abbreviations

acc	=	accusative case
CP	=	Complementizer Phrase
dat	=	dative case
dir	=	direction
Fm	=	focus marker
foc	=	focus
FocP	=	Focus Phrase
gen	=	genitive case
impf	=	imperfective aspect marker
Inst	=	instrumental case
IP	=	Inflectional Phrase
Mas	=	masculine
neg	=	negative
nom	=	nominative case
pf	=	perfective aspect marker
pl	=	plural
Q	=	Question Affix
ti	=	trace of the moved element
VP	=	Verb Phrase
1s	=	1 st person singular
1pl	=	1 st person plural
2ms	=	2 nd person singular masculine
2p	=	2 nd person
2s	=	2 nd person singular
3fs	=	3 rd person feminine singular
j	=	voiced post alveolar affricative
ʔ	=	Glottal stop
∅	=	zero morpheme
[]	=	enclose members of the same category
↘	=	falling intonation
↗	=	raising intonation
→	=	becomes
*	=	Ungrammatical structure or ill-formed structure

The Abstract

In this paper an attempt has been made to give a fuller description of the structure of interrogative clause in Oromo in the light of Minimalist Program (MP). In so doing, the whole paper is chunked into five chapters including the Summary.

In the first chapter of the paper (introduction) the background, statements of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, methodology, literature review and the theoretical framework adopted for the study were presented in brief.

The second chapter, which I may assume to be the core part of the paper, deals with *wh*-questions. This chapter has three sections: In the first section), six types of *wh*-questions were identified on the bases of formal and functional grounds. In the second section, *wh*-items were discussed. In this section nine *wh*-items were identified out of which six are basic while the remaining three are derived. All the *wh*-items exhibit deferent morphological properties and these were discussed in this section in detail. The last section of this chapter deals with the derivation of *wh*-questions. Here, it is found that the derivation of both single and multiple *wh*-questions does not take place in the overt syntax. The *wh*-phrases are *in-situ* type in Oromo.

In the third chapter, Yes or No questions were discussed. It is observed that there is no overt movement of constituents in the derivation of Yes or No questions. Yes or No questions are assumed to be characterized by question affix and suprasegmental features alternatively.

- ✕ In chapter four, echo questions are treated in brief. The ways echo questions are derived from different clauses are discussed in the chapter.
- ✕ Chapter five deals with summary and the main points raised in each chapter are recapitulated.

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CAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Oromo is grouped in Low Land East Cushitic within the Cushitic family of the Afro-Asiatic phylum (Bender 1976, Baye 1986). The speakers of the language call themselves Oromo and their language *Afan Oromo* 'Mouth of Oromo'. In various works, however, the word Oromo refers to both the language and its speakers. In this study, I adopt the word Oromo to refer to both the language and the people following the written tradition.

Among the eighty or so different ethnic groups that live within the boundary of current Ethiopia, Oromo represent the largest ethnic group both numerically and geographically. Out of the total population, Oromo are about 40-50 percent (Gragg 1976, Heine 1981, Assaffa 1993). According to the 1994 housing and Population Census, Oromo is spoken by a population of over 18,313, 450. It is spoken in the vast areas of Ethiopia stretching from the province of Tigray to the Tana River in Kenya (Ulrich 1980). In Ethiopia, it is spoken in almost all provinces of the country except in Gondor (Wako 1981). Outside Ethiopia, Oromo is spoken in Kenya, Somalia, and Sudan (Kebede 1994, Stroemer 1989, Wako 1981, Abarra 1988). The number of Oromo speakers in Kenya as Stroemer (1989:2) estimated is, 150,000. For the number of Oromo speakers in other countries, however, I have no figure at hand.

Even though Oromo is spoken in a vast area of Ethiopia with relatively larger population and believed to be diversified, its speakers mutually understand one another except in some vocabulary and accentual difference (also in Bender, 1976). As Tasama (1994) puts it, the Oromo represent numerically the most important ethnic group in Northeast Africa, which although stretched out in different geographically distant directions, has maintained strong unitary links

that transcend local adoptions and adaptation. Baxter 1986 (in Tasama 1994:983) clearly states the notion as follows:

There are considerable cultural diversities between different Oromo groups, and Oromo are variously muslims, Christian, Roman Catholics, Lutherans and followers of traditional religion ('Waqefata' monotheism). But underling these diversities are two important shared attributes. First any Oromo speaker, whatever dialect he or she speaks, can be understood immediately by another Oromo. Secondly, Oromo all share common cultural values and modes of thought and feel culturally comfortable with each other.

Oromo is currently in use in different areas of social life such as in education, mass media, office and almost in all activities in the regional state of Oromiya.

The attempts made to study the language are very rare or scanty. The work done on Oromo in general and the study of Oromo syntax in particular is too young. Especially to the best of my knowledge, there is no direct work done on the structure of interrogative clauses. This work, therefore, is aimed at analyzing the syntax of interrogatives in Oromo to fill the gap.

1.2. Statement of the problem

As pointed out above, the syntax of interrogatives in Oromo is not studied directly. Specially, the *wh*-question of Oromo did not call the attention of linguists. This leaves a gap in the syntax of Oromo. Therefore, this thesis treats the syntax of interrogatives in Oromo and gives response to the following questions:

1. What are the constituents of interrogatives in Oromo?
2. Does the word order matter in interpreting interrogatives?
3. What is/are the rule(s) governing interrogative constructions?
4. Is there any movement in the derivation of interrogative construction in Oromo?

5. What are the morphological properties of *wh*-words?
6. Is *wh*-fronting in multiple *wh*-questions subject to superiority condition?

1.3. Objective of the Study

This study is conducted to make a detailed description of the syntax of interrogatives in particular and to look into how the syntax of interrogatives behave in the Minimalist Program in general.

In short, the aim of this research is to make a fuller description of the syntax of interrogatives in Oromo in light of the Minimalist Program (MP).

1.4 Significance of the Study

As stated above the main objective of this study is to make a detailed study of the syntax of interrogatives in Oromo in the light of the Minimalist Program. However, the attempt made in this work is more of description, and thus the out come of the finding may have contribution in many ways. First, it may yield the archived form of the interrogative clauses of Oromo. From this, any one who needs the finding for further study or for pedagogical purposes may benefit. Second, since the study was supported by current theory, any one who is interested in the theoretical aspect of the study would gain much. Finally, the study may contribute to a better understanding of Oromo in particular and the study of Cushitic or Ethiopian languages in general.

1.5 Scope of the Study

The study deals with *wh*-questions, Yes or No questions and Echo-question in detail. The attempt given to indirect questions under this topic is almost none.

The study is based on 'Macha' dialect, which is the variety of the researcher. Nonetheless the findings are believed to be true for most dialects of Oromo.

1.6 Methodology

The methodology employed in conducting this research involves both informants and introspection method. First, secondary data were collected from the earlier work done on the language. Then using the elicitation method primary data were collected from different informants to crosscheck, and to enrich the data. Here, as the researcher is a native speaker of the language, he was also part of the source of data. After the data were collected in these methods, a rough description and analysis was made. After gathering comments on the various drafts, the data were reanalyzed and finalized.

1.7 Literature Review

In this section, works done by some scholars that are directly related to the topic are reviewed.

Nordfeldt (1947) is among those who had treated interrogative pronouns of Oromo. He identified *eeññuu* 'who', *maal* 'what', *isa kam* 'who, which, what' and *inni kam* or *kam inni* 'who, which, what' as interrogative pronouns. Nordfeldt said *eññuu* 'who', *maal* 'what' and *inni kam* 'who, which, what' are absolute interrogative pronouns in Oromo. He further stated that *eeññuu* refers only to person, *maal* refers only to things and *inni kam* 'who, which, what' refers to person, animal and things. Adding to this point, Nordfeldt said all these absolute interrogative pronouns inflect for case and number; *inni kam* also for gender. Moreover, he showed how these absolute interrogative pronouns inflect for the stated grammatical categories.

Baye (1986) in his PHD thesis conducted an extensive research on Oromo syntax. Adopting the theoretical framework of Extended Standard Theory (EST) developed in Chomsky (1970, 1972 ...) and Emonds (1976), Baye studied the phrase structure of Oromo in more detail. Baye stated that typologically Oromo belongs to the class of configurational* languages.

In his work, Baye has observed that non-head elements: complements and specifiers are tightly bound to their heads. Hence, any syntactic rule that operates on any category X^n does not leave the complement or the specifier intact so as to operate only on the head or vice-versa. Rather the rule takes the entire string as its domain of application.

Regarding lexical categories, (on purely formal ground) Baye recognized four major and two minor categories. These major categories are Nominal, Verbal, Adjectival and Adpositional. The minor ones include Specifiers and Particles.

From the positional relations of the head and non-head terms, it may be said that Oromo is a head final language (according to Baye 1986).

Baye further stated that Oromo does not have *wh*-movement (overt) in its syntax. In Oromo, CP. may be used as a landing site for elements, which correspond to *wh*-elements in languages that allow overt *wh*-movement. On the other hand, according to Baye, in predicate nominal clause, Oromo has overt NP movement. This movement includes rising a subject. The subject position is empty before movement and it may be occupied by the subject of the complement clause, as in the corresponding structures in languages like English.

* Configurationality is a feature that distinguishes languages with a fairly rigid word order from those with no such order (Baye 1986).

Baye (1987) also treated interrogative sentences. In the article Baye raised the issue of *wh*-words in connection with relative clauses in Oromo. Here, he proposed *wh*-words as relative pronouns. Repeating the same point raised in Baye (1986), he said that questions are formed with *wh*-phrases *in situ* for Oromo does not have overt *wh*-movement in its syntax. So in relative clauses what moves to CP is a third person pronoun, which is not a *wh*-word in form, though the movement is that of such a form in as much as the landing site is CP.

Taha (1990), who conducted a research on the focus system of Oromo, has also given a look at interrogatives in relation to the focus system in Oromo. According to Taha, *wh*-questions (Q-word questions) universally contain constituents that mark some information gap. Since a Q-word signals such a gap, it is considered a focal element. By using Q-words, a speaker signal what, where and how a thing is done. Thus, Q-word questions help to find out what is 'new' or important to a speaker. In short treating how *wh*-questions and their answers are assigned focus, he forwarded the following points:

1. In answering to the Q-word question, the constituent, which receives focus function, is an element, which provides the requested identity of the question constituents.
2. The relevance of the focus function is also quite clear in case of (pseudo) cleft question and answers. But this follows a different strategy in formulating its question from Q-word question

Interrogative sentences are also treated in *Caasluga Afaan Oromo 'Oromo Grammar'* (1996). As *wh*-questions are used to ask content of something, place, time and so on, in the book, *wh*-questions are treated based on their functions. In addition the different inflectional properties of each *wh*-word in

each functional class and the way *wh*-questions are used in a conversation were discussed in the book. Yes-No questions were also discussed indirectly.

Getachew (2005) has treated interrogative sentences of Oromo in connection to the description of sentence types of Oromo in his book *Furtuu* 'Key'. According to Getachew interrogative sentences are used to specify the role of the subject or the way action stated by the verb is carried out in the sentences. He has also mentioned few examples of interrogative sentences in the book.

To summarize the points raised thus far, we have seen that different scholars have tried to account for interrogatives of Oromo in general and *wh*-questions in particular. However, since their primary objectives were not to account the syntax of interrogatives, their work lack detailed analysis of interrogatives. For instance, if there is overt or covert movement *wh*-phrase in the derivation of interrogatives and if a *wh*-phrase are *in-situ* or in *ex-situ* in the interrogatives were not identified. In addition the single versus multiple *wh*- questions called attention of none of these scholars. In short extensive study had not been made in the syntax of interrogatives in the works reviewed.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

There are a number of assumptions proposed by theoretical linguists to carry out linguistic works at different times. The choice of one framework over another depends on the individual's knowledge (background), the adequacy of the framework to carryout the specific problem at hand and on the recency of the framework. The theoretical framework employed in this thesis is The Minimalist Program (MP) developed by Chomsky (1993, 1995a and b).

