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Language attrition in bicultural bilinguals: Evidence from Neo-Aramaic animal metaphors

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Animal-based metaphors are ubiquitous in natural languages with distinct cross-cultural implications. In this study, these conventional or dead metaphors, so to speak, are used as a tool to measure language erosion and cultural integration. We assumed that Neo-Aramaic-English bicultural bilinguals (NA-E) and Canadian-English speakers (CE) have the linguistic and cultural capacity necessary to establish concerted conceptualizations and culturally agreed upon connection between the target and source domain of these metaphors. This assumption was based on the fact that animals are one of the main categories of language vocabulary that native speakers learn during the early stages of their linguistic development. We selected widely known animal metaphors- 13 had identical meanings and 11 had culturally distinct meanings. The results showed no significant difference between the two groups as to the meaning of identical metaphors and animal gender associations. However, we found a significant statistical difference in the good and poor match of the culturally distinct metaphors. Animal gender associations did not show any significant difference. The frequency scale did not show any significant difference except for 'always' with distinct metaphors.

Key words: Neo-Aramaic, cultural integration, animal metaphors, language attrition.

INTRODUCTION

In this study, we target a figurative aspect of a minority language (that is, Neo-Aramaic) and the role of host culture in language erosion. It is widely known that the Canadian society is made up of a large number of ethnicities which resulted in developing a mosaic cultural system.

More often than not, individuals belonging to distinct ethnicities and having various linguistic and cultural backgrounds are encouraged by the general inclusive atmosphere to retain their cultural and linguistic identity. However, it is unclear whether such kind of cultural pluralism strengthens or weakens the heritage language of the minority group in question.

Therefore, we assume that the hegemonic culture puts increasingly potential pressure on certain aspects of language which creates a state of disequilibrium between minority and majority language. In language-centered cultures minority, group members usually put emphasis on their heritage language. That said, apart from language there might exist other cultural aspects that would greatly contribute to and clearly delineate the boundaries of existence, identification and future

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continuity of the minority group.

When two languages are in contact situation, it is customary to borrow or transfer (non)linguistic forms and components from source language (L1) to target language (L2) (Aikhenvald, 2003; James 1980; Heine and Kuteva, 2005; Lado, 1957; Muysken, 2000; Thomason and Kuafman, 1988; Thomason, 2001). On the microlinguistic level, lexical, phonetic, and phonological transfer or borrowing from L1 to L2 usually causes difficulties for second language learners.

However, research in first and second language acquisition proved that high-frequency linguistic structures are acquired faster and earlier (Ellis 2002; Goodman et al., 2008). In fact, the high frequency of these structures facilitates the process of borrowing or transferring from one language to another (Pagel et al., 2007). It is disappointing to admit that high-frequency facilitation hypothesis fails to explain how animal metaphors, which are characterized by low frequency, are transferred in contact situation from L2 to L1.

Little empirical work has been done on the influence of L2 on L1 in childhood bilingualism. Wong-Fillmore (1991) showed evidence from interviews with parents and stated that ''as immigrant children learn English, the patterns of language use change in their homes, and the younger they are when they learn English, the greater the effect'' (p. 341).

Pavlenko (1999, 2000) and Pavlenko and Jarvis (2000) dealt with L2 influence on L1-based concepts in post-puberty or late bilingualism, where L2 learners borrow lexical item to express specific concepts or refer to new objects that do not exist in their cultural cognition (for contact neologism see Otheguy and Garcia, 1993).

In this study, we investigate a transfer that occurs on the macrolinguistic level where bilingual speakers successfully transfer L2 sociopragmatic knowledge to their L1. We assume that NA-E bilinguals stop being an *active part* of the cultural and linguistic realm by eschewing the dynamic process of formalizing and expressing the concerted conceptualizations of the cultural group to which they belong. We use animal metaphors to examine the effect of this conceptual transfer on language erosion. The study sheds light on language attrition that is caused by 'reverse' or 'backward' transfer from L2 to L1 (Cook, 2003). Succinctly, it is not a semantic transfer that deals with the lexical meaning of words, but rather a conceptual transfer that is essentially based on speaker's world knowledge and experience drawn from cultural interaction or enculturation so to speak.

Metaphor: A multidisciplinary perspective

In *Poetics*, Aristotle (350 B.C.E) describes metaphor as "strange...unusual, different from the normal idiom... and the mark of the genius". This said, most investigators attest that metaphor is both a ubiquitous phenomenon and intransigent problem in language.

In line with this, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) claimed that metaphor is not only 'pervasive' in our daily interactions but also in our 'thought' and 'action'. They bluntly stated that "our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature" (p.3).

In other words, people conceive the social world through conceptual metaphors, which enable them to understand abstract or target concepts using knowledge of dissimilar, typically more concrete or source concepts. Lakoff (1993) further claimed that "... the locus of metaphor is not in language at all, but in the way we conceptualize one mental domain in terms of another" (p. 203). For Gibbs (1994) "...human cognition is fundamentally shaped by various poetic or figurative processes" (p.1).

In social cognition, some researchers have emphasized that metaphor is a top-down knowledge and placed little emphasis on the constraints that shape metaphor from the bottom up. According to Landau et al. (2010) "people are able to use pieces of knowledge about the source concept as a structural framework for reasoning about, interpreting, and evaluating information related to target concept" (p. 1046).

To summarize, metaphor is a vital part of our conceptual network which we draw heavily on to construe and extract abstract concepts from concrete ones. It is worth noting that according to the semantic model (within generative grammar framework) of Katz and Fodor (1963) figurative language including metaphor was labelled deviant and semantically unacceptable.

The basis of animal metaphor

A considerable number of people conjecture that humans and animals are two different organisms. However, a sizable number of this population considers humans superior and more important than animals, because humans are apparently privileged to drive cars, wear fancy suits, live in skyscrapers, own businesses, read, and write, etc.

Nonhuman animals, so to speak, are not entitled to indulge in such human activities. If we consider the list of things that humans can do, we discern that millions of people do not have the capability to access or execute what is considered germane, and probably unique, to humans such as literacy. A deeper inspection would reveal that humans and animals share a significant number of faculties and even some emotions.

Contrary to Descartes (1637/1988) and Davidson (1985), extensive research has been carried out to prove that animals do not lack mental ability. Some researchers have shown that many animals are able to think, but they do not possess the versatility that characterizes human

consciousness. They have ‘perceptual consciousnesses’ or a basic version of the human consciousness. Natsoulas (1983, p.29) described it as “the state or facility of being mentally conscious or aware of everything.”

Savage-Rumbaugh et al. (1998) used Yerkes Laboratory keyboard system to show that chimpanzees can communicate conscious thoughts and emotions. According to Seeley and Visscher (2003), even worker bees possess this kind of perceptual consciousness. Roberts (1996) defends the idea that both humans and animals experience fear but differently “...we and the small dog have emotions both of which can be called fear, they are nevertheless different emotions, with different diagnostic and therapeutic implications” (p.155).

Some zoologists like Dawkins (1993) adopted a Darwinian approach to link humans and animals in a chain or ring species. Dawkins (1993) claims that our speciesist and discontinuous mind obfuscate the fact that "a fetus can be “half human” or “a hundredth human”. “Human”, to the discontinuous mind, is an absolute concept. There can be no half measures. And from this flows much evil" (p.37, quotes original). According to Dawkins (1993), the chimpanzee who lived in Africa five and seven million years ago is our cousin. On the other hand, the *New Scientist*, in its editorial of 13 February (1999), conspicuously vindicated the idea that genetic comparison does not justify the claim that gorillas or chimpanzees and humans are virtually identical.

Unfortunately, it has become fashionable to stress that chimpanzees and humans must have staggeringly similar psychologies because they share 98.4% of their DNA. But this misses the point: genomes are not like cake recipes... A creature that shares 98.4% of its DNA with human is not 98.4% human, any more than a fish that shares, say, 40% of its DNA with us is 40% human...Take DNA as your measure of sentience and moral worth and the chemical connectedness of life ensures that you soon end up extending honorary personhood to the rat and haddock. (p.3)

Marks (2002) rejected the idea of comparing genes and pointed out that "All humans have a pair of large chromosomes (#2) that no chimpanzee has. It is a correlate, not a cause, of humanness..." (p.245). However, there has been a consensus among researchers that linguistic competence (mental grammar) and abstract thought are the two faculties that make *homo*, and *homo sapiens* in particular, unique.

Acculturation and cognitive patterns

Motivated by their delusionary conventional usage, predictability and allegedly universal nature, which according to research in cognitive linguistics, stems from the idea that figurative conceptualizations are grounded in embodied human experience (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; Lakoff, 1987), according to Black (1962), the British-American philosopher, unempirically labelled animal metaphors 'dead' more than fifty years ago.

On the one hand, cross-cultural studies of metaphor showed that conceptualizations could differ cross linguistically because the same animal may carry different images[1], and one concept can be associated with two different animals (Ansah, 2011; Kövecses, 2000; Talebinejad and Dastjerdi, 2005).

On the other hand, like other types of metaphor, conceptualizations of animal-based metaphors are shared, however *not* necessarily equally shared by all the members of a cultural group, because they are governed by individual experiences and predilections.

Succinctly, these members share cultural cognition that delineates, delimits and determines whether their participation in the cognitive process of conceptualization as members of the cultural group is profound or superficial. Therefore, the Neo-Aramaic[2] linguistic identity stands out when the NA-E bilingual thoroughly engages in the intergenerational conceptualization process.

However, this identity peters out when the inter-generational transmission of cultural conceptualizations is not consummately marshalled due to spontaneous cultural assimilation or '*acculturation*' (Redfield et al., 1936). We agree with Berry and Kostovcik (1990) that acculturation exerts considerable amount of pressure on one group, viz., NA-E bilinguals, more than the other.

In the same vein, some animal metaphors come to acquire novel senses and connotations even among the members of the same speech community. Owl, for example, in one Neo-Aramaic variety is ~~a~~ used to describe someone who is considered a jinx and whose presence portends a bad omen. However, in another variety, owl connotes physical ugliness or obtuseness.

