

***Title:* Overt Argument Noun Phrase Interpretation in Oromo**

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*Important terms and phrases*

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Referential mproperties

Pronominal reference

Anaphoric Pronominals

Non-anaphoric Pronominals

Binding Principles

Pronominals

SS Binding

LF Binding

## Declaration

This thesis is an original work, it has not been presented for a degree in any university, and all sources used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

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## Key to Symbols and Abbreviations

Agr	Agreement
C	alveo-palatal, ejective
1Cl	1 <sup>st</sup> person clitic
D	voiced, alveolar, implosive
J	voiced, alveo-palatal, affricate
1Pl	1 <sup>st</sup> person plural
1Sg	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular
2Sg	2 <sup>nd</sup> person singular
2Pl	2 <sup>nd</sup> person plural
2Sg	2 <sup>nd</sup> person singular
2Sg Hon	2 <sup>nd</sup> person singular honorific
3Pl	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural
3SgF	3 <sup>rd</sup> person singular feminine
3SgHon	3 <sup>rd</sup> person singular honorific
3SgM	3 <sup>rd</sup> person singular masculine
CP	Complementizer Phrase
EPENT	epenthetic element
FEM	feminine gender
Exp	experiencer
FOC	focus
GEN	Genitive



Hon	honorific
IMPF	imperfective aspect
INF	infinitive
IP	inflectional phrase
Lit.	literal translation
LF	logical form
NOM	nominative case
NP	noun phrase
Ps	passive
PERF	perfective aspect
Pl	plural number
Pro	non anaphoric pronominal (in governed argument position)
PRO	anaphoric pronominal (in ungoverned argument position)
SS	Syntactic Structure
*	unacceptable structure

## Abstract

In this thesis, the referential properties of Oromo overt argument noun phrases are described. The thesis has four chapters. In the first chapter, introductory issues are discussed. These include a brief description of the language, the statement of the problem, the objective, the significance, the methodology, the scope of the study, theoretical framework, and review of literature.

In the second and third chapters, the central objective is dealt with. With regard to this, the principles of binding which deal with pronominal reference are discussed. Accordingly, anaphoric pronominals are bound within their governing categories, in which there is a governor within a c-command domain, an accessible subject, and anaphors should be in agreement with their antecedents. Non-anaphoric pronominals are free in such domain. Since languages behave differently with regard to the way the binding principles operate, and with regard to the level of linguistic representation at which the principles apply, that is, SS or LF, this study attempts to account for the situation in Oromo.

In the last chapter, the summary of the whole analyses is presented. The binding principles apply to pronominals predominantly at SS. There are, however, cases, where they apply at LF. Furthermore, there are some movements that take place for the binding relationship to hold between bound pronominals and their antecedents.

other hand, however, significant number of the comments seems to have met the students' preferences to a certain extent. Based on the finding of the study, some possible recommendations are suggested.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 The Language**

Oromo is one of the Lowland East Cushitic languages of the Afro-Asiatic phylum, (Gragg, 1976; Baye, 1986). The name also applies to the speakers of the language, which is also called *Afaan Oromoo* language of the Oromo and literally ‘mouth of the Oromo’, or *Oromiffa* (with the suffix *-ffa* ‘-ish/-ic’).<sup>1</sup>

According to the 1994 Population Census of Ethiopia, Oromo has 19,000,000 (nineteen million) speakers<sup>2</sup>. It is predominantly spoken in Oromia, within Ethiopia, but there are speakers outside the country. Regarding the varieties spoken in Ethiopia, Gragg (1982), and Baye (1986) claim that the recognized ones are Mecha, Tulema, Kottu, Rayya, and Borena, spoken in Western, Central, Eastern, Northern, and Southern Ethiopia, respectively. According to and Stroomer (1987), the varieties spoken out of Ethiopia are Gabra, Borena, Sakuye, Ajuran, Garreh, Orma, Munyo and Waata.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In his “linguistic Bibliography of the Non-Semitic languages of Ethiopia”, Unseth (1990) lists the names Arsi, Borena, Guji, Gabra, Ittu, Kereyu, ‘Kottu’, Macha, Raya, Selale, Tulema, Waata, Wellega, and Wello as alternative names for Oromo. However, these names refer either to places, where the language is spoken (cf. Arsi, Wello, Wellega, Selale), or varieties of the language: Borena, Guji, Mecha, Raya, ‘Kottu’, Tulema, Waata, Gabra. Still Lamberti (1983) notes that the variety spoken in Somalia is known as Af-Arusi (Arsi), Af-Qottu locally among Oromo speakers in the Eastern and Southern parts of Ethiopia.

<sup>2</sup> Baye (1981) states that there is a striking difference between figures on the speakers.

<sup>3</sup> Lamberti (1983) claims that Garreh and Ajuran refer to the same variety.

At present, Oromo is serving different functions in the Oromia Regional State. It is a Regional Official Language, a medium of instruction in primary schools and in Teachers' Training Institutes, serves as language of the court, religion, mass media, etc. It is also being taught in higher educational institutions.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem and objective of the study**

As it is serving different functions, Oromo deserves a great attention in the study of its grammar. A lot has been done both by Ethiopians and foreigners. Descriptive works have been done; dictionaries have been compiled; grammar books have been prepared, translation works have been carried out. Study on the language, according to Baye (1986), started in the mid-nineteenth century.

The grammar works done so far have mostly been descriptive. In other words, theoretical developments like Government and Binding which have now developed into what is known as the Minimalist Programme, have not been applied to data from Ethiopian languages in general and to Oromo in particular.

This study focuses on the referential behavior of overt argument noun phrases in the language as very little has been done on this aspect of Oromo and indeed on other Ethiopian languages.

There are universal principles that govern semantic dependencies between noun phrases in sentences in languages in general and in specific conditions in particular languages, (Cook and Newson, 1996:303-304).

This study tries to answer the broad question of how the binding principles operate in the interpretation of overt argument noun phrases in Oromo. In this connection, some specific questions like the following are addressed.

How do agreement features, government, c-command, and theta role determine the binding relations of pronominals in Oromo?

Which overt argument pronominals are free and which are bound in Oromo?

What are the domains in which pronominals are free or bound in Oromo?

How are argument pronominals and their antecedents realized in Oromo?

How are the syntactic conditions of representations for co-reference between pronominals and their antecedents satisfied in Oromo?

Which thematic positions allow overt realizations of co-referential pronouns in Oromo?

### **1.3 Significance of the study**

Theories of grammar are about universal and specific properties of languages. Oromo has such properties, which this study attempts to describe in reference to pronominals and their reference. The description may serve as source material for future research in Cushitic linguistics and in the teaching of the grammar of the language.

#### **1.4 Research methodology**

This study is based on data collected from native speakers of the language including the researcher himself. The data include sentences with pronominals in different thematic positions. The sentences are analyzed in light of the principles of Binding within the GB tradition.

## 1.5 Theoretical framework

The grammar of any language, according to Chomsky (1965:15-18) and Chomsky and Halle (1968:6-7), must consist of the following major components.

1. A syntactic component, consisting of a base component and a transformational component;
2. A semantic component, [which assigns semantic interpretation to the deep structure generated by the base component, (Katz and Fodor, 1963; Katz and Postal, 1964)]; and
3. A phonological component, whose rules act on the surface syntactic string produced by the syntactic component and provide a phonetic interpretation of sentences represented by the syntactic rules.

As stated earlier, this study takes the Binding Theory of GB as a model of description of the referential properties of NPs in Oromo sentences. The theory was developed by Chomsky (1981), and has been used in subsequent studies. In this regard, Koster (1984) says the following:

... One of the major aims of the theory of grammar is the universal and restrictive characterization of the form of core dependencies between constituents.... In general, (core) grammatical dependencies involve a dependent element  $\gamma$  and an antecedent  $\alpha$ . (418)

Neither the earlier frameworks, that is the Transformational Grammar of the 1960's and the Transformational Generative Grammar of the 1970's nor the Minimalist Programme of recent times can be used as a tool for this study. This is because Transformational Grammar accounts for only how sentences are related to each other



whereas Transformational Generative Grammar relates surface structures to deep structures, which assumes two levels of representation for every sentence.

