



**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**THE STRUCTURES OF NOMINAL CLAUSES IN AFAN OROMO  
A MINIMALIST APPROACH**

**BY**

**HAWINE ALEMAYEHU**

**JULY 2007  
ADDIS ABABA**

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A MINIMALIST APPROACH**

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**APPROVED BY: BOARD OF EXAMINERS**

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## Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my work and it has not been presented before in any University. Moreover, I declare that all the sources of materials used for this thesis have been duly acknowledged.

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## List of Abbreviations and Symbols

**acc** - accusative case

<b>Agr</b>	-	agreement
<b>AgrS</b>	-	subject agreement
<b>AgrO</b>	-	object agreement
<b>aux</b>	-	auxiliary
<b>comp</b>	-	complementizer
<b>cs</b>	-	causativizer
<b>DO</b>	-	direct object
<b>DP</b>	-	determiner phrase
<b>e</b>	-	empty category
<b>F</b>	-	Feminine
<b>Foc</b>	-	focus
<b>Imp</b>	-	imperfective aspect
<b>Infl</b>	-	inflection
<b>IO</b>	-	indirect object
<b>IP</b>	-	Inflectional phrase
<b>mas</b>	-	masculine
<b>MP</b>	-	Minimalist Program
<b>Neg</b>	-	negative
<b>nom</b>	-	nominative case
<b>nonp</b>	-	non-past tense
<b>psv</b>	-	pasivizer
<b>pl</b>	-	plural
<b>prf</b>	-	perfective aspect
<b>prog</b>	-	progressive aspect
<b>pst</b>	-	past tense
<b>RC</b>	-	relative clause
<b>sg</b>	-	singular
<b>sgf</b>	-	singular feminine
<b>sgm</b>	-	singular masculine
<b>spec</b>	-	specifier
<b>t</b>	-	trace
<b>1</b>	-	first person
<b>2</b>	-	second person
<b>3</b>	-	third person

- ∅ - zero morpheme
- \* - ungrammatical structure

## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis explores the structure of nominal clauses in Afan Oromo within the framework of Chomsky's (1993, 1995) Minimalist Program. In particular, it focuses on two types of nominal clauses: akka clause, which is finite and f-clause, which is non-finite. Attempt is made to identify the functional and lexical categories, the possible movements that drive nominal clause structures and the hierarchical order of functional and lexical projections in the structures.

In akka clause, there are six functional projections – CP, TP, AspP, NegP, AgrSP and AgrOP. In

$\underline{f}$ -clause, on the other hand, there are CP, TP, NegP, AgrSP and AgrOP. With regard to distribution, akka clause is limited to the position of complement while  $\underline{f}$ -clause can occur in all argument positions. Since the language marks nominative case morphologically, the nominal head of  $\underline{f}$ -clause displays the nominative case suffix /-n/. Concerning case checking, both AgrS and Asp can check nominative case and the possible checking domain for accusative case is the light verb and light noun. It is also shown that nominal clauses have SOV word order where the object may be preposed for purpose of focus. Finally, the syntactic representations of nominal clauses have been discussed. The hierarchy in akka clauses is [DP [ CP [ AgrSP [ TP [ AspP [ NegP [AgrOP [ vP [VP ]]]]]]]] while in  $\underline{f}$ -clauses the order is [ DP [CP [ AgrSP [ TP [ NegP [AgrOP [ nP [ NP ]]]]]]]].

# CHAPTER ONE

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 The Language and the People

Oromo, also known as Afan Oromo or Oromiffa, is an Afro-Asiatic language, and the most widely spoken language of the Cushitic language family ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oromo\\_language](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oromo_language)). The people call themselves Oromo and their language Afan Oromo or Oromiffa. In various literatures, however, the word Oromo is used to refer to both the language and its speakers. In this study, the terms Afan Oromo and Oromo are used to refer to the language and the people respectively, following the way the people use the terms.

Kebede (2005) mentions that speakers of Afan Oromo live in three countries in the Horn of Africa, namely Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. As information from the free encyclopedia shows, the language is spoken by approximately 24-25 million Oromos and by other neighboring nationalities in Ethiopia and Kenya. The majority of Afan Oromo speakers live in Ethiopia, mainly in Oromia region, and the rest in Kenya and Somalia.

According to Gragg (1976) and Kebede (2005), in Ethiopia, Afan Oromo has five major dialects:

1. Rayya (Northern)
2. Boorana (Southern)
3. Tulama (Central)
4. Harar (Eastern)
5. Mecha (Western)

The dialects spoken outside Ethiopia, according to Heine (1980) cited in Baye, (1986:8) are:

- |            |           |
|------------|-----------|
| 1. Gabra   | 5. Orma   |
| 2. Boorana | 6. Ajuran |
| 3. Sakuye  | 7. Munyo  |
| 4. Garreh  | 8. Waataa |

At present, Afan Oromo has different official functions in the Oromiya Regional State and also in Oromiya Zone of the Amhara Region.. It is a regional official language, a medium of instructions in primary schools, teacher training institutions and colleges and it is a field of study in higher educational institutions such as A.A.U. It also serves as language of the courts, religions, mass media, etc.

According to the information from the free encyclopedia, the phonemic inventory of the language has the following consonants and vowels. The phonemes /p/, /v/ and /z/ appear in parentheses because they are found in loan words.

**Table 1: Consonant phonemes of Afan Oromo**

		<u>Bilabial/ Labiodental</u>	<u>Alveolar/ Retroflex</u>	<u>Palato-alveolar/ Palatal</u>	<u>Velar</u>	<u>Glottal</u>
<u>Stops and affricates</u>	<u>Voiceless</u>	(p)	t	č	k	ʔ
	<u>Voiced</u>	B	d	ǰ	g	
	<u>Ejective</u>	p'	t'	č'	k'	
	<u>Implosive</u>		ɗ			
<u>Fricatives</u>	<u>Voiceless</u>	F	S	š		h
	<u>Voiced</u>	(v)	(z)			
<u>Nasals</u>		M	n	ñ		
<u>Approximants</u>		W	l	y		
<u>Flap/Trill</u>			r			

**Table 2: Vowel phonemes of Afan Oromo**

<b>Front</b>	<b>Central</b>	<b>Back</b>
i , ii		u , uu
e , ee		o , oo
	a, aa	

Gemination is phonemic in Afan Oromo and so is vowel length. In addition, words neither begin nor end with consonant clusters and the maximum number of consonant clusters allowed word medially is two ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oromo\\_language](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oromo_language)).

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Although many languages are spoken in Ethiopia, they are not fully studied. Most of them lack even basic descriptions (Girma, 2003). Relatively speaking, Afan Oromo is one of the fairly well studied languages in Ethiopia. As it is serving different functions, it deserves a great attention in the study of its grammar. A lot has been done both by Ethiopians and foreigners. However, the grammar works done so far have mostly been descriptive and not exhaustive. There are aspects of the grammar such as nominal clauses that need detailed study in light of recent developments in theoretical linguistics. This research, therefore, attempts to explore the structure of nominal clauses using the Minimalist approach of Chomsky (1993; 1995) as a framework.

## **1.3 Objective of the Study**

The general objective of the study is to make a detailed description of the structures of nominal clauses of Afan Oromo in light of the assumptions in the Minimalist approach of Chomsky (1993, 1995). The research specifically tries to identify the internal constituents, examine the order of constituents and state the derivations of nominal clauses.

The study tries to answer the broad question of how the Minimalist Program treats the facts of the structure of nominal clauses of Afan Oromo. In this connection, the study takes the following as its focuses.

1. What is the internal structure of nominal clauses in Afan Oromo?
2. What are the constituent structures in such clauses?
3. What types of movements operate in the derivation of such clauses?
4. What are the possible orders of constituents?

## **1.4 Significance of the Study**

The description of the internal structure of nominal clauses of Afan Oromo may:

1. Provide further linguistic facts for students and teachers of Afan Oromo and for researchers in Cushitic syntax;

2. Contribute to the understanding of the typological and theoretical position of Afan Oromo and
3. Induce other researchers to make further studies on the same topic or related aspects of the language.

## **1.5 Delimitations of the Study**

This thesis is limited in two ways:

1. It is limited to syntax, particularly to the structure of nominal clauses of Afan Oromo.
2. The database is limited to the Tulama dialect, which is spoken in central Ethiopia. The reason is that the researcher herself is a native speaker of the dialect.

Eventhough the database is Tulama, it is believed that the findings might apply to other dialects of the language.

## **1.6 Methodology**

The methodologies used in this research include the following: first, the literatures on the Minimalist approach of syntax and related works on the language are consulted. Secondly, since the researcher herself is a native speaker of the Tulama dialect of the language, she herself is a source for the data. Informants whose first language is Afan Oromo and the Tulama dialect are consulted for cross checking the data. Then, the data are transcribed phonemically and glosses are provided. Finally, the facts are interpreted in light of the Minimalist approach of Chomsky (1993, 1995).

## **1.7 Review of Related Literature**

So far, some theoretical and descriptive works have been done on Afan Oromo. Those that are related to the present work are discussed in this section.

Gragg (1976) is an article that deals with the phonology, morphology and syntax of the language. The syntax section is a description of the characteristics of the major clause types including relative clauses, complement clauses, adverbial clauses, etc. But this is not more than a sketch; it simply shows that such clause types exist in the language.

Bitama (1976) is another study that begins with a brief description of the phonology, the major word classes and about different types of sentences in the language. He makes a sketchy analysis of coordinate and subordinate sentences, and also mentions nominal clauses as one type of such clauses.

Similarly, Dejene (1980) deals with five basic sentence patterns in Afan Oromo. He describes how NPs and VPs are modified and expanded, and how relative clauses are used.

Temesgen (1985) is a senior essay on the syntax of Afan Oromo. It deals with independent and dependent sentences. The dependent sentences include relative, adverbial, and complement clauses.

Owens (1985) is a study of the grammar of Afan Oromo and describes the phonology, morphology and syntax of the Harar dialect. This work describes what items occur in noun phrases, their sequences, and the inflectional classes. He also mentions a number of noun phrase structures such as relative clauses, possessives, and infinitives. In addition, this study outlines the different case forms and functions, and then makes a general summary of the clause-level constituents and their orders. Moreover, the study deals with the forms, distributions and internal structures of dependent clauses. He points out the existence of clauses introduced by 'akka' functioning as complements of verbs and verbal nouns derived with the suffixes '-aa', '-uu' and '-(un)saa' and functioning as subjects, complements, purposive and possessive elements.

Another work worth mentioning is Baye (1986) on the phrase structure of Ethiopian Oromo. It tries to examine the internal structures of two types of clausal complements among other things. These are argument complements of [-N] and modifying complements of [+N] categories. The work is based on the Extended Standard Theory developed in Chomsky (1970) and subsequent developments outlined in Radford (1981). The present study takes this work as a point of departure for a more detailed description of the internal structure of both types of clauses in light of the Minimalist approach.

In Baye (1988), the syntactic properties of infinitives in Afan Oromo are examined in the light of the theoretical framework of GB of Chomsky (1981; 1982). This study focuses mainly on the subject of infinitives, the extent to which the theory of case, in particular the assignment of nominative case accounts for the facts of Afan Oromo infinitives.

Abebe (2002) explains the case system of Afan Oromo based on Chomsky's (1981, 1982, 1986) Theory of Case, and subsequent developments. Different cases and case markers are identified and the directionality of case assignment has been determined.

Similarly, Kelbessa (2003) focuses on pronominal references in Afan Oromo. It takes the Binding Theory of GB as a model of description for the referential properties of NPs in the language.

Debela (2003) addresses pronominal empty categories in Afan Oromo in the light of the theoretical framework of GB. It discusses the nature of pronominal empty categories, their distributions and interpretations. In addition, the study describes the agreement relation between arguments and heads in DPs and IPs. The position of pro is stated in such clause types as finite clauses, complement clauses, consecutive medial clauses, simultaneous clauses and relative clauses. In addition, the distribution of PRO as subject of infinitives is described.

In summary, we have seen that different scholars have attempted to account for the syntax of Afan Oromo in general and nominal clauses in particular. However, the primary objective of their work was not to analyze the syntax of nominal clauses as an independent issue. The present study is an attempt towards this in light of a more recent development in syntactic theory. This research, specifically, attempts to identify the functional and lexical categories, the possible structures that derive nominal clause structures and the hierarchical order of functional and the lexical projections in the structures.

## **1.8 Theoretical Framework**

### **1.8.1 An Overview**

This study adopts a Minimalist approach advanced in the Minimalist Program (hereafter MP). MP is a development of Government and Binding (GB) theory, as put forward in Chomsky (1993; 1995). As it is suggested in Epstein and Hornstein (1999: ix), "MP is a research program (not a worked-out theory)". Their reason is precisely because it is intended to investigate the possibilities of some very general and still not very well understood ideas about the nature of language. Therefore, there is much more room within MP for variations and developments. In addition, Cook and Newson (1996) state that MP assumes Minimalism or simplicity as a central criterion and aims making statements about human language that are simple and general as much as possible. This section outlines some of the main aspects of the program. Epstein and Hornstein (1999: xii-xiv) summarizes the basic assumptions of the MP as follows:

First, MP makes use of fewer levels. The system reduces the set of four levels of representation: D-structure, S-structure, Logical Form (LF) and Phonetic Form (PF) of standard GB theory, to the two levels - LF and PF.

Second, recursion is relegated to the transformational component. Even though recursion is part of the transformational component, there is no upper bound on sentence length. Hence, some recursive procedures must obtain.

Third, the grammatical module is embedded in a wider array of cognitive modules. These modules interact with other modules in order to interpret sentences phonetically and conceptually. Accordingly, grammar becomes the bridge between forms and meaning as the grammar is clearly what constructs these two levels of representation.

Fourth, merge and move are the two basic structure building processes. Merge is a general structure building process that combines (or merges) two syntactic categories to form new complex ones. Move, is the second type of structure-building processes recognized in MP. It has the effect of raising a category that has already been merged to a target phrase marker.

Fifth, move is a last resort operation. An element moves if it has to as the only way of satisfying some grammatical requirements.

Sixth, there are many types of features: semantic, phonological and formal. The formal ones are relevant for syntax and are divided into intrinsic or optional; and into interpretable or non-interpretable. "The intrinsic ones are listed explicitly in the lexical entry, strictly determined by properties listed" (Chomsky, 1995:231). They include features, the case features of verbs, and the person and gender features of nouns. Optional features are added arbitrarily and are predictable from the principles of UG (e.g. nouns need case). They include the tense and agreement features of verbs and the number and case features of NPs. The much more important distinction of features, according to Chomsky (1995), is between interpretable and non-interpretable features. The interpretable ones are relevant for the interpretation of structure at LF and include categorial phi-features of nouns. They are not deleted or erased from the noun after they have been checked because they are relevant for meaning. Non-interpretable features are the case features of NPs and the phi-features of verbs which are deleted after checking.

Seventh, moves must be short. This is to say that a constituent should move the shortest distance possible in any single movement operation.

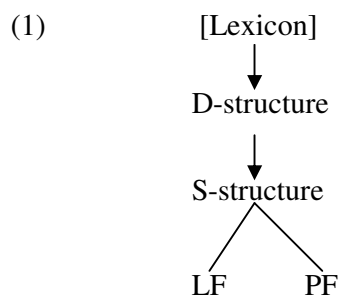
Eighth, features are checked in a specifier-head or head-head configuration. In MP, formal features are checked rather than assigned. For this purpose, several functional categories are introduced. The head of the functional categories contain features. Lexical elements come fully inflected in the lexicon and check these features. Phrasal categories move to the specifier positions and head categories move to the head positions as in GB but they move to check their features not to be assigned grammatical features or to give support for inflectional items, that is, affixes.

Ninth, grammatical operations cannot add features.

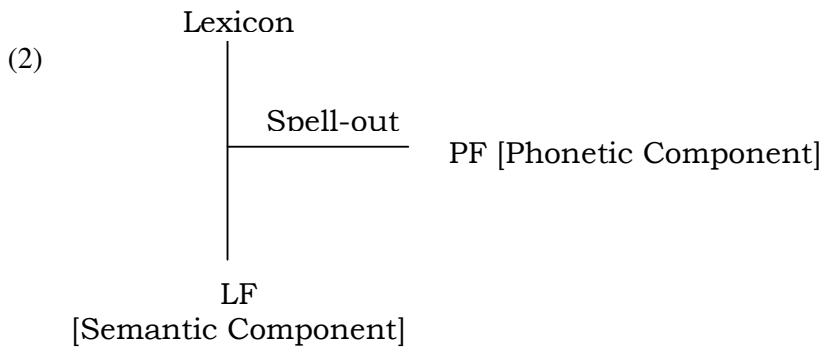
Tenth, theta-roles are distinguished from morphological features. The domains within which morphological features and theta-features operate are distinct. Theta-role assignment takes place in lexical domains and is also relational. Theta roles are not formal features to be checked and they cannot license movement. They contrast with morphological features which are checked in the functional domains and which can license movement licit or illicit.

## 1.8.2 Levels of Representation

As stated earlier, the versions of generative grammar have four levels at which various conditions are applied to filter out phrase markers. The levels are D-structure (DS), S-structure (SS), LF and PF. The latter two are “interface” levels and constitute the grammatical contributions to the semantic and phonetic interpretations of structure respectively. DS and SS are “internal” levels and only interact with other parts of the language faculty. This was assumed to take the form represented schematically in (1) (Atheir and Reed, 1999:55).