Raccoon, for example is usually associated with thieves or robbery, but among the youth, this sense has been replaced by the image of a girl who wears a lot of black eyeliner. However, one cannot just turn a blind eye to the cognitive and social influence that metaphor in general and animal metaphor in particular have in the way we dissect the world around us.

PEOPLE ARE ANIMAL’S metaphor

It is important to give a brief account of the Neo-Aramaic distinct animal metaphors, as we assume the identical ones have straightforward meanings before proceeding to the experimental part. In our account, we will allude to the fact that Neo-Aramaic animal-based metaphors provide a balanced, non-stereotypical image of both men women, unlike the image represented by the English culture where woman is viewed as inferior to man (cf.

[1] For our experimental purposes, either meaning was considered a good match.

[2] NA refers to a group of language varieties that are descendants of Middle Aramaic. NA dialects of the North-Eastern NA (also known as NENA) are spoken in northern Iraq, northwestern Iran and southeastern Turkey. The study attempts to shed light on Christian dialect spoken in a town in the north of Iraq.

Hines, 1999; Nilsen, 1996; López-Rodríguez, 2009, 2016). As a matter of consistency, we will simply follow the order used in survey format in Appendix 1.

1. According to Neo-Aramaic culture, somebody who goes to bed early is *chicken*. This image is derived from the direct contact with this domestic animal according to the nature and style of living in their rural area. Morphologically, the name of the animal[3] is inherently marked for feminine gender, but metaphorical use grants it permission to be freely used with masculine nouns. The English sense, which is, 'timid' or 'coward', of this metaphorical expression is completely different from the Neo-Aramaic one.
2. Contrary to the English cultural beliefs, Neo-Aramaic *owl* is loaded with negative connotations. Unlike the wise English *owl*, it is a source of jinx, obtuseness and homeliness, probably due to its nocturnal nature. In fact, members of this cultural group presume that there is a strong correlation between a bad luck bringer and obtuseness. Morphological marking for masculine and feminine is present in metaphorical use, but, in some Neo-Aramaic varieties, speakers borrow the feminine Arabic form and use it neutrally.
3. *Bear* is a big and strong animal, and is usually associated with aggressive behaviour, but for Neo-Aramaic speakers, *bear* signifies feeble-mindedness. Feminine and masculine gender markers are used interchangeably without interrupting the metaphorical sense. In some contexts, *bear* can offensively refer to a fat female.
4. The *sheep* image in Neo-Aramaic is widely known as a symbol of innocence and amicability with positive connotations that are restricted to males. The metaphorical image related with *sheep* in the sense of innocence is not quite common in Canadian culture, because it has another sense that refers to a timid or dependent individual.
5. In Neo-Aramaic, a prolific woman is a *rabbit*. It carries a slightly negative connotation and is uniquely used to describe women with multiple successive births. It is slightly negative, because having many kids in the family is, in fact, a source of strength.
6. *Louse* has negative connotations as it refers to a weak person with no initiatives. *Louse* is a feminine noun, but can also describe a masculine referent. On the other hand, Canadians use *louse* to describe a boorish person.
7. *Gorilla* is another animal-based metaphor that represents a distinct image in the two languages. When a man is hairy, he is a described as a *gorilla*. It can also be used to refer to a noisy male or female in spite of being a feminine-marked noun. In English, *gorilla* carries negative and positive connotations; first, it is used derogatively to refer to a large black male; second, the others sense implies a positive description of man's muscular, toned up physique.
8. The image of *cat* in Neo-Aramaic, like Arabic, is based on the myth that cats have seven lives. In this sense, it is similar to the English *cat* which has nine lives. It is interesting that neo-Aramaic, unlike English, has stretched this mythical sense and employed it metaphorically; therefore, it is quite common to hear something like "s/he is a *cat*, s/he cheated death on several occasions." The context determines whether the metaphor has commendatory or derogatory implications.
9. The metaphorical image of *pig* evokes two contradictory senses. In some Neo-Aramaic varieties, *pork* is not prohibited; therefore, *pig* does not imply any negative connotations. The animal is jocularly associated with strong, healthy and sometimes spry old people. This positive image is not arbitrarily constructed, as it originates from the fact that *pig* is not domesticated in this culture, which eliminates the English image of *pig*'s gluttony, untidiness and dirtiness associated with a pigsty. People are more familiar with wild boars which are hunted in the wilderness.
10. The *Fish*'s image is directly linked with water. This metaphorical sense refers to people who take great pleasure in swimming, bathing, splashing, sprinkling, etc. *Fish* is a feminine noun in Neo-Aramaic but can be used with masculine nouns on par. The metaphorical sense, in English, differs dramatically from the Neo-Aramaic one. An inexperienced and fledgling person is a *fish*, which apparently has a negative connotation.
11. *Mule* carries another contradictory image in the two languages. *Mule* is known as a draft animal in both cultures. However, *mule* has kept its status as a strong, hard-working animal in Neo-Aramaic, but its metaphorical sense has shifted, in English, to become associated with stubbornness. Morphologically, *mule* is a masculine noun and thus its metaphorical use is restricted to men.

METHODOLOGY

Experimental design and instrument

The experiment consisted of two parts which were randomized throughout the survey to enhance the statistical validity of our results- we capitalized them in Appendix 1 for convenience. The first one was made up of 11 animal metaphors.

These metaphors have distinct meanings in Neo-Aramaic and English. Chicken, for example, is conceptualized as a weak creature which resonates with some human characteristics whereas in the NA culture the conceptualization of this animal is different. In NA, early sleepers are usually referred to as chickens.

The second part consisted of 13 identical[4] animal metaphors. Speakers from the cultures in question have equivalent conceptualizations of these animals, for example, untrustworthy or slippery people are described as snakes. We focused on animals that are quite familiar and usually metaphorically used in both cultures; therefore, animals, such as a raccoon, dolphin, panda, etc. were excluded.

[3] Animal-bird distinction is irrelevant to our work; therefore, we will use animal as a hypernym.

[4] Henceforth, 'Identical' and 'equivalent' will be used interchangeably.

In addition to consulting metaphor dictionaries, we interviewed six native Canadian English speakers (aged +50) to confirm those with dictionary entry and to investigate the meaning of those that we could not find in dictionaries. There are no Neo-Aramaic dictionaries because Neo-Aramaic is only spoken. We interviewed seven Neo-Aramaic native speakers (aged +60) to verify the meaning of the metaphors we used in our on-line survey.

We used animal metaphors as a means to examine the effect of learning a second language (i.e. Canadian English) on core concepts in the first language (that is, Neo-Aramaic). This will reveal the influence of cultural integration on native or primary language. The study dealt with the nominal use of animals in metaphors, for example, 'X is a pig' (Appendix 1). Adjectival animal metaphors, for example 'shrewish', 'foxy', and 'mousy', etc. and Verbal metaphors, such as 'X wanted to white ant Y' or 'X was horsing around with Y' were not tackled.

The survey consisted of three main questions. The first one required providing appropriate adjectives to describe the human characteristics that each animal implies. As expected, there was a wide range of adjectives associated with each metaphor. In order to tease apart these various adjectives, based on the established connotations of the selected animal metaphors, our analysis treated the adjectives as subordinates subsumed under the superordinate term (that is, the animal).

'Scorpion' for example, subsumed 'sly', 'untrustworthy', 'sneaky' and 'wicked' which were treated as a 'good match' whereas other adjectives, such as 'fierce', 'strong', and 'withdrawn' were labelled as a 'poor match'. The second question was about gender identification- each animal metaphor can be used to refer to male, female or both. The third question dealt with frequency. We asked the participants to give a frequency rating for each metaphor by depending on a predesigned, descending scale that consisted of six options: always, usually, sometimes, rarely, never, and I do not know this expression.

Subjects

Two groups participated in the study. The first one consisted of 30 NA-E bilinguals[5] who volunteered to take part in the study. We excluded three NA participants because they did not identify themselves as native NA speakers. The second group was made up of 30 CE monolinguals that were granted one credit in one of the courses upon signing up for the study. Uncompleted surveys were not included in our data. To ensure partial homogeneity among participants, both groups aged between 20 and 28 in order to get a sensible response to our linguistic questions about animal metaphors. The data collected from the old speakers were not used for statistical purposes. All the CE participants were undergraduate students at McMaster University during the time of conducting the survey- a few NA-E bilinguals were McMaster alumni.

Procedure

The participants had to complete an on-line survey on animal metaphor (Appendix 1). The survey takes between 30 to 45 minutes to complete. However, participants were not obliged to answer all the questions in one session as they had the option to save their uncompleted survey and come back at a later time. The preamble statement gives a brief account about the survey and its objectives (Appendix 2). Before taking the survey, the participants had to read the consent form and agree to participate (Appendix 3). Then, they answered some demographic questions.

[5] NA-E bilinguals are immigrants who arrived in Canada when they were young children. Most of them have at least 10 years of natural exposure. They did not get any bilingual education at school.

RESULTS

The nonparametric equivalent of a two-independent samples t-test (that is, the Wilcox rank-sum (two-tailed) test) was used in the study statistical analysis.

For the identical metaphors, (see Appendix 1, bolded), the good match scores of NA-E bilinguals (M*dn* 50) and CE speakers (M*dn*60) did not differ significantly at .05 level as shown in the plot below (Figure 1), *W*= 86.5, *p*=0.9, *r*= -0.02. 50% of the good match scores lied between 70 and 37, which did not differ from the scores of CE speakers whose scores were between 70 and 33.

This suggests that NA-E bilinguals and CE speakers are equally cognizant about this kind of metaphors. The plot in Figure 1 shows the convergence between both groups and their ability to create a kind of linkage between metaphors and human characteristics.