In Transformational Generative Grammar ‘Pronominals’ are considered as syntactically transformed elements derived by ‘pronominalization transformations’, and reflexives by ‘reflexivization transformations’. However, they were also considered base-generated NPs assigned semantic interpretation, (Jackendoff, 1972).

There are two problems that hinder the Minimalist programme from being used for this study. Firstly, the theory is not autonomous since it is a development of the theory of Government and Binding. Secondly, as Fromkin (2000) states, binding of argument NPs involves co-indexing, which the Minimalist Programme tries to avoid, as issues of reference are lexical.

In the GB theoretical literature, there are three principles of binding, which deal with the referential behavior of **anaphors**, **pronouns**, and **R-expressions**<sup>4</sup>, all of which are arguments with thematic roles. The principles are:

**An anaphor is bound within its governing domain**

**A Pronominal may be free or bound within its governing domain**

**An R-expression is free everywhere,**

---

<sup>4</sup> Pronominals is used in this study as an umbrella term for ‘anaphoric’ and ‘non-anaphoric’ pronominals.

(Chomsky, 1981, 1982, 1986; Chomsky and Lasnik, 1991); (Horrocks, 1987; Cook and Newson, 1996). Part of the human language faculty consists of knowledge of how a language uses these principles for the interpretation of arguments, (Cook and Newson, 1996:69).

Referential dependencies between argument NPs are shown by indices.<sup>5</sup> If NPs, which refer to the same entity are co-indexed, where NPs, which refer to different entities, are contra-indexed, (Chomsky, 1980; 1981; 1986a; Lasnik, 1989; Chomsky and Lasnik, 1991).

According to the principles stated above, for an argument to be called bound in a given domain, it should be co-indexed with a c-commanding argument, otherwise it is bound in that domain, (Higginbotham, 1983). A domain D may be a finite clause or an NP, which has a subject, (Haegeman, 1994: 114).

There are other modules of grammar and some syntactic relations, which are vital for the binding of argument NPs.<sup>6</sup> These include:

**Theta theory ( $\theta$ - theory)**, is concerned in the assignment of thematic roles to NPs in a structure. It makes use of Chomsky's (1981) 'theta criterion', which requires that every argument NP be assigned one and only one theta role, and each theta role be

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<sup>5</sup> Another way of showing referential dependency is by 'linking' [the bound NP and its antecedent] (Higginbotham, 1983)

<sup>6</sup> In addition to these, there is 'subject constraint', which is tacitly introduced in government. This is because, a lexical subject is possible only when there is a governor (case assignor), (Koster, 1984:418)

associated to a predicate. Hence, for an NP to be an argument, it should bear a theta role, (Chomsky, 1981).

According to this theory, binding of NPs is related to arguments, and non-arguments, (Haegeman, 1994:226).

**Government theory** deals with a general principle by which elements are assigned 'cases' by other elements that c-command them, (Cook and Newson 1996:235)

**Case theory** deals with the assignment of abstract case to NPs that are in relations of government. Any non-empty noun phrase must be assigned case by a case assigner, (Ibid). Chomsky and Lasnik (1977) proposed the notion 'case filter', by which such noun phrases get case.

**C-command** is a syntactic notion, which defines 'antecedent –trace' relations and bound anaphors to their antecedents, (Koster, 1984:117). Antecedents should c-command the NPs that they bind, (Chomsky, 1986:8; Horrocks, 1987:110, Haegeman, 1994:212). C-command holds obligatorily for anaphors, but not for pronominals. Pronominals cannot be bound by c-commanding NPs in their governing domain, but they may be bound by NPs that do c-command them outside their governing domain, (Koster, 1984:419).

## **Agreement**

Co-indexation of NPs that are bound to each other presupposes feature sharing between them. In other words, an NP cannot be bound by another an NP, that does not share agreement feature(s) with it, (Haegeman, 1994).

In general, it is with the help of these modules and principles of the grammar that the description of the referential behaviour of argument NPs of the language is made.

### **1.6 The Scope of the study**

This study is delimited in two ways. Firstly, since it is difficult to treat all varieties of the language in a paper like this, only the Mecha dialect, the variety that the researcher speaks, is considered. The researcher believes that there may not be fundamental variations across the varieties regarding the core features of referential dependencies. Secondly, from the three argument NPs, only anaphors and pronominals are treated here.

Binding of pronominals, as Salon (1984) states, operates at the two levels of the linguistic representations, Surface Structure (SS) and Logical Form (LF) or at either of them. In this study, LF binding principles are used when the principles fail to hold at SS.

### **1.7 Review of Related Literature**

Since the central concern of the study is pronominal reference in Oromo, only works on this issue are reviewed in this section. Accordingly, “Pronouns and

Pronominalization in Oromo” by Haimanot (1984), which focuses on the Mecha dialect of Wellega, and “The Grammar of Harrar Oromo” by Owens (1985), which, as the title indicates, also focuses on the Eastern dialect spoken in Harrar, are reviewed.

Haimanot (1984) states that pronominalization of NPs is used to avoid repetition of the subject noun phrases. This presupposes that there is an NP for every pronoun. She further states that pronouns and their antecedents should share agreement feature(s). When discussing the domain in which reflexives can be co-referential, Haimanot (1984:33) says, “The reflexive Pronouns replace co-referential noun phrases normally within the same finite clause.” She claims that *of* ‘self’ and *mata* ‘head’ are used as reflexive pronouns in the language. She claims that the difference between the two is that the latter is used to emphasize possessive adjectives as in (1):

1. *gurmuu-n hoJii-saa hoJJet-ø-e* (page)28

Gurmu-NOM job-his do-PERF

‘Gurmu did his own job’

She says that when co-reference is to be established between the possessive *-saa* ‘his’ and the subject *gurmuu* ‘Gurmu’, *mataa* ‘head’ is added as a reflexive form and it occurs preceding the possessive pronoun. However, her argument fails in (2) below, in which, *mataa* ‘head’ does not refer to the subject NP *isee* ‘she’, but to the empty possessor subject of the genitive NP *hoJii mataa-saa* ‘the job of himself’. *mataa* ‘head’ is used to emphasize the possessor subject.

2. *isee-n [Pro hoJii mataa-saa] hoJJet-t-e*

she-NOM Pro job head-his do-3SgF-PERF

‘She did the job of himself’

In (2), Pro is the subject of *hoJii* ‘job’, and the possessive suffix *-saa* ‘his’ creates the recovery of this subject.

On the status of reflexives, Haymanot’s claim is that they are prefixes of possessive ‘adjectives’. I argue that they are agreement markers showing relation between the reflexive and its antecedent. However, in the majority of cases, the bare reflexive *of* ‘self’ is used since there is agreement inflection on verbs in the language. The fact that the possessive ‘adjective’ can be omitted as in (3) below serves as a clue for the independent status of the reflexive *of* ‘self’ in the language.

3. (a) [tulluu-n]<sub>i</sub> [of-iisaa]<sub>i</sub> rukut- $\phi$ -e

Tullu-NOM self-his-GEN hit-3SgM-PERF

‘Tullu hit himself’

(b) [tulluu-n]<sub>i</sub> [o f]<sub>i</sub> rukut- $\phi$ -e

Tullu-NOM self hit-3SgM-PERF

‘Tullu hit himself’

In other words, *of* ‘self’ inflects for subject, which is co-referential with *tullu* ‘Tullu’. Besides, Gragg (1976), in his “The Oromo of Wellega”, claims that the reflexive *of* ‘self’ takes possessive suffixes in the language.

Unlike reflexives, Haimanot says that reciprocals are independent forms and they take possessive adjectives as suffixes. ‘pronominalization’, according to her is used to avoid repetition of names as in her example given as (4) below.

4. (a) *gurmuu-n hoJii gurmuu hoJJet-φ-a* (page 28)

Gurmu-NOM job Gurmu do-3SgM-IMPF

‘Gurmu does Gurmu’s job’

(b) *maCaaf-ni kun maCaafa bultii-ti* (page 26)

book-NOM this book Bulti-is

‘This book is Built’s book’

In (4a and b), the second occurrence of the names *gurmuu* ‘Gurmu’ and *maCaafa* ‘book’ requires the use of the pronoun *-saa* ‘his’ and *kan* ‘of’, respectively.