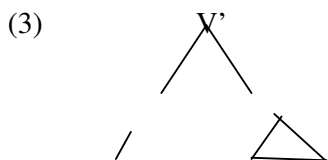
MP questions whether all these representations are necessary. It reduces the four levels to the two interface levels of LF and PF only. LF interfaces with the semantic and conceptual systems of cognition, and PF to the articulatory–perceptual modules. The ideal Minimalist design is something like the following (Atheir and Reed, 1999:56):



The Minimalist approach is derivational and works as follows (see Chomsky 1993). There are the lexicon and the computational systems that derive LF and PF representations from lexical information. The lexicon specifies a set of items with their phonetic, semantic and syntactic properties. The computational system, which is constrained by economy principles, uses these items to derive linguistic expressions. The derivation converges at PF if its PF representation is legitimate, and crashes if it is not. Likewise a derivation converges at LF if its LF representation is legitimate, and crashes if it is not. The computational system selects elements from the lexicon and projects them into binary x-bar structures. Two types of operations are possible; one forms a single phrase marker from two distinct phrase markers, and a singular operation, move- $\alpha$ , which applies within one phrase marker leaving a trace in the original position. At any movement, the operation of spell-out can apply leading to PF. And after spell-out, (covert) computation may continue until an LF representation is generated.

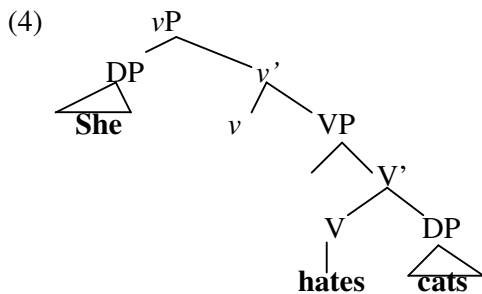
### 1.8.3 The Operations Merge and Move

The central operations of the MP are merge and move. Merge is a structure-building operation that forms phrases in a bottom-up way. In other words, it is a syntactic procedure whereby two independent syntactic categories combine (or merge) to form a new complex one. According to Cook and Newson (1996:323), the head of the category that projects is known as the target of merge and becomes the label of the new complex category. For example, in the sentence ‘she hates cats’, the derivation starts with the introduction of the verb ‘hates’ from the lexicon. This verb serves as the target at this point. The V ‘hates’ projects to V’ and selects a complement ‘cats’. The fact that V projects to V’ and the fact that the complement occurs to the right of the head is deduced from X’-Theory. Hence in the step described here, the V ‘hates’ and the DP ‘cats’ are merged into V’ as follows:



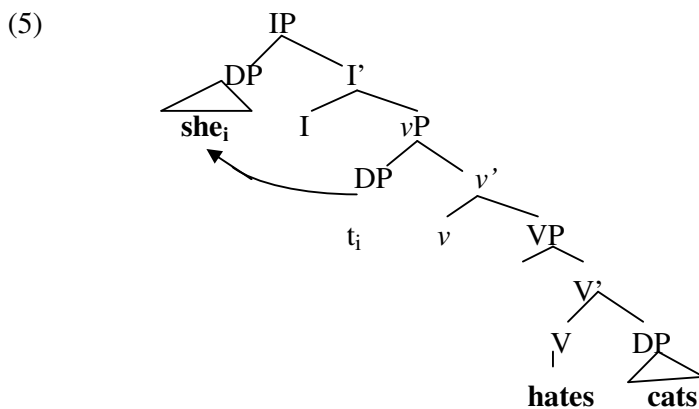
V	DP
<b>hates</b>	<b>cats</b>

In the next step, V' is the target and it merges with the DP 'she' to form vP where the DP 'she' serves as specifier. According to the uniform theta assignment hypothesis (UTAH), the theme can project as a specifier or a complement of VP, or the agent can be either the specifier of vP or the specifier of VP. Thus, one way would be to assume that agents appear in the specifier of little vP, so that a simple transitive structure like the above sentence would have the representation in (4) below.



Move is the second type of structure-building process recognized in MP. It has the effect of taking a category that has already been merged in the projected structure to form a new complex category. Move also leaves a silent copy of the raised element in the position it occupied prior to the operation. Moreover, it is assumed that movement is always 'leftward' and that heads and specifiers project to the left in a tree.

To provide an illustration, in the sentence '*she hates cats*', the specifier of vP moves to the specifier of IP to check its case feature against the case feature of I.



Based on the linear correspondence axiom (LCA)<sup>1</sup> of Kayne (1994), which proposes a uniform

specifier-head-complement (S-H-C) order, all languages are considered to be head initial. The axiom also holds for the universality of adjunction and movement. According to him, movement is leftward. Adjunction is also to the left of its host.

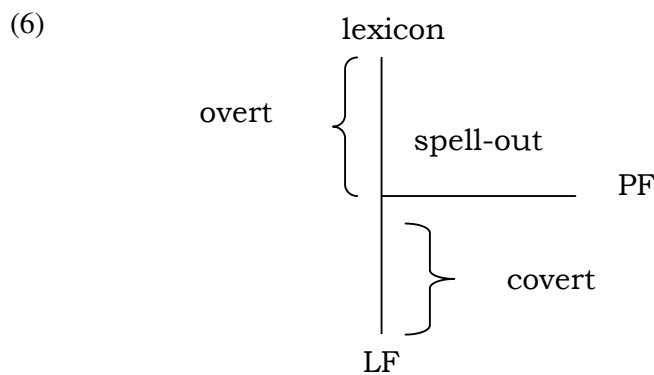
### 1.8.4 Feature Checking

In syntactic projections entries get inflectional features in the lexicon as parts of their intrinsic properties.

The features of lexical constituents consist of three different types: formal that is syntactic or inflectional, semantic and phonological features (Chomsky, 1995:229).

Semantic and phonological features are considered to be relevant at the interface levels of LF and PF respectively. Formal features, on the other hand, are features that cause movements in the derivations. As Chomsky (1995) explains movements enable the features of the moved elements to be compared with those of the head of a functional projection. Such a comparison is called feature checking. Movement from the position of lexical insertion to the spell-out position of a constituent occurs as follows.

The lexical constituent moves to a landing site in the functional domain. It checks its features against the features of a head. A movement is called overt where there is a strong feature to be checked. Movement that takes place between spell-out and LF is covert, whereas the movement that takes place between lexical insertion and spell-out is overt as shown below.



<sup>1</sup>Kayne (1994) proposes a universal principle, the Linear Correspondence Axiom (LCA) which states essentially that asymmetric c-command imposes a linear ordering of terminal elements. Any phrase marker that violates this condition is barred. More specifically, he draws the further conclusions that there is a universal specifier-head-complement (SOV) ordering. The proposal is very much in the spirit of Minimalist Program.

After uninterpretable features of a constituent have been checked against those of a functional

head, they are deleted. According to MP, features of functional categories are either strong or weak. Weak features are invisible whereas strong features are visible at PF. All visible features have to be checked and deleted before spell-out since they are not interpretable.

### **1.8.5 The Economy Conditions**

As already mentioned, notions of economy are fundamental to the MP. Both derivations and representations are forced to be economical in the sense represented below.

Economy principles that operate across a grammar often involve the comparison of alternative derivations. The major economy principles are short move, greed, procrastinate, last resort operation and full interpretation.

Relativeized minimality principle is one of the economy principle proposed by Rizzi (1990). It states that derivations must contain shortest links (shortest movement condition). The basic idea is that a constituent must move to the first position of the right kind from its source position. This means that a moved constituent moves to the nearest appropriate position. Rizzi (2001) states the application of short move also needs to be relativized to the type of constituent moving and to the relevant landing site. For example, a moved head will move to the next-highest head, an argument will move to the next-highest argument position, an operator will move to the next-highest operator position, etc.

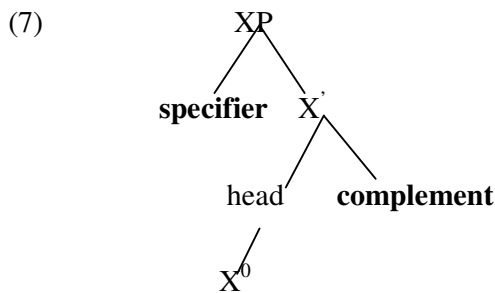
Greed is a principle that states that a constituent should not move to satisfy the needs of some other constituent, but its own. This means that constituents move only in order to check their own features (Marantz, 1995).

As discussed in Marantz (1995), procrastinate is a principle that prefers movements to be delayed as long as possible so that their application does not affect PF. Only strong features must be checked prior to spell-out as they are not legitimate objects at PF. Movement is executed in order to check weak features cannot take place before LF by procrastinate. On the other hand, once an element has checked all its features, it cannot move further because movement, according to the economy principle, is a last resort operation (Chomsky, 1993).

The principle that relates to representation is full interpretation (FI). It requires that every element receive an appropriate interpretation at the interface levels (Chomsky, 1993).

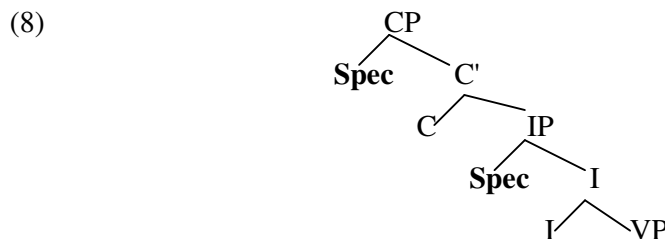
## 1.8.6 Deriving Basic Clause Structures

Structure building is a process whereby heads project into larger units. According to Kayne (1994), projections are uniform across categories, lexical as well as functional. There are two levels of projections of heads:  $X'$  and  $XP$ .  $X'$  contains the head  $X^0$  and its complement.  $XP$  contains the intermediate projection  $X'$  and a specifier. The linear order of the items in  $XP$  may be subject to parametric variation or as argued by Kayne (1994), it could be universal. According to him the structure would be as shown below.



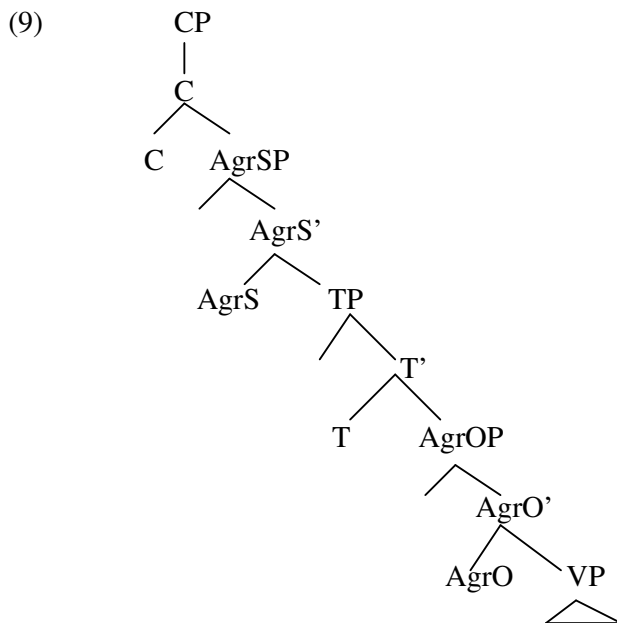
Kayne (1994) proposes a uniform specifier- head- complement (S-H-C) linear order for all languages. According to this assumption, all other orders, like SOV, VSO etc. are derived by movement. Chomsky (1994: 413-420) also adopts Kayne's (1994) proposal with some modification but generally takes SVO as part of UG.

Within the Minimalist approach, sentences in all languages have the same phrase structure consisting of a lexical domain and a functional domain. Accordingly, clauses may have three layers: a VP layer where thematic role assignment takes place, an IP layer where functional categories are projected for the checking of V- and also NP-features, and the CP layer, where operator like properties are projected. Hence, the basic structure of a clause is as in (8):



The VP layer is the locus of insertion of the verb and its arguments. These are inserted in their fully inflected forms (stem plus inflectional affixes). The functional projections show features associated with heads. As shown in the previous sections, a lexical element may move to a given

functional projection if it needs to check one or more features. Elaborating proposals by Pollock (1989) and Belletti (1990), Chomsky (1991, 1993) proposes a split of the IP into Subject Agreement Phrase (AgrSP), Tense Phrase (TP), and Object Agreement Phrase (AgrOP). Categories such as Asp(ect)P, VoiceP, Perf(ect)P, Num(ber)P, PersonP and others are also introduced by Ouhalla (1991) and others. Putting aside questions related to the existence and location of such functional categories and their projections in the clause structure, Chomsky proposes the following clause structure (Cook and Newson, 1996:327):



In Chomsky (1995), the above structure and other modifications have suggested. Among which: (a) features are seen as interpretable or non-interpretable, (b) the V- and N- features are reformulated as categorial features to which case and phi-features are added, (c) all movements at LF, that is, covert, caused by weak features of a target, is replaced by feature movement, (d) neither AgrSP nor AgrOP occur, and (e) move is replaced by attract. In addition to these, he proposes that case and Agr features are separate and subject and object arguments check their features in T and the light verb *v* respectively.

## CHAPTER TWO

### 2. BASIC DESCRIPTIONS OF NOMINAL CLAUSES

Sentences consist of one or more clauses or sub-sentences. The clauses may coordinate with one another in which case they are connected by a coordinating conjunction, or one may be subordinate to the other and is introduced by a subordinating conjunction.

A subordinate clause is a clause that is embedded as a constituent of a matrix sentence and functions like a noun, adjective, or adverb in that sentence. A subordinate clause that can function as simple nominals is referred to as a nominal clause. This chapter is devoted to types of nominal clauses and their functions with respect to main clauses in Afan Oromo.

#### 2.1 Types of Nominal Clauses

Nominal clause types may differ from language to language and each language may have more than one type. The types may depend on the form of a verb in a clause. Verbs are either finite or non-finite. Clause types may also depend on the absence or presence of words that link the nominal clause to the main clause.

In Afan Oromo, as stated in Baye (1986:200), there are two types of nominal clauses: finite and non-finite. The distinction between finite and non-finite clauses is based partly (though not wholly) on morphological criteria: thus, a clause is finite if it contains a finite verb, that is a verb inflected for tense or agreement, and non-finite if it lacks a finite verb, for example, if it is a verbless clause, or if it is a clause containing a non-finite tenseless and agreementless verb. The finite type is introduced by the element akka ‘that’ while the non-finite is introduced by an optional adposition –f ‘for’ in the language. For the purpose of exposition, he calls the finite and non-finite clauses as akka and f-clauses respectively and treats akka and f as complementizers. The non-finite clause /the f-clause/ is morphologically identifiable by the deverbalizing suffix /-uu-/. In the clauses, the complementizer akka and the deverbalizing suffix /-uu-/ are obligatory. In this study, the same terms are used to refer to both types of clauses. In what follows, we will look briefly at the relevant properties which characterize both akka and f-clause types.

## 2.1.1 Akka Clause

The akka clause is finite. It has a finite verb that consists of a stem, representing the lexical meaning of the verb, and a suffix representing tense and/or aspect and subject agreement. For example, in the sentence,

- (1) *abdii-n [ akka nu-ʔi ɖuf-n-e ] ni beek-a*  
A.-nom that we-nom come-lpl-prf Foc know-3sgm-Imp  
'Abdi knows that we came'

the verb *ɖufne* in the above akka clause has the stem *ɖuf-* 'come', */-n-/* which indicates that the subject is first person plural, and */-e/* which shows that the aspect is perfective.

### 2.1.1.1 Verb Inflections in Akka Clauses

#### 2.1.1.1.1 Tense

Afan Oromo makes a two-way distinction of tense - past and non-past. It is expressed both overtly and covertly. In Afan Oromo, simple past and simple present tenses are not expressed by phonologically visible tense elements as in the following structure.

- (2) a. [ *abdii-n boru ambo deem-a* ]  
A.-nom tomorrow Ambo go-3sgm-Imp  
'Abdi will go to Ambo tomorrow'
- b. [ *abdii-n amma ambo deem-a* ]  
A.-nom now Ambo go-3sgm -Imp  
'Abdi leaves for Ambo now'
- c. [ *abdii-n ambo deem-e* ]  
A.-nom Ambo go-3sgm -prf  
'Abdi went to Ambo'

The above description is consistent with Girma (2003) says that languages may not have visible tense features. In languages where tense is not expressed morphologically, it is abstract. In such cases, the aspectual form is used. According to Girma (2003), it is the perfective aspect that has an abstract past tense while the imperfective aspect has an abstract non-past tense. It is because of this that we get non-past and past readings from the imperfective and perfective forms of

verbs respectively as in the examples in (2) above. It is similar in the akka clause too, as shown in the following past and non-past nominal clauses.

- (3) a. [ akka abdii-n boru ambo deem-u ]  
 that A.-nom tomorrow Ambo go-3sgm-Imp  
 ‘That Abdi will go Ambo tomorrow’
- b. [ akka abdii-n amma ambo deem-u ]  
 that A.-nom now Ambo go-3sgm -Imp  
 ‘That Abdi leaves to Ambo now’
- c. [ akka abdii-n ambo deem-e ]  
 that A.-nom Ambo go-3sgm-prf  
 ‘That Abdi went to Ambo’

In the language, auxiliaries express tense overtly. The non-past, which includes present and future, is marked by an auxiliary ǰir- while the past tense is expressed by tur-. Both are inflected for person, number, gender and aspect. Gender is marked by /-t-/ for third person singular feminine and by a zero morpheme for third person singular masculine and not marked in other cases. Plural number is expressed by /-u/ and /-n-/ while singular number is described by a zero morphem.<sup>2</sup> The auxiliaries are inflected for person overtly in the case of second person only. It is /-t-/ that marks the second person. Aspect is also shown by a suffix /-a/ in imperfective and by /-e/ in perfective (except in the cases of second and third person plural). Observe the following table.