In this section the intention is to give an overview of how the theory works, what characterizes the theory and how it differs from its immediate predecessor

(GB) in brief, but not to give a complete representation of the theory*. This section starts by stating the motivation behind the MP and moves onto how it differs from GB. Finally, I will discuss how structure is formed in the MP.

1.8.1 The Motivation

The overall aim of the Minimalist Program (MP) is to understand human language as simple and general as possible- the minimalist framework drive for simplification. In Radford (1997:16) this is stated as follows:

A Theory of grammar, which posits that the internal grammatical structure of words, phrases and sentences in a natural language is determined by innate principles of UG offers the important advantage that it minimizes the burden of grammatical learning imposed on the child. This is vital consideration, since learnability is a criterion of adequacy for any theory of language, i.e. any adequate theory of grammar must be able to explain how children come to learn the grammar of their natural language(s) in such a rapid and uniform fashion.

The Theory of UG developed by Chomsky accounts for all the above facts by posing that there is universal set of innately endowed grammatical principle which determine the nature of grammatical structure and the range of the grammatical operations found in natural languages grammar (Ibid). Since UG principles, which are innately endowed, do not have to be learned by the child, the theory of UG minimizes the learning load placed on the child, and thereby maximizes the learnability of natural languages grammar.

While the desire to 'minimize' was the primary motivating force behind the move from GB to MP, it was not the only one. Results in the fields of

* For the complete account of the Theory any interested person is referred to Chomsky's works (Chomsky 1993,1995a and 1995b).

Psycholinguistics, Computer science, and Semantics also made a move in this direction a highly desirable one (Authier and Reed 1999:52)

Especially, the principles of economy lead to minimalism, (Chomsky 1993, 1995 b). If the linguistic system needs to be as economical as possible, in terms of both how it represent and generates structures clearly the smallest possible set of devices to account for language phenomena should be used. The defining characteristic of MP, economy of representation, requires that representations of syntactic structure contain no more than the required element (Principle of Full Interpretation may be a consequence of this condition).

In sum, the desire to minimize the burden of grammatical learning placed on the children in learning the grammar of their native language(s) and the incapability of GB in offering an account of cross linguistic differences in word order in terms of a small number of universal rules (i.e. GB failed to capture a larger number of generalization) motivated the more recent move from GB to MP. In this instance, however, it is not cross linguistic variation itself that led to the demise of the GB framework, but rather the exact manner in which GB captured those variations (Ibid). In short MP aims at establishing the theory of grammar for human language by postulating only minimal assumptions that are necessary and essential on conceptual ground alone (Ura 2003).

1.8.2 Basic Differences between GB and MP

The MP takes as its point of departure the question of whether the four levels of syntactic representation used in GB are really necessary. The basic hypothesis is that since language is simply a mapping between sound (phonetics and phonology) and meaning (semantics), then the only truly indispensable levels of

grammatical representation are those which interface with physical world of sound (PF) and the world of cognition (LF)[♦] (Authier and Reed 1999).

It is also assumed in MP that there is a single computational system CH_L for human language and only limited lexical variety, where varieties of language are essentially morphological (Chomsky 1994:3). CH_L should be interpreted as mapping some array A of lexical choices to a pair (Π, λ) , a linguistic expression of a particular language L . Where Π is a PF representation and λ is an LF representations each consisting of legitimate object that can receive interpretation (Ura 2003:349). In short, MP makes the quite radical move of entirely eliminating S- and D-structures and replacing the remaining syntactic levels of representation with phonological and semantic interface levels (Ibid).

Another basic difference is, in GB a sentence is judged to be grammatical (i.e. syntactically well-formed), if it only obeys all of the syntactic rule systems (the nine subtheories of GB)^ψ to apply at each levels of syntactic representation, i.e. GB use syntactic rules to determine syntactic well or ill-formedness. In MP, however, one of the primary factors determining grammaticality is the presence of features at PF or LF that are in violation of principle of Full Interpretation. (FI)[♥]. That is, strong features sent to PF unchecked cause derivation to crash and as do uninterpretable features sent to LF (Ibid). A sentence is judged to be

♦ PF representation of a sentence tells us how it is pronounced, and its LF representation describes linguistics aspects of its meaning (Radford 1997b: 70).

ψ The nine sub theories of GB are: X'-Theory, Theta Theory, Quantification Theory, Bounding theory, Case Theory, binding Theory, Control Theory, government Theory, and Morphological Theory (Authier and Reed 1999:28-29).

♥ FI states that every element that appears in the structure must be interpreted in some way, i.e. there are no superfluous elements in the structure of language (Cook and Newson 1996:168).

grammatical if and only if the derivation converges^N at the two interface levels i.e. PF and LF.

One important difference between MP and GB is that in MP structures are built up piecemeal. In GB D-structure was presented as a complete structure and not much was said about the internal operation (Chomsky 1993:21). However, MP emphasis on the internal working of the structure formation process in getting rid of D- and S-structures, i.e. CHL is strictly derivational, but not representational, in that it involves successive operations leading to (Π, λ) . Thus, CHL (computation) typically involve simple steps expressible in terms of natural relations and properties, with the context that made them natural (Ura 2003:349).

Another basic difference is that MP replaces case marking of GB with the notation of checking (Ibid, 333). That is, in the Minimalist assumption all morphological operations are lexical in nature – MP assumes that all lexical emerge from lexicon fully inflected (Authier and Reed 1999). Any syntactic movement, therefore, is not motivated by Morphological Theory, i.e. to get their feature marked, but to get their feature checked with the abstract formal morphological feature present in their respective head position. Syntactic derivation must always proceed 'bottom up', from the smallest syntactic unit to the largest one in binary[#] fashion in MP, while the same thing is carried out in GB in the other way round.

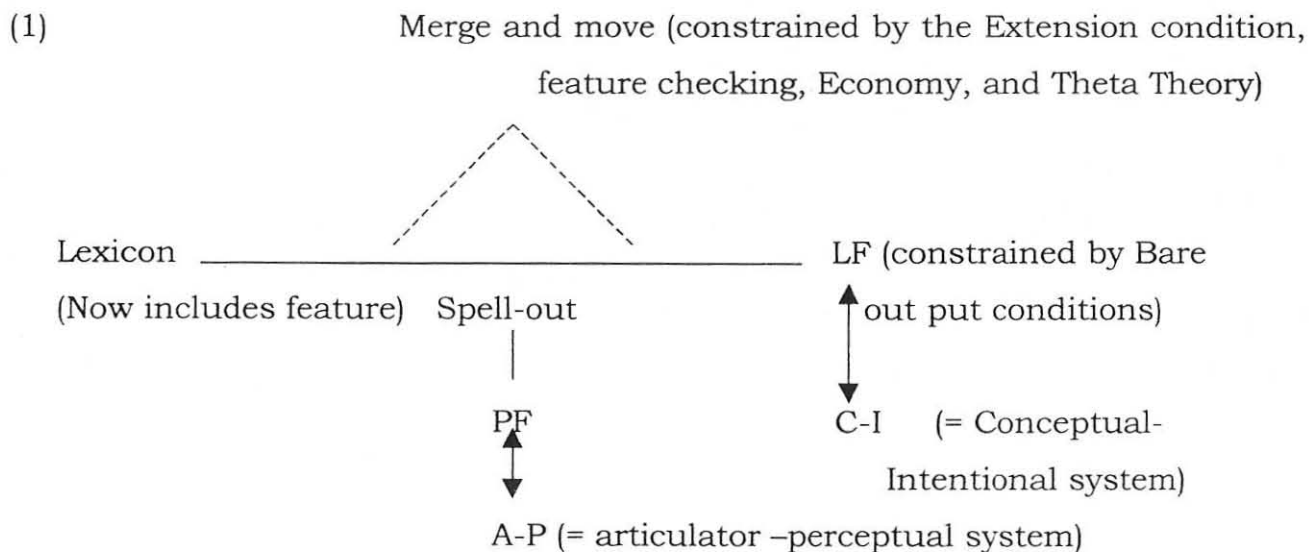
^N A technical term used in the new theory (MP) to mean well-formed or grammatical structure (Radford 1997b).

[#] A term relating to a two –valued properties or relations: It is widely assumed in linguistics that parameters have binary setting, that features have binary values, and that all branching in syntactic structure is binary (Radford 1997b).

In sum, we can summarize the point raised above in such a way that MP differs from GB: a) in making use of two fewer levels of representation, b) in assuming that the two remaining levels are interface levels, c) in making use of a purely derivational approach to structure building, d) in emphasizing the role of formal-morphological feature of the lexicon in the structural building process, f) in eliminating most of the sub-theories and altering the role played by that remaining ones and g) no longer assume that the affixation of inflectional morphemes is affected by syntactic process (Ibid).

1.8.3 Structural Formation in MP

In the preceding section, I have indicated how the notion of GB is different from the framework adopted for this thesis (MP). In this section, I shall proceed into describing the way the framework works. Before we go further, let us consider the MP model represented in Chomsky (1993) cited in Authier and Reed (1999) as in (1):

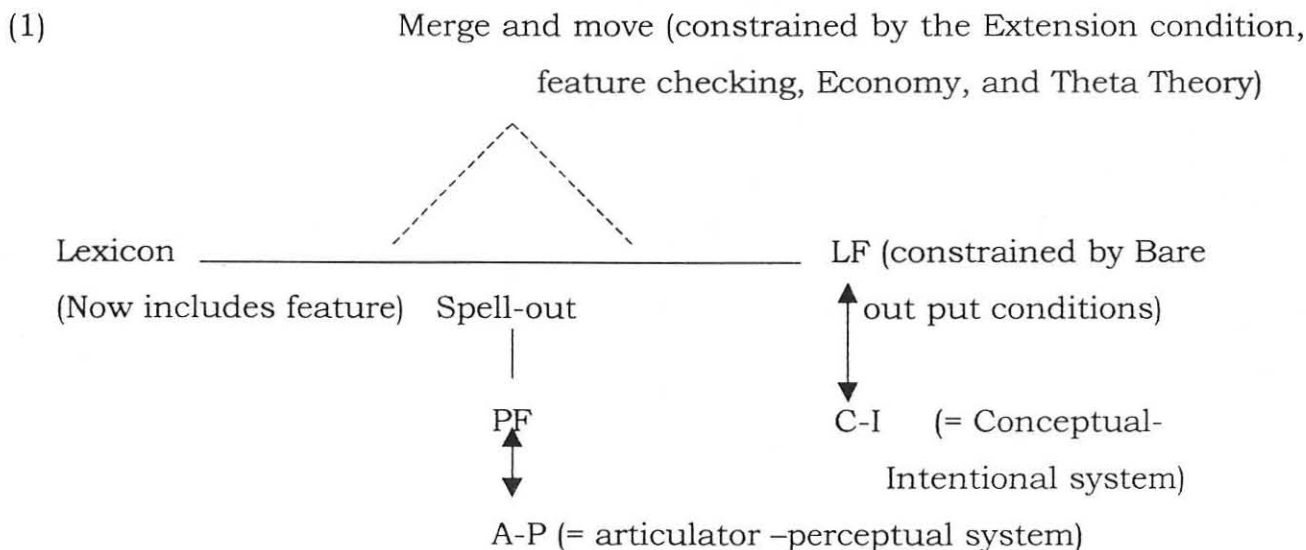


So in the model it is clearly indicated that the theory attempts to reduce the level of representation into two main basic levels.

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So in the model it is clearly indicated that the theory attempts to reduce the level of representation into two main basic levels.