Owens (1985) mentions some functions of the reflexive *if* ‘self’ like direct object, causative object, object of post-position, etc. In addition, he raises some construals of reflexives. He says:

A. If the complement is co-referential to the subject, the reflexive is used. This follows from equi-NP deletion followed by reflexivization transformation in Transformational Generative Grammar.

B. In constructions like,

5. *inni [alii]<sub>i</sub> [if]<sub>i</sub> gargaar-uu Dork-φ-e* (Page 189)

he Ali self help-ing prevent-3SgM-PERF

‘He prevented Ali from helping himself’





D. With the subject reflexives<sup>7</sup> *-at* we cannot have the reflexive *if* ‘self’ as a direct object. I would argue that this ‘subject reflexive’ could be used with a reflexive pronoun when the reflexive is used as a complement of a post-position as in (8).

8. *inni if-iif loon gurgur-at- $\phi$ -e* (Page 189)

he self-for cattle sell-BENF-3SgM-PERF

‘He sold cattle for himself’

In (8), the reflexive *if* ‘self’ is used as the complement of the postposition *-iif* ‘for’. The reflexive can be dropped when it occurs with the benefactive *-at*, implying that, when a reflexive functions as a complement of a postposition, it is identified by this benefactive morpheme.

In general, works on pronominals of the language have not and could not have used the principles of binding. The present study, would try to explain the facts described hitherto using this model as a tool for more exhaustive explanatory adequacy.

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<sup>7</sup> According to Owens (1985), a subject reflexive is an item that shows that an action happens to the subject or for the subject.

## CHAPTER TWO

### ANAPHORIC PRONOMINALS

#### 2.0 Overview

In the syntax of natural languages, there are NPs, which are anaphoric, hence bound to some other NPs in governing domain. In Binding theory, all NPs are assumed to behave similarly across languages. The possible idiosyncrasies are merely variations attested in particular languages. This chapter deals broadly with the interpretation of overt anaphoric pronominals of Oromo.

The chapter is divided into five parts, which include the forms of anaphoric pronominals in the language, their thematic positions, their syntactic conditions, their covert antecedents, and their agreement in number with their antecedents.

#### 2.1 Reflexives and reciprocal pronouns in Oromo

As far as the elements are concerned, recourse should be made to the forms of the anaphoric pronominals that is, reflexives, and reciprocals in Oromo. The forms are *of* and *wal* reflexive, and reciprocal, respectively. They are equivalent to the English ‘-self’ /’-selves’ (Culicover, 1976), and to ‘each other’/ one another’. They are

optionally followed by genitive-agreement suffixes. However, it is a very unusual for such forms to occur with anaphors. This could be due to the fact that there is agreement in the verbs of the language. In the following table anaphors of the language and their inflections are presented:

person		Reflexive	Reciprocal
1	Sg	<i>of- koo</i> self- 1Sg      ‘myself’	-
	P1	<i>of-iikeeñña</i> self –1Pl      ‘ourselves’	<i>wal-iikeeñña</i> each other- 1Pl      ‘we each other’
2	Sg	<i>of-iikee</i> self -2Sg      ‘yourself’	-
	P1	<i>of-iikeessan</i> self -2p1      ‘yourselves’	<i>wal-iikeessan</i> each other -2P1      ‘You(p1) each other’
	Hon	<i>of-iikeessan</i> self -2Sg Hon      ‘yourself’	-
3	Sg		
	M	<i>of-iisaa</i> self -3Sg M      ‘himself’	-
	F	<i>of-iisee</i> Self -3SgF      ‘herself’	-
	P1	<i>of-iisaanii</i> self -3p1      ‘themselves’	<i>wal-iisaanii</i> each other -3P1      ‘they each other’
	Hon	<i>of-iisaanii</i> self -3Sg Hon      ‘himself/ herself’	-

**\*The Reflexive and Reciprocals in Oromo**

## 2.2 Thematic position of anaphoric pronominals



I-NOM self-1Cl hit-1Sg-PERF

‘I hit myself’

(b) [*nu-i*]<sub>i</sub> [*wal*]<sub>i</sub> *rukut-n-e*

we-NOM each other hit-1Pl-PERF

‘We hit each other’

(1a) and (1b) are ungrammatical due to the occurrence of the anaphoric pronominals *of* ‘self’, and *wal* ‘each other’ with agent theta role in subject position; in (2a) and (b) they are in patient role, hence the sentences are grammatical.

### 2.3 Syntactic conditions in the binding of anaphoric pronominals

In this section, four conditions for the binding of anaphors are examined. An anaphor should agree with its antecedent; it should be c-commanded by the antecedent within its governing category, and that there should be a subject NP in the same domain.

#### 2.3.1 Agreement

Both reflexives and reciprocals may have agreement inflection for person in Oromo. (cf.2.1.). Co-indexation presupposes feature sharing between reflexives and reciprocals and their antecedents. Consider the following illustrative examples:

3. (a) \**[isee-n]*<sub>i</sub> *[of-iikoo]*<sub>i</sub> *rukut-t-e*

she-NOM self-1Sg hit-3SgF-PERF

‘She hit myself’

(b) [*isee-n*]<sub>i</sub> [*of-iisee*]<sub>i</sub> *rukut-t-e*

she-NOM self-3SgF hit-3SgF-PERF

‘She hit herself’

4. (a) \**[nu-i]*<sub>i</sub> [*wal-iisaanii*]<sub>i</sub> *rukut-n-e*

we-NOM each other-3Pl hit-1Pl-PERF

‘We hit each other (them)’

(b) [*nu-i*]<sub>i</sub> [*wal-iikeenna*]<sub>i</sub> *rukut-n-e*

we-NOM each other- 1Pl hit-1pl-PERF

‘We hit each other (us)’

The ungrammaticality in (3a) and (4a) is due to the lack of matching in features between the anaphors and their antecedents. The principle of co indexation is violated in both sentences since the anaphors show third person features in relation to their first person subjects.

### 2.3.2 C-command

The condition that an anaphor is bound by an (antecedent) NP, by which it is c-commanded in its domain, is examined next. The following are some examples.

5. (a)  $[tulluu-n]_i [of]_i rukut-\phi-e$   
 Tullu-NOM self hit-3SgM-PERF

‘Tullu hit himself’

(b)  $[abbaa-n [tulluu]_j ]_i [of]_i rukut-\phi-e$

father-NOM Tullu self hit-3SgM-PERF

‘Tullu’s father hit himself’

(5a) is possible, because the reflexive *of* ‘self’ is bound to the antecedent NP *tulluu* ‘Tullu’ which is in the same (governing) domain, that is the same clause. When we consider (5b), the subject is a genitive NP consisting of the (possessed) NP *abbaa* ‘father’ and the (possessor) NP *tulluu* ‘Tullu’. The reflexive can be bound to the NP as a whole, but not to *tulluu* ‘Tullu’, or to *abbaa* ‘father’. This is because, *abbaa-n tulluu* ‘Tullu’s father’ c-commands the reflexive while the constituent NPs do not, since there is maximal projection blocking the c-command relation between the anaphors and the constituent.

### 2.3.3 Government

The other condition in binding is the fact that there should be a governor (and a case assigner) in the domain where anaphor is bound. The distance between the anaphor and its antecedent should be minimal. The following sentences illustrate the role of government in the binding.

6. (a)  $[tulluu-n]_i [of]_i aJJe\text{-}\phi\text{-}e$   
 Tullu-NOM self kill-3SgM-PERF  
 ‘Tullu killed himself’
- (b)  $[[ [tulluu-n]_i [ [PRO_i [of]_i aJJe\text{-}uu] ] barbaad\text{-}\phi\text{-}e ]]$   
IP CP IP  
 Tullu-NOM PRO self kill-INF want-3SgM-PERF  
 ‘Tullu wanted to kill himself’
7. (a)  $[nu-i]_i [wal]_i rukut\text{-}n\text{-}e$   
 we-NOM each other hit-1Pl-PERF  
 ‘We hit each other’
- (b)  $[[ [ [nu-i]_i [ [PRO_i [wal]_i rukut\text{-}uu] ] barbaad\text{-}n\text{-}e ]]$   
CP IP CP IP  
 we-NOM each other hit-INF want-1Pl-PERF  
 ‘we want to hit each other’

In (6a and b), we can see that the difference between the two is that, (a) has only one finite clause, whereas (b) has two clauses, one finite and another non-finite. This, in effect, has caused a difference in the distance between the reflexive *of* ‘self’ and the antecedent *tulluu* ‘Tullu’ different in (a) and (b): In (a), the antecedent and the reflexive are within the same (finite) clause, whereas, in (b), the lower (non-finite) clause does not have a lexical subject, which could bind the reflexive, as the position is not governed, the clause being non-finite. Hence, the antecedent of the reflexive is the



subject NP *tulluu* ‘Tullu’ of the matrix clause. The same condition operates in the binding of the reciprocal *wal* ‘each other’ and its antecedent *nu-i* ‘we’ in (7).