We did not find a significant difference between the poor and zero match scores of both groups, (M*dn*=27) for NA-E speakers did not differ significantly from (M*dn*=30) for CE speakers, *W*= 84, *p*= 1, *r*= -0.02. CE speakers demonstrated more consistency than NA-E bilinguals did in this condition; their *IQR* was 13 relative to their NA peers (*IQR* 20). Again, half of the scores were between 37 and 17 for NA-E bilinguals and between 33 and 20 for CE speakers.

The spread of the data was very similar in case of their zero match (that is, they refrained from giving any description), (M*dn*= 17) for NA-E bilinguals and (M*dn*=13) for CE speaker, *W*=77.5. *p*= 0.7, *r*= -0.07 as shown in (Figure 2). These results index that the two groups not only did they share the same cultural perspective regarding what these conventional metaphors mean but also demonstrated the same level of cultural leaning as to providing wrong meanings and refraining from or failing to provide any.

We noticed more convergence between both groups in associations of gender with these metaphors. It is an indication that both groups share the knowledge required to establish a correlation between the genders in two distinct domains: the animal (source domain) and the human (target domain). All the panels in Figure 3 show an overlap suggesting that NA-E bilinguals and CE speakers do not differ significantly at 0.05 level. For choosing the correct gender, for both groups (M*dn*=53), *W*= 94.5, *p*= 0.6, *r*= -0.07. However, mismatch scores of both groups were lower than their good match scores. NA-E bilinguals made more mistakes and thus scored higher (M*dn*=30) than CE speakers (M*dn*=23), *W*= 66.5, *p*=0.4, *r*= -0.2.

Both groups demonstrated a pattern in gender identification as they got high scores for matching up gender with the metaphor. However, their scores tapered off in the other two conditions. NA-E bilinguals showed more consistency than CE speakers did in choosing

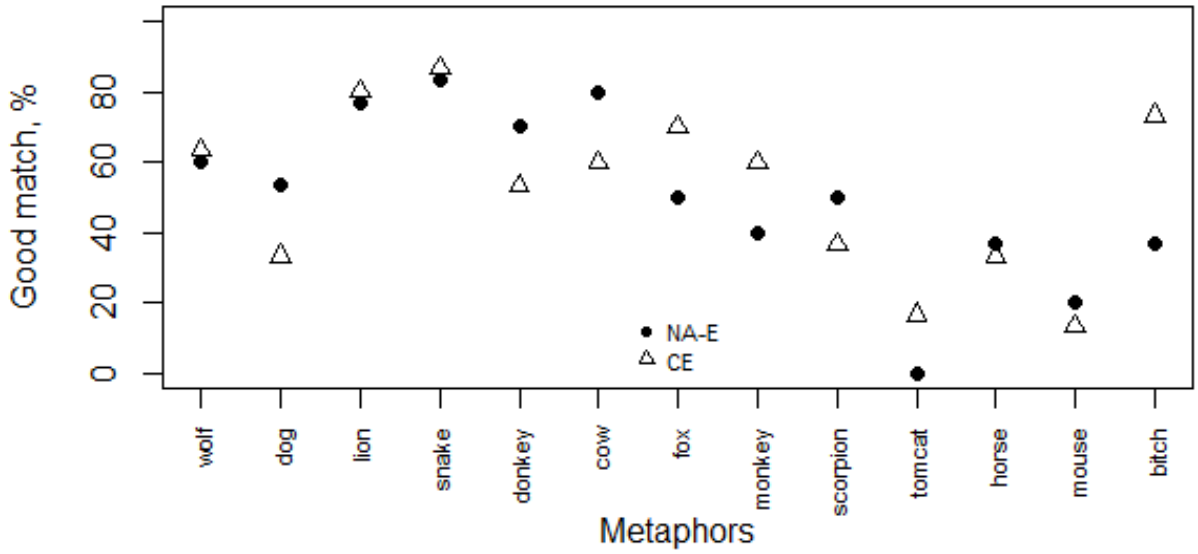

Figure 1. NA-E and CE good match of culturally equivalent animal metaphors.

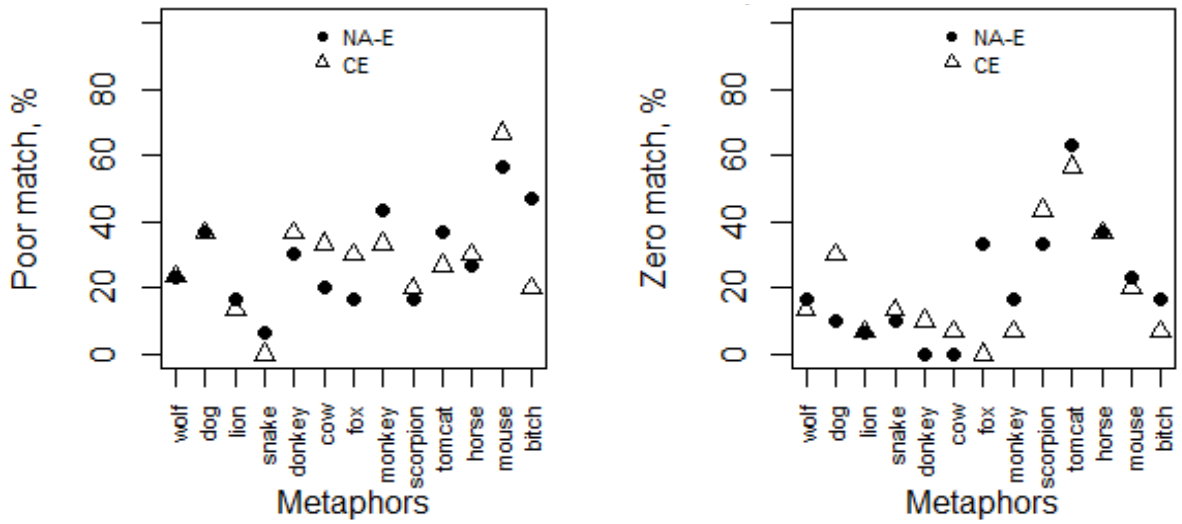

Figure 2. NA-E and CE poor and zero match of culturally identical animal metaphors.

gender that did not match up with the metaphor, because their *IQR* was 13 compared to 20 for CE speakers.

We observed a similar tendency in their behaviour, as they failed to properly associate either gender with the metaphors in question (zero gender match). Again, NA-E bilinguals scored a bit higher than CE speakers did, suggesting that they did not know which gender should be used in this condition. However, failure to provide gender did not differ significantly for NA-E bilinguals (M*dn*=17) and CE speakers (M*dn*=13), *W*=76.5, *p*= 0.7, *r*= -0.08.

Distinct metaphors showed that there was a significant difference between NA-E bilinguals and CE speakers at 0.05 level. The good match in Figure 4 show that CE speakers scored higher (M*dn*=47) than NA-E bilinguals (M*dn*=10), *W*=100.5, *p*= 0.01, *r*= -0.48. Half of their scores were between 73 and 25 whereas the 50% of NA-E bilinguals scores were lower (22- 5).

In other words, CE speaker were better than NA-E bilinguals at associating transformable characteristics of the target domain with the source domain. We noticed that NA-E bilinguals had less variability (*IQR*=17) than CE speakers did (*IQR*= 50), which indexes more agreement or a general tendency within this group to provide less

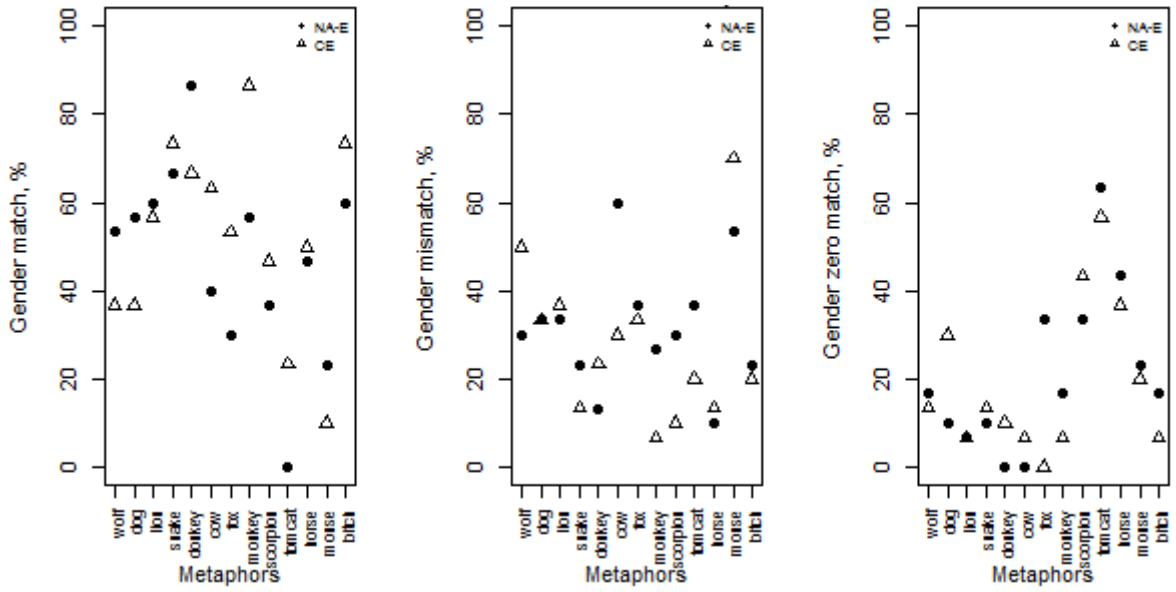

Figure 3. Three levels of gender agreement with culturally identical animal metaphors.