Having observed the sketch of the MP model, I shall derive back to the way it works. There is syntactic mechanism that forms the structure that appears at the interface level– Computational System (Ibid, 318). The syntactic system (also known as the computational system) consists of just seven mechanisms: merge, move, the extension condition, a set of new economy condition principles, spell-Out, feature checking and the reformulated version of theta theory (Ibid).

Merge and move are the structural-building process of MP while the rest are considered as the triggering force and constraints in the computational system in general. There is a consideration of what constitutes a legitimate object at each representational level, which possibly have their foundation in the interpretive components themselves. Ideally the grammar should consist of only the bare minimum conditions (Cook and Newson 1996).

The process of structural building that constitutes LF and PF representation start from the lexicon. We start selecting a set of lexical items from which the Structural Description (SD) is to be built (Chomsky 1995b). This set of lexical items is called a Numeration. The types of categories that may undergo merge are determined by the *c*- and *s*-selection properties of the lexical items, which they dominate (Authier and Reed 1999:58). The head of the category that project becomes the label of the complex formed. In other words, a phrase structure is formed in a bottom-up fashion by a uniform operation called “merge” which combines two elements say α and β , and project one of them as the head $k = \{\gamma, \{\alpha, \beta\}\}$, where $\gamma \in \{\alpha, \beta\}$ [▲] (Chomsky 1994, in Fukui 2003).

[▲] The schema state that merge forms a new object *K* by combining two objects α , and β and specifies one of them as the projecting element (hence the head of *K*. Merge applies recursively to form a new structure (Fukui 2003).

The computational system can form as many separate sets as it likes, but at some point in the derivation it must combine these sets in the appropriate way to form a single tree, otherwise a single SD has not been formed and the result will be ungrammatical (Ibid). The ultimate SD formed will only be grammatical if each element from the Numeration is used the required number of items, that is to say items can not be left in the Numeration unused if grammatical sentence is to result.

After this, the computation splits the partially formed SD at a point known as Spell-Out, after which the computational system proceeds to form two independent representations with quite different properties (i.e. PF and LF). Spell-Out applies to structure S already formed. It strips away from S those elements relevant only to Π leaving residue S_L , which is mapped to λ by syntactic operations. The sub system of CHL that maps S to Π is called the 'phonological component' and the sub system of CHL that maps S to λ is called 'the covert component'. The pre-Spell-Out component is called the 'overt component'. In this system, therefore, there is no direct relation between Π and λ (Chomsky 1995a in Ura 2003:349).

During the Spell-Out wrong information is not allowed to appear at each interface levels—semantic information is not allowed to appear at PF and phonetic information is not allowed to appear at LF. A derivation converges if such conditions are met otherwise it crashes (Ibid). So PF representation that contains semantic information crashes, causing the SD to be ungrammatical; an LF representation that contains phonetic information crashes, again causing the SD to be ungrammatical. The Spell-Out is confined to splitting the derivation in the appropriate way (Ibid).

The wrong information is eliminated before they arrive at LF and PF via the mechanism of Checking. Checking is assumed to take place whenever an item

bearing a feature moves into the 'checking domain' of a head bearing a matching feature. A checking domain of a head is in its Spec position, any position adjoined to it, or any position adjoined to the maximal projection of the head (Authier and Reed, 1999). If strong features are unchecked before the Spell-Out, they remain so at the PF interface and will cause a derivation to crash (Marantz, 1995).

The interface conditions become even more general and thus more explanatory, if they are taken to instantiate the Principle of Full Interpretation. Each representation at LF and PF can only contain elements, which are interpreted at these levels with no superfluous elements allowed. In short the computation (derivation) converges at one of the interface levels, if it forms an interpretable representation in this sense, and converges if it converges at both interface levels; otherwise it crashes (Chomsky 1995b: 390).

Since MP is transformational, movement operation is part of the computational system (Cook and Newson, 1996:323). The computational system move element about in the structure. This may indeed be part of the structural formation process as elements may be moved in to structural position created by the process itself (Ibid).

Movement is a constrained operation and needs to be kept local following Relativized Minimality of Rizzi (1990) or Minimal Link Condition (MLC) of Chomsky (1995) that only accept movement into the nearest relevant position; α must make the 'shortest move' (Chomsky, 1995b; 401).

There are two other major constraints on the move operation. One, which delays movement for as long as possible, which is called procrastinate. I.e. Procrastinate demands that movement to wait until after Spell-Out as long as waiting is compatible with convergence (Marantz 1995:360). According to the

principles of procrastinate covert movement is less costly than overt movement. This means that overt movement is not allowed unless the derivation would otherwise crash. A derivation crashes at same interface levels (either PF or LF), if there are some features present that is not interpretable at that level. For example, if a case feature is present at LF, the derivation crashes and if a strong feature is present at PF, the derivation crashes (Chomsky 1993 in Collins 2003:55). The principal motivation for procrastinate is to describe the difference between languages as to whether movement occurs overtly or not (Collins 2003: 55).

The other economic principle is called 'Greed' which allow movement of element only if it satisfies some properties of the moved element- Movement can not be made to satisfy the properties of element that become relate to the moved element by the movement process; move raises α to the position β only if morphological properties of α itself would not otherwise be satisfied in the derivation (Chomsky 1995b: 400). Movement is not optional in the MP and overt movement is always forced by strong feature. For example overt *wh*-movement in English is assumed to be forced by strong *wh*-feature in C (Marantz 1995: 378).

Lasnik (1995, in Radford 1997) on the other hand suggests that movement is driven by a principle which he terms as enlightened self-interest which specify that constituents move in order to check features carried by other constituents so that movement is motivated by a form of altruism. The natural implementation of the altruism is to suppose that the question affix Q which occupies the head C position of an interrogative CP carries an interrogative specifier feature, and that (correspondingly) *wh*-operators like 'who' carry an interrogative head feature. Thus it is assumed that *wh*-operator move to Spec-CP in order to check the interrogative specifier feature carried by Q (Radford 1997).

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In short, the computational system starts off with a Numeration of the lexical items from which the SD is to be formed. Then by the operation of Merge and Move, SDs are built up piecemeal, with the move operation being constrained by Minimal Link Condition, Procrastinate and Greed (Cook and Newson 1996). The whole system is in a sense 'driven' by the lexical items and their morphology; operations are driven by morphological necessity: certain features must be checked in the checking domain of the head, or the derivation will crash (Chomsky 1993:32 in Cook and Newson 1996).

The process proceeds to a point at which the derivation splits into phonetically and semantically relevant information: Spell-Out. From there two separate representations are formed (i.e. PF and LF). The computational system continues to form structure after Spell-Out, but if the end point of these operations do not confirm to a Full Interpretation condition, the derivation crashes. If these conditions are met at both LF and PF the derivation converges (Cook and Newson 1996).

To sum up the points raised thus far under this section, I have pointed the force behind MP, the characteristic difference between MP and GB and how MP Works. Since the Theory is in progress, MP will achieve its high standard syntactic theory in its standard of explanation, accuracy, and in its account for other fields of studies such as psycholinguistics, semantics and computer science. As Chomsky himself points out, the new picture formed under Minimalist assumptions is not only conceptually better, but is also empirically more adequate, as under these assumptions many problems that arose in the GB framework are given satisfactory solutions (Chomsky 1993).

CHAPTER TWO

Wh-Interrogatives

2.1 Types of Wh-Interrogatives

Question in a natural language can be classified into a number of types. One of these types is *wh*-interrogative. *Wh*-interrogatives are so called because (in English) they typically involve the use of an interrogative word beginning with *wh* (e.g. who, why, what, when, where, which, but also how) (Radford 1981, Cook and Newson 1996). Although the term *wh* seems originated from English interrogative words. It is used in syntax to refer to interrogative words equivalent to the above mentioned English type words of any language. The usage of *wh*-item and *wh*-questions in reference to Oromo or any other language, therefore, is to mean interrogative items equivalent to the above English words and questions formed involving such items. As mentioned in the introductory chapter of this thesis my focus of investigation with regard to Oromo *wh*-questions focuses on main clauses. Hence the so-called indirect questions, i.e. embedded *wh*- questions of the sort presented in (1) will not be dealt with in this thesis for the reason mentioned already.

- (1) meetii-n eessa deem-t-a na-n jet-t-e
Meti-nom where go-2s-impf me-acc say -3pfs- pf
'Meti asked me, "where are you going?'

In (1) the *wh*-question, *eessa deemta* 'Where are you going?' is subordinated in the sentence *meetiin na-n jettee* 'Meti asked me'.

The type of the response or information the speaker needs in uttering a particular question differs based on what particular *wh*- word he has included in the sentence. Based on this, we can classify *wh*-questions in different classes. In the following sections, I shall discuss this point.

2.1.1. Subject Interrogative

In Oromo we use *eeñnu* and *maal* to ask for the subject. Consider the examples in (2):

- (2) a. *eeñnu d'uf-e*
who came-pf
'Who came?'
- b. *Č aalaa d'uf-e*
Chala come-f
'Chala came'
- c. *maal-tu Č'ab- e*
what-foc break-pf
'What is it break?'
- d. *muka-tu Č'ab- e*
tree -Fm break-pf
'It is tree that is broken.'

In (2) *eñnu* 'who' and *maal* 'what' are used to ask the subject who has done action specified by the verbs *d'uf-* 'come' and *ñaat-* 'eat'. The response for such question can be given as in (b) and (d) respectively. In example (b) *Č'aalaa*-is the nominal and direct response to (a).

It is stated in Nordfeldt (1947) that *eñnu* 'who' refers only to person while *maal* 'what' refers only to things. Thus for *wh*-question (a) and (c) above response as in (3a) and (3b) respectively, cannot be accepted.

- (3) a. **saree d'uf-e*
dog come-pf
'A dog came'
- b. *? Č'aalaa cab-e*
Chala break-pf

In (3a) and (3b) *saree* and *Čaalaa* were given as the response to the *wh*-questions in (2a) and (2c), respectively. However the responses are proper as the direct response to their respective questions. However if we are not sure of who is doing something, we use only *maal*. In this case (3b) can be an acceptable construction.

There is another point we should note here. As we can see from (2c), *maal* is inflected for focus. This is obligatory, i.e. we cannot use the absolutive *maal* as the subject of *wh*-question.

In the same way *eeññu* can also be inflected for focus, if we need it for pragmatic purpose as in (4a). The attachment is not obligatory, however. The response given should also correspond to the focused question like in (4b).

- (4) a. *eeññu -tu d'uf-e*
 who-Fm come-pf
 'Who is that came?'
- b. *Čaalaa- tu d'uf-e*
 Ch-Fm come-pf
 'It is Chala who came.'

The difference between (4a) and (2a) is only in focus– i.e. in (4a) *eeññu* 'who' is marked for focus while in (2a) *eeññu* 'who' is unmarked (see section. 2.2 on focus).

2.1.2. Temporal interrogative

Temporal interrogative is used to ask for a time of an action. In Oromo, *yoom* 'when' is used to ask for the time of the action/state. Consider (5):

(5) a. *yoom deem-t-a*
when go- 2ps-Im
'When do you go?'

b. *bor-an deem-a*
tomorrow -1s go- Im
'I will go tomorrow'

In (5a) above, *yoom* 'when' is used to ask for the time of the action and the response *bor* 'tomorrow' as in (b) or any other element that has temporal adverb function can be given as the response. This temporal interrogative word and its response are canonically placed immediately before their respective verbs as can be observed from the examples in (5). In these examples, the subjects *ati* 'you' and *ani* 'I' were dropped in (5a) and (5b) respectively from their base positions¹.

2.1.3. Locative Interrogative

The locative interrogative (as its name indicates) is used to ask for the specification of a place. In Oromo *eesssa* 'where' is used to interrogate for location. Consider (6):

(6) a. *eessa deem-t-e*
where go-2s - pf
'Where did you go?'

b. *baalee-n deem-e*
Bale-1s go-pf
'I went to Bale.'