### 2.3.4 Accessible subject

In addition to a governor and, a domain, an anaphor must have a subject that binds it. The following examples illustrate this condition.

8. (a)  $\left[ \left[ \left[ \text{tulluu-n} \right]_{\text{CP IP}} \right]_j \left[ \left[ \left[ \text{in-ni} \right]_{\text{CP IP}} \right]_i \left[ \text{of} \right]_i \text{aJJees-uu-saa} \right] \right] \text{ijjaafat-}\phi\text{-a}$   
 Tullu-NOM he-NOM self kill-VN-his expect-3SgM-IMPF

‘Tullu expects him to kill himself’

- (b)  $\left[ \left[ \left[ \text{tulluu-n} \right]_{\text{CP IP}} \right]_j \left[ \left[ \text{Pro} \right]_{\text{CP IP}} \right]_i \left[ \text{of} \right]_i \text{aJJees-uu-saa} \right] \text{ijjaafat-}\phi\text{-a}$   
 Tullu Pro self kill-VN-his expect-3SgM-IMPF

‘Tullu expects him to kill himself’

9.  $\left[ \left[ \left[ \text{nu-i} \right]_{\text{CP IP}} \right]_i \left[ \text{seenaa} \left[ \text{wal-ii} \right]_{\text{NP}} \right] \text{balleess-i-n-e} \right]$   
 we-NOM history each other-GEN spoil-EPENT-1PI-IMPF

‘We spoiled history of each other’

In (8) and (9), the anaphors are bound to their respective nearest subject. In (8a), the NP *inni* ‘he’ binds the reflexive *of* ‘self’; but *tulluu* ‘Tullu’ cannot do so, because there is a nearer subject between it and the reflexive *of* ‘self’. Because the subject position of the lower IP is governed by AGR in infl, extraction of the (lexical) subject NP is possible, hence (8b), in which AGR, which is a bundle of features, serves as Big SUBJECT, (Chomsky, 1981; Haegeman, 1994).

When we come to (9), the nearest NP *seena* ‘history’ cannot bind the reciprocal *wal* ‘each other’, since it is not a subject and hence cannot be a barrier in the selection of antecedents for anaphors, (Fromkin, 2000).

## 2.4 Covert antecedents of anaphoric pronominals

Anaphoric pronominals may have covert antecedents in Oromo. There are two instances.

Like in other Pro-drop languages, subject positions of finite clauses can be Pro in Oromo. When we consider the antecedents of anaphoric pronominals, since the antecedents are subjects, we would have a covert antecedent Pro, which is different from its overt counterpart only in its realization. The following sentences illustrate this phenomenon:

10. (a)  $[in-ni]_i [of]_i aJJees-\phi-e$   
he-NOM self kill-3SgM-PERF  
‘He killed himself’

- (b)  $Pro_i [of]_i aJJees-\phi-e$   
Pro self kill-3SgM-PERF  
‘He killed himself’

11. (a)  $[nu-i]_i [wal]_i rukut-n-e$   
 we-NOM each other hit-1PI-PERF  
 ‘We hit each other’
- (b)  $Pro_i [wal]_i rukut-n-e$   
 Pro each other hit-1PI-PERF  
 ‘We hit each other’

The antecedents in (10a) and (11a) can be Pro, as in (10b) and (11b), respectively, because the position is governed by infl of the matrix verbs. Hence, we can say that Pro can act as an antecedent when its position is governed.

Another possibility for Pro to act as a binder is illustrated in (12) below.

12. (a)  $\left[ \left[ \underset{CP\ IP}{[tulluu-n]_i} \left[ \underset{CP\ IP}{[in-ni]_j} [of]_j miiD-uu-saa \right] \right] barbaad-\phi-a \right]$   
 Tullu-NOM he-NOM self hurt-INF want-3SgM-IMPF  
 Lit. ‘Tullu wants he to hurt himself’
- (b)  $\left[ \left[ \underset{CP\ IP}{[tulluu-n]_i} \left[ \underset{CP\ IP}{[Pro_i [of]_i miiD-uu-saa]} \right] \right] barbaad-\phi-a \right]$   
 Tullu-NOM Pro self hurt-INF-his want -3SgM-IMPF  
 Lit. ‘He wants he to hurt himself’

The lower IPs in (12 a, and b) are non-finite; but, their subject position is governed by the genitive suffix on the verb of the predicate of the lower clause. In (12b), the

subject Pro, which is in a governed position, binds the reflexive *of* ‘self’. However, when the subject position of a clause is ungoverned, PRO occupies the position. In Oromo, PRO acts as a binder when there is an arbitrary controller. The following sentences illustrate this.

13. (a)  $\left[ \left[ \underset{\text{CP IP}}{\text{PRO}} \left[ \underset{\text{CP IP}}{\left[ \text{PRO}_i \left[ \text{of}_i \text{miiD-uu-n} \right] \right]} \text{gaarii miti} \right] \right] \right]$   
 PRO PRO self hurt-INF-NOM good not

‘It is not good (for one) to hurt oneself.

- (b)  $\left[ \left[ \underset{\text{CP IP}}{\text{PRO}} \left[ \underset{\text{CP IP}}{\left[ \text{PRO}_i \left[ \text{wal}_i \text{miiD-uu-n} \right] \right]} \text{gaarii miti} \right] \right] \right]$   
 PRO PRO each other hurt-INF-NOM good not

‘It is not good (for any persons) to hurt each other’

In (13a, and b) we have arbitrary controllers, (Picallo, 1984; Lasnik and Uriagereka, 1988). One could also argue that there is a null expletive in the position of the PRO, in which case the subject turns into Pro, because in this assumption, the empty element would be the subject of the predicate *gaarii miti* ‘(it is) not good’.

## 2.5 Number agreement in Oromo reciprocal

Bound (anaphoric) pronominals are essentially the same in agreement features as their binders. (c.f.3.3.1). In the case of reciprocals, the agreement that holds between the reciprocal and its antecedent is in number, since the reciprocity requires two or more participants.

The antecedents of reciprocals are always plural. But, examine the following:

14. (a) **[nam-ni]<sub>i</sub>** *bara kana-a* **[wal]<sub>i</sub>** *Jibb-φ-a*  
person-NOM year this-GEN each other hate-3SgM-IMPF  
'People of this day hate each other'
- (b) **[hark-i]<sub>i</sub>** *dabaree* **[wal]<sub>i</sub>** *DiK-φ-a*  
hand-NOM turns each other wash-3SgM-IMPF  
'Hands wash each other turn-by-turn'
- (c) **[mil-ni]<sub>i</sub>** **[wal]<sub>i</sub>** *Diit-u kana miti*  
leg-NOM each other kick-IMPF this not  
'These are not legs that (can) kick each other'
- (d) **[barataa-n]<sub>i</sub>** **[wal]<sub>i</sub>** *lol-φ-e*  
student-NOM each other quarrel-3Sg-PERF  
'Students quarreled with each other'

When we examine (14 a-d), the reciprocal *wal* 'each other' is bound by the antecedent NPs *nama* 'man', *harka* 'hand', *miila* 'leg', and *barataa* 'student', respectively. The morphology of these antecedents does not show any plurality; but the antecedent of the reciprocal in each sentence is not single. In (14a and d), *nama* 'person' and *barataa* 'student', respectively, are generic nouns, which are considered plural. In (14a and b),

*harka* ‘hand’ and *miilla* ‘leg’, respectively, are also taken as plural since they exist in pairs. We cannot make the antecedents in (a-c) morphologically plural.<sup>9</sup>

In the case of (14 d), we see an interesting phenomenon:

15. (a)            [barat-t-oot-ni]<sub>i</sub> [wal]<sub>i</sub> lol-an- $\emptyset$   
                         student-FEM-PL-NOM each other quarrel -3Pl-PERF  
                         ‘Students quarreled with each other’
- (b)                [barat-t-oot-ni]<sub>i</sub> [wal]<sub>i</sub> lol-t-e  
                         student-FEM-PL-NOM each other quarrel-3SgF-PERF  
                         ‘Students quarreled with each other’

When we examine (15 a, and b), which are the paraphrases of (14d), there is difference since in (14), the subject is generic, which can bind a reciprocal; however, in (15 a, and b), the same NP is plural morphologically.