---

<sup>2</sup>The number marker /-n-/ appears as /-r-/ in second person plural in both past and non-past auxiliaries because of phonological process. The number marker /-n-/ is preceded by the vowel /a/ in the case of second and third person plural as the language does not allow a cluster of three consonants.

**Table 3: The inflections of the auxiliaries ĵir- and tur-**

Person, Number, Gender	non – past				past			
	Person	Number	Gender	Aspect	Person	Number	Gender	Aspect
1sg	ĵir	- φ	- φ	- a	tur	- φ	- φ	- e
1pl	ĵir	- φ	- n	- a	tur	- φ	- n	- e
2sg	ĵir	- t	- φ	- a	tur	- t	- φ	- e
2pl	ĵir	- t	- u	- a <sup>3</sup>	tur	- t	- an	- i
3sgf	ĵir	- φ	- φ	- ti - a <sup>3</sup>	tur	- φ	- φ-	- t - e
3sgm	ĵir	- φ	- φ	- a	tur	- φ	- φ-	- φ - e
3pl	ĵir	- φ	- u	- a <sup>3</sup>	tur	- φ	- an	- i

As the above table shows, in the past tense marker auxiliary, agreement is marked similarly in second person singular and third person singular feminine. It is indicated that /-t-/ is a gender marker in 3sgf, but person marker in 2sg. Since the language marks gender in third person singular masculine and feminine only, we can suggest that /-t-/ marks person not gender in 2sg case. Similarly, both past and non-past tense marker auxiliaries are inflected for the same agreement and aspect markers in the case of first person singular and third person singular masculine. In order to disambiguate, /-n/ is suffixed to elements immediately before the auxiliaries to show the first person singular in simple verbal clauses. It is assumed that /-n/ is a shorten form of the first person singular pronoun *ana* ‘me’. In subordinate clauses, however, external arguments obligatorily occur in order to disambiguate. The following structures are examples.

- (4) a. [ pro deem-aa ĵir-a ]  
 go- Imp(prog) aux-3sgm-Imp  
 ‘He is going’
- b. [ pro deem-aa-n ĵir-a ]  
 go-Imp(prog)-1sg aux-1sg-Imp  
 ‘I am going’

---

<sup>3</sup> Imperfective marker in second and third person plural and third person singular feminine is /-a/. But /-a/ is dropped as the language does not allow a cluster of two different vowels.

c. [ pro deem-ee tur-e ]  
go-prf(prog) aux-3sgm-prf  
'He was going'

d. [ pro deem-ee-n tur-e ]  
go-prf(prog)-1sg aux-1sg-prf  
'I was going'

(5) a. [ akka in-ni deem-aa jir-u ]  
that he-nom go-imp(prog) aux-3sgm-imp  
'That he is going'

b. [ akka an-i deem-aa jir-u ]  
that I-nom go-imp(prog) aux-1sg-imp  
'That I am going'

c. [ akka in-ni deem-ee tur-e ]  
that he-nom go-prf(prog) aux-3sgm-prf  
'That he was going'

d. [ akka an-i deem-ee tur-e ]  
that I-nom go-prf(prog) aux-1sg-prf  
'That I was going'

The form of the past tense marker is similar both in simple and subordinating clauses. In the akka clause, the auxiliary tur- is inflected for the same number, gender, person and aspect as in matrix clauses. The non-past tense marker auxiliary jir-, however, is inflected in a different way. The reason is that imperfective aspect is marked differently in main and subordinate clauses as shown in the following table. I leave as a question for future researchers why imperfective is marked not similarly in simple verbal and subordinate clauses.

**Table 4: The inflections of non-past tense marker auxiliary in main and subordinate (nominal) clauses**

Person, Number, Gender	Non-past									
	main clause				subordinate clauses					
	Person	Number	Gender	Aspect	Person	Number	Gender	Aspect		
1sg	ǰir	ϕ	ϕ	ϕ	a	ǰir	ϕ	ϕ	ϕ	u
1pl	ǰir	ϕ	n	ϕ	a	ǰir	ϕ	n	ϕ	u
2sg	ǰir	t	ϕ	ϕ	a	ǰir	t	ϕ	ϕ	u
2pl	ǰir	t	u	ϕ	a	ǰir	t	an	ϕ	i
3sgf	ǰir	ϕ	ϕ	ti	a	ǰir	ϕ	ϕ	t	u
3sgm	ǰir	ϕ	ϕ	ϕ	a	ǰir	ϕ	ϕ	ϕ	u
3pl	ǰir	ϕ	u	ϕ	a	ǰir	ϕ	an	ϕ	i

The following structures are examples that show the forms.

- (6) a. an-i [akka abdii-n k'oʔat-aa ǰir-u ] n-an-beek-a.  
 I-nom that A.-nom study-imp(prog) aux-3sgm-imp Foc-1sg-know-imp  
 'I know that Abdi is studying'
- b. isa-an [ akka pro eessa deem-aa ǰir-an-i ] na-tti him-an-i.  
 he-pl that where go-imp(prog) aux-3pl-imp me-to tell-3pl.prf  
 'They told me where they are going'
- (7) a. abdii-n [akka pro hoǰǰet-aa tur-t-an-i ] ni beek-a  
 A.-nom that work-prf(prog) aux-2-pl-prf Foc know-3sgm-prf  
 'Abdi knew that you were working'
- b. abdii-n [ akka in-ni bofa aǰǰees-ee tur-e ] meetii-tti him-e  
 A.-nom that he-nom snake kill-prf(prog) aux-3sgm-prf M.-to tell-3sgm-prf  
 'Abdi told Meti that he had killed a lion'

As we can observe from the above examples, the tenses expressed in the structures are both past and non-past.

From the above examples, we can see that in Afan Oromo, tense is expressed both overtly and covertly. It is the perfective aspect that has an abstract past and the imperfective aspect that has

an abstract non-past tense. In compound tenses, such as present perfect, past perfect, present progressive and past progressive, however, tense is expressed by tense marking auxiliaries.

### 2.1.1.1.2 Aspect

Verbs in akka clauses are inflected for aspect. It is shown by a suffix *-a/* in affirmative and by *-u/* in negative imperfective main clauses. In subordinate clauses, however, imperfective is marked differently. It is shown by *-u/* in affirmative subordinate clauses. On the other hand, *-e/* marks perfective aspect both in affirmative and negative main and subordinate clauses and negative subordinate clauses (except in the cases of second and third person plural of perfective affirmative clauses). The table below summarizes the perfective and imperfective verbs of both affirmative and negative clauses.

**Table 5: Aspect markers in affirmative and negative akka clauses**

Agreement	Perfective		Imperfective			
	Affirmative	Negative	Main clause		Subordinate clause	
			Affirmative	Negative	Affirmative	Negative
1sg	-e	-e	-a	-u	-u	-e
1pl	-e	-e	-a	-u	-u	-e
2sg	-e	-e	-a	-u	-u	-e
2pl	-i	-e	-a	-u	-i	-e
3sgm	-e	-e	-a	-u	-u	-e
3sgf	-e	-e	-a	-u	-u	-e
3pl	-i	-e	-a	-u	-i	-e

As it is shown in the above table, imperfective aspect is expressed differently in akka and in main clauses. In second and third person plurals, however, both perfective and imperfective aspect is marked similarly. In addition, perfective aspects also do not show differences in both main and subordinate clauses. In matrix clauses, the imperfective marker *-a/* is dropped in third person singular feminine and second and third person plural. The reason is that it is preceded by the plural marker *-u/* and by the gender marker *-ti-/* as the language does not allow sequences of vowels. The following are examples that show these phenomena and the aspectual forms in the language.

- (8) a. meetii-n boru finfinnee deem-ti  
 M.-nom tomorrow F. go-3sgf-Imp  
 ‘Meti will go to Finfinnee tomorrow’
- b. baratt-oot-ni boru finfinnee deem-u  
 student-pl-nom tomorrow F. go-pl-Imp  
 ‘Students will go to Finfinnee tomorrow’
- c. an-i [ akka ati amma deem-t-u ] n-an-barbaad-a.  
 I-nom that you:nom now go-2-sg-Imp Foc-1sg-want-Imp  
 ‘I want that you leave now’
- d. an-i [ akka ati amma hin deem-n-e ] n-an-beek-a.  
 I-nom that you:nom now neg. go-neg-Imp Foc-1sg-know-Imp  
 ‘I know that you do not leave now’

From table 5, it is also possible to forward that both negative perfective clauses and negative imperfective subordinate clauses are inflected for aspect similarly. Thus, in negative perfective and imperfective akka clauses, it is impossible to distinguish their aspect. To disambiguate, we need to use time adverbs like *harʔa* ‘today’, *boru* ‘tomorrow’, *kaleessa* ‘yesterday’, etc. as in the following examples.

- (9) a. [ akka abdii-n kaleessa mana-barumsaa hin deem-n-e ]  
 that A.-nom yesterday school neg go-neg-prf  
 ‘That Abdi did not go to school yesterday’
- b. [ akka abdii-n boru mana-barumsaa hin deem-n-e ]  
 that A.-nom tomorrow school neg go-neg-prf  
 ‘That Abdi will not go to school tomorrow’

Progressive is a form of aspect that indicates an action is incomplete, in progress, or developing. The progressive in English is formed with auxiliary verb 'BE' and '-ing'. Similarly, the perfective or imperfective aspect markers plus the tense marking auxiliaries express progressive aspect in Afan Oromo.

- (10) a. an-i [ akka abdii-n k'oʔat-aa jir-u ] n-an-beek-a.  
 I-nom that A.-nom study-prog aux-3sgm-Imp Foc-1sg-know-Imp  
 ‘I know that Abdi is studying’

b. isa-an [ akka pro eessa deem-aa ĵir-an-i ] ana-tti him-an-i.  
 he-pl: nom that where go-prog aux-3pl-imp me-to tell-3pl-prf  
 ‘They told me where they are going’

(11) a. abdii-n [akka pro hoĵjet-aa tur-t-an-i ] ni beek-a  
 A.-nom that work-prf(prog) aux-2-pl-prf Foc know-3sgm-prf  
 ‘Abdi knew that you were working’

b. abdii-n [akka in-ni bofa aĵĵees-ee tur-e ] metii-tti him-e  
 A.-nom that he-nom snake kill-prog aux-prf M-to tell-3sgm-prf  
 ‘Abdi told Meti that he had been killing a snake’

### 2.1.1.1.3 Agreement

In natural language, constituents of a sentence share features. Verbs agree in person, number and gender with their arguments. Agreement could be realized morphologically or it may be abstract (Chomsky, 1995). In Afan Oromo, verbs in akka clauses agree with their subjects. Consider the following examples.

(12) a. meetii-n [ akka-n deem-e ] beek-ti  
 M.-nom that -1sg do-prf know-3sgf-imp  
 ‘Meti knows that I went’

b. meetii-n [ akka nu-7i deem-n-e ] beek-ti  
 M.-nom that we-nom go-1pl-prf know-3sgf-imp  
 ‘Meti knows that we went’

c. meetii-n [ akka ati deem-t-e ] beek-ti  
 M.-nom that you:sg:nom go-2sg-prf know-3sgf-imp  
 ‘Meti knows that you went’

d. meetii-n [ akka isin deem-t-an-i ] beek-ti  
 M.-nom that you:pl go-2-pl-prf know-3sgf-imp  
 ‘Meti knows that you went’

e. meetii-n [ akka išee-n deem-t-e ] beek-ti  
 M.-nom that she-nom go-3sgf-prf know-3sgf-imp  
 ‘Meti knows that she went’

f. meetii-n [ akka in-ni deem-e ] beek-ti  
 M.-nom that he-nom go-3sgm-prf know-3sgf-Imp  
 ‘Meti knows that he went’

g. meetii-n [ akka isa-an deem-an-i ] beek-ti  
 M.-nom that he-pl:nom go-3pl-prf know-3sgf-Imp  
 ‘Meti knows that they went’

As we can see from the above finite clauses, agreement relation is manifested in the verbs. The verbs show number, gender and person affixes. In the perfective clauses, first and third persons are marked by a zero morpheme while second person is marked by the morpheme /-t-/. Singular is marked by a zero morpheme whereas plural is indicated by /-n-/ for first person and by /-an-/ for second and third persons. In addition, the masculine is marked by a zero morpheme in third person singular whereas gender in third person singular feminine is indicated by /-t-/. As examples (12c) and (12e) shows, it is ambiguous to identify the person and gender of 2sg and 3sgf and thus external arguments cannot be dropped.

In both perfective and imperfective paradigms, person, number and gender markers in the akka clauses are the same as in matrix clauses. The main difference between the two is that the plural in second and third person in imperfective verbs of matrix clauses is marked by /-u-/ while in akka clauses it is indicated by /-an-/. Observe the following examples.

(13) a. [ isin gara manaa ni deem-t-u ]  
 you:pl:nom to house Foc go-2pl-Imp  
 ‘You will go to house’

b. meetii-n [ akka isin deem-t-an-i ] beek-ti  
 M.-nom that you:pl:nom go-2-pl-prf know-3sgf-Imp  
 ‘Meti knows that you went’

(14) a. [ isa-an gara manaa ni deem-u ]  
 he-pl:nom to house Foc go-3pl-Imp  
 ‘They will go to house’

b. meetii-n [ akka isa-an deem-an-i ] beek-ti  
 M.-nom that he-pl:nom go-3pl-prf know-3sgf-Imp  
 ‘Meti knows that they went’

Since the agreement affixes are overt, external arguments may easily be dropped as in the following structures:

(15) a. [ pro [ akka pro kitaaba bit-an-i ] dubbat-an-i ]  
 that book buy-3pl-prf speak-3pl-prf  
 ‘They said that they bought a book’

b. [ pro [ akka pro kitaaba bit-t-an-i ] dubba-t-an-i ] ]  
 that book buy-2-pl-prf speak-2-pl-prf.  
 ‘You said that you bought a book’

As stated earlier, auxiliaries are inflected for person and number. Because of this, there is double agreement between subject and the main and the auxiliary verbs as in the following structures:

(16) a. abdi-n [ akka meetin-n duf-t-e ĵir-t-u ] daga-e.  
 A.-nom that M.-nom come-3sgf-prf aux-3sgf-prf hear-3sgm-prf  
 ‘Abdi heard that Meti has come’

b. abdi-n [ akka pro bofa aĵĵees-ee tur-e ] ana-tti him-e  
 A.-nom that snake kill-3sgm-prog aux-3sgm-prf me-to tell-3sgm-prf  
 ‘Abdi told me that he had been killing a snake’

In the negative perfective clauses and in the imperfective subordinate clauses, verbs are not inflected for subject agreement and thus external arguments cannot be dropped. The negative particle in such constructions are *hin* and */-n-/. *hin* occurs as an independent item while */-n-/* is suffixed to the main verb.*

(17) **Agreement** **Negation in perfective and subordinate imperfective clauses**

1sg .....	hin deem-n-e
2sg .....	hin deem-n-e
3sgm .....	hin deem-n-e
3sgf .....	hin deem-n-e
1pl .....	hin deem-n-e
2pl .....	hin deem-n-e
3pl .....	hin deem-n-e

Verbs agree in person, number and gender with their objects by showing clitics in all clause types (Debela, 2003). Object agreement is manifested only when the object is a pronoun but not proper noun. The agreement markers are termed as clitics because they are shorten and cliticized form of pronouns. Consider the following clauses.

- (18) a. [ akka baratt-oot-ni (ana-an) na-barbaad-an-i ]  
 that student-pl-nom me-Foc 1sg-want-3pl-Imp  
 ‘That students want me’
- b. [ akka baratt-oot-ni ( nu-un) nu-barbaad-an-i ]  
 that student-pl-nom us- Foc 1pl-want-3pl-Imp  
 ‘That students want us’
- c. [ akka baratt-oot-ni ( si-in) si-barbaad-an-i ]  
 that student-pl-nom you:sg- Foc 2sg-want-3pl-Imp  
 ‘That students want you’
- d. [ akka baratt-oot-ni ( isin-in) sin-barbaad-an-i ]  
 that student-pl-nom you:pl- Foc 2pl-want-3pl-Imp  
 ‘That students want you’
- e. [akka baratt-oot-ni ( iṣee-n)/(isa-an)/(isa-an-in) barbaad-an-i-n ]  
 that student-pl-nom she:acc-Foc /he:acc-Foc /he:acc-pl-Foc want-3pl-Imp-3  
 ‘That students want her/him/them’

In the above structures, the verbs agree with the objects by prefixing the clitics *na-*, *nu-*, *si-*, and *sin-* for first person singular and plural and for second person singular and plural, respectively. The verbs also suffix */-n/* to agree with all third person objects. The objects are also inflected for focus.<sup>4</sup> Since these agreement affixes are overt, the object may easily be dropped.

According to Debela (2003), properties of clitics are defined in terms of notions such as optionality, specificity, morphology, host selection, semantic selection and phonology. Thus, unlike agreement markers, clitics are optional which is also true in this language. That is they can be dropped without making the structure ungrammatical. Observe (18) which is repeated in (19) below.