¹ In Oromo it is possible to have a clause with out surface subject. According to Baye (1986) since Oromo has subject referring clitics or affix in its verb, a clause without a structural subject is permissible. Therefore the presence or absence of overt subject does not violate the grammaticality of a clause in Oromo

In (6), *eessa* 'where' is used to question the location where somebody went and the response is given like in (6b) above. In the same way, if one needs to know the source of something, the construction as in (7) below can be used.

- (7) a. *eessa-a bit-t-e*
where- from buy- 2ps-pf
'From where did you buy?'
- b. *eessa-a d'uf-t-an*
where from come-2p-pl
'From where did you come (pl)?'

In (7a) *eessa-a* 'where-from' is used to question the source of the action under consideration. Here *eessa-a* 'where-from' is different from the general locative adverb interrogative word *eessa* 'where' in that it has long vowel, which indicate direction.

2.1.4. Manner Interrogative

In Oromo *akkam-itti* 'what-manner' is introduced in sentences to question for the manner of the action. Consider (8) below:

- (8) a. *akkam-itti deem-e ?*
How-manner go-pf
'In what manner did he go?'
- b. *haala gaarii-n deem-Ø-e*
Condition good-foc go-3ms-pf
'He went in a good condition.'

Here *akkam* 'how' is inflected for manner (see section on morphology(2.2)). In fact the *wh*-question in (8a) can have different interpretations like 'why did he

go?’ assuming that he is not supposed to go. So, if this point is considered, the question can be responded by specifying the reason of his going rather than in the specified way (8b).

2.1.5. Instrumental Interrogative

In Oromo *maal* ‘what’ along with its postpositionall clitics *-n* is used to question the means or with what the action is done or will be done. See the examples in (9):[♦]

- (9) a. *maali-i-n d’uf-t-an*
what-by come- 2p- pl
‘By what did you come?’
b. *luka-a-n d’uf-n-e*
foot- by come-1ppl- pf
‘We came on foot.’

In (9a) *maalii-n* ‘what-by’ questions the means with/by what the action of coming took place. *maalii-n* is placed immediately before the verb *d’uf* ‘come’ and following the subject, which is phonologically empty from its position. In this case, if the vowel ‘i’ in *maaliin* is short it designate first person singular like *maali-n* ‘what I’.

2.1.6. Reason Interrogative

In Oromo *maali-f* ‘why-for’ question for the specification of reason. Following are some examples:

[♦] The vowels ‘i’ and ‘a’ are used here in the data (9a and b) as epenthetic

- (10) a. *tolaa-n maali-f d'uf-e*
T-nom why -for come- pf
'For what did Tola come?'
- b. *tolaa-n barumsaa-f d'uf-e*
T- nom education-for come-pf
'Tola came to learn.'

As the example in (10) shows *maali-f* 'why for' questions for what reason the action of coming took place. The reply for this question can be as in (b) *barumsaa-f* 'lesson for'.

The interrogative of reason can be constructed in the above way placing the interrogative word in the complement position of the verb. So, if one seeks for reason the above specified way is the common way of questioning in Oromo, i.e. placing *maali-f* 'why for' immediately before the verb and after the subject.

In the above discussion we may also observe an interesting fact with regard to the *wh*-items. That is the *wh*-items attach Focus markers and first person singular clitics and inflect for different grammatical functions. In the following section, I shall address this fact.

2.2 The Morphology of *wh*-Words

The word morphology in linguistics is used in reference to the study of the internal structure of words (Katamba 1993:3). Morphological processes fall into two broad categories; inflectional and derivation morphology. Inflectional morphology deals with syntactically determined affixation process while derivational morphology is used to create lexical items (Ibid 47 & 205).

In practice, however, there is no always unanimity in the classification of the processes as inflectional or derivational. There is no general agreement on which process is derivational or which process is inflectional. Moreover, what is treated as derivation in one language may be inflectional in another language and vice versa (ibid. 206).

Despite the above discussion, I shall treat some inflectional and derivational properties of *wh*-words based on the distinction made by Katamba (1993). The attempt is made because of two main reasons. This involves both empirical and theoretical. Theoretically (MP assumptions)- lexical items are enumerated from the lexicon fully inflected with the inflectional affixes. The functional nodes in the syntax are not associated with affixes (nor with any phonological content what so ever), but simply with certain features- Tense, Case, and Agreement features among others (Marantz 1995:366). Empirically, it adds additional information to the morphology of Oromo. Moreover it plays a pivotal role in the derivation of *wh*- questions i.e. it gives a clear picture to the derivation of *wh*-question as we shall discuss in a moment.

2.2.1 The *wh*- items

There are six basic *wh*-items in Oromo. These are listed in (11).

(11) <i>maal</i>	‘what’
<i>kam</i>	‘which’
<i>eeññu</i>	‘who’
<i>eessa</i>	‘where’
<i>yoom</i>	‘when’
<i>meek’a</i>	‘how much or how many’

The six *wh*- items listed in (11) above are in their absolutive form. They can attach some inflectional and derivational affixes. Below, I shall account for some of the inflectional and derivational properties of these *wh*-items.

2.2.1.1 Some Inflections and Derivations

As I tried to point out above, *wh*-items exhibit different morphological properties like nouns and adjectives do in Oromo (Baye, 1981). I examine each of the *wh*-items in turn.

A) *eeññu* ‘who’

eeññu ‘who’ can change its shape for various grammatical interpretations. Consider (12)[♥]:

(12)		Singular	plural	gloss
	nom	eeññu	eeññu-faa	‘who’
	acc.	eeññuu-n	eeññuu-n-faa	‘whom’
	gen	eeññuu-f	eeññu-faa-f	‘for whom’
	dat	eeññu-tti	eeññu-faa-tti	‘to whom’
	foc	eeññu-tu	eeññu-faa-tu	‘who(focused)’
	person	eeññu-n	eeññu-faa-n	‘who I’

As we can see from (12), the *wh*-item *eeññu* ‘who’ inflects for accusative, genitive, dative, number and marked for focus and person. One peculiar feature we can see in the case of *eeññu* is, it marks morphologically accusative case and unmark nominative case. In other nouns, however, nominative case

[♥] In Baye 1981 *-f* is used as dative case marker, and *-itti* is identified as a definite marker, which is morphologically conditioned, i.e. attached to feminine gender. But I argue that *-f* is genitive case marker (benefactive case) and *-itti* as dative case marker according to my present analysis.

is morphologically marked while accusative case is unmarked morphologically (Baye, 1981). In this marking of accusative we can get another *wh*-item *eeññuu-n* 'whom'. In this regard, therefore it is also possible to regard this morpheme as a derivational morpheme than as inflectional only .

In other case when *eeññu* is marked for focus, it is used only as a subject. In Taha (1990) this is stated that *-tu* is attached to *wh*-words or other nouns whose status are nominative or subject, i.e. we cannot find *wh* -items with *-tu* with non nominative DP/ NP. If we attach *-tu* to a DP in non-subject position the sentence would be ungrammatical (cf. section 2.3).

According to Baye (1988) *-tu* is selected to show a contrastive focus function while in Taha (1990) it is used having an assertive function.

eeññu can also attach another focus marker. Consider (13)[⊗]:

- (13) a. *eeññu-d'a kan d'uf-e*
 who-Fm that come-pf
 'who is that came?'
- b. *Č'aalaa-d'a kan d'uf-e*
 Chala-Fm that come-pf
 'It is Chala who come.'

In the above example, *-d'a* shows that the category to which it is attached is focused. It restricts the person who came among others. *-d'a* can co-occur with *-tu* in the same constituents or in the same sentence. Consider (14):

- (14) a. *eeññu-d'a-tu d'uf-e*
 who -Fm-Fm come-pf
 'Who is he that came?'

[⊗] when the *wh*-item is the subject of a relative clause it can not the focus marker *-tu* but an other focus marker *-d'a*.

B. kam ‘which’

kam ‘which’ inflects for nominative, accusative, genitive, dative, number and marked for focus and person. Consider (16)[⊕]:

(16)		Singular	plural	gloss
	nom	kam	kam-faa	‘which’
	acc	kam-ii-n	kam-ii-n-faa	‘which’
	gen	kam-ii-f	kam-faa-f	‘for which’
	dat.	Kam-itti	kam-faa-tti	‘to which’
	foc.	Kam-tu	kam-faa-tu	‘which one’
	person	kam-an	kamfaa-n	‘which I’

From *kam* ‘which’, we can derive another *wh*-item ‘How’ by prefixing *akka*. Consider (17):

(17) akka + kam → *akkakam* → *akkam* ‘How’

In Oromo *akkam* is used more frequently in formal greeting as in (18):

- (18) a. *akkam* ? ‘How are you?’
 b. *akkam bul-t-e* ‘How was the night?’
 how night-2s-pf
 c. *akkam bul-t-an* ? ‘How was the night?’
 how night-2p-pl

[⊕] the vowel ‘ii’ in data (16) is considered as epenthetic

C) *eessa* 'where'

As stated above *eessa* refers only to a place. It also inflects for cases and attaches focus and person markers as in the following examples:

(19)		Singular	plural	gloss
	nom	<i>eessa</i>	<i>eessa-faa</i>	'where'
	acc.	<i>eessa</i>	<i>eessa-faa</i>	'where'
	gen	<i>eessaa-f</i>	<i>eessa-faa-f</i>	'for where'
	dat.	<i>eessa-tti</i>	<i>eessa-faa-tti</i>	'to where'
	foc.	<i>eessa-tu</i>	<i>eessa-faa-tu</i>	'where particular'
	person	<i>eessa-n</i>	<i>eessa-faa-n</i>	'where I'

We can see from the given examples that in the genitive case, the vowel *a* in *eessa* gets long. Because when this vowel becomes long in this condition, it also reflects the direction as in the examples in (20):

- (20) a. *eessa-a*
where-from
'From where'
- b. *eessa-an*
where -dir
'Which way'

So from this example we can deduce that the genitive case incorporates ablative case (i.e. source and direction) along with itself.

D) *maal* 'what'

Like other *wh*-items we have seen above, *maal* also inflects for different grammatical categories and suffixes focus and person markers. Consider (21) below:

(21)	Singular	plural	gloss
nom	maal	maal-faa	'what'
acc.	maal	maal-faa	'what'
gen.	maal-iif	maal-faa-f	'for what'
dat	maal-itti	maal-faa-tti	'to what'
foc.	maal-tu	maal-faa-tu	'what particular'
Inst.	maal-iin	maal-fa-iin	'by or with what'
Person	maal-in	maal-fa-in	'what I'

The example in (21) shows *maal* does not inflect for nominative and accusative. The nominative and the accusative of *maal* are the absolute form. We can use *maal* as subject only when it marked for focus (the point mentioned earlier). In the case of instrumental case, if we need to know the specific means by which the action is made, it is possible to add the focus marker *-d'a* like *maali-d'a-n* 'by what particular tool'.

We can also get another *wh*-item 'why' using *maal* as the base and attaching *-(i)f* like as in (22)⁺:

(22)	maal-if
	what-for
	'Why/what for'

E) *yoom* 'when'

We use *yoom* only to refer to 'time'. *yoom* also inflects for different grammatical categories and attach person marker as in (23) which also appear in singular and plural form.

⁺ The genitive (benefactive) case marker *-f* sometimes overlap with *-(i)f* which is used for as derivational morpheme in the specified way.