In (15a), the agreement we have is plural number, which is common. However, the agreement we have in (15 b) is an unusual one; the subject plural NP and the verb agree not only in number, but also in (feminine) gender.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> I observed hesitation from some of my respondents on the impossibility of [nam-oot-ni]<sub>i</sub> bara kanaa [wal]<sub>i</sub> Jibb-u [pluralizing the antecedent *nama* ‘person’ in (14a)]; to me, it is not possible to make *it* morphologically plural in such constructions.

<sup>10</sup> If we make a close investigation across the varieties of the language, Guji, Borena, and Eastern show the relationship between the grammatical categories gender and number

What needs to be clear is that antecedents of reciprocals that do not have a morphological plural marker are not singular; the semantics of the NPs is always plural. The presence of the reciprocal itself, and the plural number agreement on the verb provide a clue on the (plural) number feature of the antecedent. However it is more pragmatic than grammatical, the issue of honorific pronouns can be raised in relation to the binding of reciprocals in Oromo. Some languages have polite pronominal forms.

Kapeliuk mentions ways of expressing politeness. There are languages that use special pronouns. Amharic and Spanish follow this pattern (for instance, the Amharic *irso*, and *irsaččäw* for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> persons); there are other languages that use 2<sup>nd</sup> plural for 2<sup>nd</sup>Sg honorific, and 3<sup>rd</sup> plural for 3<sup>rd</sup>Sg honorific. There are still others, that use 3<sup>rd</sup>SgF, (eg. Italian), and 3<sup>rd</sup> plural, (eg. German), for 3<sup>rd</sup> Sg honorific, (Kapeliuk, 1994). Oromo is one of the languages that use 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> plural pronouns for honorific, and the morphology of verbs also shows this. This has effect in the binding of reciprocals. Consider the examples below:

16. (a) *obbo tolaa-n muka mur-an-ø*

Mr Tolla-NOM tree cut-Hon-PERF

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clearly. In addition, some derived nominals are feminine before becoming plural even in the Mecha dialect, which is the target of this study, as illustrated below:

<i>bar-at-aa</i>	<i>&gt;bar-at-t-oota</i>
learn-BENF-Exp.	learn-BENF-Fem-Pl
'student'	'student'
	<i>&gt;* bar-at-oota</i>

- ‘Mr Tolla cut a tree’
- (b)     *isaan muka mur-an-∅*  
           he (Hon) tree cut- Hon-PERF  
           ‘He (Hon) cut a tree’
17. (a)     *obbo tolaa-n muka mur-t-an-∅*  
           Mr. Tolla-NOM tree cut-2per-Hon-PERF  
           ‘(You) Mr Tolla cut a tree’
- (b)     *isin muka mur-t-an-∅*  
           you (Hon) tree cut-2Per-PL-PERF  
           ‘You (Hon) cut a tree’

The subject in (16a) and (17a)- *obbo tolaa* ‘Mr Tolla’ is replaced by the pronoun *isaan*, and *isin*, respectively. However, the pronouns may refer to more than one person, as the plural and the honorific are homophonous. The morphology on the verb, as Kapeluk (1994) says, is also the same. Hence, there is no clue as to which of these pronouns reference is made. However, their forms are the same as that of plural pronouns, which cannot function as antecedents for reciprocals as illustrated in (18) and (19) below:

18. (a)     \* [*obbo tolaa-n*]<sub>i</sub> [*wal*]<sub>i</sub> *rukut-an-∅*  
           mr Tolla-NOM each other hit-3Pl-PERF  
           ‘Mr Tolla hit each other’

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This, I would say, shows that there is some connection between the grammatical categories plural number and feminine gender in the language, which even the Mecha dialect has retained in some derived nominals. The issue



(b) \* [isaan]<sub>i</sub> [wal]<sub>i</sub> rukut-an- $\phi$

he (Hon) each other hit-Hon-PERF

‘He (Hon) hit each other’

19. (a) \* [obbo tolaa-n]<sub>i</sub> [wal]<sub>i</sub> rukut-t-an- $\phi$

mr Tolla-NOM each other hit-2per-PL-PERF

‘Mr Tolla hit each other’

(b) \* [isin]<sub>i</sub> [wal]<sub>i</sub> rukut-t-an- $\phi$

you (Hon) each other hit-2Per-PL-PERF

‘You (Hon) hit each other’

The presence/absence of the reciprocals, however, provides information on whether the pronouns refer to plural/honorific.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Non-Anaphoric Pronominal Interpretation in Oromo

#### 3.0 Overview

The grammar shows that certain NPs are referentially free in their governing domain. Such NPs are called non-anaphoric pronominals, or simply pronouns. They get their reference not from their governing domain, but from the discourse in which they are used.

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<sup>1</sup> needs further reseach.

The fact that pronouns are called ‘non-anaphoric’ may refute the meaning of ‘anaphors’. This is because, anaphors, which were the subject of discussion in chapter two, are those elements which are identical in their reference to some NPs preceding them in their domain. (c.f. 1.5 and chapter two). Pronouns are different in this regard since they may fail to get reference within their domain.

This chapter discusses the interpretation of such categories in Oromo. It is divided into six parts-Pronouns in simple sentences, and in complex sentences pronouns, which have covert antecedents, pronominal epithets, and logophoric pronouns.

### **3.1 Pronouns in simple sentence<sup>11</sup>**

It is the unmarked case that non-anaphoric elements such as pronouns, and referential expressions are free in their simple clause. However, there are marked cases where, for example, a name is bound in a domain in languages like Thai<sup>12</sup>, (Lasnik and Uriagereka, 1988: 40).

In this section, we consider the interpretation of pronouns in simple sentences of Oromo.

#### **3.1.1 Subject Pronouns of a simple Sentence**

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<sup>11</sup> ‘Simple sentence’ is used here to refer to the division, which is traditionally used to refer to the number of clauses embedded.

Pronouns in a subject position, as is the case in any language, do not have any constraint of occurrence. We only need to consider that a pronoun stands for an NP, which is in the domain of discourse. As stated in Cook and Newson (1996), cited in Cobbott (1819:73), we need to duly consider the NP to which a pronoun refers before we write it. This is the only condition that pronouns in subject positions should satisfy as in the following example:

1.            *[in-ni]<sub>i</sub> [tulluu]<sub>j</sub> rukut- $\phi$ -e*  
               he-Nom Tullu hit-3SgM-PERF  
               ‘He hit Tullu’

The subject pronoun *inni* ‘he’ in (1) stands for somebody with the feature [+MALE, +3Ps], in which case we can substitute it by a name like *tola* ‘Tolla’.

2.            *[tola-n]<sub>i</sub> [tulluu]<sub>j</sub> rukut- $\phi$ -e*  
               Tolla-NOM Tullu hit-3SgM-PERF  
               ‘Tolla hit Tullu’

In (1), as it is shown with the indices, the pronoun *inni* ‘he’ cannot be bound to the name *tulluu* ‘Tullu’, because, NPs cannot occur to the right of a pronoun if the c-command relationship required between the NPs is to be established. The name *tulluu* ‘Tullu’ in (2) is not coreferential to the name *tola* ‘Tolla’, either, since names are free everywhere.

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<sup>12</sup> For example, in Thai, [*coon*]<sub>i</sub> choop [*coon*]<sub>j</sub> ‘John likes John’ is possible.