<sup>4</sup> As we can see from (18), objects suffix focus marker. It is the particle */-n/* which marks it. If an object ending in short vowels precedes it, the focus marker lengthens its vowel.

- (19) a. [ akka baratt-oot-ni ana-an barbaad-an-i ]  
that student-pl-nom me-Foc want-3pl-Imp  
‘That students want me’
- b. [ akka baratt-oot-ni nu-un barbaad-an-i ]  
that student-pl-nom us-Foc want-3pl-Imp  
‘That students want us’
- c. [ akka baratt-oot-ni si-in barbaad-an-i ]  
that student-pl-nom you(sg)-Foc want-3pl-Imp  
‘That students want you’
- d. [ akka baratt-oot-ni isin-in barbaad-an-i ]  
that student-pl-nom you(pl)-Foc want-3pl-Imp  
‘That students want you’
- e. [ akka baratt-oot-ni iŕee-n/isa-an/isa-an-in barbaad-an-i ]  
that student-pl-nom she:acc-Foc /he:acc-Foc /he:acc-pl-Foc want-3pl-Imp  
‘That students want her/him/them’

Belletti (2001) argues that there is a relationship between Agr projections and clitics. According to Belletti, the identity of the kinds of feature that Agr and clitic pronouns express, as well as their status as heads, can allow for an assimilation of the two, as agreement markers. Alternatively, the relation holds in subtler terms in that an Agr head/ projection constitutes the designated landing site for the clitics.

#### 2.1.1.1.4. Negation

In Afan Oromo, there are two ways to negate finite clauses. One is by using the pre-verbal negative element hin, which occurs as an independent item, and the other is by using pre-verbal hin and the post-verbal -n- negative elements together. In the akka clauses, both hin and -n- are used as in the following:

- (20) a. [ akka meetii- n duf-t-e ]  
that M.-nom come-3sgf – prf  
‘ That Meti came’
- b. [ akka meetii- n hin duf-n-e ]  
that M.-nom neg come-neg-prf  
‘That Meti did not come’

The above examples are perfective akka clauses.(20a) is affirmative whereas (20b) is its negative form. In (20b), the negative markers occur before and after the verb. Similarly, in imperfective akka clauses, both the pre-verbal and post verbal negative elements hin and -n- are used. Consider, for example, the following clauses:

- (21)a. [ akka meetii-n barat-t-u ]  
 that M.-nom learn-3sgf-Imp  
 ‘That Meti learns’
- b. [ akka meetii- n hin barat- n-e ]  
 that M.-nom neg learn-neg-prf  
 ‘That Meti does/did not learn’

From these facts, it is possible to forward a descriptive generalization that both perfective and imperfective akka clauses are negated similarly. Thus, in negative akka clauses, it is impossible to distinguish perfective from imperfective. To disambiguate, we need to use time adverbs like *harʔa* ‘today’, *boru* ‘tomorrow’, *kaleessa* ‘yesterday’, etc. as in the following examples.

- (22) a. [ akka abdi-n kaleessa mana-barumsaa hin deem-n-e ]  
 that A.-nom yesterday school neg go-neg-prf  
 ‘That Abdi did not go to school yesterday’
- b.[ akka abdi-n boru mana-barumsaa hin deem-n-e ]  
 that A.-nom tomorrow school neg go-neg-prf  
 ‘That Abdi will not go to school tomorrow’

The table below summarizes the functional elements in affirmative and negative clauses for the verb *beek* ‘know’.

**Table 6: Functional elements in affirmative and negative akka clause**

	Perfective clause		Imperfective clause			
			Main clause		Subordinate clause	
	Affirmative	Negative	Affirmativ -e	Negative	Affirmativ -e	Negative
1sg	beek-e	hin beek-n-e	nan-beek-a	hin beek-u	-n beek-u	hin beek-n-e
2sg	beek-t-e	”	beek-t-a	hin beek-t-u	beek-t-u	”
3sgm	beek-e	”	beek-a	hin beek-u	beek-u	”
3sgf	beek-t-e	”	beek-t-i	hin beek-t-u	beek-t-u	”
1pl	beek-n-e	”	beek-n-a	hin beek-n-u	beek-n-u	”
2pl	beek-t-an-i	”	beek-t-u	hinbeek-t-an-i	beek-t-an-i	”
3pl	beek-an-i	”	beek-u	hin beek-an-i	beek-an-i	”

### 2.1.2 f-Clause

The head of non-finite nominal clause is identified by the nominalizing affix *-uu*. As in Baye (1986:213), with the exception of the verb *ɗa* ‘be’, all other verbs may undergo the process of nominalization. The following are examples of such clauses:

(23) a. [ PRO deem-uu-n ] barbaačisaa ɗa

go-to-nom necessary is

'Going is necessary'

b. abdii-n [ PRO deem-uu ] barbaad-e

A.-nom go-to want-3sgm-prf

'Abdi wanted to go'

Cook and Newson (1996) argue that infinitival clauses apparently have a tense element and this element shows the lack of tense. In terms of features, the infinitival marker ‘*to*’ can be classified as a [-tense] element in English. Siloni (1997), on the other hand, states that gerund clauses display verbal properties and appear embedded under temporal projection. From what we have just said it appears that there is good motivation to extend this argument to f-clauses also. There is a postposition *-f* ‘*for*’ which is optionally suffixed to the head as in the following.

- (24) a. abdii-n [ PRO gara manaa deem-uu ] barbaad-e  
 A.-nom to house go-to want-3sgm-prf  
 'Abdi wanted to go to house'
- b. abdii-n [PRO gara manaa deem-uu-f ] barbaad-e  
 A.-nom to house go-to-for want-3sgm-prf  
 'Abdi wanted to go to house'

The same syntactic features that characterize its verbal counterpart characterize the nominal head of  $\underline{f}$ -clauses. It takes object arguments and has external arguments that could be pro or PRO. The postpositional particle -f 'for' optionally appears with the head that selects the PRO subject. Particularly, it occurs with such clauses functioning as a complement and/or adjunct but not with  $\underline{f}$ -clauses functioning as subject as in the following structures.

- (25) a. abdii - n [ PRO deem – uu - f ] barbaad – a  
 A.-nom go – to – for want – 3sgm- Imp  
 ' Abdi wants to go'
- b. meetii-n [PRO laak'ana iŕee ñaač-uu-f ] gara manaa dem-t-e  
 M.-nom lunch her eat-to-for to house go-3sgf-prf  
 'Meti went to house to eat her lunch'
- c\*. [ PRO barač-uu- f ] gaarii ɗa  
 learn – to –for good is  
 ' Learnig is good'

In addition, the occurrence of the postposition  $\underline{f}$  is obligatory with verbs of intention and when the  $\underline{f}$ -clause functions as adjunct constituent used to modify the verb as in the following examples.

- (26) a. an-i [ PRO darb-uu-f ] n-an-k'o?ɗ-a  
 I-nom pass-to-for Foc-1sg-study-Imp  
 'I study in order to pass'
- b. abdii-n [ PRO kitaaba bit-uu-f ] k'arŕii barbaad-e  
 A.-nom book buy-to-for money want-3sgm-prf  
 'Abdi wanted money in order to buy a book'

The subject PRO is either free (that refers to anyone) or controlled by an overt or covert argument. In (27b) below, PRO is controlled by the DP *meetii*. In (27a), however, it is free.

- (27) a. [ PRO barač-uu-n ] barbaačisaa *ɗa*  
 learn-to-nom important is  
 'Learning is important'
- b. *meetii*-n [ PRO barač-uu ] barbaad-di  
 M.-nom learn-to want-3sg-f-Imp  
 'Meti wants to learn'

The other element which may occur as the head of the *f*-clause is the focus marker *-ɗa*. It is suffixed just after the nominal head or before the postpositional particle *-f*. Below are instances of such structures.

- (28) a. *abdii*-n [ PRO deem-uu-*ɗa* ] barbaad-e  
 A.-nom go-to-Foc want-3sgm-prf  
 'Abdi wanted to go'
- b. *an*-i [ PRO argač-uu-*ɗa*-f ] *n-an-hoŋŋeɗ*-a  
 I-nom get-to-Foc-for Foc-1sg-work-Imp  
 'I work in order to get'

### 2.1.2.1 Agreement

The *f*-clauses we have seen so far have PRO as their subject. However, there are *f*-clauses which allow lexical subjects which could be dropped. In this case, the head of the clause shows subject and object clitics or agreement markers. Thus derived nominals like *deemuu* 'going', *baračuu* 'learning', etc. agree in person, number and gender with their subjects and objects. In *f*-clauses, subject clitics occur with the nominal head as in the following structures.

- (29) a. *meetii*-n [ *abdii*-n deem-uu-saa ] *ɗageet*-t-e  
 M.-nom A.-nom go-to-3sgm hear-3sgf-prf  
 'Meti heard Abdi's going'
- b. [ *an*-i deem-uu-n-koo ] *abdii aar*-s-e  
 I-nom go-to-nom-1sg Abdi annoy-cs-3sg-prf  
 'My going annoyed Abdi'

c. abdi-n [meetii-n barač-uu-šee ] ni barbaad-a  
 A.-nom M.-nom learn-to-3sgf Foc want-3sgm-Imp  
 'Abdi wants Meti to learn/Abdi wants Meti's learning'

As we can observe from the above structures, the nominal head of  $\underline{f}$ -clauses show subject clitics. The full set is shown below.

(30)

<b>Person Number and Gender</b>	<b>Clitic</b>
1sg .....	-koo
2sg .....	-kee
3sgm .....	-saa
3sgf .....	-šee
1pl .....	-kee-ña
2pl .....	-kee-ssan
3pl .....	-saa-nii

According to Baye (1986:222), “it is the presence of such agreement markers which licenses the occurrence of a lexical subject in the position which is otherwise filled by PRO”. Moreover, both Baye (1986) and Debela (2003) argue that because of the presence of such elements on the infinitival heads, the external argument may easily be dropped. The following example can illustrate this.

- (31) a. meetii-n [ pro deem-uu-saa ] dageet-t-e  
 M.-nom go-to-3sgm hear-3sgf-prf  
 'Meti heard his going'
- b. [ pro deem-uu-n-koo ] abdi aar-s-e  
 go-to-nom-1sg Abdi annoy-cs-3sg-prf  
 'My going annoyed Abdi'
- c. abdi-n [ pro barač-uu-šee ] ni barbaad-a  
 A.-nom learn-to-3sgf Foc want-3sgm-Imp  
 'Abdi wants her to learn'

The agreement elements in the  $\underline{f}$ -clauses in (30) are identical with the possessive markers as the following examples demonstrate.

- |                                                      |                                               |
|------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| (32)a. [ mana-koo ]<br>house – 1sg<br>'My house'     | b. [ mana-saa ]<br>house-3sgm<br>'his house'  |
| c. [ mana-saa-ni ]<br>house- 3sg-pl<br>'Their house' | d. [ mana-kee ]<br>house- 2sg<br>'your house' |

These genitive markers do not show possession in infinitive clauses since there is no such relationship between the infinitival heads and any of the arguments in the clause in which they occur. In other words, they are agreement markers in  $\underline{f}$ -clauses. The subject of  $\underline{f}$ -clauses can appear overtly only when the nominal head shows overt agreement.

- (33) a. meetii-n [ abdii-n deem-uu-saa] beek-ti  
M.-nom A.-nom go-to-3sgm know-3sgf-Imp  
'Meti knows Abdi's going'
- b.\* meti-n [ abdii-n deem-uu ] beek-ti  
M.-nom A.-nom go-to know-3sgm-Imp  
'Meti knows Abdi's going'

The only difference between complement  $\underline{f}$ -clauses in (33 a and b) is the absence of AgrS -saa '3sgm' in (33b) which has caused the ungrammaticality. Thus we can conclude that subjects occur overtly if there is overt agreement that matches the subject in the features person, number and gender as in the following:

- (34) a. [meetii-n pro si-waam-uu-šee ]  
M.-nom 2sg-call-to-3sgf  
'Meti' calling of you'
- b. [isa-an pro nu-waam-uu-saa-nii ]  
he-pl:nom 2pl-call-to-3sg-pl  
'Their calling of us'

Similarly, nominal heads of  $\underline{f}$ -clauses show agreement with their object in person, number and gender. Object agreement, similar to akka clauses is manifested only when the object is a pronoun but not proper noun.

- (35) a. [in-ni ana-an na-ĵaalač -uu-n-saa ] gaarii da  
he- nom I-Foc 1sg-love-to-nom-3sgm good is  
'His loving of me is good'

- b. [ in-ni nu-un nu-ǰaalač-uu-n-saa ] gaarii ɗa  
 he- nom we-Foc 1pl-love-to-nom-3sgm good is  
 'His loving of us is good'
- c. [ in-ni si-in si-ǰaalač-uu-n-saa ] gaarii ɗa  
 he-nom you:sg-Foc 2sg-love-to-nom-3sgm good is  
 'His loving of you is good'
- d. [ in-ni isin-in sin-ǰaalač-uu-n-saa ] gaarii ɗa  
 he-nom you:pl-Foc 2pl-love-to-nom-3sgm good is  
 'His loving of you is good'
- e. [ in-ni isa-an / iʃee-n / isa-an-in / ǰaalač-uu-n-saa ] gaarii ɗa  
 he-nom he:acc-Foc/she:acc-Foc/he:acc-pl-Foc love-to-nom-3sgm good is  
 'His loving of him/her/them is good'

As mentioned previously, Debela (2003), defines properties of clitics in terms of notions such as optionality, specificity, morphology, host selection, semantic selection and phonology. Thus, unlike agreement markers, clitics are optional which is also true in this language. That is they can be dropped without making the structure ungrammatical. Observe (35) which is repeated in (36) below.

- (36) a. [ in-ni ana-an ǰaalač -uu-n-saa ] gaarii ɗa  
 he- nom I-Foc love-to-nom-3sgm good is  
 'His loving of me is good'
- b. [ in-ni nu-un ǰaalač-uu-n-saa ] gaarii ɗa  
 he- nom we-Foc love-to-nom-3sgm good is  
 'His loving of us is good'
- c. [ in-ni si-in ǰaalač-uu-n-saa ] gaarii ɗa  
 he-nom you:sg-Foc love-to-nom-3sgm good is  
 'His loving of you is good'
- d. [ in-ni isin-in ǰaalač-uu-n-saa ] gaarii ɗa  
 he-nom you:pl-Foc love-to-nom-3sgm good is  
 'His loving of you is good'

- e. [in-ni isa-an/ iṣee-n/ isa-an-in ṣaalač-uu-n-saa ] gaarii ፋa  
 he-nom he:acc-Foc/she:acc-Foc/he:acc-pl-Foc love-to-nom-3sgm good is  
 'His loving of him/her/them is good'

In (36) the infinitival head *ṣaalčuu-* shows the object clitics - *na-*, *nu-*, *si-* and *sin-* in agreement with the object that may be dropped. Unlike in *akka* clauses, in *f*-clauses, there is no object agreement for third person singular and plural. Thus we cannot drop the third person object agreement as in (37e).

- (37) a. [ in-ni pro na-ṣaalač-uu-n-saa ] gaarii ፋa  
 he-nom 1sg-love-to-nom-3sgm good is  
 'His loving of me is good'
- b. [ in-ni pro nu-ṣaalač-uu-n-saa ] gaarii ፋa  
 he-nom 1pl-love-to-nom-3sgm good is  
 'His loving of us is good'
- c. [ in-ni pro si-ṣaalač-uu-n-saa ] gaarii ፋa  
 he-nom 2pl-love-to-nom-3sgm good is  
 'His loving of you is good'
- d. [ in-ni pro sin-ṣaalač-uu-n-saa ] gaarii ፋa  
 he-nom 2pl-love-to-nom-3sgm good is  
 'His loving of you is good'
- e\*. [in-ni pro ṣaalač-uu-n-saa] gaarii ፋa  
 he-nom love-to-nom-3sgm good is  
 'His loving of him/her/them is good'

From above presentation, we can conclude that *f*-clauses show subject and object agreements and the inflections are distinct from those that show possession.

### 2.1.2.2. Negation

In Afan Oromo, finite clauses use the element *hin (-n-)* for negation. In non-finite clauses, however, nominal negative auxiliary *ፋis-uu*, which occur following the nominal head, express negation. Consider, for example, the following structures.

- (38) a. [ iʃee-n deem-uu ɗiis-uu-n-ʃee ] gaarii ɗa  
 she-nom go-to neg-to-nom-3sgf good is  
 ‘Her not going is good’
- b. [ abdii-n ana na-waam-uu ɗiis-uu-saa ]  
 A.-nom me 1sg-call-to neg-to- 3sgm  
 ‘Abdi’s not calling of me is good’
- c. [ PRO deem-uu ɗiis-uu-n ] gaarii ɗa  
 go-to neg-to-nom good is  
 ‘Not going is good’

As these examples show, in negative  $\bar{f}$ -clauses, it is the nominal negative auxiliary that agrees with its subject and carries the nominative case marker as in (38a and c). Object clitics, however, are prefixed to the nominal head as in (38b).

## 2.2 Functions of Nominal Clauses

Like simple nouns, nominal clauses occur in argument positions to which theta-role is assigned. The complements of verbs occur inside v-bar whereas subjects occur outside v-bar. Complements are hence said to be internal arguments and subjects are external arguments. In the following sections I show these roles in nominal clauses.