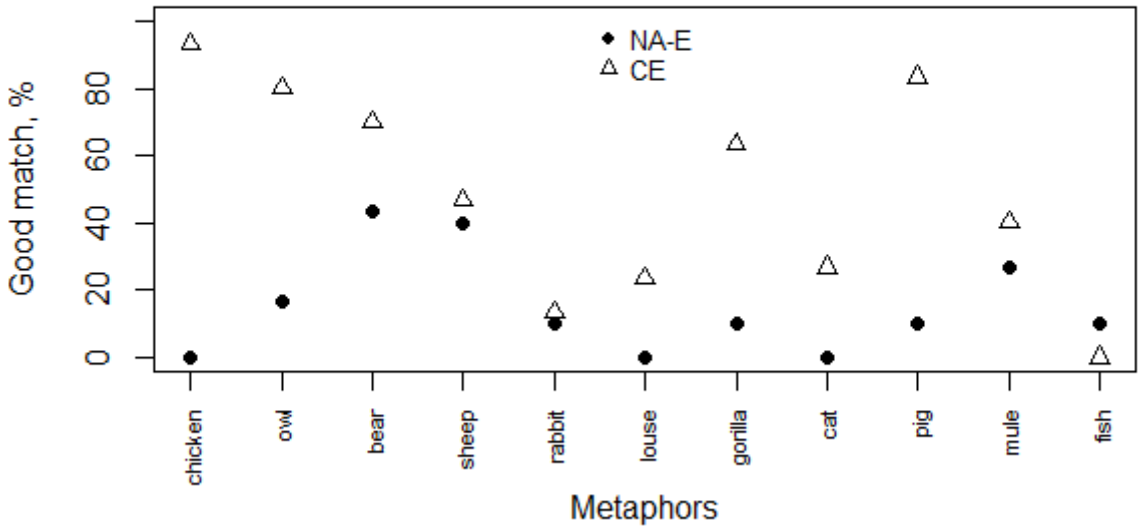

Figure 4. NA-E and CE good match of culturally distinct animal metaphors.

good matches. Figure 4 shows the good match scores of both groups for each distinct metaphor.

CE speakers were well informed about animal metaphors relative to NA-E bilinguals, because they scored lower throughout the other two conditions (that is, giving poor matches or providing none). NA-E bilinguals scored higher on poor match condition, we did find a significant difference between both groups as left panel in Figure 5 shows, NA-E bilinguals (M*dn*=43) and CE speakers (M*dn*=17), *W*= 21, *p*=0.01, *r*=-0.47. NA-E bilinguals preferred not to associate any description with this kind of metaphors more frequently than CE speakers did (Figure 5 right panel). Their (M*dn*=37) was higher than that of CE speakers (M*dn*=27), *W*= 47, *p*= 0.4, *r*= -0.16.

The low scores of NA-E bilinguals (Figure 4) in distinct metaphor good match condition explain part of the variability in their geneder match for these metaphors (*IQR*= 42 compared with 28 for their Canadian peers). However, there was not a significant difference between NA-E blinguals (M*dn*= 40) and CE speakers (M*dn*= 50) as shown in Figure 6, *W*= 75, *p*= 0.3, *r*= -0.2. Regarding

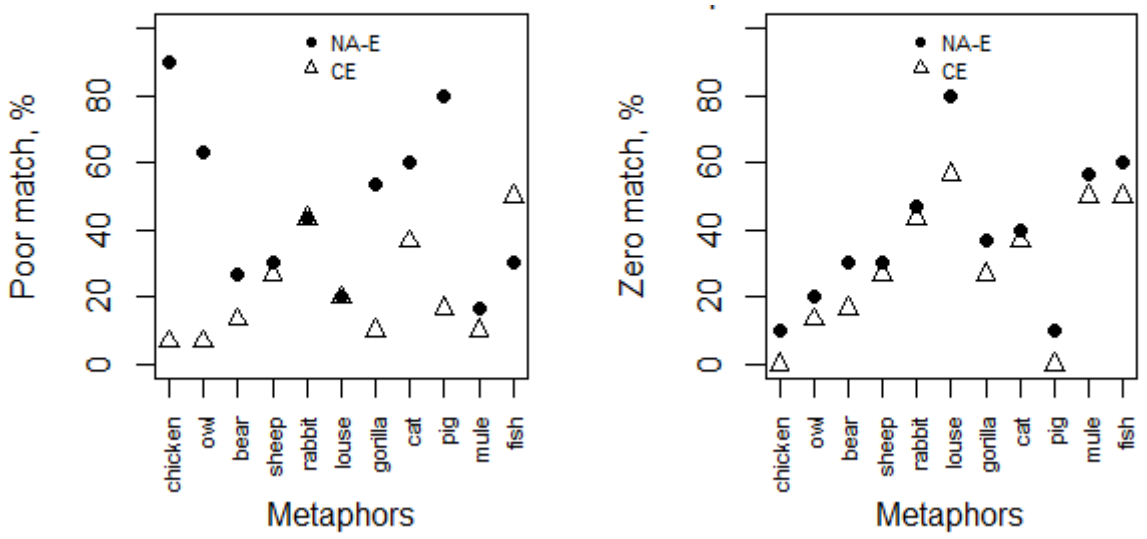

Figure 5. NA-E and CE poor and zero match of culturally distinct animal metaphors.

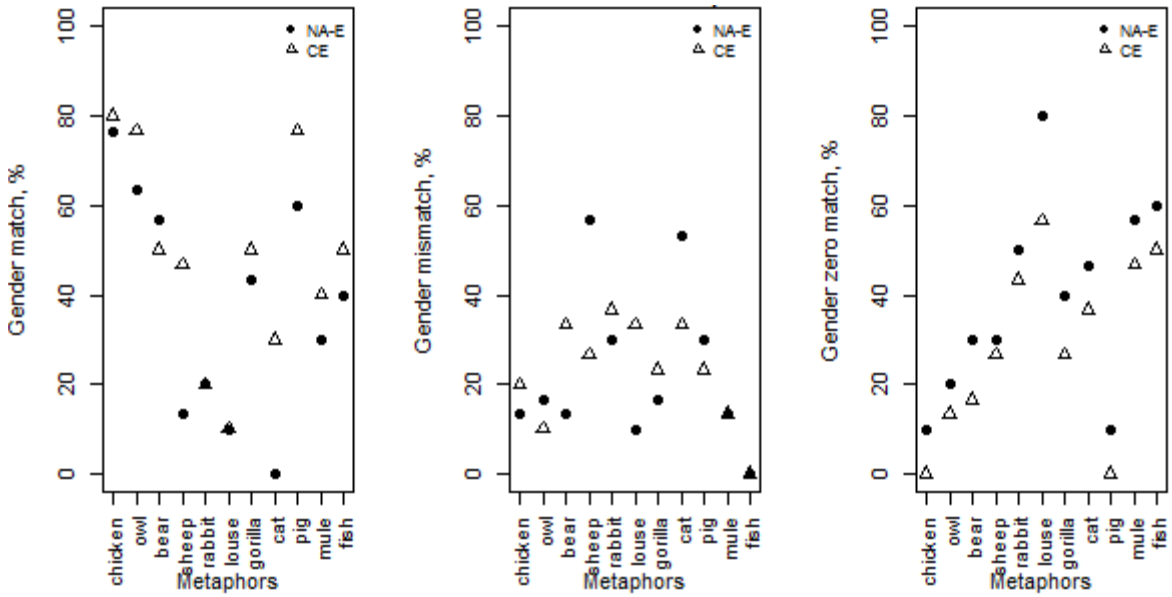

Figure 6. Three levels of gender agreement with culturally distinct animal metaphors.

gender mismatch NA-E bilinguals scored lower (M*dn*= 17) than CE speakers (M*dn*= 23) did, but they shared the same value of *IQR* (17), *W*= 69, *p*=0.6, *r*= -0.11.

NA-E blinguals did not opt for either of the gender options more frequently than CE speakers. For the condition of gender zero match, they scored as high as their gender match condition. However, there was not a significant difference between both groups at .05 level. For CE speakers median was (27) and for NA-E bilinguals (M*dn*=40), *W*= 43.5, *p*= 0.3, *r*=-0.2. The plots in Figure 6 give a detailed description of gender associations.

NA-E blinguals and CE speakers did not score high on the frequency scale. Apparently, there was an ascending pattern that showed a shift towards higher scores as participants moved away from high frequency to low frequency options (Figures 7 and 8). We did not find a significant difference between NA-E bilinguals and CE speakers on the frequency scale- all the *p*-values were above the significance level of 0.05. Statistical results obtained from Wilcoxon signed-rank test are summarised in Table 1.

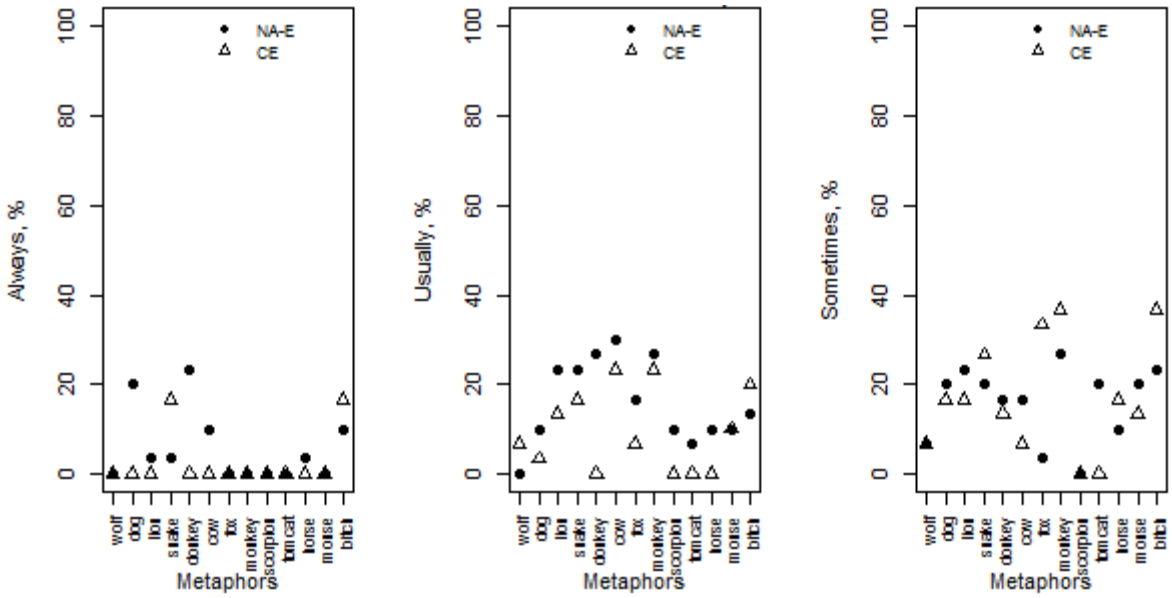

Figure 7. Three levels of usage frequency with culturally identical animale metaphors.