NP  
he-NOM fathere Tullu help-3SgM-IMPF

‘He helps Tullu’s father’

7.           [[*abbaa-n* [*tulluu*]<sub>i</sub>] [*isa*]<sub>j</sub> *gargaar-ϕ-a*  
              NP  
              father-NOM Tullu him help-3SgM-IMPF

‘Tullu’s father helps him’

In (6), the (subject) pronoun *inni* ‘he’ cannot get an antecedent; because, there is no NP c-commanding it. However, the object pronoun *isa* ‘him’ in (7) may be bound by the possessor noun *tulluu* ‘Tullu’<sup>13</sup>. This is because there is a governing category, which is the NP *abbaa tulluu* ‘Tullu’s father’ that hinders *tulluu* ‘Tullu’ to c-command and hence binds the pronoun *isa* ‘him’.

## 3.2 Pronouns in complex sentence

In this section, four major areas in the interpretation of overt argument pronouns are discussed: pronouns in embedded infinitival clauses, pronouns in subject positions of main clauses, pronouns in object position of embedded clauses, and ambiguity in the thematic status of pronouns in adverbial clauses.

### 3.2.1 Pronouns in embedded infinitival clauses

There are two ways by which a subject position of an infinitival clause is occupied.

This depends on whether the position is governed, and hence case marked or not.

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<sup>13</sup> The reference of the pronoun is somehow disjoint, and this situation conforms to the referential behavior of pronouns that they resist being assigned genitive antecedents unless both pronoun and antecedent are ‘old information’ with respect to the discourse. (Salon, 1984:178).

When a subject position of an infinitival clause is ungoverned, the position is occupied by PRO, which is controlled by the subject or object of the matrix clause as in (8) below:

8. 
$$\left[ \left[ \underset{\text{CP IP}}{[in-ni]_i} \left[ \underset{\text{CP IP}}{[PRO_i \text{ hoolaa Kal-uu}]} \text{ barbaad-}\phi\text{-a} \right] \right] \right]$$
  
 he-NOM PRO sheep slaughter-INF want-3SgM-IMPF  
 ‘He wants to slaughter a sheep’

In (8), the subject position of the (embedded) clause is occupied by the anaphoric pronominal PRO as it is an ungoverned position. The verb of the infinitival clause can assign case only to the internal argument *hoolaa* ‘sheep’. This covert subject is controlled by the subject *inni* ‘he’ of the matrix clause.

There is a possibility for the subject position of infinitival clauses to be governed and case marked in Oromo. Chomsky (1981) states that there are languages that have overt subjects of infinitival clauses, which show agreement inflection as in the following sentence:

9. (a) 
$$\left[ \left[ \underset{\text{CP IP}}{[in-ni]_i} \left[ \underset{\text{CP IP}}{[in-ni]_j \text{ hoolaa Kal-uu-saa}} \right] \text{ barbaad-}\phi\text{-a} \right] \right]$$
  
 he-NOM he-NOM sheep slaughter-INF-his want-3SgM-IMPF  
 Lit. ‘He wants he to slaughter sheep’

- (b) 
$$\left[ \left[ [in-ni]_j \left[ [Pro_i \text{ hoolaa Kal-uu-saa}] \text{ barbaad-}\phi\text{-a} \right] \right] \right]$$

CP IP CP IP  
 he-NOM Pro sheep slaughter-INF-his-3SgM-IMPF

Lit. ‘He wants he to slaughter sheep’

In (9), the subject position of the embedded clause is governed by the possessive Agr – *saa* ‘his’. Hence, we can drop the subject of the embedded clause as in (9b), in which the pronoun is Pro, whose reference is also recovered from the agreement inflection on the verb of the matrix clause.

When we consider the reference of the subject of the embedded clause, as the indices show, the pronoun cannot be co-referential with the subject of the matrix clause whether it is overt as in (9a), or covert as in (9b).

### 3.2.2 Subject position of main clauses

In Oromo, a subject pronoun of a main clause may not co-refer with an object NP of an embedded clause. Let us examine the following sentences:

10. (a)  $\left[ \left[ \underset{\text{CP IP}}{\text{jeroo}} \left[ \underset{\text{CP IP}}{\text{tulluu-n}} \left[ \text{tolaa} \right]_i \text{ waam-}\phi\text{-e} \right] \right]_i \left[ \left[ \text{in-ni} \right]_{i/t} \text{ t}_i \text{ gabaa tur-}\phi\text{-e} \right] \right]$

when Tullu-NOM Tolla call-3SgM-PERF he-NOM market be-3SgM-PERF

‘When Tullu called Tolla, he was at the market’

(b)  $\left[ \left[ \text{in-ni} \right]_i \left[ \underset{\text{CP IP}}{\text{jeroo}} \left[ \underset{\text{CP IP}}{\text{tulluu-n}} \left[ \text{tolaa} \right]_i \text{ waam-}\phi\text{-e} \right] \right] \text{ gabaa tur-}\phi\text{-e} \right]$

he-NOM when Tullu-NOM Tolla call-3SgM-PERF market be-3SgM-PERF

‘He, when Tullu called Tolla, was at market.’



In the representation, the embedded clause occupies the adjunct position of the VP of the main clause. In situ, the object NP of the embedded clause- *tola* ‘Tolla’ cannot bind the subject pronoun of the main clause for it does not c-command it, hence, the disjoint reference in (b). When the adverbial CP moves to a spec of CP, the required c-command position is satisfied as in (10c) below:

10. (c)  ${}_{CP} [{}_{IP} jeroo [{}_{IP} tulluun [tola]_i waam-\phi e]]_j [ [in-ni]_i t_j gaba$   
*aa tur-\phi e]*  
 when Tullu-NOM Tolla call-3SgM-PERF he-NOM  $t_j$  market be-3SgM-PERF  
 ‘He, when Tullu called Tolla, was at the market’

Hence, it is the position of the adverbial clause that determines the co-reference of the subject pronoun of the matrix clause. In other words, for a pronoun to be bound by an object NP of an embedded adverbial clause, it needs to be c-commanded by the NP, and this is possible if the clause, which carries the NP, moves to the spec of CP of the matrix clause.

### 3.2.3 Object position of embedded adverbial clauses

An object pronoun of an adverbial clause may refer to the subject NP of the matrix clause of a complex sentence. As opposed to the case with object NP in main clauses, (c. f. 3.2.2), the subject NP of the matrix clause, can c-command the object pronoun of the embedded, in situ, as in (11) below:

11. (a)  $[{}_{CP} jeroo [{}_{IP} tulluu-n [isa]_{ij} waam-\phi e]] [ [tola-n]_i gaba$   
*aa tur-\phi e]*  
 when Tullu-NOM him call-3SgM-PERF Tolla-NOM market be-3SgM-PERF

‘When Tullu called him, Tolla was at the market’

(b)  $\left[ \underset{\text{IP}}{[tolaa-n]_i} \left[ \underset{\text{CP}}{jeroo} \left[ \underset{\text{IP}}{tulluu-n} [isa]_{ij} waam-\phi-e \right] \right] gabaat tur-\phi-e \right]$   
 Tolla-NOM when Tullu-NOM him call-3SgM-PERF market be-3SgM-PERF

‘Tolla, when Tullu called him, was at the market’

The movement of the adverbial clause, in (10a) has created a c-command condition for the binding of the pronoun. However, in (11a), the opposite is observed. Even if the deep structure representation has the pronoun in a position lower than the NP, which binds it, it seems to violate the constraint, which requires the pronoun to be bound to the NP that follows it.

The deep structure of (11a) is (11b), in which case the movement of the adverbial clause to matrix CP in (11a) would violate the c-command relationship between the binder NP and the pronoun, contrary to what we see.

11. (c)  $\left[ \underset{\text{CP}}{jeroo} \left[ \underset{\text{IP}}{tulluu-n} isa waam-\phi-e \right] \right]_j \left[ \underset{\text{IP}}{tolaa-n} \right]_i t_j gabaat tur-\phi-e$   
 When Tullu-NOM him call-3SgM-PERF Tolla-NOM  $t_i$  market be-3SgM-PERF

‘When Tullu called him, Tolla was at market’

The movement in (11) is motivated by the requirement that, if a co-referential pronoun occurs out of the c-command domain of its antecedent, the movement of the phrase, containing the pronoun, to a c-commanding domain of the antecedent would satisfy the required c-command relation between the two NPs, (Lasnik and Uriagereka, 1988).