### 2.2.1 Subject Nominal Clauses

As mentioned earlier, a sentence may have a nominal clause as a subject. But as Watters (2000) states, in African languages, nominal clauses in subject positions are less common, but when they do occur in such positions, they usually take the form of infinitives. The same is true of Afan Oromo. In this language, akka clauses cannot occur as external argument (subject) of verbs with DP complements. The use of such clauses in subject positions leads to ungrammatical structures as in the following:

- (39)\*. [ akka meetii-n kitaaba bit-t-e ] na-gamač-iis-e  
 that M.-nom book buy-3sgf-prf 1sg-please-cs-3sgm  
 ‘That Meti bought a book pleased me’

Such structures are possible only if the matrix verb is the copula  $\bar{d}$ a ‘is’. According to Baye

(1986), eventhough the clauses appear in clause initial positions, they are not the external argument of the matrix clauses. It is a phonetically null element that occurs in subject position. Consider (40) above shown below.

(40) [ [ akka meetii-n kitaaba bit-t-e] [ e beek-amaa ɗa ] ]  
 that M.-nom book buy-3sg-f-prf know-psv is  
 ‘It is known that Meti bought a book’

On the other hand, we can find f-clauses used as subject since they behave like any other nominal. The structures below are examples of this.

(41) a. [PRO deem-uu-n] dirk'ma ɗa  
 go-to-nom obligatory is  
 ‘Going is obligatory’  
 b. [ abdii-n deem-uu-n-saa ] na-aar-s-e  
 A. -nom go-to-nom-3msg 1sg-annoy-cs-prf  
 ‘Abdi’s going annoyed me’

## 2.2.2 Complement Nominal Clauses

A complement clause is a structure that is used as a complement of some other word (Radford, 1997). The term complement clause extends to clauses selected by verbs and adpositions.

### 2.2.2.1 Verb Complement Nominal Clauses

As we have observed in the preceding section, akka clause is limited to the position of object. In other words, it functions only as internal arguments of verbs.

(42) abdii-n [ akka nu-ʔi deem-n-u] ɗagah-e  
 A.-nom that we-nom go-2pl-imp hear-3sgm-prf  
 ‘Abdi heard that we will go’

In the above examples, the akka clauses occur in positions of direct object position. The f-clause can also occur as complements of verbs as in (43) below.

- (43) abdii-n [ PRO deem-uu ] barbaad-e  
 A.-nom go-to want-3sgm-prf  
 ‘Abdi wanted to go’

As shown in the above examples, both akka and f- clauses occur in complement position.

### 2.2.2.2 Prepositional Nominal Clauses

Prepositional complement clauses are nominal clauses linked to an adposition. Sometimes, such clauses are called object of prepositions. In Afan Oromo, the adposition can occupy a position either before or after the nominal clause.

- (44) a. išee-n [ waaʔee [ PRO deem-uu ] ] ana-tti him-t-e  
 she-nom about go-to me-to tell-3sgf-prf  
 ‘She told me about going’
- b. pro [ [ akka [ pro maal k’ayyabat-t-an-i ] ] irratti ] mariʔan-n-a  
 that what study-2-pl-Imp about discuss-2pl-Imp  
 ‘We will discuss about what you study’

In (44a), the nominal clause occurs as a complement of the preposition waaʔee and in such cases the element -f is missing. In (44b), the akka clause occurs as a complement of the postposition -irratti.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **3. CASE CHECKING IN NOMINAL CLAUSES**

#### **3.1 An Overview**

Grammatical features which Chomsky (1995) calls formal features play different roles in syntactic structure. They include number, gender, and person. Other features include case, which determines the morphological form of nouns, and aspect, tense, mood, and polarity, which determine the form of verbs and other constituents. Among these grammatical features, some are interpretable at LF in the sense that they have semantic content and contribute to meaning, whereas others are uninterpretable at LF in that they have no semantic contents. Features are further classified into strong and weak. Strong features require overt movement of constituents containing compatible features that should be eliminated while weak features are those which may not trigger overt movement.

In MP, it is assumed that as a consequence of a principle called full interpretability (FI), LF representations contain only semantically interpretable features. It follows that uninterpretable features must somehow be checked first and then eliminated in the course of deriving an LF representation in order for the derivation to converge. On the other hand, in derivations, a head needs to ensure that its specifiers and complements carry appropriate features. These phenomena are dealt within a unified way within the framework of feature checking. In the next sections, I show how checking case takes place in nominal clauses of Afan Oromo.

#### **3.2 Case Checking in Nominal Clauses**

Chomsky (1986) distinguishes cases in two ways: structural and inherent. Structural case is dissociated from theta-role and is assigned in a purely structural way while inherent case is linked to theta-role. This captures a well-known fact concerning the difference between structural case and inherent case. In English, for example, the structural case of a DP as subject of a clause could be nominative but it may have various kinds of theta-roles. On the other hand, a DP with inherent case marking as ablative or instrumental can only have a fixed theta-role associated with it. (Ura, 2001).

Case checking in the Minimalist approach refers to structural case. Inherent cases are not structure-sensitive in that they do not need to be checked in a specifier-head relation. Before

proceeding to the discussion on case checking in nominal clauses of Afan Oromo, it is necessary first to identify the structural cases in the language.

In Afan Oromo, DPs are inflected for case both overtly and covertly. As Abebe (2002) states, nominative and genitive cases are phonetically marked while other cases such as dative, instrumental and accusative are phonetically null. Moreover, the language has nominative and accusative structural cases as shown in the following nominal clauses:

- (1) a. [akka abdi-n ɸuf-e]  
           that A.-nom come-3sgm-prf  
           'That Abdi came'
- b. [ abdi-n kitaaba bit-uu-saa ]  
           A.-nom book buy-to-3sgm  
           'Abdi's buying of a book'

In the above structures, *AgrS* and light *n* check nominative and accusative cases respectively. I discuss how and why these functional categories check structural cases below. There are other cases like dative, genitive and instrumental, which are inherent as in the following nominal clauses:

- (2) a. [ akka abdi-n meetii-f kitaaba bit-e ]  
           that A.-nom M.-for book buy-3sgm-prf  
           'That Abdi bought a book for Meti'
- b. [ abdi-n ulee-n bofa aḵḵees-uu-saa ]  
           A.-nom stick-with snake kill-to-3sgm  
           'Abdi's killing of a snake with a stick'
- c. [akka an-i farda abdi arg-e ]  
           that I-nom horse A. see-1sg-prf  
           'That I saw Abdi's horse'

As may be observed, the postposition *-f* 'for' and *-n* 'with' are suffixed to the nouns and assign both the theta-roles and the dative and instrumental cases in (2a) and (2b) respectively. Genitive case is assigned by an empty element attached to a possessor noun like *abdi* in (2c).

From the observation of such facts, it is possible to conclude that nominative and accusative are structural, whereas other cases are inherent. Thus, in the coming sections, I present how structural cases are checked in nominal clauses this language.

### 3.2.1 Nominative Case Checking

Nouns that are the subjects of clauses check nominative case. Afan Oromo nouns that occur in external argument positions show nominative case both overtly and covertly. This means that it is marked by /-n/ and by a zero morpheme.<sup>5</sup>

Regarding nominative case marking in personal pronouns, the following table may illustrate the forms.

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<sup>5</sup> Abebe (2002:19) states that the nominative marker /-n/ appears as /-ni/, /-i/ or a zero morpheme because of phonological condition indicated below.

Most nouns ending in short vowel with a preceding single consonant drop the final vowel and add /-ni/ to show the nominative case. On the other hand, if a noun ends with a short vowel but the final short vowel is preceded by two consonants or a geminate consonant, the final vowel is dropped and only /-i/ is suffixed to show nominative case. According to Abebe (2002), /-n/ is dropped as the language does not allow a cluster of three consonants.

The affix /-n/ occurs if a noun ends with a long vowel.

Lastly, Abebe (2002) states that nominative case is realized by an empty element- Ø if a noun ends with a consonant. According to him, in the language, only a limited number of consonantal phonemes, that is /n/, /l/ and /t/ can occur at word final positions. In addition to these phonemes, there is the trill sound /r/ that can occur at word final position. Except /n/, the other sounds are in words of numerals.

**Table 7: Nominative case markers in personal pronouns**

Base Form	Subject Form	Nominative marker	English
ana/an	ani	-i	I
si	ati sini	∅ -ni	you (sg) you(sg)(politeness)
isa	inni <sup>6</sup>	-ni	he
išii /išee <sup>7</sup>	išiin/i buy-3sgm-prf een	-n	she
nu	nuʔi/nuti/nuyi <sup>8</sup>	-ʔi/ti/yi	we
isin	isin isini	∅ -i	you (pl) you(pl)(politeness)
isaan	isaan isaani	∅ -i	they they(politeness)

According to Chomsky (1993 and 1995), structural nominative case is checked by functional categories such as subject agreement (AgrS) and/or temporal elements such as T or Asp. Both Baye (1986) and Abebe (2002) discuss that it is Agr that checks nominative case of subject DPs in Afan Oromo. In contrast to this, Girma (2003:37) mentions that Afan Oromo overtly marks nominative case and such marking is found in the presence and absence of agreement.

Chomsky (1995) suggests three mechanisms by which features can be checked, namely: (i) via a specifier – head relation, (ii) via adjunction of one head to another, and (iii) via attraction of a feature to head. However, case features are checked via specifier-head relation. In what follows, I show how nominative case is checked in Afan Oromo. However, before proceeding to the discussion of case checking processes in the language, it is necessary first to identify what elements check nominative case in the language. To see the relationship between nominative case and the categories in Afan Oromo, let us consider the following structures.

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<sup>6</sup> Assimilation changes the alveolar voiceless fricative /-s/ to alveolar nasal /-n/.

<sup>7</sup> The variation of išii/išee is assumed to be adialectic influence.

<sup>8</sup> The variation of nuti/nuʔi/nuyi is because of phonological process.

- (3) a. [akka abdii-n ambo deem-e ]  
that A.-nom A. go-3sgm-prf  
‘That Abdi went to Ambo’
- b. [abdii-n ambo deem-uu-saa]  
A.-nom A. go-to-3sgm  
‘Abdi's going to Ambo’

A common feature in the IP of the above structures is Agr, therefore, it can be claimed that this feature is responsible for the process of nominative case checking. It seems that AgrS and nominative case are related in Afan Oromo. In such structures, when AgrS is morphologically realized, nominative case is checked, and the derivation converges. From this, it is possible to conclude that, in Afan Oromo, it is AgrS that is responsible for the checking of nominative case. However, there is a case when constructions which have no agreement feature but check the nominative case of external arguments; this is in negation of both perfective clauses and imperfective subordinate clauses. The language does not distinguish different persons in such constructions. This is shown in the following table for the verb *deem-* ‘go’.

**Table 8: The negative forms of perfective clauses and imperfective subordinate clauses**

Agreement	Perfective clauses	Imperfective Subordinate Clauses
1sg	hin deem-n-e	hin deem-n-e
2pl	hin deem-n-e	hin deem-n-e
2sg	hin deem-n-e	hin deem-n-e
2pl	hin deem-n-e	hin deem-n-e
3sgm	hin deem-n-e	hin deem-n-e
3sgf	hin deem-n-e	hin deem-n-e
3pl	hin deem-n-e	hin deem-n-e

As we can see from the above table, the verb does not show subject agreement when it is negative. However, the language overtly marks nominative case for subject in such clauses as the example below show.

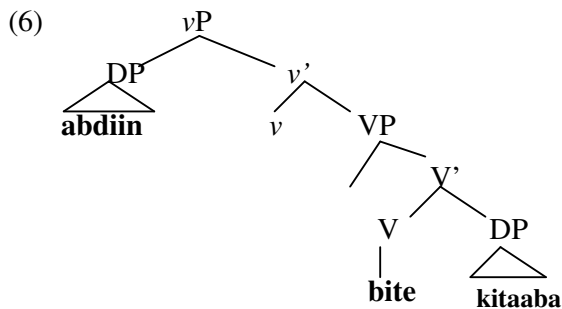
- (4) a. [akka meetii-n finfinnee hin deem-n-e]  
 that M.-nom F. neg go-neg-prf  
 ‘That Meti did not go to Fifine’

From the above facts, we can generalize that in Afan Oromo, structural nominative case is related to the functional categories- AgrS and Asp. Accordingly, in all structures where there is AgrS in IP, it is this feature that is relevant for nominative case checking. And Asp checks nominative case if and only if AgrS is lacking.

To make the discussion more concrete, let us see how nominative case checking takes place in the following active transitive akka nominal clause.

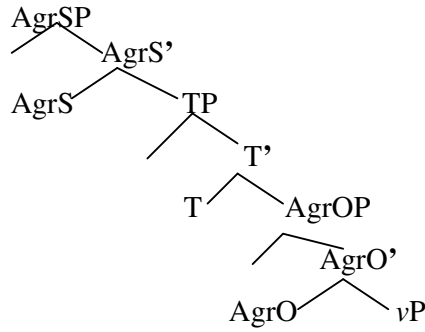
- (5) [akka abdii-n kitaaba bit-e ]  
 that A.-nom book buy-3sgm-prf  
 ‘That Abdi bought a book’

In (5), the DP abdii is assigned an external theta-role, and kitaaba an internal theta-role by the verb bite. The verb bite merges with the complement DP- kitaaba to form the V-bar kitaaba bite, then this merges with the specifier DP- abdii to form the vP shell as in the structure in (6) below.



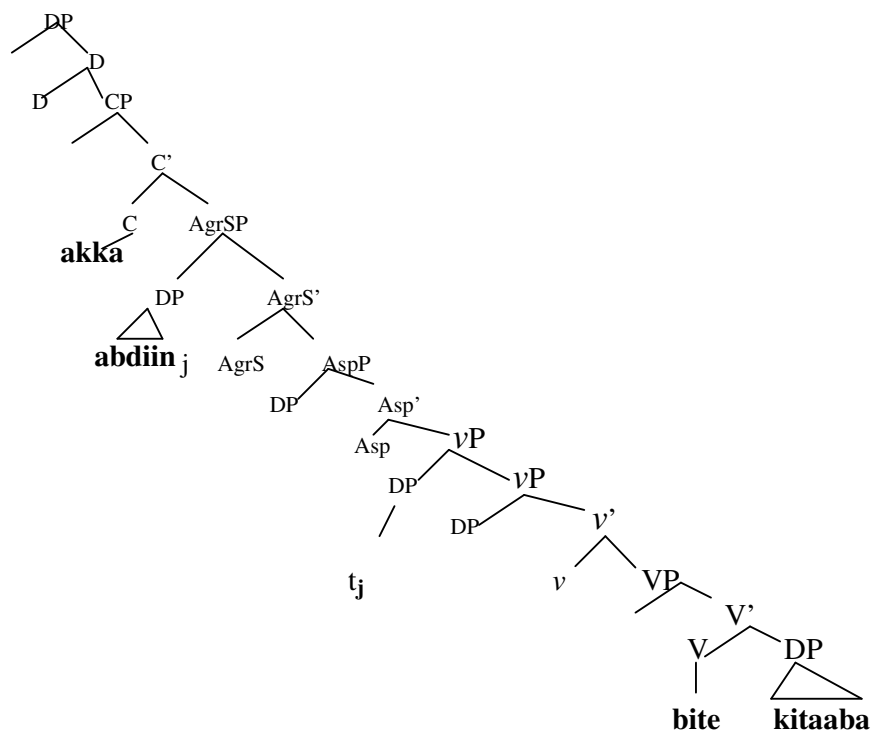
Although V and the two DPs in (6) seem to be very close to one another, case checking does not take place here because (i) the complement DP is not in the checking domain, and (ii) the specifier DP cannot enter into any checking relation for the reason that it is located in a position where it is assigned a theta-role. In order to check nominative case, the vP merges with IP; the subject abdii moves to spec-IP (by A-movement). Chomsky (1991, 1993) adopts Pollock (1989) and Belletti’s (1990) proposals about IP consisting of two AgrP’s in every clause, one above and one below T. The upper one has subject agreement and nominative case, and the lower one has object agreement, and accusative case checking takes place there. The overall structure is thus as follows.

(7)



Within the split IP, nominal clauses such as (5) above might be derived as in (8) below. The subject DP- *abdiin* originates in spec-vP then moves to spec-AgrSP to check its nominative case as in (8) below.