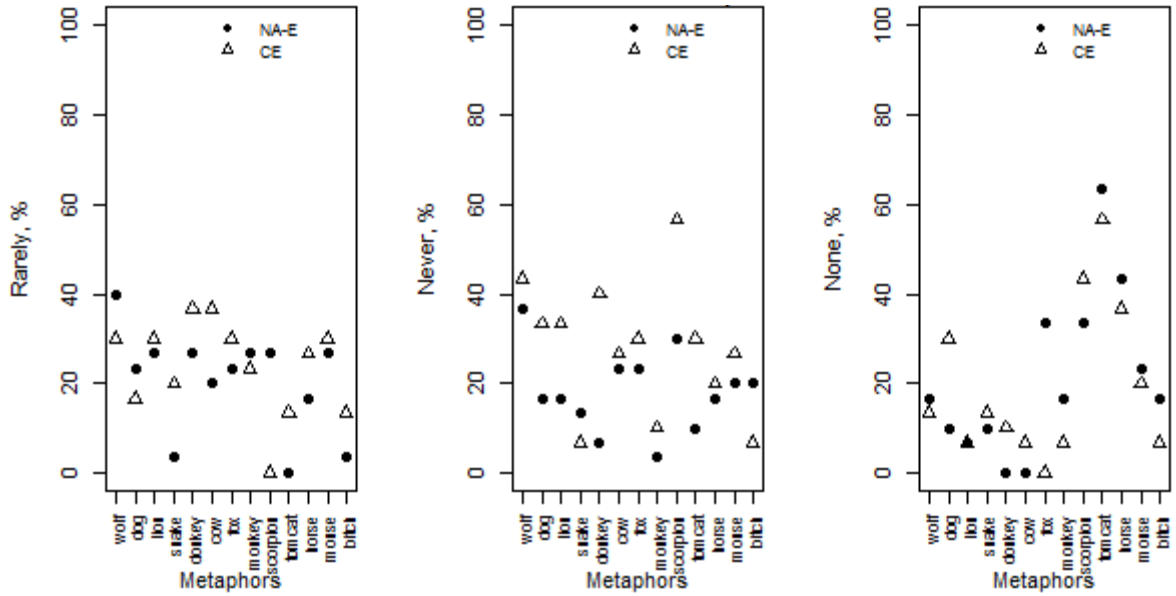

Figure 8. Three levels of decreasing frequency with culturally identical animal metaphors.

We noticed that the frequency patterns of distinct metaphors are similar to those associated with identical metaphors. The scores of NA-E bilinguals and CE speakers took an ascending trajectory towards the lower end of the frequency scale. NA-E bilinguals and CE speakers did not differ significantly in their ratings on the frequency scale (Figures 9 and 10).

In spite of the fact that both groups scored considerably low , we found a significant difference in their ratings of 'always' as shown in Table 1. This can be attributed to their general tendency to score higher on 'usually' and 'sometimes'.Even with 'rarely' and 'never', NA-E blinguals seemed to score relatively lower than CE speakers.

DISCUSSION

The study presented in this article provided empirical evidence in support of the claim that the dominant culture of the majority group could influence the linguistic

Table 1. The significance obtained from wilcoxon test for the frequency of identical and distinct metaphors.

Degree of frequency Identical metaphors	*W*	*p*-value	*r*	Degree of frequency distinct metaphors	*W*	*p*-value	*r*
Alwyas	55	0.07	-0.326	Always	31.5	0.02	-0.422
Usually	50	0.07	-0.326	Usually	56	0.7	-0.054
Sometimes	80.5	0.8	-0.377	Sometimes	68	0.6	-0.091
Rarely	102	0.3	-0.165	Rarely	65.5	0.7	-0.061
Never	121.5	0.06	-0.348	Never	86	0.09	-0.309
None	76.5	0.7	-0.075	None	47	0.4	-0.162

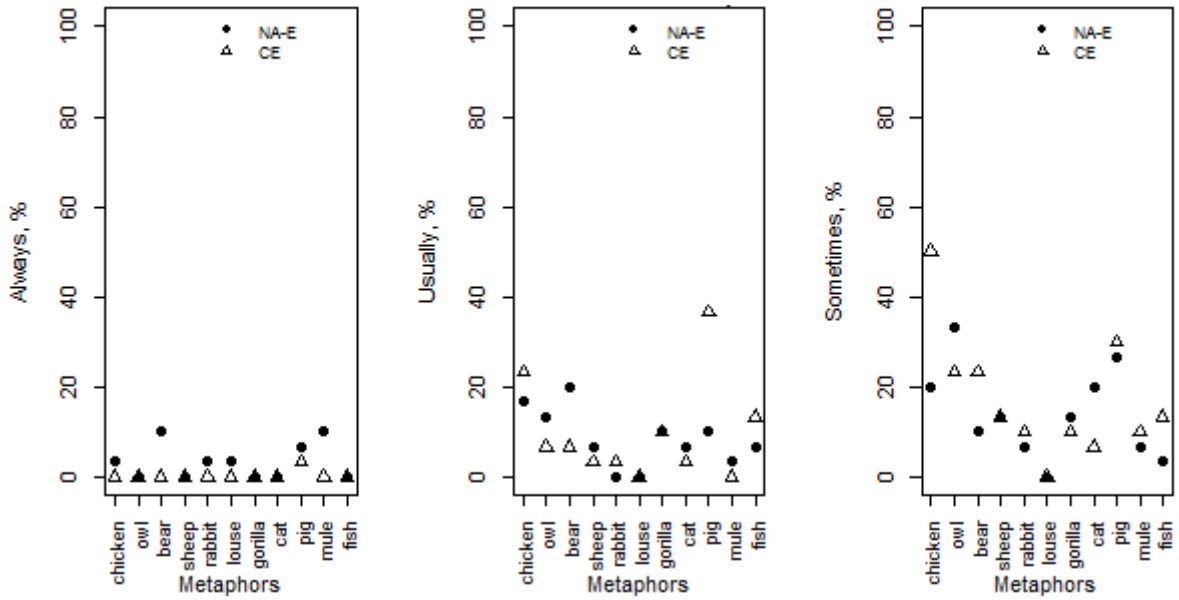

Figure 9. Three levels of usage frequency with culturally distinct animal metaphors.

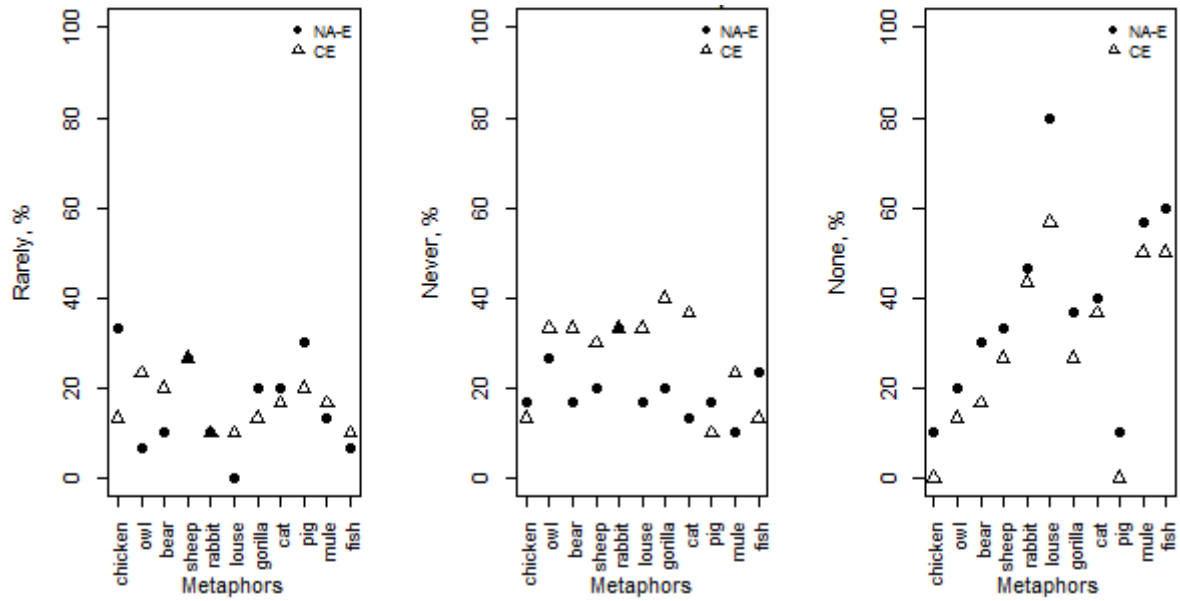

Figure 10. Three levels of decrease frequency with culturally distincy animal metaphors.

decision of the minority group on the macrolinguistic level. First, we discuss the influence observed in the equivalent figurative meaning of a set of metaphors to show that NA-E bilinguals and CE monolinguals exhibit the same degree of pragmatic competence.

The cultural cognition of a speech community is the main source and key element in shaping and developing its pragmatic competence. The influence of culture was evident in the first condition where NA-E bilinguals and CE monolinguals had similar conceptualizations of the culturally equivalent metaphors.

In the same vein, NA-E bilinguals and CE monolinguals showed other signs of cultural convergence when they both could not associate the animal's name with its figurative meaning. In the second part of the condition, we looked at how good were the participants of both groups in associating gender with the connotative meaning of the animal's name.