23)	Singular	plural	gloss
	nom yoom	yoom-faa	'when'
	acc. yoom	yoom-faa	'when'
	gen yoom-ii-f	yoom-faa-f	'for whene'
	dat yoom-itti	yoom-faa-tti	'to when'
	person yoom-i-n	yoom-faa-n	'when I'

Unlike other *wh*-items that we have seen above, *yoom* inflects only for few functional categories: genitives, datives and number. It does not mark focus morphologically like other *wh*-items in the singular case. However, when *yoom* is pluralized it can attach focus marker. Consider (24):

- (24) yoom-faa-tu
 When-pl-Fm
 'When particular days'

E) meek'a 'How much or How many'

The *wh*-item *meek'a* is used only to denote quantity. It can change its shape by inflecting for various functional categories and by attaching focus marker and person marker like other *wh*-items. Consider (25):

(25)	Singular	plural	gloss
	acc meek'aa-n	meek'a-faa-n	'with how much/many'
	gen meek'aa-f	meek'a-faa-f	'for how much/many'
	dat meek'a-tti	meek'a-faa-tti	'to how much /many'
	foc meek'a-tu	meek'a-faa-tu	'how much/many'
	person meek'a-n	meek'a-faa-n	'how much/many I'

When one needs to ask time both the accusative and dative forms can be used for they have similar meaning in this case. For example:

- (26) a. saʔa meekʼaa-n dʼuf -t-an
 hour how much-at come-2p-pl
 'At what time did you come?'
- b. saʔa meekʼa-tti dʼuf-t-an
 hour how much -at come- 2p-pl
 'At what time did you come?'

In (26), however, there is pragmatic difference between the two. The example in (26b) is more emphasized than in (26a). That is to say a speaker utters the (b) example in order to get information on the exact time of the action, while in the (26a) the need for the exact time is not necessity.

To summarize the points raised thus far, I have identified nine (9) *wh*-items of Oromo. Six are basic while the other three: *maalif* 'why', *eeññuun* 'whom' and *akkam* 'how' are derived from *maal* 'what' *eeññu* 'who' and *kam* 'which' respectively. We have also noticed that the six absolute or basic *wh*-items can inflect for various grammatical or functional categories. From these none of the *wh*-items inflect for nominative case while all inflect for genitive, dative, number, person and focus. From the six absolute *wh*-items *eeññu*, *kam* and *meekʼa* inflect for accusative while *eessaa*, *maal* and *yoom* do not inflect for accusative case.

2.2.2 Some more points on focus

In the preceding section we have observed that *-tu* is used to mark contrastive focus in each *wh*-item without any restrictions. We have also note that *-dʼa* can also incorporate *-tu* to give more emphases to the constituents to which they are attached. However, there is another focus marker, which appear with every *wh*-item in the absolute case. Observe the following examples in (27):

- (27) a. eeñnu + -uma → eeñnuma ‘who + particular’
 b. maal + -uma → maaluma ‘what + particular’
 c. eessa + -uma → eessuma ‘where + particular’

In Taha (1990:69), this focus marker is used as having restricted function. That means the focus marker *-uma* is used to restrict a proposed set of information to one or more correct values among the set.

As we can observe from (28) below this focus marker can appear with other focus markers discussed earlier *-tu* and *-d’a* within a single constituent to make the information carried by the constituent more restrict. For example:

- (28) a. eeññ-uma-tu
 who -Fm-Fm
 ‘Who particular’
 b. eeññ-d’-uma
 who-Fm-Fm
 ‘Who particular’
 c. eeññ-d’-uma-tu
 who-Fm-Fm-fm
 ‘Who particular’

We can notice from (28) that the focus markers can appear in pair or /and in triple within a single constituents. From semantic or pragmatic point of view the number of focus markers are symmetric with focus prominence. That is to say a constituent with a triple focus marker more prominent to a constituent with double focus marker and a constituent with double focus marker is more prominent to a constituent with a single or no focus marker. In other word focus prominence decreases as we reduce the number of focus markers.

Regarding their order, *-d'a* always precede *-uma* and *-uma* always precedes *-tu* as in the example (28c). Any other order results an ungrammatical structure. The focus makers are ordered in hierarchical way.

2.3. Derivation of *wh*- Questions

We have seen in section 1.8.3 that one of the points of departure of MP from GB is, in its approach to syntactic structure. GB strongly supports representational approach whereas MP supports derivational approach to syntactic structure. According to Authier and Reed (1999:52), a derivational approach to syntax is one in which all syntactic principles and parameters apply in tandem as the structural process proceeds.

In the following section I shall account for the derivation of *wh*-questions. In so doing, I shall begin with the derivation of single *wh*-question and move on to multiple *wh*-questions. In this case, however, I am not going to give the fuller account of the derivation of *wh*-questions I am after. Rather I shall consider some of the factors that contribute to the grammaticality or non-grammaticality of the *wh*- questions.

2.3.1. Single *wh*-Questions

2.3.1.1. The Unmarked Position of single *wh*-Phrase

Oromo has an SOV word order in its basic sentences and is grouped as configurational (Baye 1986). In this type of languages the *wh*-phrase is expected to be *in situ* in the canonical position associated with its grammatical function (Kiss 1995 in Girma 2005a). Let us consider examples in (29):

- (29) a. *eeññu* -tu d'uf-e
 who-Fm come-pf
 'Who is that came?'
- b. *maal* bit-t-e
 what buy- 2ps-Pf
 'What did you buy?'
- c. *leelloo-n eeññu-tti t'alayaa* ergi-t-e
 Lelo -non who-dat letter send-3pfs-pf
 'To whom did Lelo send a letter?'

In (29), *eeññu*, *maal* and *eeññu* are Subject, Direct Object and Indirect Object respectively. It is clear from (30) below that all the *wh*-phrases respect their unmarked declarative clause positions. Consider also (30):

- (30) a. *tolaa*-tu d'uf-e
 T-Fm come-pf
 'It is Tola who came.'
- b. *kitaaba-n* bit-e
 book-1s buy-pf
 'I bought a book.'
- c. *leelloo-n gaaddise-tti t'alayaa* ergi-t-e
 L-nom Gaddise-dat letter send- 3pfs-pf
 'Lelo sent a letter to Gaddise.'

The examples in (30) are direct response to the *wh*-question in (29) in the same order. (30a) corresponds to (29a), (30b) to (29b) and (30c) to (29c). To put it in other way as the response to the *wh*-question in (29), in (30a-c) *tola* 'Tola', *kitaaba* 'book' and *gaaddise* 'Gaddise' are subject, Direct Object and Indirect Object following the same order that we find in the corresponding *wh*-phrases in (29a-c) respectively.

In other words, the nominative, accusative and dative of the *wh*-phrases in Oromo are expressed in their respective grammatical positions. In addition in (29a) the subject focus marker *-tu* is attached to *eeñnu*, which is in the structural subject position. This tells us that *eeñnu* is in its base position. Thus, from this fact *wh*-phrases in Oromo are clearly in-situ in the unmarked cases.

2.3.1.2 Factors that allow *wh-in situ*

There are various factors that allow *wh-in-situ*. Among these, the different interpretations of *wh*-phrase in different contexts are one. According to Huang (1995, in Watanabe 2003), *shenme* (Chinese word) can be interpreted as a *wh*-phrase, a universal quantifier, a negative polarity item, or an existential quantifier depending on the context in which it appears. In the same way *wh*-item with out any visible additional morphological element can serve as quantifiers in many languages such as Russian (Zauitnevich 2000) and Chinese (Hoh and Chiang 1990, in Girma 2005b). Grima (2005b), however, says Amharic *wh*-words need a morphological element in order to be used as quantifier.

In Oromo, similar to Amharic, the *wh*-items need obligatory morphological element in order to function as a quantifier. Consider (31):

- (31) a. *eeñnu-illee/iyyuu* 'whoever, anybody or everybody'
 b. *maal -illee/iyyuu* 'whatever'
 c. *yoom- illee/iyyuu* 'whenever'
 d. *eessa- illee/iyyuu* 'wherever'
 e. *meeek'a -illee/iyyuu* 'what so ever the price/number'
 f. *kam- illee/iyyuu* 'whichever'

We can see in (31) that *-illee* or *-iyyuu*[♦] is used as quantificational element. This quantificational element can also be used with marked *wh*-words as in (32):

- (32) a. eeññuu-n-illee/iyyuu ‘whomever’
 b. eeññu-tti-illee/iyyuu ‘to whomever’
 c. eessa-tti-llee/iyyuu ‘to wherever’
 d. eessa-faa-tti-illee /iyyuu ‘to wherever (pl)’

Regarding its attachment, *-illee* or *-iyyuu* can be attached to any *wh*-item whether it is marked or unmarked.

Watanabe (1992a, in Watanabe 2003) claim that the existence of morph-syntactic property, namely, the indeterminate elements, which receive various quantificational interpretations governed by morphosyntactic environments, allow *wh-in-situ* in Chinese and Japanese. Based on this claim, I argue that the presence of the quantificational element discussed above and the existence of inflectional and derivational morphemes in the *wh*-items in Oromo which is partially or totally governed by morphosyntactic requirement also allow the *wh-in-situ* in Oromo. Since the claim lack depth and detailed analyses, however, I recommend further research to be made on this area.

On the basis of the above claim, therefore, we can say that the interpretation of *wh*-questions in Oromo is made at LF (post Spell-Out). In Oromo movement of *wh*-phrase to check off the [+WH] features may wait until after LF obeying procrastinate[•]. Thus we can assume the following schematic representation for

♦ *-illee* and *-iyyuu* are used alternatively as quantificational element in Oromo. It is not clear whether they belong to different dialects of Oromo or interpreted as synonymous.

• Procrastinate says, if you can wait you must wait. (Cook and Newson 1996:357).

wh-phrases of Oromo like Chinese *wh*-phrases: [Cp Op_x [IP...wh_(x)...]](cf. Watanabe 2003:215). The schema presupposes that Oromo belongs to *wh-in-situ* languages.

However, there is a case where a *wh*-phrase in Oromo exhibits movement. I shall consider the point shortly.

2.3.1.3 On Wh- Movement

In this section, I shall look at *wh*-movements more closely examining some sentences with *wh*-word. How they work and what their limitations are.

Wh-movement is called operator movement because it applies to expressions, which contain (e.g. Interrogative) operator of some kind and operator beginning with *wh* in particular (Radford 1997). So let us assume following Cook and Newson (1996:206) that the *wh*-movement operates under the following principle;

1. Principle of movement: move α - (i.e. move any element any where) in *wh*-movement α =a *wh*-phrase which move from an A-position to the non A-position of spec CP leaving *wh*-trace (variable).
2. The *wh*-criteria: all [+ WH] complementizers must contain a [+WH] element.
3. The double Filled Comp Filter: The C-system may not contain both a *wh*-item and complementizer.

Now let us take some Oromo sentences with *wh*-phrase and see how the above points operate. Consider (33):

(33). a. *tolaa-n maal bit-e?*

T-nom what buy -pf

'What did Tola buy?'

If we examine the example in (33) on the bases of principle 1 above, we can get the following as (34) below:

- (34) a. * [maali [tolaa-n ti bit-e?]]
 what T- nom buy- pf

In (34) *maal* ‘what’ is moved to the spec-CP leaving a trace behind its base position. However, in Oromo *wh*-question with the structure (34) above is ungrammatical in every respect. So principle 1 that works for languages like English (VO languages) does not generate grammatical sentences in Oromo. For more convenience let us take some more examples:

- (35) a. Č’aalaa-n eessa d’eem-e
 Ch.- nom where go - pf
 ‘Where did Chala go?’
 b. * eessa Č’aalaa-n ti deem-e?
 Where Ch-Nom go- pf
 c. hawwii-n maali -f d’uf-t-e?
 H- nom what for come- 3pfs- pf
 ‘Why did Hawi come?’
 d) * maali- f hawwii-n ti d’uf-t-e
 Why- for H-nom come- 3pfs- pf

Similar to (34,) structures in (35b) and (35d) are both ungrammatical. What we can understand from examples (34) and (35b) and (35d) is, that overt *wh*-movement is impossible in Oromo regardless of principle 1.