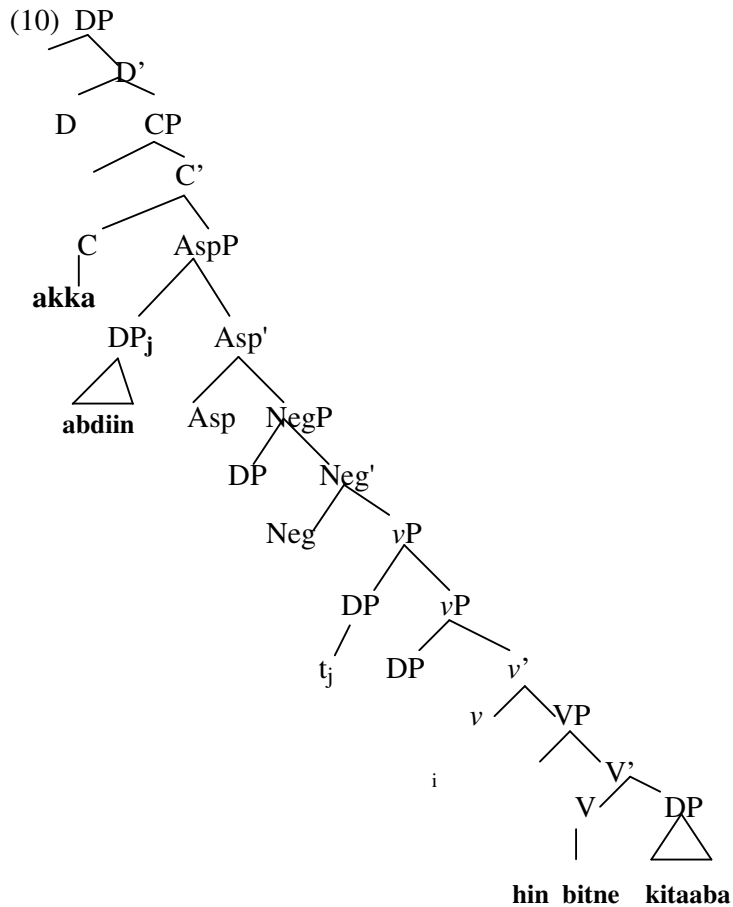
(8)



On the other hand, one of the major roles of a temporal projection in syntax is to check structural nominative case (Chomsky, 1995). There can be two temporal projections in an IP-layer one for AspP and another for TP. As discussed before, the temporal projection, namely AspP, can check nominative case, if AgrS is missing as in negation. In such cases, the subject of an agreementless finite clauses raises to the spec-AspP to check its nominative case. Let us observe the structure below.

- (9) [ akka abdii-n kitaaba hin bin-n-e ]  
 that A.-nom book neg buy-neg-prf.  
 'That Abdi did not buy a book'

Given the assumption we have followed so far, (9) will have the structure (10) below.



As mentioned in the previous chapter, akka clauses do not function as external argument of the matrix clause. When the matrix verb of akka clauses is the copula da 'is', however, it may occur in clause initial position or it may be preposed for focus. This is observable from the following structures.

- (11) [ [ akka abdii-n deem-e ] [ e dʒaa da ] ]  
 that A.-nom go-3sgm-prf certain is  
 'That Abdi went is certain / It is certain that Abdi went'

Baye (1986:202) argues that in structures such as (11) above, the external argument of the matrix clause is not the akka clause. It is a pleonastic element (e), which in Afan Oromo is phonetically null. He claimed that the akka clause that appears as an external argument seems to be an adjunct of V. He also compares structures such as (11) above with the English ‘It seems clear that Abdi went is certain’, and named such clauses as an adjunct rather than external argument clause. Thus akka clauses are not marked for nominative case marker and do not check such a case.

Regarding f-clauses, there are different views available in the literature about how and in which component nominalization takes place. Today, basically two ways of accounting for the specific argument-structure and eventivity-related properties of nouns derived from verbs can be distinguished; they are traditionally labeled as ‘lexical’ (or ‘lexicalist’) and ‘syntactic’ (or ‘constructionalist’). In the first mentioned wide spread approach it is the mapping between the verb and its derivatives in the lexicon that assigns to the derived forms shared lexical-semantic properties of the root. The argument-structure changing functions operate on lexical entries, being the source for the projected syntactic structure that can be thus exclusively nominal. The syntactic account, on the other hand, ascribes properties common to both verb and verbal nominal to the “full phrasal syntactic projection of the stem within the structure of the derived word, relying on syntactic operations, to join together the stem and the affix”.

There is no a priori reason for preferring one way of explanation over another, merely because of the fact that nominalized verbs and their roots share selectional properties or have the same argument structure. Both approaches, i.e. enriched lexicon as well as enriched syntactic component, can account for this, as pointed out in Chomsky (1970). Both approaches have their own advantages and disadvantages. If deverbal nominals are constructed in the lexicon in the form of atomic listed lexical items, we can readily account for their idiosyncrasies that are attested in natural language but at the price of losing generalizations that arise on the basis of a unified structural account. On the other hand, if one adopts the view that nominalization is a syntactic process, the explanation of relations between event nominals and their arguments as compared to the relation between arguments and verbs is more straightforward. Nevertheless, the question arises whether the system does not overgeneralize. Since the proposal of lexicalist hypothesis has become standard for the analysis of derived nominals in particular, and for the characterization of transformation in general, this study is also supposed to explain nominalized clauses following this view. Thus, we can express non-transformationally that the pre-verbal/nominal DPs satisfy the same semantic representations of the head in the sentence (12a) and nominal clauses in (12b).

- (12) a. [ meetii-n kitaaba bit-t-e ]  
 M.-nom book buy-3sgf-prf  
 'Meti bought a book'
- b. [ meetii-n kitaaba bit-uu-šee ]  
 M.-nom book buy-to-3sgf  
 'Meti's buying of a book'

As we can see in (12) the nominal and verbal clauses are the same except that one is nominal and the other is verbal. In both structures, the arguments of *bit-* have the same structural cases checked by AgrS and *v*.

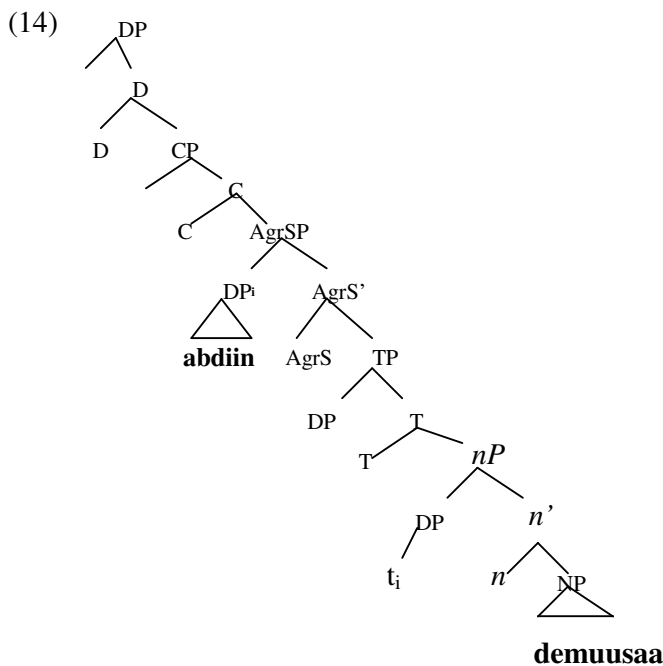
Abney (1987) has developed the influential proposal that DPs resemble clauses not only in their semantics, as shown in instance of nominalization, but also in their structure. According to Abney (1987), much like clauses, DPs should be built around a functional category. For him, DPs are equal to IPs. According to Szabolsci (1994), however, DPs are assumed to correspond to the clausal level that is CPs. In line with Szabolsci analysis, I suppose that in  $\bar{f}$ -clauses, DP selects CP projection; more functional structure is then involved and the representation ultimately terminates in the NP. Siloni (1997) argues that such clauses display verbal properties and appear embedded under temporal elements. Adger (2003), on the other hand, extends the treatment of clausal structure to nominal structures and argues that just as VPs are combined with a light  $\nu$ P projection, NPs are contained with a light *n*P whose function is to introduce an Agent and check accusative case.

The  $\bar{f}$ -clause has a PRO, pro or lexical subject. It has a lexical or pro subject when the infinitival head show overt agreement. When agreement is absent, the subject is PRO. Compare the following two sentential examples:

- (13) a. meetii-n [abdii-n deem-uu-saa] dʒageet-t-e  
 M.-nom A.-nom go-to-3sgm hear-3sg-f-prf]  
 'Meti heard Abdi's going'
- b. meetii-n [pro deem-uu-saa] dʒageet-t-e  
 M.-nom go-to-3sgm hear-3sg-f-prf]  
 'Meti heard his going'

c. meetii-n [PRO deem-uu-f] barbaad-d-i.  
 M.-nom go-to-for want-3sg-f-Imp  
 'Meti wants to go to '

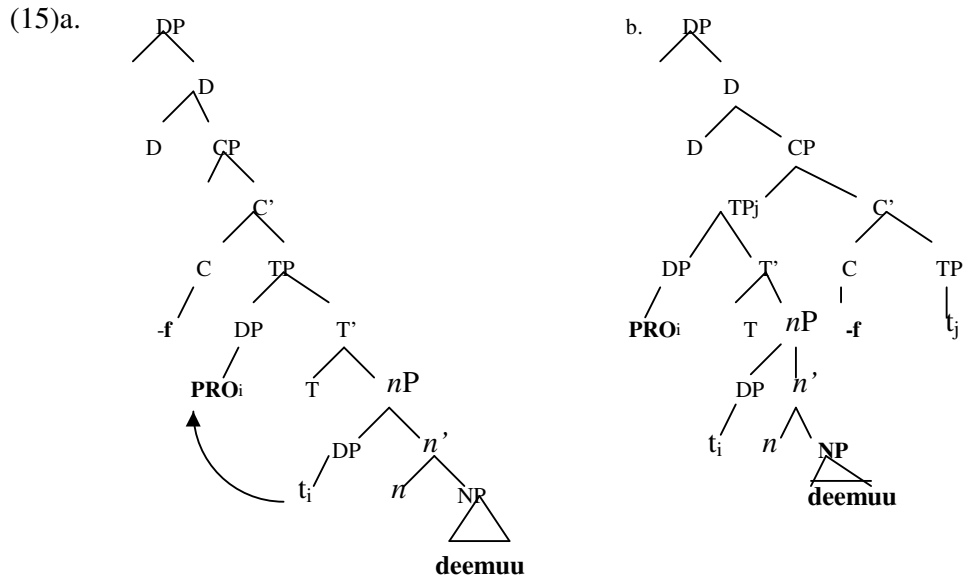
As can be seen from (13a), a phonologically overt DP is allowed to occur at the subject position because the head of the  $\bar{f}$ -clause is inflected for agreement overtly. Because of the presence of such features on the infinitival heads, the external argument of the clauses may easily be dropped as in (13b). The nominative case of the subject of the  $\bar{f}$ -clause is checked by the AgrS. Consider this in the following structure.



On the other hand, in Chomsky and Lasnik (1993; 1995), it is suggested that the null subject - PRO of infinitival constructions has a special null case. Accordingly, the null subject found in structures such as (13c) has a null case.

If PRO is a null case pronoun and if pronouns carry case properties, an obvious conclusion to draw is that PRO must carry case. Chomsky and Lasnik (1993; 1995) suggest that just as PRO has a null phonological form, so it carries a null case. They also suggest that the case is checked by infinitival 'to' in English. In line with this idea, it is /-uu-/ that checks the case of PRO subjects in  $\bar{f}$ -clauses of Afan Oromo. What this implies is that the infinitival markers carry a null case specifier feature that is checked against the null-case head-feature of PRO.

Because of the occurrence of the complementizer  $\underline{f}$  in clause final position, the IP layer moves to spec of CP to form grammatical  $\underline{f}$ -clauses such as in (13c) above. So, for example, we might suppose that the bracketed non-finite complement in (13c) has the structure (15) below.



The  $\underline{f}$ -clauses occur as subjects and objects. Since the heads of infinitival clauses are nominal, they display the nominative case affix  $/-n/$  as the following examples show. And AgrS or Asp also checks the nominative case of  $\underline{f}$ -clause functioning as subject. Consider (16) below.

- (16) a. [ k'ayyabač-uu-n ] barbaačisaa da.  
 study-to-nom important is (Imp/nonP)  
 'Studying is important'
- b. [ televjiniini daawwač-uu-n ] abdii hin gamač-iis-u-n  
 Tv watch-to-nom A. neg please-cs-Imp-3  
 'Watching TV does not please Abdi'
- c. [ meetii-n deem-uu-n-šee ] na aar-s-e  
 M.-nom go-to-nom-3fs me annoy-cs-1sg-prf  
 'Meti's going annoyed me'

### 3.2.2. Accusative Case Checking

Case may or may not be morphologically realized depending on the language in question. In Afan Oromo, a noun or a pronoun has base forms and these forms are used when they occur as

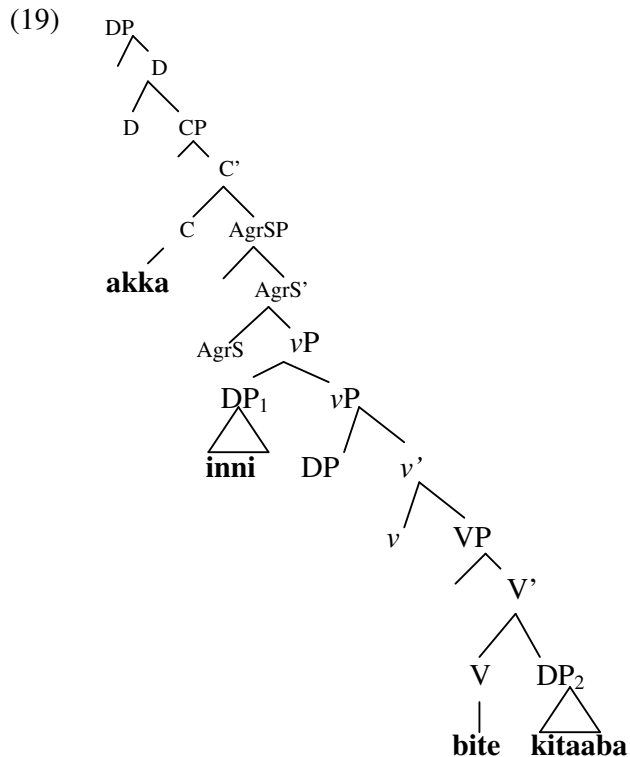
the complement of a verb or adposition. This means that accusative case is covert as shown in the following nominal clauses.

- (17) a. [akka meetii-n herreega k'ayyabat-t-e]  
that M.-nom Mathematics study-3sgf-prf  
'That Meti studied Mathematics'
- b. [abdii-n kitaaba bit-uu-saa]  
A.-nom book. buy-to-3sgm  
'Abdi's buying of a book'

On the other hand, as shown in these examples, the basic word order of Afan Oromo is SOV, that is, Subject-Object-Verb. On the basis of Kayne's (1994) universal word order, object DPs originate in the position following the verb. So it seems that in Afan Oromo, overt movement of the object to a position preceding the verb takes place. The movement is to a position of a functional category external to VP for accusative case checking. According to Chomsky (1993, 1995), objects, which are assigned theta roles by verbs, check their case against the functional projection of AgrO or against a light verb- *v*. It is possible to suggest that either of these categories check accusative case in Afan Oromo. I will try to show whether AgrO or *v* checks accusative case in this language.

According to the Uniformity of Theta-Assignment Hypothesis (UTHA) formulated in Baker (1988) cited in Radford (1997), a theta-role theme can be associated with a specifier or a complement position of a VP. An Agent role is associated with either a specifier position of *v*P or VP. So that a simple transitive nominal clauses, like (18) below, would have the syntactic representation in (19).

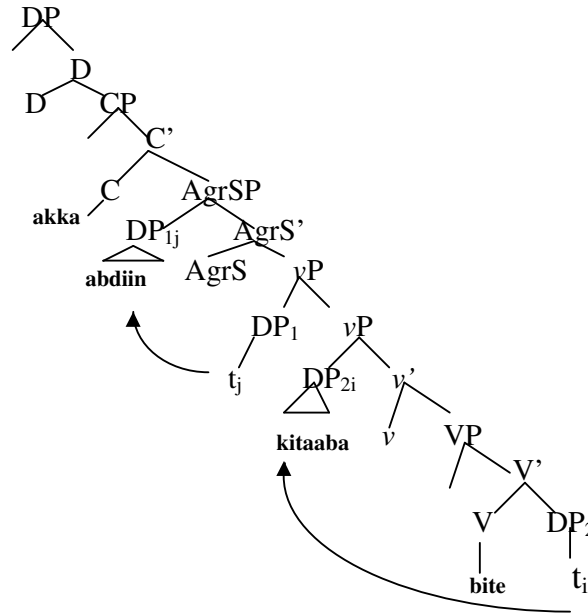
- (18) [ akka in-ni kitaaba bit-e]  
that he-nom book buy-3sgm-prf  
'That he bought a book'



In the representation, inni kitaaba bite, the verb *bite* merges with its DP<sub>2</sub> kitaaba to form the v-bar kitaaba bite, this then merges with the DP<sub>1</sub> inni to form a vP leading to the structure (19) above. Here DP<sub>2</sub> is treated as the object of the lower verbal complex, and it checks accusative case. If it is AgrO that checks the case, the resulting vP then merges with AgrO' to form an AgrOP constituent and the object DP<sub>2</sub> then raises to spec-AgrO (by A- movement). According to Chomsky (1995), this is in violation of the Rizzi's (1990) Relativized Minimality, a case of super-raising which is against the "shortest movement" condition. Since vP consists solely of strong features, it can trigger overt raising of objects. Thus, the object DP<sub>2</sub> moves to the spec of vP as required. The object forms a chain (DP, t) within the checking domain of v and thus is able to check its case. Therefore, it is this functional category that checks accusative case in Afan Oromo.

To make the discussion more concrete, let us see how accusative case checking takes place in the above simple active transitive nominal clause in (18). The Minimalist approach to phrase structures allows multiple specifiers to be projected from a single head (Chomsky, 1994). Given this assumption, it is allowed for object DP in (18) to move to an outer spec position of the light verb v in order to check off the strong accusative case feature of v before spell-out. The steps of derivation are illustrated in (20) below.

(20)



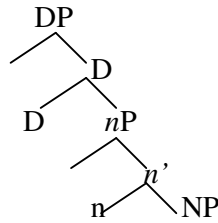
DP<sub>2</sub> is now in the checking domain of *v* and hence can check off the accusative case feature. Now V must move to *v* covertly in order to have its case checked off (note that the checking of *v*'s accusative case cannot be fulfilled if V stays in VP).