Again, both groups demonstrated a highly comparable level of sociopragmatic knowledge which points towards more awareness of such kind of figurative language use. As we pointed out in section 4 earlier, some animal metaphors have more than one figurative meaning associated with them and, consequently, require a shift in assigning gender.

For example, *fox* has two distinct figurative meanings: clever or crafty and attractive or sexy. The former sense is freely associated with both male and female whereas the latter is restricted to females only. That said, we noticed that both groups were equally involved in the nitty-gritty of animal gender assignment for culturally equivalent animal-based metaphors.

Second, we traced the effect of cultural cognition on a set of culturally distinct animal-based metaphors. CE monolinguals outperformed NA-E bilinguals in this condition because NA-E bilinguals were unable to guess at the figurative sense of the metaphors in question. NA-E bilinguals' conceptualization of these metaphors was motivated by the cognitive cultural patterns prevalent in Canada. Therefore, NA-E bilinguals' conceptualizations were not a matter of guesswork as such but rather a constellation of figurative computations derived from their adherence to the dominant cultural values.

NA-E bilinguals were informed that they were chosen to participate as native NA speakers and that the survey was about the figurative meaning of NA animal metaphors. However, NA-E bilinguals failed to conceptualize the culturally distinct animal metaphors as native NA speakers. Instead, they were better than CE monolinguals in providing incorrect figurative meanings of the NA metaphors.

The poor performance of NA-E bilinguals in this condition can be attributed to the fact their conceptualizations of these metaphors were solely based on the Canadian image of animals. Succinctly, it all boils down to one fact: NA-E bilinguals seem to have imbibed a set of cultural beliefs typical of the Canadian society which led to a shift in their cultural cognition patterns.

Gender assignment for the culturally distinct metaphors and usage-frequency test for both sets of metaphors did not provide conclusive evidence that could further support our hypothesis. However, there was one exception to this generalization as regards the use of 'always' with the culturally distinct metaphors. By scrutinizing the data, we found out that four NA-E bilinguals (mean age 27) were responsible for this shift. We reason that the younger the individual the great the effect of culture.

CONCLUSION

This study considered the role that culture, as a source of our shared representations, may play in language attrition and cultural assimilation. The significant difference and low scores in the good match of distinct metaphors stem from the fact that NA-E bilinguals were motivated by their profound participation and involvement in the cognitive process of conceptualizing animal-based metaphors through adopted acculturation patterns that play an important role in their disengagement from their NA cultural cognition.

NA-E bilinguals were not able to establish felicitous associations between target and source domain according to their culture, because they employed borrowed images and conceptualizations that are different from their NA-E cultural practices and beliefs. The hypothesis of adopted acculturation patterns also explains the poor performance of NA-E bilinguals in the other two conditions related to distinct metaphors (that is, poor and zero match).

The obtained statistical results bolster up the idea that the intergenerational process of transmitting the shared cultural cognition is interrupted and blurred by the adopted conceptualizations from the host culture (Figure 11). A question that can be raised here is how these low frequency metaphors have made their way into the cultural cognition of NA-E bilinguals.

This shows that language and identity are two separate components of culture and that identity has a mutable, inconstant nature; therefore, NA-E bilinguals opt for L2 identity that is represented by the macrolinguistic components that facilitate the process of getting unequivocal communicative messages across to the listener. Encouraged by the open and inclusive atmosphere in their host community, Neo-Aramaic bilinguals opt for preserving their cultural identity outside the linguistic realm of their ancestors (Edwards, 1984, 1985; Myhill, 2003). This prediction contradicts Fishman's (1991) opinion that language and cultural identity are crucially linked. Language, for NA-E, does not constitute an essential part of their identity; therefore, they choose not to use it in their everyday interactions. Other factors, such as tradition, religion, and endogamy constitute the

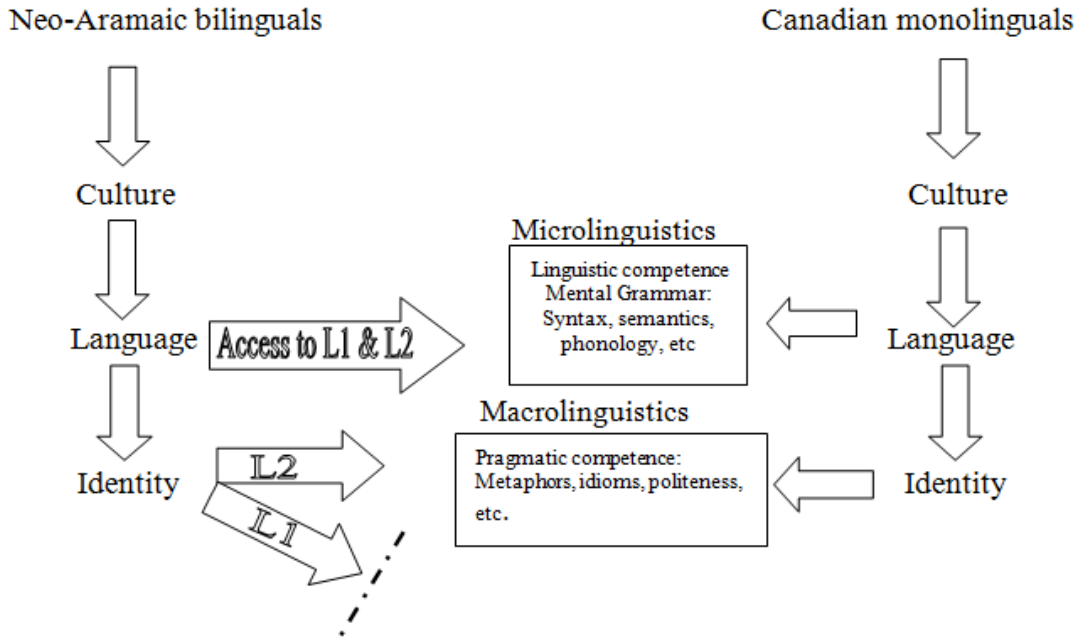

Figure 11. NA-E bilinguals and CE monolinguals linguistics and pragmatic competence.

vitality of their identity.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to offer his sincere gratitude to Magda Stroinska, John Colarusso and George Thomas (McMaster University) for commenting on the earlier drafts of this research.

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Appendix 1

Distinct and identical metaphors

What does this animal (for example, wolf) refer to? This animal name may refer to human body-part, behaviour, or characteristic. You need to provide an appropriate adjective or description that best describes its meaning. In case you provide more than one adjective, you should be consistent; do not provide conflicting or incompatible adjectives. Use the first adjective or description that comes to your mind.

What human characteristics does this animal refer to? If you do not know type an X.

1- Person X is a WOLF	●Male ●Female ●Both	●Always ● Usually ●Sometimes ●Rarely ●Never ●None
2- Person X is a DONKEY	●Male ●Female ●Both	●Always ● Usually ●Sometimes ●Rarely ●Never ●None
3- Person X is a **CHICKEN**	●Male ●Female ●Both	●Always ● Usually ●Sometimes ●Rarely ●Never ●None
4- Person X is an **OWL**	●Male ●Female ●Both	●Always ● Usually ●Sometimes ●Rarely ●Never ●None
5- Person X is a MOUSE	●Male ●Female ●Both	●Always ● Usually ●Sometimes ●Rarely ●Never ●None
6- Person X is a COW	●Male ●Female ●Both	●Always ● Usually ●Sometimes ●Rarely ●Never ●None
7- Person X is a SCORPION	●Male ●Female ●Both	●Always ● Usually ●Sometimes ●Rarely ●Never ●None
8- Person X is a HORSE	●Male ●Female ●Both	●Always ● Usually ●Sometimes ●Rarely ●Never ●None
9- Person X is a MONKEY	●Male ●Female ●Both	●Always ● Usually ●Sometimes ●Rarely ●Never ●None
10- Person X is a FOX	●Male ●Female ●Both	●Always ● Usually ●Sometimes ●Rarely ●Never ●None
11- Person X is a DOG	●Male ●Female ●Both	●Always ● Usually ●Sometimes ●Rarely ●Never ●None
12- Person X is a **BEAR**	●Male ●Female ●Both	●Always ● Usually ●Sometimes ●Rarely ●Never ●None
13- Person X is a **LAMB**	●Male ●Female ●Both	●Always ● Usually ●Sometimes ●Rarely ●Never ●None
14- Person X is a tomcat	●Male ●Female ●Both	●Always ● Usually ●Sometimes ●Rarely ●Never ●None
15- Person X is a **RABBIT**	●Male ●Female ●Both	●Always ● Usually ●Sometimes ●Rarely ●Never ●None
16- Person X is a **LOUSE**	●Male ●Female ●Both	●Always ● Usually ●Sometimes ●Rarely ●Never ●None
17- Person X is a LION	●Male ●Female ●Both	●Always ● Usually ●Sometimes ●Rarely ●Never ●None
18- Person X is a SNAKE	●Male ●Female ●Both	●Always ● Usually ●Sometimes ●Rarely ●Never ●None

Appendix 1. Cont'd

19- Person X is a **GORILLA**	●Male ●Female ●Both	●Always ● Usually ●Sometimes ●Rarely ●Never ●None
20- Person X is a **CAT**	●Male ●Female ●Both	●Always ● Usually ●Sometimes ●Rarely ●Never ●None
21- Person X is a **PIG**	●Male ●Female ●Both	●Always ● Usually ●Sometimes ●Rarely ●Never ●None
22- Person X is a **FISH**	●Male ●Female ●Both	●Always ● Usually ●Sometimes ●Rarely ●Never ●None
23- Person X is a **MULE**	●Male ●Female ●Both	●Always ● Usually ●Sometimes ●Rarely ●Never ●None
24- Person X is a BITCH	●Male ●Female ●Both	●Always ● Usually ●Sometimes ●Rarely ●Never ●None