Chomsky (1986), in Collins, (2003:49) claimed that Move-alpha is applied only when a failure to apply it would lead to structure that violate a grammatical condition (cf. Last Resort). In other words in the Minimalist Framework Last Resort is defined as, “a step in a derivation is legitimate only if it is necessary

for convergence” (Chomsky 1995b). Based on this claim we can say that since the examples in (34) and (35a&c) are already well formed interrogative structures of Oromo before the application of Move-alpha, the application of Move-alpha is not necessary for the derivation to converge.

2.3.1.3.1 Factors Triggering *wh*-movement

There are several factors that trigger *wh*-movement. One suggestion is that the complementizer system contains an abstract interrogative feature that forces *wh*-element to move to it (Cook and Newson 1996:201). According to the same source, features are not equally strong or weak. The basic difference between strong and weak features is that strong features always trigger overt, visible movement. Weak features also trigger movement but this movement is covert (Radford 1997a).

Oromo in this respect can be assumed to be having covert *wh*-movement, which is triggered by the weak *wh*-feature like in Chinese. In Chinese and similar languages, we can say that an interrogative C has a weak *wh*-feature (ibid). Indeed overt *wh*- movement seems to be absent in Oromo.

When we come to English, however, it has strong *wh*-feature at the Spec-C position. Thus English needs obligatory *wh*-movement to its Spec-CP (Radford 1997b). For example the *wh*-question of English pre and post move are presented in (36) below:

(36) a. pre move=your name is what?

b. post move= what_i is your name t_i?

As can be seen from the above example *wh*-phrase must move from A- position to the non A-position leaving its trace like in the (36b) above. When we come back to Oromo, there is *wh*-movement from A- position to non-A-position for

checking not a *wh*-feature but for checking another feature. If there is *wh*-movement in Oromo to sentence initial position, there must be a reason other than *wh*-feature checking that we shall discuss below.

2.3.1.3.2 Focus triggered movement

According to Taha (1990) there are reasons why we bring a phrase or a word to sentence initial positions in Oromo. Consider the following examples:

- (37) a. Č'aalaa-n yoom d'uf-e
Ch-nom when come- pf
'When did Chala come?'
- b) yoom d'uf- e Č'aalaa-n
when come- pf Ch – nom
'When did Chala come?'

In (37a) the *wh*-phrase is in-situ while in (37b) it is in ex-situ. Consequently, the speaker signals different information when he utters the questions. In (37a) the *wh*-phrase is focus neutral (contrastive focus). In (37b), however, the *wh*-phrase is the object of the contrastive focus. So in (37b) what the speaker wants to know is when the action of coming took place rather than who came. Therefore, what we understand from the above particular example is, the *wh*-phrase fronting in Oromo is because of contrastive focus. This is also the case in other Ethiopian languages such as Amharic. What is new in Oromo is focus can also be marked morphologically as we have discussed in section 2.2.

In section 2.2.2 we have noticed that morphologically multiple focus markers are possible in Oromo. These focus markers are ordered somewhat in hierarchical way. Based on this, I assume that the attachment is made via

successive cyclic movement of the constituent bearing the feature to each focus head as in (38):

- (38) [FocP³[Foc⁰ -tu][FocP² [Foc⁰-uma][FocP¹[Foc⁰-d'a][NP[N⁰ → eeñnu]]]]]
 [FocP³ eeñnu-d'-uma-tu i][FocP² ti [FocP¹ ti][ti]]]]

2.3.1.3.3 Some more points

In *wh*-phrase fronting, there is peculiar feature in Oromo as opposed to some other languages having *wh*-phrase *in situ*. In Chinese as suggested by Roberts (1997) fronting of *wh*-items is possible. In Oromo fronting of a *wh*-item results in ungrammatical sentence like (39) below:

- (39) a margee-n yoom d'uf-t-e?
 M- nom When come- 3pfs-pf
 'When did Merge come?'
 b. * yoom margee-n d'uf-t-e?
 When M- nom come-3pfs- pf



In (39b) the *wh*-item *yoom* 'when', is fronted in isolation and resulted in ungrammatical sentence. The ungrammaticality of (39b) above can be accounted for in terms of pied piping- a process by which a moved constituent (or set of feature) drags one or more other constituents (or a set of features) along with it when it moves (Radford 1997b). Let us also consider the example in (40):

- (40) [ati [sangaa kam [bit-t-e]]]
 you ox which boy-2ps-pf
 'Which ox did you buy?'

Based on pied piping metaphor, therefore, we cannot move the *wh*-item in isolation. If we move the *wh*-item alone, it would result an ill-formed sentence like in (41):

(41) * [CP kam [IP ati [sangaa ti [bit-t-e]]]]
 which you ox buy- 2pf- pf

To use the pied-piping metaphor stated above, when the *wh*-determiner *kam* ‘which’ moves to Spec-Foc, its complement *sangaa*-‘ox’ has to be pied piped along with the moved *wh*-determiner as in (42):

(42) [FocP sangaa kami bit-t-ej [IP ati ti tj]
 ox which buy-2ps-pf you
 ‘Which ox did you buy?’

In the same way in (39b) when the *wh*-phrase moves, it should drag the verb along with itself. That is because, since the *wh*-item is the complement of the verb the relation between the two is very local and we cannot separate them. Any operation that affects one also affects the other.

The *wh*-phrase fronting in Oromo involve the entire VP if the *wh*-phrase is the complement of the verb. The same thing holds true also to Amharic (cf. Grima 2005)). Applying the same procedure, therefore, the sentence in (39b) above would be corrected like in (43):

(43) yoom d’uf-t-e margee-n
 When come- 3fs- pf M -nom
 ‘When did Marge come?’

In short, based on the principles of structural dependency, (Cook and Newson 1996), when a *wh*-phrase fronting is needed knowing the *wh*-item alone is not

enough but the knowledge of the properties of the whole clause in fronting is crucial.

2.3.2 Multiple Wh- phrases

In the above sections, I claimed that *wh*-phrases are *in-situ* in Oromo; i.e. there is no obligatory *wh*-movement in the derivation of *wh*-questions. Moreover, I stated that the fronting of a *wh*-phrase is only because of contrastive focus. In this section, I proceed to see if the same thing is at work in the case of multiple *wh*-questions. To begin with, consider (44):

- (44) a. eeññu eeññuu -f maal bit-e
 who who-for what buy-pf
 b. eeññuu -f eeññu maal bit-e
 who-for who what buy-pf
 c. maal bit- e eeññuu-f eeññu
 what buy-pf who-for who

Lit. 'Who bought what for whom?'

As we can see in (44a), there are three *wh*-phrases in a single *wh*-question namely *eeññu*, *eeññuu-f* and *maal*. All the *wh*-phrases are in their base positions. However, any of the *wh*-phrases can be fronted in this language if it is focused as in (44b) and (c). Let us also observe the corresponding declarative response to the above *wh*-questions.

- (45) a. tolaa-n bulaa-f kop'ee bit-e
 Tola -nom Bula-for shoes buy-pf
 b. bulaa-f tolaa-n kop'ee bit-e
 Bula-for tola-nom shoes buy-pf

- c. kop'ee bit-e bulaa-f tolaa-n
 shoes buy-pf Bula Tola-nom
 Lit. 'Tola bought a shoe for Bula.'

We can see from (45) that the constituent order varies as the order of the *wh*-phrases in the corresponding *wh*-questions varies. The order, however, varies depending on the way the speaker want to hear from the hearer. In this case if we have hypothetical wh_1 , wh_2 and wh_3 with the order: $wh_1 > wh_2 > wh_3$, we can say, wh_1 is the most prominent whereas wh_3 is the least. Any order difference made to the given order brings difference in the pragmatic information. Similar operation holds in Amharic (cf. Girma 2005b).

In the above section, we have seen that the fronting or inversion of a *wh*-phrase is because of focus. From this particular example in (45) it seems that the economy principle is inoperable in Oromo. According to Radford (1997:144), the economy principle in multiple *wh*-question determined that only one *wh*- operator will be moved into Spec-CP in a multiple *wh*-question structure. Consider the following examples of English sentences:

- (46) a. you think who will say What?
 b. Who_{t2} do_i you_i think t₂ will say what?
 c.* what_{t3} do_i you_i think who will say t₃?

The *wh*-question in (46c) above is not possible English ways of interrogative construction. This is in light with the economic principle that states that economic consideration favor shorter movement over longer ones (ibid). Since in example (46) 'Who' is closer to CP than 'what', CP lures the nearest *wh*-operator into Spec-CP. In other words since ' Who' is nearer to CP in (46) than 'What', it is 'Who' which must move to Spec-CP, not 'What'.

The ungrammaticality of (46c) can be best explained in terms of Relativised Minimality of Rizzi (1990) or the Minimal Link Condition (MLC) of Chomsky and Lasnik (1993 in Watanabe 2003). In the framework of Chomsky (1995a), MLC is incorporated into the definition of movement operation, and furthermore, movement is characterized in terms of attraction[♦]. Observe (50) below:

(47) K attracts F if F is the closest feature that can enter into a checking relation with K (cf. Watanabe, 2003)

The movement of 'what' in (46c) is blocked by this definition only if 'who' has the closest feature that can enter into a checking relation with the head that is supposed to check the relevant feature of 'what'. Thus, since 'who' has the closest feature with the head of CP, the movement of 'what', crossing over 'who' is blocked in the principled fashion.

In Oromo, the movement of a *wh*-phrase crossing over another *wh*-phrase is possible. That is to say, any *wh*- phrase can be fronted crossing another based on what the speaker wants to signal. In short, if we have a hypothetical *wh*₁, *wh*₂ and *wh*₃-phrases the orders in (48) are possible.

- (48)
- | | | | | | |
|----|-----------------|---|-----------------|---|-----------------|
| 1. | WH ₁ | > | WH ₂ | > | WH ₃ |
| 2. | WH ₂ | > | WH ₁ | > | WH ₃ |
| 3. | WH ₂ | > | WH ₃ | > | WH ₁ |
| 4. | WH ₁ | > | WH ₃ | > | WH ₂ |
| 5. | WH ₃ | > | WH ₂ | > | WH ₁ |
| 6. | WH ₃ | > | WH ₁ | > | WH ₂ |

As far as I am concerned, any of the above *wh*- phrase order does not violate the grammar of Oromo. In this case the order is not haphazard. The order

♦ Attraction involves movement of a set of grammatical features carried by a head on their own without movement of the corresponding Phonetic feature (Radford 1997b: 230).

should keep Focus prominence hierarchy (FPH) (Girma 2005b). The most prominent *wh*-phrase is placed syntactically in the highest position. In other word free words order is not tolerated in Oromo.

As we have mentioned earlier *wh*-movement (fronting) seems to diverge from the economic principle in Oromo unlike English or VO languages in general. It is also stated above that overt *wh*- movement is triggered or motivated by the need to check the strong [+WH] feature of CP (Also in Radford, 1997; 136). Watanabe (2003: 210) also stated that movement obeys subadjacency, i.e. whether it applies in overt syntax or at LF, and that only one *wh*-feature is required to be raised to Spec of an interrogative CP. Since in Oromo a *wh*-phrase is fronted not because of checking *wh*-feature. It is rather moved to check strong focus feature, therefore, I also assume that it might be equally economical if in a multiple *wh*-question any *wh*-phrase is fronted overtly crossing over another *wh*-phrase for checking the strong focus feature (i.e. for pragmatic reason) and still generate a well-formed grammatical structure of the language.

Generally, in Oromo the superiority condition seems inoperable. This is also true for Amharic. According to Girma (2005b) any *wh*-phrase can be fronted based on the emphasis that the speaker wants to assign to each *wh*- phrase. But since the superiority condition stated for languages like English (Chomsky 1973, in Girma 2005) and for language like Oromo (OV languages) is not the same (for fronting is made basically for different purposes according to the languages) the fronting of a *wh*-phrase does not violate the superiority condition in languages like Oromo.