As discussed in the previous chapter, both types of nominal clauses can function as complements. Structural accusative case, however, is assigned to objects or complement DPs of verbs. Accusative case checking in akka clauses and in subordinate clauses where it is functioning in such position is almost the same.

Under the system we have considered above, we have seen that verbs of akka clauses have a complement, which is the first phase of merging with the head, and then with the specifier. The subjects of transitive verbs merge with the specifier of a light verb and the objects merge in the complement of the head verb. As the word order of Afan Oromo is SOV, the object moves overtly from the complement position to the spec of *vP* to check its case. In what follows I show the situation in f-clauses.

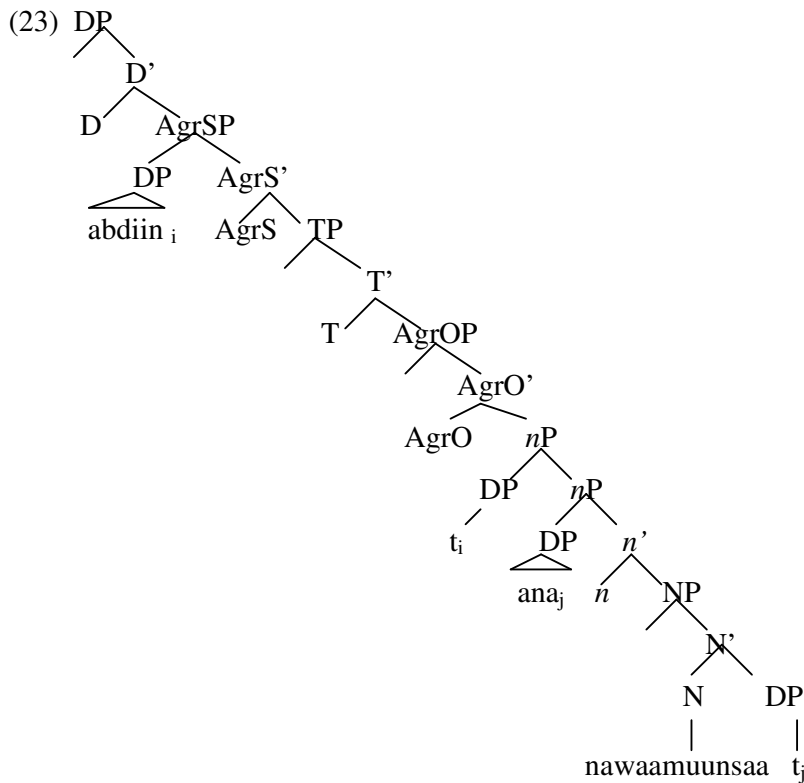
As stated earlier, Adger (2003) extends the treatment of clausal structures to nominal structures and argues that just as VPs are combined with a light *vP* projection, NPs are contained within a light *nP* whose function is to introduce an Agent and checks accusative case in NPs and adopts a structure which would look like (21).

(21)



Just as objects in akka clauses move to spec of *v* to check their case, we can bring the same kind of evidence for f-clauses also. This means that the object DPs in f-clauses move to spec of light *n* to check their accusative case. This gives the nominal hierarchy of projection as in (23) for structures like (22) below.

(22) [ abdiin-*n* ana na-waam-uu-saa ]  
 A.-nom me 1sg-call-to-3sgm  
 ‘Abdi’s calling of me’



So far we have discussed the functional elements that check structural cases in nominal clauses in Afan Oromo and how they are checked. From the observation of the facts presented, it is possible to conclude that both AgrS and Asp check nominative case, whereas accusative case is checked by light *v* and *n* through overt movement of DPs.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4. WORD ORDER OF NOMINAL CLAUSES AND THEIR DERIVATION

Word order refers to the linear ordering of words and constituents in a sentence. Like the majority of Ethiopian languages, the basic word order in Afan Oromo is subject-object-verb (SOV). Let us observe the following simple structures.

- (1) a. *abdii-n hoolaa bit-e*  
A.-nom sheep buy-3sgm-prf  
'Abdi bought a sheep'
- b. *hoolaa abdii-n bit-e*  
sheep A.-nom buy-3sgm-prf  
'Abdi bought a sheep'
- c.\* *abdii-n bit-e hoolaa*  
A.-nom buy-3sgm-prf sheep  
'Abdi bought a sheep'
- d\*. *bit-e abdii-n hoolaa*  
buy-3sgm-prf A.-nom sheep  
'Abdi bought a sheep'

This shows that the verb precedes neither the subject nor the object. Word order in subordinate clauses may differ from the basic word order of simple clauses. In Afan Oromo, however, word order in nominal clauses is almost the same as in the corresponding verbal clauses. Let us observe the following structures:

- (2) a. [*akka abdii-n kitaaba bit-e* ]  
that A.-nom book buy-3sgm-prf  
'That Abdi bought a book'
- b. [*akka kitaaba abdii-n bit-e*]  
that book A.-nom buy-3sgm-prf  
'That Abdi bought a book'
- c\*. [*akka abdii-n bit-e hoolaa*]  
that A.-nom buy-3sgm-prf sheep  
'That Abdi bought a sheep'

- d.\* [ akka bit-e abdii-n kitaaba ]  
that buy-3sgm-prf A.-nom book  
‘That Abdi bought a sheep’
- (3) a. [abdii-n kitaaba bit-uu-saa]  
A.-nom book buy-3sgm-prf  
‘Abdi’s buying of a book’
- b. [kitaaba abdii-n bit-uu-saa]  
book A.-nom buy-to-3sgm  
‘ Abdi’s buying of a book’
- c.\* [abdii-n bit-uu-saa kitaaba]  
A.-nom buy-3sgm-prf book  
‘ Abdi’s buying of a book’
- d\*. [ bit-uu-saa abdii-n kitaaba ]  
buy-to-3sgm A.-nom book  
‘ Abdi’s buying of a book’

As can be seen from above examples, it seems that the order available for nominal clauses is also SOV and its derivative OSV.

In general, as we have seen above, it seems that there is no verb movement in Afan Oromo. This is also the proposal suggested in Kayne (1994) and Chomsky (1995) for the derivation of SOV languages in general.

Exceptionally, the *vP* can be preposed to the initial position of the sentence, but this order is highly marked by a distinct juncture between the verb and the subject DP, and by low-level intonation on the subject in simple clauses. But such structure is not possible in nominal clauses as the contrast in (4) shows.

- (4) a. [ [ hoolaa bit-e ] [ abdii-n t ] ]  
sheep buy-3sgm-prf A.-nom  
‘Abdi bought a sheep’
- b.\* [ [ hoolaa bit-e akka ] [ abdii-n t ] ]  
that sheep buy-3sgm-prf A.-nom
- c.\* [ [ hoolaa bit-uu-saa ] [ abdii-n t ] ]  
sheep buy-to- 3sgm A.-nom

The movement of the complement along with the verb can be accounted for through pied piping (Radford, 1997). It is a process by which a moved constituent or set of feature drags one or more constituents or a set of features along with it when it moves.

Afan Oromo uses different forms of focalizing devices to mark the pragmatic function of focus in different sentential structures. According to Taha (1990), the language uses intonational prominance, special focus constructions, focus markers, and special constituent orders. Then, he concludes that any word order other than an SOV pattern is the marked one and the constituent that is placed in a position other than in its linear syntactic position is a focused one. Accordingly, he justifies that in sentences like (1b, 2b, 3b and 4a) the objects are preposed in order to be focused.

On the other hand, Baye (1986) and Amanuel (2006) treat interrogative sentences in simple clauses of Afan Oromo. They state that the language does not have wh-movement in its syntax. Thus, the nominative, accusative and dative of the wh-phrases in the language are expressed in their respective grammatical positions. Similarly, wh-phrases are in-situ in nominal clauses also as shown in the following structures.

- (5) a. [ akka eeññu duf-e ]  
           that who come-3sgm-prf  
           ‘That who came’
- b. [ eeññu duf-uu-saa ]  
           who come-to-3sgm  
           ‘Whose coming’

There is, however, a case where a wh-phrase exhibits movement in akka clauses. The reason why wh-phrase moves to sentence initial position is because of contrastive focus. Consider (5a) above as follows:

- (6) a. [ eeññu<sub>i</sub> [ akka [ t<sub>i</sub> duf-e ] ] ]  
           who that come-3sgm-prf  
           ‘That who came’

Because of the occurrence of the complementizer -f in clause final position, the IP layer moves to spec of CP to give grammatical f-clauses. Thus, fronting of wh-items is impossible in such clauses.

The general assumption for the derivation of the SOV order is that the object moves to the position preceding the verb but following the subject for reasons of case. As stated in the earlier chapter, the landing sites of the moved complement in the language are specifier of *v*Ps and *n*P (in the case of non-finite nominal clauses). This type of movement is known as short object movement (or object shift) and it refers to *v*P-internal movement. In what follows I show the situation in dative structures.

Some predicates have three arguments. These include predicates like *kenn-* 'give' and *fudat-* 'receive'. Corresponding nominal predicates follow the same pattern. In these clauses direct objects (DOs) and indirect objects (IOs) are ordered freely. Consider the following:

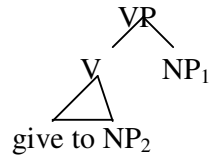
- (7) a. [ akka meetii-n abdii-tti kitaaba kenn-it-e ]  
           that M.-nom A.to book give-3sgf-prf  
           ‘That Meti gave a book to Abdi’
- b. [ akka meetii-n kitaaba abdii-tti kenn-it-e ]  
           that M.-nom book A.-to give-3sgf-prf  
           ‘That Meti gave a book to Abdi’
- (8) a. [ meetii-n abdii -tti kitaaba kenn-uu-šee ]  
           M.-nom A.-to book give-to-3sgf  
           ‘Meti’s giving of a book to Abdi’
- b. [ meetii -n kitaaba abdii-ttii kenn-uu-šee ]  
           M.-nom book A-to give-to-3sgf  
           ‘Meti’s giving of a book to Abdi’

There are different ways of analyzing such double object constructions. Chomsky (1955/1975) cited in Larson (1988), for example, proposes an analysis of dative structures in which a sentence like (9a) is derived from a structure of the form (9b) by extraposition of the PP- ‘to him’:

- (9) a. The teacher gave several books to him,  
       b. The teacher [gave to him] several books.

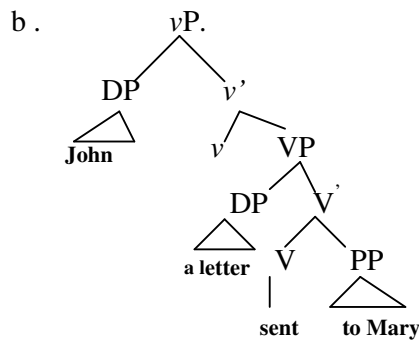
Under this analysis, a double object construction has the following structure where  $N_1$  is a direct and  $N_2$  is the indirect object.

(10)



On the other hand, Larson (1988) analyzes the structure of double objects by adopting a version of Chomsky's (1955/1975) proposal. The basic assumption of Larson (1988) is on the *v*P in dative structures which is as illustrated below. A sentence like (11a) has a structure in (11b).

(11) a. John sent a letter to Mary.



According to Larson (1988), (11b) is the basic configuration of the double object structure. The *v*P in (11b) consists of the specifier 'John' and an empty *v* taking a VP complement whose specifier is the DP 'a letter' which is a theme, whose head is 'send', and whose complement is the PP 'to Mary' which is a goal.

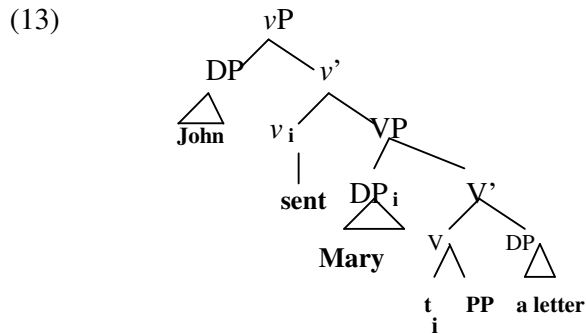
With this view of dative complementation, a recent revision of dative shift can also syntactically derive double objects, which is analogous to passivization (Larson, 1988). Dative shift or passivization is a movement operation whereby the complement of a verb becomes its subject. Larson (1988) gives the name "passive" to DP movement that promotes an argument to IP, and the name "Dative Shift" to DP movement that promotes an argument to VP position. It is possible, therefore, that double object constructions like in (12b) can be derived from the basic configurations such as (12a) below.

(12) a. John sent a letter to Mary

b. John sent Mary a letter

In (12b), the former indirect object (Mary) becomes a derived VP subject and the preposition is absorbed here. The former direct object (a letter) also undergoes demotion and realized as V-bar

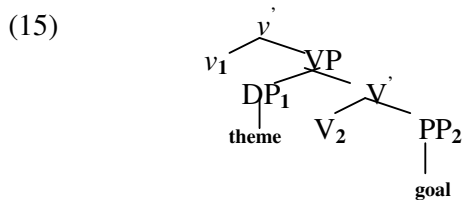
adjunct. The VP then merged with an abstract causative light verb whose agent subject is 'John' and the verb 'send' is also adjoins to the light verb. This yields the structure in (13) below.



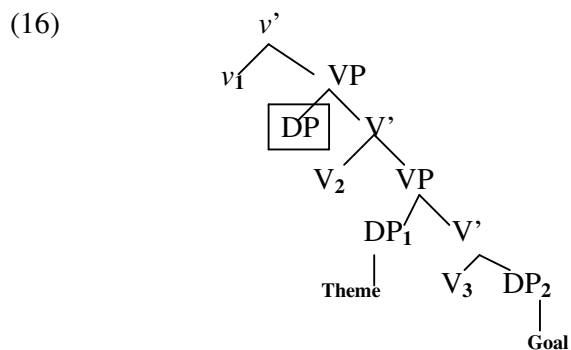
The other double objects structural hypothesis is made in Hale and Keyser (1993). The elements of structural configuration presented in Hale and Keyser (1993) sets a limit to the double-object construction headed by verbs of the type represented in (14) below.

(14) I wrote Mary a letter

Like that of Larson (1988), Hale and Keyser (1993) call such structures derived. They also assume the following hierarchical arrangement for the internal arguments of the double object constructions.



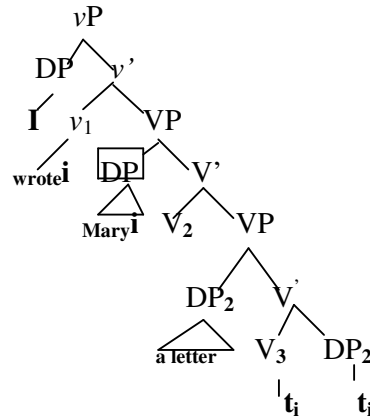
It is from this basic configuration that the derived structure originates. In Hale and Keyser's terms, the secondary predication at issue is the higher of the two arguments (the theme and goal). Thus, the structure would consist of a recursive projection as in (16).



The lower V-projection presents the same relative arrangement of arguments as that assumed for the basic double object constructions with the theme higher than the goal. The surface configuration is derived by head movements as required by the empty terminal nodes, raising the overt verb, that is, V<sub>3</sub> first move to V<sub>2</sub> and then to V<sub>1</sub>. The goal raises to the position indicated by the boxed DP, that is, the specifier of V<sub>2</sub>.

Hale and Keyser (1993) propose the VP in (14) above as (17) below.

(17)



The elements of the structural configuration presented in (17) are justified in the following manner. The verb 'wrote' moves first to V<sub>2</sub> then to the upper verb, v<sub>1</sub>, which is the standard transitive verb. DP<sub>2</sub> (Mary) moves to the position corresponding to the boxed DP, i.e., specifier of VP in between the light verb phrase and the thematic VP. That verb is present to permit this and appears here for this reason alone.