Appendix 2

Preamble statement

This survey is administered by (Ala Al-kajela of McMaster University/ Department of Linguistics and Languages). The purpose of the survey is to investigate animal metaphors in English and Neo-Aramaic. Information gathered during this survey will be written up as part of a dissertation. What we learn from this survey will help us understand the effect of learning a second language on the first language, how much native Neo-Aramaic speakers know about animal metaphors, and to what degree the non-native speakers achieve cultural integration. To learn more about the survey and the researcher's study, particularly in terms of any risks or harms associated with the survey, how confidentiality and anonymity will be handled, withdrawal procedures, incentives that are promised, how to obtain information about the survey's results, how to find helpful resources should the survey make you uncomfortable or upset etc., please read the accompanying letter of information. This survey should take approximately [30-45] minutes to complete. People filling out this survey must be [native monolingual speakers of English or Neo-Aramaic bilinguals and 18 years of age or older]. This survey is part of a study that has been reviewed and cleared by the McMaster Research Ethics Board (MREB). The MREB protocol number associated with this survey is [2015-068]. You are free to complete this survey or not. If you have any concerns or questions about your rights as a participant or about the way the study is being conducted, please contact: McMaster Research Ethics Secretariat Telephone 1-(905) 525-9140 ext. 23142 C/o Research Office for Administration, Development and Support (ROADS) E-mail: ethicsoffice@mcmaster.ca

Appendix 3

Consent
I have read the information presented in the information letter about a study being conducted by Ala Al-Kajela of McMaster University. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about my involvement in this study and to receive additional details I requested. I understand that if I agree to participate in this study, I may withdraw from the study at any time. I agree to participate in the study
Having read the above, I understand that by clicking the "Yes" button below, I agree to take part in this study under the terms and conditions outlined in the accompanied letter of information

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Journal of Languages and Culture

Full Length Research Paper

Inflectional morphology in Mecha Oromo

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This study provides relatively detailed descriptions of inflectional morphology in the Oromo language. It identifies occurrence patterns of morphemes and draws rules for inflections in the language. Although it focuses basically on inflectional morphology, it in some ways, deals with derivational processes and syntactic structures for comparison and relational analysis. A degree of fusion of morphs and morphological occurrences of inflectional formatives have been thoroughly dealt with. The thesis describes the inflectional forms of, essentially, nouns and verbs. However, words occurring in the nominals and verb-related words occurring in the predicate position have also been examined. Since the two word classes (nouns and verbs) are mostly the ones that undergo inflection, they determine the inflectional characteristics of the language. The study consists of five chapters which are concerned, respectively, with introduction in which preliminaries and methodology are treated, literature review which deals with some related concepts and previous works on Oromo, nominal inflection (including nouns, pronouns and adjectives), verb inflection (including verbs and adverbs) and conclusion. Number, singulative, gender and case are considered in the nominal inflection. Verb inflection is described in terms of inherent and agreement properties of grammatical function. In the descriptive chapters, distribution of morphemes and their allomorphs, along with their hosts, have been examined. This study provides a relatively more comprehensive and detailed description of inflectional morphology in Oromo, and hence the research outcomes are more focused to forms and functions of inflections.

Key words: Inflection, derivation, nominals, verbs, morphology.

INTRODUCTION

Oromo is one of the languages of the Cushitic family in the Afro-Asiatic super family (phylum). It is called Afaan Oromoo by the speakers of the language. The present study uses 'Oromo' referring to both the language and the people as this is commonly used in the literature. Several varieties of Oromo are spoken in Ethiopia, Kenya and some parts of Somalia. In Ethiopia, Oromo is the largest ethnic group, and the language is spoken over a vast area of the country. According to the 2007 census of Ethiopian population, about 37% of the country's population is speaker of Oromo. It is currently a medium of instruction at first and second cycles of elementary school level in Oromia regional state. At this level, all subjects are taught in Oromo. At the secondary and preparatory levels, Oromo is offered as a subject. It is also given as a field of study at the university level. Furthermore, Oromo is a language of mass media and administration in the Oromia regional state and in the

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mass media at the federal level of the country, Ethiopia besides Amharic which is the major federal language.

Various studies have been conducted on the Oromo language since the nineteenth century. The research outcomes include grammars and descriptions of the various aspects of the language. The earliest works on Oromo deal with the grammar and lexicography of the language. Tutcheck (1844) and Viterbo (1887) are perhaps the earliest works on the Oromo grammar and lexicon. Onesimos Nasib translated the bible into Oromo using the Ethiopic syllabary at the end of the eighteenth century (1899) along with other short literary materials some of which were done with Aster Gano (cf. Mekuria 1995). Word formation was part of the works of grammar in both categories of inflection and derivation. Inflection signals grammatical relationships of lexical items in syntactic constructions but derivation results in new words.

Statement of the problem

Based on the way morphological strings are applied on stems in typological analysis, languages are classified into three major types: (1) isolating, (2) agglutinating, and (3) fusional. Isolating languages tend to have no morphology at all. An independent morpheme carries grammatical information. Agglutinating languages consist of a stem with one, or in some cases, more sequential affixes that can easily be separated. In such languages, morphemes and morphs are in one-to-one identifiable correspondence. Fusional languages often use a single form representing various morphemes that is a form indicating several functions. Contrary to what is observed in isolating and agglutinating languages, the fusional ones do not display one-to-one correspondence between morphs and morphemes. Some scholars make classification of morphological typology as analytic, synthetic and polysynthetic (incorporating). In analytic languages, grammatical categories are represented by independent morphs. In synthetic languages, morphs of grammatical information are attached to roots or stems concatinatively. Polysynthetic languages are similar to the synthetic ones except that in the former concatenated morphs in a word are many and the word is long. In view of the aforementioned explanation and previous works, I considered that Oromo is typologically a synthetic (fusional) language. Some scholars categorize word forms of languages as analytic, synthetic and polysynthetic. While analytic languages are simple isolating, synthetic and polysynthetic are inflecting, of course, the latter type being languages with long word-forms. Most languages of Semitic typology are nonlinear or of fusional type. For example, in Amharic */s-b-r/* is a root for *'break'* which can result in different derived words by inserting various vowel patterns, that is, without sequential morphs. The arrangement structure of a word's constituent units across languages is governed by morphological rules in the respective languages.

Morphology studies the word structure of a language derivationally and inflectionally. The latter is meant for the construction of sentences. Both the derivational and inflectional word forms are realized in a sentence though their structural analysis is done within words. As Aronoff and Fudeman (2011: 168) state "derivation gives you new lexemes, and inflection gives you the forms of a lexeme that are determined by syntactic environment". Consequently, the derived word can change its placement in a sentence but the inflected form is made to occur in a specific position in a given syntactic context. Many grammar books which involve the treatment of derivation and inflection have been produced on the Oromo language. A separate and close examination of the latter seems to be lacking. Declension is the modification of nominals (nouns, adjectives, and pronouns) for grammatical functions, while conjugation is the change of the verb form to fit a syntactic context (Janda and Townsend, 2002). The motivation for this study was the absence of a comprehensive study on the inflectional morphology in the Oromo language. Thus, the study attempted to answer the following research questions in relation to Oromo.

(1) What is the structural distinction between root, stem, and inflected forms?
(2) What are the occurrence patterns of inflectional morphemes?
(3) What relational and/or differing forms are observed in inflectional occurrences distinct from derivational patterns?
(4) What are the characteristics of inflectional morphemes?

Objectives of the study

General objective

The general objective of this research is to describe and explain inflectional morphology in Oromo. The description focuses on the formal and functional characteristics of the inflectional morphemes in the language.

Specific objectives

This study aims to achieve the following specific objectives:

(a) To identify and classify inflectional morphemes.
(b) To classify inflectional phonemes and characterize the relationship between root, stem and inflected forms.
(c) To show the occurrence pattern of inflectional morphemes.

(d) To compare the pattern of inflectional morphemes with that of derivational morphemes.
(e) To identify the rule(s) of inflectional processes.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Data collection

Three research instruments were employed for data collection. The primary one was introspection, because I am a native speaker of Oromo, particularly, the western (Wallaga) variety. Corpus data and discussion with some natives were also intended to be sources of the necessary data. Involving few natives as informants is for confirmation purpose; discussing with them helped the data to be genuine enough. Two of my informants, Endashaw Jiru and Birhanu Diriba, reside in Addis Ababa, whereas the other one, whose name is Nasibu Gudina, lives in Nekempt whose visitation was in time gaps. The data collected were paradigms of word-forms and sentences with relevant patterns. Sentences are utilized for relational consideration as inflection is a morpho-syntactic feature. Corpus data and discussion with other natives took place next to provision of the necessary data through introspection. The corpora was collected by reading texts and grammar books and also by recording short narratives written in Oromo.

Data analysis

The data were used in phonemically transcribed version which is similar with the Oromo language's orthography except some phonemes that are specific to the language. The orthography uses almost the same characters with the IPA alphabet. Words were analyzed into morphs and then glossed. The English equivalents were provided for the data used in the analysis. Morpheme(s) were examined for their forms and functions and described in their pattern of occurrence. After careful examination of the data, exemplary interpretation was provided in chapters three and four. Finally, based on the analysis and interpretation, conclusions were drawn.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Inflection of nominals

Word classes of nouns, pronouns and adjectives can be described under nominals. Nominals are inflected for various grammatical properties in Wallaga Oromo. The change of form of nominals for grammatical purposes is referred to declension. This section provides similarities and distinctions among declensions of the nouns, pronouns and adjectives along with the way they behave in inflection. In doing so, the forms of root, stem and word will be identified as well.

Noun inflection

Almost all nouns in Oromo end with a vowel except for a few of them which ends in specific consonants like *n, l, t*. Inflectional categories that are inherent to nouns exist in four major types. These are marking number, singulative, gender, and case. Number and gender are inherent categories, while case is relational because it is signaled in a sentence by the paradigmatic form in which it is used (Gragg, 1976: 182; Griefenow-Mewis 2001: 41). The singulative form is significant in Wallaga Oromo.