To summarize the points raised under this section, we have observed that in both single and multiple *wh*-questions, *wh*-phrases respect their canonical positions in the unmarked cases. Based on this, I have argued that the *wh*-

phrases in Oromo are in-situ in both single and multiple *wh*-questions. This means that there is no obligatory *wh*-phrase movement in the derivation of *wh*-questions. If the *wh*-phrases are subjected to focus, however, the fronting of a *wh*-phrase to a sentence initial position is possible. In this, fronting of *wh*-phrase, we have also observed that one *wh*-phrase can cross over another and still generate a grammatical structure of the language. Here I argued that since the fronting is made not to check [WH] feature, the process is not in violation of economic condition.

Chapter Three

Yes or No Questions

In the preceding chapter we have seen one type of question. In this chapter we shall consider Yes or No question.

Yes or No questions are so-called because they permit 'Yes' and 'No' (or their counterparts in other languages) as appropriate replies (Radford 1981). Consider the question and its reply in (49):

- (49) a. tulluu-n barataa-d'a-a
T-.nom student-is -Q
'Is Tullu student?'
- b. eeyyee/lakki
"Yes/No."

In (49) the question in (49a) is replied as in (49b) using *eeyyee* 'Yes' or *lakki* 'No' as its appropriate reply. Of course speaker (b) does not have to reply to such question only in this way. He might reply *tarii* 'may be', *natti hin fakkaatu* 'I don not think so', *waa'uu* 'no /nothing'. All these are possible ways of replying to such types of questions depending on the knowledge or the information the hearer has on the proposed question. But, according to Radford (1981), at least he has the option of replying using 'Yes' or 'No'. This is the main reason why it is called 'Yes' or 'No' questions.

3.1 The derivation of Yes or No questions

On the derivation of Yes or No questions, I do not have much to say. That is the derivation of Yes or No questions is almost the same with the derivation of *wh*-questions, we have seen earlier.

The derivation of Yes or No questions does not take place in the overt syntax. Consider (50):

- (50) a. tolaa-n d'eeraa-d'a-a
T.-nom tall -is -Q
'Is Tola tall?'
- b. dasoo-n haad'a kee-ti-i
D-nom mother your is -Q
'Is Daso your mother?'

In both (50a) and (50b) above every thing is in place. No constituent changed its place for the formation of the interrogative. That is, every constituents of the sentence remains in place as in their declarative counterparts in (51):

- (51) a. tolaa-n d'eeraa-d'a
T.-nom tall-is
"Tola is tall."
- b. dasoo-n haad'a kee-ti
D-nom mother your -is
'Daso is your mother.'

As one can observe from both (50) and (51), the constituents order in both cases are the same and similar. On the bases of these analyses we can say that there is no auxiliary inversion or do insertion as in English in the derivation of Yes or No questions in Oromo. Consider the English example in (52):

- (52) a. [IP It is raining.]
b. [CPs [IP it ti raining?]]
c. [IP I like to study syntax].
d. [CP Do [IP you like to study syntax?]]

We can observe from (52) that the Yes or No question in (b) and (d) are derived from (a) and (c) counter parts through auxiliary inversion and do insertion respectively. In Oromo constituents are in-situ. According to the assumption in MP; therefore, the Yes or No question in Oromo can be interpreted at LF (after Spell-Out). There is no such syntactic mechanism in Oromo (a point left for further analyses). In other words there is no visible movement in the derivation of questions of this type in Oromo. Every thing will be completed at LF (in the covert syntax). I claim, therefore, that the Yes or No questions in Oromo is simply an IP sentence following Grimshaw's (1990) proposal in Roberts (1997).

However, there is a possibility for order difference in the constituents of Yes or No question. One of the initiations for the order difference is focus prominence. I shall consider the point shortly.

3.2 On the properties of Yes or No questions

3.2.1. Constituent Fronting

In the Yes or No questions, order difference in the constituents is possible even though its interpretation is made at LF. To put the notion on the concrete bases, consider the following example.

- (53) a. [IPdame-n reʔee k'al-e-e]
 Dame-nom goat-pf-Q
 b . (FocP reʔee k'al-e-ei [IP dame-n ti])
 goat slaughter Dame-nom
 lit. 'Did Dame slaughter a goat?'

As we can see in (53) *reʔee k'al-e* 'goat slaughtered' moved to sentence initial position. When the speaker utters (a) and (b) he signals different information. In example (a) the increment of information lays on the NP *dame* 'Dame'.

However in (b), the increment of information is on VP *re?ee k'ale* 'goat slaughtered'. We can also note from this example that the increment of information corresponds to higher position in syntactic structure. Thus on the bases of this we can say that the movement of a constituent to the sentence initial position is because of focus.

The importance of this information is relative to the speaker's pragmatic knowledge or the speaker's experience in the actual world. According to Taha (1990), the increment of information, which the speaker signals either structurally or contextually to the most important information, is because of focus. Adding to this point, Taha (1990) says the increment of information may be any thing from specific lexical item to the entire sentence or the sentence operators.

In addition to structural focus marking we can also focalize a constituent morphologically in the construction of Yes or No questions. The more frequent focus marker in this case is *-tu*, which is attached to the subject to restrict its gap. Consider (54):

- (54) a. K'aanfee-tu sa?a bit-e-e
 K-Fm cow but-pf-Q
 'Is it Kanfe who bought a cow?'

In (54) focus marker *-tu* is used to focalize the subject *k'aanfe* 'Kanfe'. When the speaker produces the sentence he wants to know if it is *Kanfe* but no body else who has bought a cow, i.e. to restrict *Kanfe* among others. The type of focus is assertive and the function of this focus marker is completion (Taha 1990).

3.2.1.1 Two or more focus markers

In the above sections we have observed that the fronting of constituents in the Yes or No question in Oromo is because of focus, which is marked either syntactically or morphologically. In the morphological focus marking I have identified *-tu* as focus marker. In further analysis, however, I identified more than one focus marker (cf. section 2.2) within a single constituent as we can easily recognize from the following examples.

- (55) a. [_{FocP} Č'aalaa-d'a-tu d'uf-e-e]
Chala-Fm-Fm come-pf-Q
b. [_{FocP} Č'aalaa-d'-uma-tu d'uf-e-e]
Chala-Fm-Fm-Fm come-pf-Q
Lit. 'Is it Chala who came?'

We can observe from the examples in (55) that there are successive markers of focus within a single constituent namely NP Č'aalaa 'Chala'. This means that there are double and triple focus markers within a single category NP in (62a & b) respectively. In Taha (1990) and Baye (1988) each focus marker is identified separately. What is 'new' in this study is only the successive occurrence of each focus marker. This is not limited to the above data. We can also find the same thing in other constituents. In this case the attachment of each focus marker is not expected to happen simultaneously. I assume that the attachment is made via successive cyclic movement of the NP to each target focus marker in each focus head as in (56):

- (56) [_{FocP}³ Č'aalaa-d'-uma-tu [_{FocP}² ti [_{FocP}¹ ti [NP ti]]]]

3.2.1.2 Some more points on fronting

In the above section, we have observed that the fronting of constituents to a sentence initial position is because of focus prominence. In this fronting, one interesting feature we can observe is that, if the constituent in the complement position is moved to the sentence initial position, it must pied-pipe the verb as we have noticed in the case of *wh*-fronting earlier. Consider (53) repeated in (57) for ease:

- (57) a. [IP dame-n re?ee k'ale-e-e]
 Dame -nom goat slaughter-pf-Q
 'Did Dame slaughter a goat?'
- b. [FocP re?ee kal-e-ei [IP dame-n ti]]
 goat slaughter-pf-Q Dame-nom
 'Did Dame slaughter a goat?'
- c. * [FocP re?eei [IP dame-n ti k'al-e-e]]
 goat Dame-nom slaughter-pf-Q

The ungrammaticality of (57c) can be explained based on pied-piping metaphor. That is in (57c) *re?ee* 'a goat' is moved to the sentence initial position in isolation from the verb complement position. But since the pied piping of the verb is necessary in the move, separating it from its complement causes the derivation to crash. The complement along with its verb must move to sentence initial position like in the (57b) example. In this case the head verb and the complement together seem to act as a single unit.

3.2.2 The question affix

We have seen above that there is no overt (PF) movement in the derivation of Yes or No question in Oromo. Apart from this, however, there are some

properties of Yes or No questions that we observe in the overt syntax. To begin with let us consider the examples in (58):

- (58) a. dammee-n bareed-duu-d'a.
Damme-nom beautiful-3pfs-is
'Damme is beautiful.'
- b. saree-n bofa ñaat-t-e
dog-nom snake eat-3pfs-pf
'A dog ate snake.'

When we change the above declarative sentence in to its Yes or No question counter part we can get (59):

- (59) a. dammee-n bareed-duu-d'a-a.
Deme-nom beautiful-3pfs-is-Q
'Is Damme beautiful?'
- b. saree-n bofa ñaat-t-e-e
dog-nom snake eat-3pfs-pf-Q
'Did a dog eat snake?'

Indeed we can see the same constituent order in both declarative and interrogative sentences of (58) and (59) above respectively. This tells us the LF interpretation of Yes or No question in Oromo. One different point we can observe is, in the case of declarative sentence in (58) the vowel in the final constituent is short while the same vowel is long in integrative counterpart the vowels of the auxiliary *-d'a* and perfect marker *-e* respectively; that is what differentiates declarative from interrogative sentence in Oromo. The lengthening of the vowels is made purely on the bases of syntax and its attachment can be accounted via derivational processes as in (60):

(60) [QP [Q° -a [VP [V° -d'a]]] → [QP -d'a-a [VP ti]][♦]

Here we can assume that the final vowel (the lengthened) is interpreted as a question affix like *ka/no* in Japanese (Cheng 1991 in Watanabe 2003) and *wāy* in Amharic (Girma 2005b).

If the assumption made above is valid, lack of overt movement in the derivation of Yes or No questions in Oromo is because of economy. Since the question suffix is sufficient to indicate that the clause is a question (Baltin 2003). Chomsky (1986 cited in Collins 2003:49) states that move-alpha is applied only when a failure to apply it lead to a structure that violate a grammatical condition. In (59) since all the conditions for the Yes or No questions derivation is satisfied at LF (may be by assumed question affix) there is no need for the overt auxiliary movement.

3.2.3 The role of suprasegmental features

In the preceding section we have observed that lengthened vowel at the end of the verb or final constituent is assumed to be question affix and indicates that the sentence is interrogative. There is one more feature that can be used alternatively to mark Yes or No questions. I shall discuss this feature below.

According to Wako (1981), Abarra (1988), Llonet (1988) in addition to vowel length and consonant gemination, the role of other suprasegmental features is significant in bringing semantic or syntactic distinction in Oromo. Anderson (1978), Gandour (1978) and Alemayehu (1987, in Habte 2003) state that, a language is said to be 'intonational language', if pitch is used to signal semantic and/or syntactic distinction at phrase or sentence level. Here pitch

[♦] The derivation of other Yes or No question can be made through the same procedure.

variation operates beyond word levels at larger syntactic levels as to the above scholars. Oromo as pitch-accent or intonational language (cf. Habte 2003), Owens (1985) cited in Kebede (1994:30) employ suprasegmental feature in its syntax to differentiate declarative sentence from its interrogative counterpart. According to my analyses, if a sentence ends up with a falling intonation, it is an indicator of declarative sentence as the examples in (61) may indicate.

- (61) a. tolaa-n bareed- aa -d'a . ↘
 T-nom handsom-mas- is
 'Tola is handsom.'
- b. sangaa-n an-i kaleessa bit-e furd-aa-d'a ↘
 ox -nom I-nom yesterday buy-pf fat-mas -is
 'An ox I bought yesterday is fat.'