### 3.2.4 Ambiguity in thematic status of pronouns of some embedded adverbial clauses

By making a thorough recourse to non-argument binding, we can handle the binding relations holding between some NPs, which are ambiguous in their thematic status. This is especially significant where person markers of some pronouns are similar. The data we have in Oromo are on 1Sg and 3SgM pronouns since both are marked by zero morphemes.

If we consider the following structures, we can see two possible interpretations for the reference of the pronouns involved.

12. *tulluu-n akka in-ni deem- $\phi$ -e beek- $\phi$ -a*

Tulluu-NOM that he-NOM go-3SgM-PERF know-3SgM-IMPF

a. ‘Tullu knows that he went’

b. ‘I/He know(s) that he, Tullu went’

The interpretation we have here depends on the intention of the speaker, which in turn determines the type of binding that is at work. The analysis we have for each interpretation would be as follows:

12. (a)  $\left[ \underset{\text{IP}}{[tulluu-n]_i} \underset{\text{CP}}{[akka \underset{\text{IP}}{[in-ni]_j} deem-\phi-e]} beek-\phi-a \right]$   
 Tullu-NOM that he-NOM go-3SgM-PERF know-3SgM-IMPF  
 ‘Tullu knows that he went’
- (b)  $\left[ \underset{\text{IP}}{Pro} \underset{\text{CP}}{\left[ \underset{\text{IP}}{[tulluu-n]_i} akka [in-ni]_j deem-\phi-e \right]} beek-\phi-a \right]$   
 Pro Tullu-NOM that he-NOM go-3SgM-PERF know-3SgM-IMPF  
 ‘I/he know(s) that he, Tullu went’

In (12a), the pronoun *inni* ‘he’ has a disjoint reference with the name *tulluu* ‘Tullu’ of the matrix clause, and it is in argument position of the external argument of *deem-* ‘go’. However, the same pronoun in (12b) is co-referential to *tulluu* ‘Tullu’. The (binder) NP in (b) unlike in (a), is not part of the matrix clause, nor is the pronoun. The external argument for *beek-* ‘know’ in (b) is a covert subject *Pro*, and the internal argument is the lower CP, in which the predicate *deem-* ‘go’ would have two external ‘arguments’ *tulluu* ‘Tullu’ and *inni* ‘he’ –which theta-criterion does not allow. Consequently, the type of binding we have in (b) is non-argument binding.

### 3.2.5 Coreferential subjects of complement and adjunct clauses

In Oromo, a pronominal subject of both a complement and adjunct clause is deleted if it is coreferential with the subject of the matrix clause. This is illustrated in (13) below.

13. (a) 
$$\left[ \underset{\text{IP}}{[tulluu-n]_i} \left[ \underset{\text{CP}}{akka} \left[ \underset{\text{IP}}{[in-ni]_{ij}} \text{soorom-}\phi\text{-}u \right] \right] \text{jaad-}\phi\text{-}a \right]$$
  
 Tullu-NOM that he-NOM prosper-3SgM-IMPF thinks-3SgM-IMPF

‘Tullu thinks that he would prosper’

- (b) 
$$\left[ \underset{\text{IP}}{[tulluu-n]_i} \left[ \underset{\text{CP}}{akka} \left[ \underset{\text{IP}}{[Pro_i \text{soorom-}\phi\text{-}u]} \right] \right] \text{jaad-}\phi\text{-}a \right]$$

Tullu-NOM that pro prosper-3SgM-IMPF thinks-3SgM-IMPF

‘Tullu thinks that he would prosper’

14. (a) 
$$\left[ \underset{\text{IP}}{[tulluu-n]_i} \left[ \underset{\text{CP}}{jeroo} \left[ \underset{\text{IP}}{[in-ni]_{ij}} \text{deem-}\phi\text{-}e \text{hin-beek-}\phi\text{-}u \right] \right] \right]$$

Tullu-NOM when he-NOM go-3SgM-PERF Neg-Know-3SgM-IMPF

‘Tullu does not know when he left’

- (b) 
$$\left[ \underset{\text{IP}}{[tulluu-n]_i} \left[ \underset{\text{CP}}{jeroo} \left[ \underset{\text{IP}}{[Pro_i \text{deem-}\phi\text{-}e]} \right] \text{hin-beek-}\phi\text{-}u \right] \right]$$

Tullu-NOM when Pro go-3SgM-PERF Neg-know-3SgM-IMPF

‘Tullu does not know when he left’

In (13a), the embedded clause is a complement, and in (14a), it is an adjunct. In their coreferential reading, the embedded pronominal subjects are deleted as in (13b) and (14b).

### 3.3 Covert antecedents of bound pronouns

As Oromo is a pro-drop language, subjects of a finite clause can be null. This, in effect, has made it possible for antecedents of (bound) pronouns to be covert. The following sentences illustrate this.

15. (a) 
$$\left[ \underset{\text{IP}}{[in-ni]_i} \left[ \underset{\text{CP}}{akka} \left[ \underset{\text{IP}}{[nam-ni [isa]_{ij}} \text{Jibb-}\phi\text{-}e \right] \right] \text{beek-}\phi\text{-}a \right] \right]$$

he –NOM that man-NOM him hate-3SgM-PERF know-3SgM- IMPF

‘He knows that people hated him’

- (b)  $\left[ \underset{\text{IP}}{\text{Pro}}_i \left[ \underset{\text{CP}}{\text{akka}} \left[ \underset{\text{IP}}{\text{nam-ni}} \left[ \text{isa} \right]_{ij} \text{Jibb-}\phi\text{-e} \right] \right] \text{beek-}\phi\text{-a} \right]$   
 Pro that man-NOM him hate-3SgM-PERF know-3SgM-IMPf

‘He knows that people hated him’

(15 a, and b) are the same with reference to the interpretation of the pronoun *isa* ‘him’ of the lower clause. The difference between the two clauses is in the realization of the antecedent of the pronoun *isa* ‘him’ which is overt in (a) but covert in (b).

### 3.4 Pronominal Epithets in Oromo

These are usually adjectives, which function as pronouns. With respect to the binding theory, they always have a referential identity with other NPs like in (16) below.

16. (a)  $\left[ \left[ \underset{\text{CP}}{\text{an-i}} \left[ \underset{\text{IP}}{\text{tulluu}} \right]_i \text{waam-}\phi\text{-u-} \right] \underset{\text{IP NP}}{\text{jjuu}} \right] \left[ \left[ \text{gaDee-n kun} \right]_i \text{hin-Duf-}\phi\text{-u} \right]$   
 I-NOM Tullu call-1Sg-IMPf-though rubbish-NOM this Neg-come-3SgM-MPF

Lit. ‘Though I call Tullu, the rubbish will not come’

- (b) \* *an-i tulluu waam-φ-u-jjuu gaDee-n hin-Duf-φ-u*

I-NOM Tullu call-1Sg-IMPf-though rubbish-NOM NEG-come-3SgM-PF

‘Though I call Tullu rubbish will not come’

The presence of the specifier *kun* ‘this’ in (16a), makes the adjective *gaDee* ‘rubbish’ a pronoun. If we omit the specifier, the adjective would not serve as a pronoun. If we

substitute the specified adjective, which in turn, qualifies the antecedent NP *tulluu* ‘Tullu’, via the pronoun *inni* ‘he’, the sentence would be equally grammatical. The pronoun does not need a specifier, because pronouns are specifiers’, (Baye, 1989:599-600). We can substitute *gaDeen kun* ‘this rubbish’ in (16a) by a pronoun as in (16c) below:

16. (c)      $\left[ \begin{array}{c} [an-i [tulluu]_i \\ \text{CP IP} \end{array} \right] \left[ \begin{array}{c} [in-ni]_i \\ \text{IP} \end{array} \right] \left[ \begin{array}{c} hin-Duf-\phi-u \\ \text{I-NOM Tullu call-1Sg-IMPF-Though he-NOM NEG-come-3SgM-IMPF} \end{array} \right]$

‘Though I call Tullu, he would not come’

Pronominal epithets in general behave like pronouns with regard to the binding theory, and the examples confirm this.