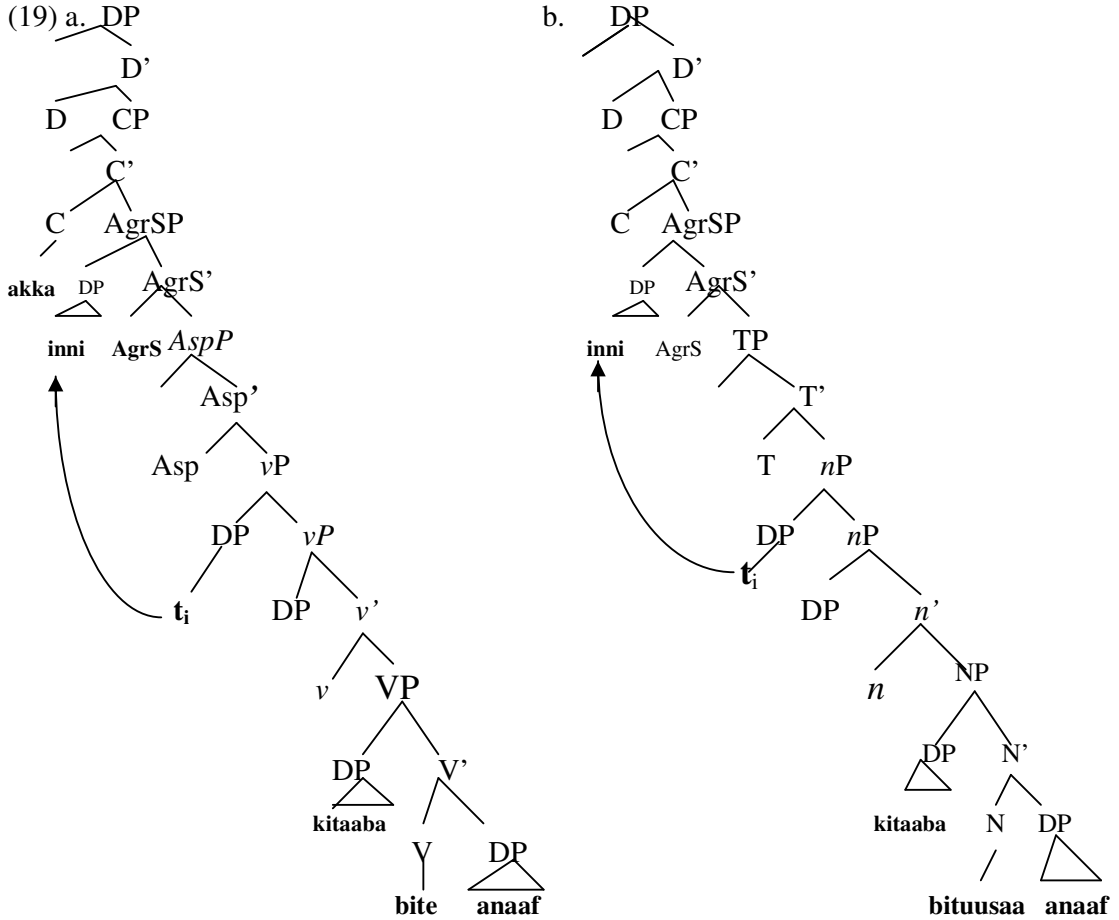
Now, we can represent the double object constructions of Afan Oromo based on one of the hypothesis suggested above.

Recall that SOV is the basic word order in this language, and the order between direct and indirect object is also free. Based on Hale and Keyser's (1993) assumption, the double object constructions in nominal clauses of Afan Oromo are structured in the following manner.

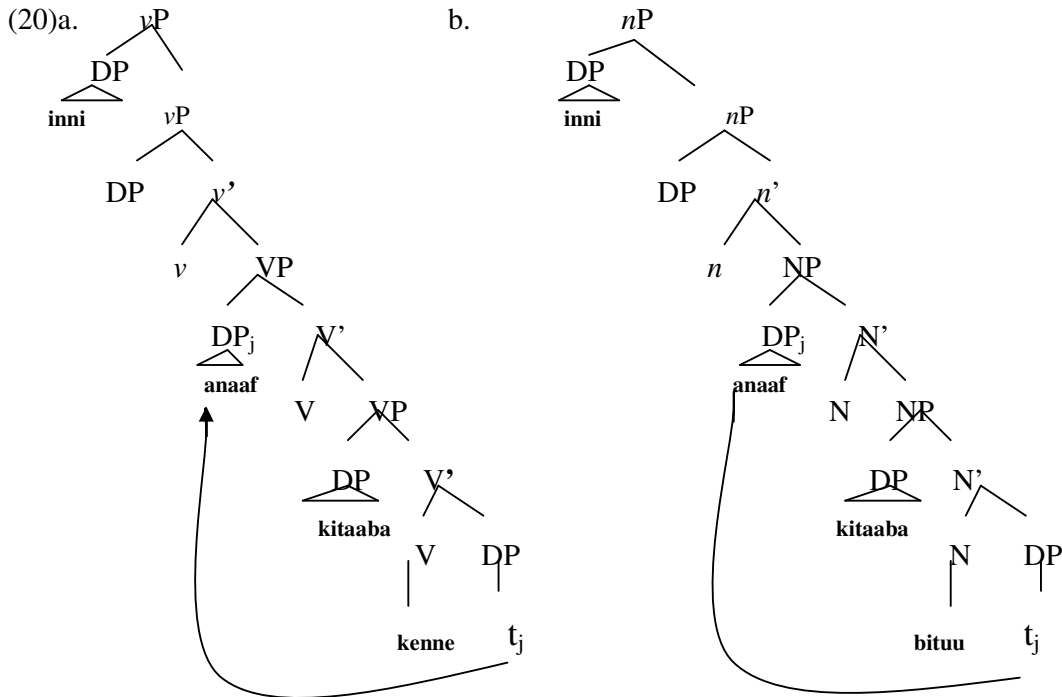
By adopting Larson (1988) and Hale and Keyser (1993) analysis of nominal clauses, the basic structure of double object structure in (18) is as in (19) below.

- (18) a. [ akka in-ni kitaaba anaa-f kenn-e ]  
 that he-nom book me-for give-3sgm-prf  
 'That he gave a book for me'

- b. [ in-ni kitaaba anaa-f bit-uu-saa ]  
 he-nom book me-for buy-to-3sgm  
 'His buying of a book for me'



In Hale and Keyser's terms, there is an empty VP which projects in between the light *v*-bar and the big VP. Then the goal moves to the specifier position of the empty headed VP. This VP is presented to permit this movement and it occurs there for this reason alone. By extending this analysis to the nominal domain, it gives us the following kind of *vP*-shell structure for the above (18a and b):

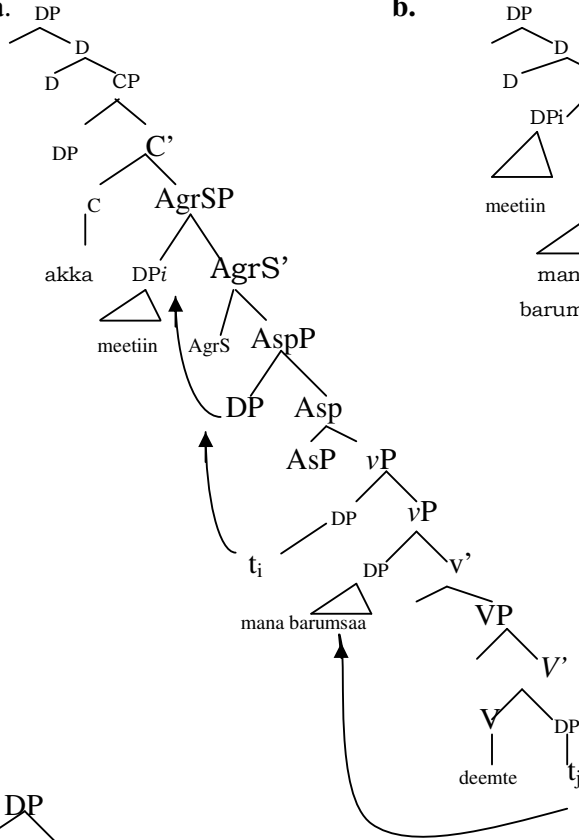


The optional movement of the DO DP- *kitaaba* to spec of vP or nP for the reason of checking accusative case results in free order of objects. If the DO moves overtly, then it precedes IO. But if the DO moves covertly, it is the IO that precedes DO.

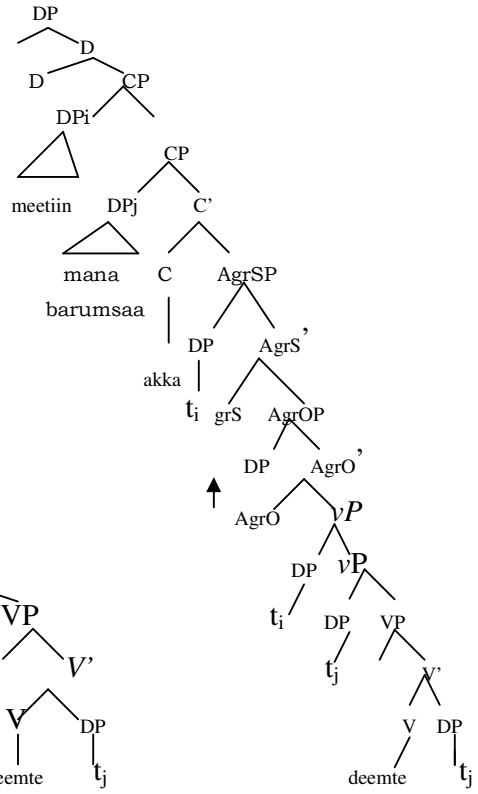
With regard to the distribution of complementizers, they can occur in initial, internal or final position of the clauses. This means that either the subject or the object or both can be focalized and appear in Spec of C. The complementizer akka is associated with a position that is external to the nominal clause. However, it may appear in clause internal positions as the structures in (21) shows. In the examples, either the subject or object or both DPs can be focalized. Thus they may move to spec of CP leaving a trace in base position. Recall that the bare phrase structure theory allows multiple specifiers in principle. Structurally then, we assume that akka clauses in (21) look as in (22) below.

- (21) a. [ akka [ meetii-n mana barumsaa deem-t-e ] ]  
 that M.-nom school go-3sgf-prf  
 ‘That Meti went to school’
- b. [ meetii-n<sub>i</sub> [ mana barumsaa<sub>j</sub> [ akka [ t<sub>i</sub> [ t<sub>j</sub> deem-t-e ] ] ] ] ]  
 M.-nom school that go-3sgf-prf  
 ‘That Meti went to school’
- c. [ meetii-n<sub>i</sub> [ akka [ t<sub>i</sub> mana barumsaa deem-t-e ] ] ]  
 M.-nom that school go-3sgf-prf  
 ‘That Meti went to school’

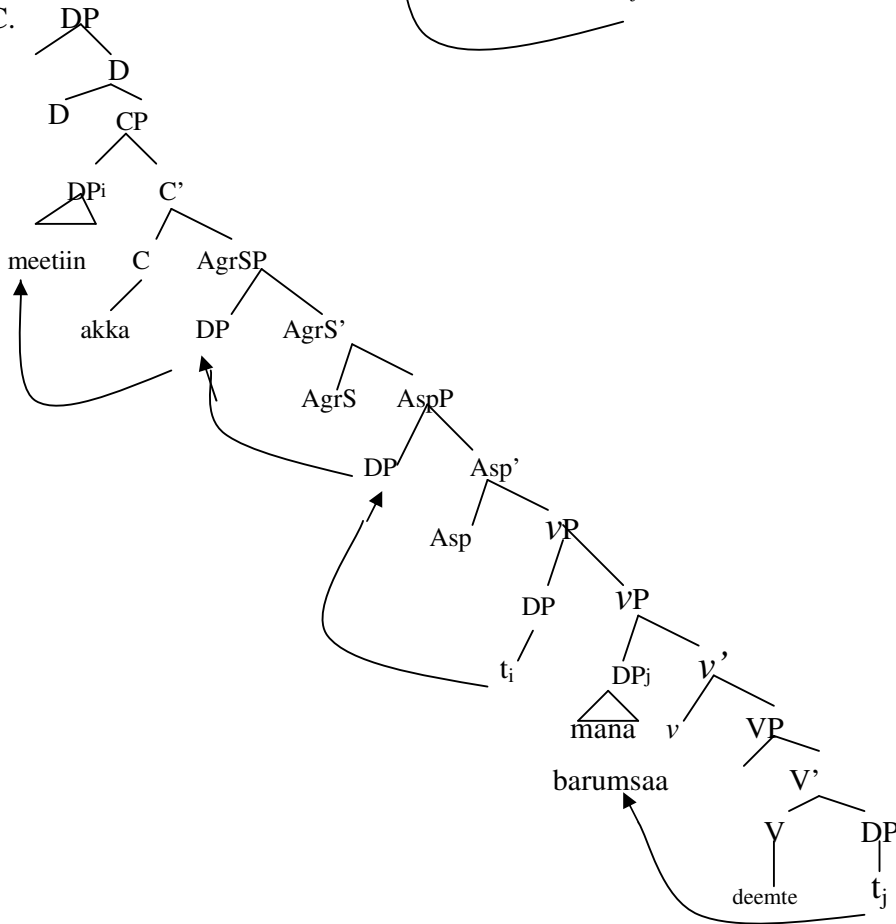
(22) a.



b.



c.



In  $\underline{f}$ -clauses, on the other hand, the complementizer  $-f$  'for' occurs in clause final position only. The examples in (23) are illustrative of this.

- (23) a. *abdii-n [kitaaba bit-uu-f] gara gabaa deem-e*  
 A.-nom book buy-to-for to marker go-3sgm-prf  
 'Abdi went to market to buy a book'
- b. *metii-n [deem-uu-ɗaa-f] barbaad-di*  
 M.-nom go-to-Foc-for want-3sg-f-Imp  
 'Meti wants to go'
- c.\* *abdii-n [kitaaba-f bit-uu] gara gabaa deem-e*  
 A.-nom book-for buy-to to market go-3sgm-prf

Because of the occurrence of the complementizer  $\underline{f}$  in clause final position, the IP layer moves to spec of CP to give grammatical  $\underline{f}$ -clauses such as in (23a and b) above.

With regard to the distribution,  $\underline{f}$ -clauses appear in all argument positions. The akka clause, however, is restricted to complement positions. The following are examples.

- (24) [ *ati ana na-waam-uu-n-kee [akka na-ɗaalat-t-u [ mirkan-eess-a ] ] ]*  
 you:nom me 1sg-call-to-nom-2sg that 1sg-love-2sg-prf prove-3sg-Imp  
 'That you call me shows that you love me'

The example shows structural relations that nominal clauses have in relation to the matrix clauses. In (24), the structure is a case when the  $\underline{f}$ -clause functions as subject and the akka clause as complement.

The analysis of this example is to show that the clausal subjects are in the specifier of AgrSP position and the clausal complements are in the specifier of  $\nu$ P and that they have moved from spec of  $\nu$ P and complement of V respectively. So an example like (24) would have the structure as in (25) below.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### 5. SUMMARY and CONCLUSION

This chapter summarizes the major issues raised in each chapter of the thesis, and some points that need further investigation. This study deals with the nominal clause structures in Afan Oromo. To achieve its objective, the thesis is divided into five chapters each of which has specific issues.

In the first chapter we have discussed about the language and the people in general. We have also reviewed previous studies undertaken on the issues to be discussed. Moreover, the theoretical framework that has been used to analyze aspects of the nominal clause structure of the language has been presented. The theoretical framework used in this study is the Minimalist approach, which is a recent version of the Principles and Parameters approach to syntactic theory.

Chapter two is devoted to the basic descriptions of nominal clauses in the language. Accordingly, both their types and functions have been treated. Here two types of nominal clauses are examined. These are akka clause and f-clause. In this chapter we have also observed that the akka clauses are limited to the position of complements, that is, to the internal arguments of verbs. In contrast, f-clauses can occur not only in complement positions but also in subject positions.

Some points of the description made in the chapter are worth recapitulating here. We have seen two different types of f-clauses: one type disallows overt subjects and takes PRO. The other type allows overt subjects that could be pro. The verbs of akka clauses and the nominal heads of f-clauses, which allow overt subject, agree with their arguments through affixes or clitics. Following this, we have seen clitics corresponding to subjects of f-clauses and objects of both clause types. And those affixes corresponding to subjects of akka clauses are also examined. Regarding temporal functional categories, verbs of akka clauses consist of suffixes representing aspect. Tense, however, is expressed through the auxiliaries ǰir- for non-past and tur- for past tenses. To express negation, akka clauses use hin-n whereas f-clauses use the auxiliary düis-.

In chapter three the study has shown the mechanisms of case checking in the derivation of the nominal clauses. Structural and inherent cases have been differentiated on the basis of theta-role

assignment. Accordingly, nominative and accusative cases are structural while others are inherent. Different functional projections have been considered in relation to structural cases. The study distinguishes that both AgrS and Asp can check the nominative case while the possible checking domain for accusative case is the Spec of the *vP* or *nP*. On the other hand, regarding the distribution of *f*-clauses, they can occur as subjects of matrix clauses. Since the heads of infinitival clauses are nominal, they display the nominative case affix /-n/. Akka clauses, however, do not function as external arguments. Thus they are not marked for and do not check nominative case.

Chapter four is about word order of nominal clauses and their derivations in Afan Oromo. Primarily, the basic word order of the language has been distinguished then the patterns of constituents in nominal clauses are examined. The language is verb final, that is, SOV in both simple clauses and nominal clauses. Using Kayne's (1994) universal word order, the derivation of Afan Oromo word order has been presented. The other major point discussed in this chapter is double object constructions. In Afan Oromo, the order of direct and indirect objects are free. Concerning double object constructions, different analyses are proposed by different scholars. Following Hale and Keyser (1993), the analysis of double object construction in nominal clauses of the language is proposed. The reason for the free order of direct and indirect objects is also formulated. Next, it is argued that the word order of nominal clauses is the same as the corresponding verbal clauses. Finally, the structural representations of each nominal clauses are provided.

In light of the analysis made, the following conclusions are drawn.

- 1 Nominal clauses of Afan Oromo are categorially equal to CPs.
- 2 In nominal clauses of the language, nominative case is checked by the functional categories AgrS and Asp whereas accusative is checked by *vP* or *nP*.
- 3 The word order in nominal clauses of Afan Oromo is a verb final pattern.

As one may understand, the thesis limits itself to some aspects of nominal clauses in Afan Oromo. There are certain nominal clauses that call for analysis and explanation. For instance, nominal clauses that are headed by verbal nouns deverbalized by -sa as in *deem-sa* 'going' and -a as in *kolf-a* 'laughing' that need closer investigation.

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