When the speaker utters the above sentences as declaratives or statements he does it with a falling intonation. In relation to this Wako (1981:49) says: a falling pitch which occur at the end of statement or at the end of a question sentence with question words (*wh*-items) signals the end of an utterance. From this we can understand that the falling pitch indicate the sentence is declarative or statement, if *wh*-phrase is not introduced.

On the other hand, the rising intonation indicates the utterance is question. Consider the following in (62):

- (62) a. mana k'abd-a ↗
 house have-2s mas
 'Do you have house?'
- b. kaleessa gal-t-e ↗
 yesterday backhome-2s-pf
 'Did you come back home yesterday?'

We can observe from (62) that, Yes or No questions in Oromo are also characterized by intonation. Wako (1981:49) also says a rising pitch, which occurs at the end of a question sentence without question word signals a question and the end of an utterance.

In sum, in this chapter, we have observed that the Yes or No questions in Oromo are interpreted at LF (i.e. in the covert syntax) waiting after the point of spell-Out. In addition, we have observed that in the construction of such question the sentence final vowel gets long to mark that the sentence is interrogative in the non-*wh*-question. Here I argued that the lengthened vowel could be considered as a question affix like those languages having overt question particles such as Japanese (Cheng 1991 in Watanabe 2003) and Amharic (Girma 2005b). Since this question affix is enough to indicate that the clause is a question, the overt movement of the auxiliary is blocked obeying economic condition of procrastinate and Greed. In addition, we have also observed that rising intonation alternatively signals a question in non *wh*-questions following Wako's (1981:49) proposal and this study. In short the Yes or No questions in Oromo are characterized either by question affix or rising intonation*.

* It seems that a raising intonation and the question affix appear together. I argue that the Yes or No questions in Oromo are characterized either by raising intonation or by question affix. It is the effect of the raising intonation that seem as if the vowel is lengthened, when the raising intonation is employed which is not the case however.

CHAPTER FOUR: Echo-Questions

Another typological division between questions of natural language is between echo and non-echo questions. Echo questions are questions that involve one person echoing the speech of another (Radford 1981). In this chapter, I shall examine questions of this sort very briefly.

An echo question can be constructed from different types of sentence. I shall consider some of these below.

4.1 Echo-question from statements

An echo-question can be constructed from their statement counterpart as in (63):

(63) a. konkolaataa-n bit-e

car -1ps buy-pf

'I bought a car.'

b. konkolaataa-n bit-e-e

car- 1sg buy-pf-Q

'I bought a car?'

Lit. "Did you mean 'I bought a car'?"

The statement in (63a) and the echo question in (63b) are similar in many cases. For instance, there is no word order difference in both sentences. Yet there are some points that distinguish echo questions from statement eventhough both have more in common. As we can observe from (63b) the perfective marker in the statement is short while it is long in the echo question. Let us also consider some more examples.

- (64) a. kuyyee-n barat-tuu-d'a
 K.-nom student -3fs -is
 'Kuye is student.'
- b. kuyyee-n barat-tuu-d'a-a
 K.-nom student-3fs-is -Q
 'Kuye is student?'

We can also see from the example in (64) that the vowel the auxiliary *-d'a* in (64a) and (64b) are short and long respectively. If we examine more examples of this sort we can also observe the same thing. Thus, what we understand from these is that, echo questions from statements are characterized by the question affix to signal that the clauses are questions like we have observed for Yes or No questions in preceding chapter. I.e. when we utter the example in (63a and 64a) we simply utter them with a falling intonation. But their echo question counter parts (63b and 64b) are uttered either by using a raising intonation or the assumed question affix. Another important point is when we echo statement we can also utter it with rising pitch or intonation if question affix is not introduced.

As we can clearly see from the examples provided, structurally echo questions share more common feature with Yes or No question. I shall discuss their differences in section 4.2.

On the other hand, we can also echo statement using Yes or No questions as in (65):

- (65) a. sayyoo-n deem-a
 Sayo- 1sg go -impf
 'I go (will go) to Sayo.'

- b. sayyoo-n deem-a-a
Sayo-1s go -impf-Q
'I (will) go to Sayo?'

Here speaker (b) is echoing statement made by (a) using Yes or No question. We can also echo statement, using *wh*-question.

- (66) a. leenc'a d'uf-e
lion come-pf
'A lion came.'
b. maal-tu d'uf-e-e
what-Fm come-pf-Q
'What came?'

In (66), the statement by (a) is echoed by (b) using *wh*-question. As we can observe from the example *leenc'a* 'lion' in (a) is un-marked morphologically for focus while *maal* 'what' is marked for focus morphologically for the same reason we have mentioned in (section 2.2). Moreover the perfective marker in the echo *wh*-question became long to distinguish it from its non-echo counterparts.

4.2 Echo question from Yes or No questions

In the same way, we have seen above for statement, it is also possible to echo Yes or No question like in (67):

- (67) a. jaboo-n barat-tuu-da-a
Jabo-nom student-3fs-Q
'Is Jabo student?'

- b. jaboo-n barat-tuu-da-a
 Jabo-nom student-3fs-Q
 'Is Jabo student?'

We cannot see clear difference in their structure between echo and non-echo Yes or No questions of (67). However, in this kind of echo questions the speaker often use *yi* at the end of the utterance to signal that the question is an echo as in (68)[▲]:

- (68) a. tolaa-n barataa-d'a-a
 T - nom student-is-Q
 'Is Tola student?'
 b. tolaa-n barataa-da-a yi
 T - nom student is -Q
 'Tola is student?'

We can see from (68) that *yi* is used to distinguish echo Yes or No question from its non-echo Yes or No question counter parts.

We can also echo Yes or No question in (67) using echo *wh*-question when we are not certain about what/who Jabo is on what is specified. Therefore, when we echo (67a) above using echo *wh*-question we can get (69):

- (69) jaboo-n maal-oo- d'a-a
 Jabo -nom what-is-Q
 'What did you say Jabo is?'

[▲] *yi* sometimes seems as if it appears with non echo Yes or No questions. However, the appearance of this particle/affix happens when the listener fail to recognize the speech and the speaker re utter his own speech.

It is clear from (69) that the *wh*-item *maal* ‘what’ has suffixed *-oo* which has the meaning of what about like in *caalaa-n -oo* ‘what about Chala’

4.3 Echo question from *wh*-question

In the same way we echo statements and Yes or No questions, we can also echo *wh*-questions. Consider (70):

- (70) a. *tulluu-n eessa deem-e*
Tullu-nom where go-pf
‘Where did Tullu go?’
b. *tulluu-n eessa deem-e-e*
Tullu-nom where go-pf-Q
‘Where did Tullu go?’

In (70) the speaker (b) echoed the non-echo *wh*-question in (a). The echo *wh*-question is different from its non-echo *wh*-question in that it has a question affix. Echo *wh*-question is characterized by question affix.

4.4 Echo question from Imperatives

In Oromo echoing from imperatives is also possible. Consider (71):^Ω

- (71) a. *na-n hin-tuk’i-n*
I-acc Foc- touch -neg
‘Do not touch me!’
b. *na-n hin tuk’i-n-ii*
I-acc Foc-touch-neg-Q
‘You mean ‘do not touch me?’’

^Ω the prefix *hin-* is treated here as a verbal focus marker

In (71) speaker (b) is echoing imperative made by speaker (a). We can also echo imperative in (71a) by using echo *wh*-question like in (72):

(72) maal na hin god'i-n-ii
what me neg-do-neg-Q
'Do not do me what?'

As we can see from the examples, even though the imperative does not have vowel at the end of the sentence or verb, long or double 'i' is inserted in the echo counter part. If the last constituent ends with consonant, long 'i' is inserted as the question affix to signal that the sentence is a question in non *wh*-question.

To sum up the discussion made under this chapter, in Oromo echo questions from statements, imperatives and *wh*-questions are characterized by the proposed question affix while echo Yes or No questions are characterized by suffixation of -yi to the end of the utterances. In addition echo questions can be characterized by rising intonation, if question affix is not introduced as we have observed for Yes or No questions.

CHAPTER FIVE

Summary

In this chapter, I shall recapitulate the core points discussed throughout the preceding chapters.

The main theme of the thesis is to give a fuller account of the description of the syntax of interrogative clauses in Oromo. The discussion was made in the light of Minimalist Program (MP). The whole thesis is divided into four basic chapters.

In the first chapter of the thesis, introduction, the background, statements of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, methodology, literature review and the theoretical framework adopted for the finding were presented in brief. Under the literature review only some of the works that have direct relevance to the study were reviewed. In the theoretical framework the theoretical framework adopted for the study (MP) was discussed in terms of what motivated the theory, how it is different from its immediate predecessor (GB) and how the theory works were presented in brief. For the fuller account of the theory, however, any interested person is referred to Chomsk's work.

In the second chapter of the thesis, *wh*-questions were discussed in more details. This chapter has three sections. These include: types of *wh*-questions, *wh*-items and derivations of *wh*-questions. In section 2.1 six types of *wh*-questions are presented based on formal and functional grounds. These include: subject interrogatives, temporal interrogative, locative interrogative, manner interrogative, instrumental interrogative and reason interrogative.

In section 2.2, *wh*-items were discussed. In this case, six basic and three derived *wh*-items were distinguished. These *wh*-items were observed to exhibit different morphological properties. Each *wh*-item inflects for case, person, number and focus. These were discussed in depth.

In section 2.3, the derivation of *wh*-questions were considered. It was discussed that there is no overt movement of *wh*-phrase in the derivation of *wh*-question in Oromo. The derivation of *wh*-question takes place in covert syntax at LF obeying the economic conditions of procrastinates and Greed. There is no obligatory movement of *wh*-phrase in Oromo. For pragmatic purpose, however, *wh*-phrase can move to sentence initial position. This is mainly for checking the strong focal feature at CP/FocP that need obligatory overt movement of *wh*-phrase to its focus-bearing node. In this movement one *wh*-phrase can cross another *wh*-phrase violating superiority condition. In this case I argued that since the movement is note triggered by strong [WH] feature the movement does not violet the economic condition stated. Another interesting point is when the *wh*-phrase in the complement position move it must pied pipe the verb without which the movement result ungrammatical structure of the language.

It was also observed that morphologically multiple focus markers are possible within a single *wh*-phrase. The focus markers are ordered in hierarchical way and its derivation is assumed to be made through successive cyclic movement of the head phrase to each corresponding focus bearing node.

In the third chapter of the thesis, Yes or No questions were discussed. Under this chapter the derivation of Yes or No questions and some properties of Yes or No questions were discussed in detail. Regarding the derivation of Yes or No questions it is assumed that it is similar to the derivation of *wh*-questions. That is, there is no overt movement of constituents or do insertion in the

derivation of Yes or No questions or there is no such thing in Oromo. The derivation of Yes or No questions in Oromo is made in the covert syntax at LF. The role of focus in initiating overt constituent movement was also discussed in the chapter.

It was also observed that Yes or No questions in Oromo are characterized by overt question affixes. In this case the lengthened vowel at the end of the verb or at the end of the final constituent in the structure is considered to be triggered by syntax and assumed to be question particle that signal the structure is interrogative rather than statement or imperative where *wh*-phrase are not introduced. Alternatively Yes or No questions are characterized by suprasegmental features. The rising intonation is used to signal the clause in interrogative where there is no question particle or Q-words.

In chapter four of the thesis, echo questions were discussed in brief. Echo question in Oromo can be derived from statement, Yes or No questions, *wh*-questions and imperatives. Echo Yes or no questions are considered to be characterized by *-yi* while other echo questions are characterized by the assumed question affix.

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Declaration

I the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my work and all sources of materials used for this thesis have been duly acknowledged.

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