### 3.5 Logophoric Pronouns

Essentially, reflexives like ‘himself’ and pronouns like ‘him’ complement each other in that where reflexives occur, pronouns do not.

In some languages like the African languages of Dogon, Ewe, Tupuri, etc, cited from Hagege (1974), Clements (1975), Von Roncador (1972), & Culy (1994a) quoted in Culy (1997)), logophors are morphologically different from reflexives; and in other languages like English [Sag (1992:228) quoted in Culy (1997)], logophors are like reflexives.

There are two positions for logophoric pronouns in structures. They occur in argument positions (but restricted to genitive [picture] NPs), and in non-argument position, (Culicover, 1976', Haegeman, 1994, Fromkin, 2000).

When we consider the (morphological) shape of logophoric pronouns in Oromo, it seems that the language is found between the type, which has different form, and those that have forms that are the same as reflexive. Whether in non-argument position, or with picture nouns, the forms used are *mataa* 'head' and *of* 'self' (both with person inflections). We will consider two positions of logophoric pronouns and the way they behave.

### 3.5.1 Logophors in non-argument position

In Oromo, logophors occur in non-argument positions like in (17) below:

17. (a) Pro<sub>i</sub> [*mataa-koo*]<sub>i</sub> *malee nama sadii-tu as Jir-φ-a*  
 head-my without person three-FOC here be-3SgM-IMPF  
 'Excluding myself, there are three persons here'
- (b) Pro<sub>i</sub> [*of-ikoo*] *malee nama sadii-tu as Jir-φ-a*  
 self-my without person three-FOC here be-3SgM-IMPF  
 'Excluding myself, there are three persons here'
- (c) [*ana*] *malee nama sadii-tu as Jir-φ-a*  
 me without person three-FOC her be-3SgM-IMPF



‘Excluding me, there are three persons here’

(16a, b and c) are the same in meaning, and are equally acceptable. The logophors in (a) and (b) - *mataa-koo*, and *of-iikoo* (both ‘myself’), respectively are used logophorically in a way that the omission of the inflection, which varies depending on the person, is not possible. In both cases, we can replace the logophor by the pronoun *ana* ‘me’ (for the person we have here), hence (17c). In (17a and b), there is an antecedent Pro of the logophors *mataakoo* and *ofiikoo* (both ‘myself’); and this antecedent is the same as the pronoun *ana* ‘I’, which has replaced the logophors like in (17c).

That we have *mataa* ‘head’ as a logophor in Oromo makes the language fall under the type of such African languages like Ewe, Tupuri, Dogon. However, the use of *of* ‘self’ as a reflexive, makes the language like English. (c.f.3.5.). The difference in the use of the reflexive in Oromo is that person inflections are obligatory when the reflexive functions as a logophor.

### **3.5.2 Argument Position**

There are two cases where logophoric pronouns occur one with ‘picture nouns’, and, another with ambiguous antecedent, both described below:

#### **3.5.2.1 Logophors with genitive NPs**

It has been mentioned earlier that there are two types of logophores in Oromo: (1) the reflexive *of* ‘self’, and (2) the logophoric pronoun *mataa* ‘self’. In both cases, there

should be person inflections in the form of genitive suffixes when they are used in genitive NPs, which are often called in the literature 'picture nouns', as in the following:

18. (a)  $[tulluu-n]_i$   $[\underset{NP}{suuraa} [mataa-saa]_i]$  *Jibb-φ-a*  
 Tullu-NOM picture head-his hate-3SgM-IMPF  
 'Tullu hates a picture of himself'
- (b)  $[tulluu-n]_i$   $[\underset{NP}{suuraa} [of-iisaa]_i]$  *Jibb-φ-a*  
 Tullu-NOM picture self-his hate-3SgM-IMPF  
 'Tullu hates a picture of himself'
- (c)  $[tulluu-n]_i$   $[\underset{NP}{suuraa} [isaa]_i]$  *Jibb-φ-a*  
 Tullu-NOM picture his hate-3SgM-IMPF  
 'Tullu hates a picture of himself'

As we can see from the sentences (a) and (b), just like non-argument positions, we can alternatively use the logophors *mataa* 'head', and *of* 'self', respectively. They also show inflections and they can be replaced by pronouns as in (18c).

### 3.5.2.2 Logophors with Ambiguous Antecedent

In cases where the determining of antecedents for reflexives is difficult, the choice of one of the candidates would turn a reflexive into a logophor as in (19) below:

19. (a) *tulluu-n tolaa-tti waa?ee of-iisaa him-φ-e*

Tullu-NOM Tolla-to about self- his tell-3SgM-PERF

‘Tullu told Tolla about himself’

(b) *tulluu-n [tolaa-tti]<sub>i</sub> waa?ee [isaa]<sub>i</sub> him- $\phi$ -e*

Tullu-NOM Tolla-to about his tell-3SgM-PERF

‘Tullu told Tolla about him’

When we look at (19a), the ‘reflexive’ *ofiisaa* ‘himself’ has two statuses. When the interpretation takes *tulluu* ‘Tullu’ as the antecedent, it is a reflexive; when the antecedent is *tolaa* ‘Tolla’, it serves as a ‘logophor’, and can be replaced by the pronoun *isa* ‘him’, as in (19b).

## ***CHAPTER FOUR***

### ***SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION***

In this study, an attempt has been made to show some referential characteristics of overt argument NPs in Oromo. The first chapter deals with introductory issues including a brief description of the language, the objective, the significance and scope of the study, the methodology, the theoretical framework, and review of related literature.

The second and the third chapters discuss the central objective of the thesis. In these chapters, the properties of pronominals are discussed. In addition, forms of anaphoric pronominals have been identified to be *of* ‘self’ and *wal* ‘each other’, which are also identified in previous works like Gragg (1976), Haimanot (1984) and Owens (1985).<sup>14</sup> They show genitive inflections of possession in agreement with the antecedents of the anaphors. They are patient in their thematic roles and objects in their syntactic function.

The genitive agreement suffixes are optional since the antecedent is identified from the person inflections of the verb. Reciprocals can have antecedents that are not phonetically plural.

It is shown that conditions of c-command, government, and accessibility to subjects are satisfied. Antecedents can be overt and covert since the language is pro-drop.

Subject and object pronouns are referentially free in complex structures. In structures where the pronominal fails to satisfy the c-command requirement at s-structure, the binding relation holds at LF. This is true for structures in which the antecedent is a subject. When the antecedent is an object, the relation holds at s-structure. This suggests an asymmetry between the two constituents.

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<sup>14</sup> However, Haimanot’s (1984) reflexive is *ofi*, and Owens’ (1985) is *if*. While Haimanot’s is a matter of phonological discrepancy, Owens is due to dialectal difference.

If a pronoun is a subject, and a genitive NP is an object, the pronoun has disjoint reference. On the other hand, if a pronoun is an object c-commanded by a possessor noun, it has co-reference with the noun.

Embedded infinitival clauses may have PRO, which is co-referential with the subject of the matrix clause, or Pro, with a disjoint reference with the same subject. The latter is possible when there is agreement inflection on the predicate of the embedded clause.

Subject pronoun of main clauses is co-referential with object NPs of embedded adverbial clauses only when the latter clause a scope position, otherwise, the reference is disjoint. Object pronouns of embedded adverbial clauses may co-refer with the subject NPs of main clauses whether the adverbial clauses take scope position or in situ. Co-referential subject pronouns of both adjunct and complement clauses are null.

Specifiers like *kun* ‘this’ combine with adjectives to yield pronominal epithets. Besides, *mataa* ‘head’ and the reflexive *of* ‘self’ serve as logophors, both, showing obligatory genitive suffixes. Such logophoric pronouns occur in non-argument, and argument positions. The latter is possible only with picture nouns and when there is more than one NP for antecedent role.

The researcher does not claim that the account made in this study is comprehensive enough. But, it is hoped that the study would take a step forward Ethiopian linguistics

in general, and the study of Oromo, in particular. This is because the issue of NP interpretation is an aspect not extensively dealt with in the study of Ethiopian languages.

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