Number

Wallaga Oromo distinguishes between plural and singular nouns. Plural nouns are marked in different ways. Several types of suffixes can be attached to nouns to make plural forms. In collective nouns, some exist in plural form only (e.g. *hamaamota*'bride servants'), whereas some others have the same singular and plural forms like *ilkaan* 'tooth/teeth'. In some cases, the plural marker varies based on semantic nature of the noun.

As shown in Table 1, the occurrence variation between *-ota-* and *-oota-* is based on the penultimate syllable of a base noun. When the penultimate syllable contains short vowel, *-oota-* is suffixed, but when it contains long vowel *-ota-* is suffixed for plurality of the nouns. These allomorphs occur in complementary distribution based on the phonological nature of the noun hosts that is the vowel length of penultimate syllables in the nouns. It occurs with ± animate nouns.

Nouns of kinship terms are marked for plurality by the morpheme *-an*, which follows either geminate consonant or short /a/. The morpheme triggers the consonant to be geminated when it is appended. It may also occur by lengthening the final short /a/ on the base word when the base noun ends in short /a/ followed by gemination or consonant cluster (Table 2).

The morph *–lee* is suffixed to inanimate nouns that end in long vowel as in Table 3, whereas its allomorph *-olii* is suffixed to animate nouns with a long vowel in the preceding syllable and which end in short vowel. The plural marker *-ilee* is suffixed to inanimate nouns, whereas *-olii* is used with animate nouns. The allomorph *–olee* can be used with ± animate nouns. Both *-olee* and *–ilee* are suffixed to the nouns with long vowel in the penultimate syllable.

Non-human nouns are marked for plurality by the morph *–een* suffixed to the noun roots. It is appended to two syllabic nouns that end in short /a/ sound. If the allomorph is preceded by glides and nasals, it makes the consonants to be geminate.

The plural marker *-an* can be preceded by the geminate consonant *-ww-* when it is appended to nouns with long terminating vowels, but the nouns can be ± animate like the domains of the plural morpheme *-(o)ota* (Table 4).

As in Table 5, ± animate nouns may take the plural morph *-an* but the phonological form of the nouns, that they end in vowel length, makes the morph preceded by the geminate phoneme /*-ww-*/ for settling occurrence of impermissible number of vowels. The consonant is doubled because the morph *-an* occurs following

Table 1. The Plural Morph *-(o)ota* on Nouns.

Base form	Inflected form	Gloss
waggaa	*wagg-oota*	'years'
gowwaa	*goww-oota*	'fools'
ganda	*gand-oota*	'kebeles'
hayyuu	*hayy-oota*	'scholars'
kitaaba	*kitaab-ota*	'books'
k'aama	*k'aam-ota*	'bodies'
diina	*diin-ota*	'enemies'
leenc'a	*leenc'-ota*	'lions'

Table 2. Plural forms of kinship terms.

Base forms	Inflected form	Meaning
Eessuma	*eessum(m)-an*	'uncles' (through mother)'
Wasiila	*wasiil(l)-an*	'uncles'(through father)'
Ilma	*ilma-an*	'sons'

Table 3. Plural morphs *-lee*, *-olii*, *-olee*, *-ilee*.

Base forms	Inflected form	Meaning
buʔaa	*buʔaa-lee*	'profits'
baatii	*baatii-lee*	'months'
ǰaarsa	*ǰaars-olii*	'elders'
gaangee	*gaang-olii*	'mules'
k'aama	*k'aam-olee*	'bodies'
aanaa	*aan-olee*	'districts'
Kitaaba	*kitaab-ilee*	'books'
ɗaaba	*ɗaab-ilee*	'organizations'

Table 4. Plural Morph *–een*.

Base forms	Inflected form	Meaning
Muka	*muk-een*	'woods'
Farad	*fard-een*	'horses'
Gaara	*gaar(r)-een*	'mountains'
Mana	*man(n)-een*	'houses'

geminate consonant. + Abstract nouns are members of this morpheme which is preceded by the epenthetic element /*-ww-*/. All the suffixes in Table 5 are utilized for a noun ending in a vowel(s).

Some nouns are used in the same form in singular and plural paradigms. Syntactic context and relational consideration is peculiar proof for identifying status of such nouns in terms of their number (plural/singular).

Nouns that name body parts are the same in their singular and plural forms. Plural forms of some nouns are

Table 5. Plural forms of ± animate nouns by *–an*.

Base form	Plural form	Meaning
hoǰii	*hoǰii-ww-an*	'works'
murtoo	*murtoo-ww-an*	'decisions'
balaa	*balaa-ww-an*	'accidents'
Koree	*koree-ww-an*	'councils'

Table 6. Special forms in plurality of nouns.

Noun type	Base form	Plural form	Meaning
Body parts	*ilkaan*	*ilkaan-Ø*	'tooth/teeth'
	k'uba	*k'uba-Ø*	'finger/fingers'
Irregular forms	*goromsa*	*gorommii*	'heifers'
	farad	*faradoo*	'horses'
Plural only	-	*hamaamota*	'bride servants'
	-	*iǰoollee*	'children'

Table 7. Associative Marker *–faa*.

Base form	Inflected form	Meaning
kuulanii	*kuulanii-faa*	'Kulani and others'
eeňňu	*eeňňu-faa*	'whom and others'
kuulanii	*kuulanii-n-faa*	'Kulani-Nom-and others'
eeňňuu	*eeňňuu-n-faa*	'who and others'

apart from the ones indicated earlier; they seem to be irregular plural forms as in the third row of Table 6. Nouns which name things with the notion of generality like *iǰoollee* 'children' are used in plural form only. They do not have singular forms or the base forms cannot be stripe out of the inflected.Some nouns code between their singular and plural forms by the final syllables on their base forms; for example, *waraabessa* 'hyena' vs. *waraabeyyii* 'hyenas'. Such forms seem to be contrastive in their final syllable *-ssa* and *-yyii* on the lexical item. In some cases, members of the different categories of plural markers can be possibly alternated for taking number marker; for instance, *fard-een* 'horses' or its alternate form *fard-oota* 'horses', *kitaab-ilee* 'books' or the alternate form *kitaab-ota* 'books' can be used. Different markers of plurality can be used together on a noun of kinship term; for example, *fira* 'relative' →*firoota* 'relatives' */fir-oot(t)-an* 'relatives'. The ± animate nouns can be pluralized by different morphs based on the phonological form and choice of the base word. There are multiple of forms to make nouns plural, and these are appended to nouns on the basis of the language's internal segmental and auto-segmental (gemination and vowel length) occurrence pattern as well as semantic type of the nouns.

In Wallaga Oromo, a proper noun can be suffixed with the associative marker *–faa* to identify a group referring to human, that is, the morpheme *-faa* is suffixed to someone's name in the group. It is mostly suffixed on interrogative pronoun *eeňňu* 'who' in questions.

The morpheme *–faa* can be appended to proper nouns and interrogative pronouns either in nominative case paradigm or in the object form as in Table 8. The nominative markers precede the associative marker as in the Table 7.

Singulative

The singulative marker shows that noun is marked for being used as single form which may or may not be definite. This grammatical property is marked in Wallaga Oromo using *-iččа* (for masculine) and *-ittii* (for feminine).

Table 8. Singulative forms.

Base form	Inflected form	Meaning
nama	*nam-ičča*	'a/the man'
gurbaa	*gurb-ičča*	'a/the boy'
intala	*intal-ittii*	'a/the girl'
dubartii	*dubart-ittii*	'a/the woman'

Table 9. Gender distinction in nouns.

Base form	Masculine		Feminine	
	Inflected form	Meaning	Inflected form	Meaning
gurbaa	*Gurbaa*	'boy'	*intala*	'girl'
gessuma	*Eessuma*	'uncle'	*adaadaa*	'aunt'
mararaa	*marar-aa*	'dear boy/man'	*marar-tuu*	'dear girl/woman'
boonaa	*boon-aa*	'proud boy/man'	*boon-tuu*	'proud girl/woman'
sooressa	*sooressa*	'rich man'	*soorettii*	'rich girl/woman'
ogeessa	*ogeessa*	'techincian'	*ogeettii*	'technician lady'

In some studies, these two markers have been considered to be definiteness markers (cf. Nordfeldt, 1947:26; Launhardt, 1973: 107; Gragg, 1976:181; Mohammed and Zaborski, 1990:10); while, Oromo does not have any overt marker of definiteness which means a specified noun that can be either singular or plural. However, the singulative marker entails definiteness being with singular nouns in Oromo.

The morpheme *–ičča* in the inflected form in Table 8 is considered as the object/citation form which can be varied to *-ičč-i* whose final *-i* marks nominative case. Both the morphs *-ičča* and *-ittii* tend to be singulative markers embodying the property of definiteness. The following sentence provides an example for an indefinite singulative form:

[2] (a) *nam-ičča ɓokko waam-ee-n ɗuf-e*
man-Sing:ABS one call:1sg-Conv-1sgm come:1sg-Perf
'I came after calling a man'

In example [2] (a), *-ičča* shows an indefinite singulative property. Therefore, the basic functions of the morphemes (*-ičča* and *-ittii*) are marking the singulative property. Had they been definiteness markers, they could have possibly been used with plural nouns; but that is not permissible. The function of these morphemes as definite, however, can be understood on the basis of semantic aspect of the sentence.

Gender

Two types of gender, that is, masculine and feminine, exist in Oromo (Gragg, 1976:180; Mohammed and Zaborski, 1990:5; Griefenow-Mewis, 2003:22). These are identified through gender marking suffixes, or lexically by using different words for masculine and feminine forms. The distinct words for masculine and feminine like *adaadaa* 'aunt' and *eessuma* 'uncle' are also used in Oromo. Gender indicating words can be used for animals and they are placed immediately after or before the nouns they belong to. The most common contrastive pair of words used in this way is *kormaa* 'male (m.)' vs. *ɗaltuu*' female (f.). Consider Table 9.

In Table 9, the first two examples are distinguished for gender lexically. The third and fourth nouns that are derived from verbs indicate that the long *-aa* suffixed to the verb root or to a C-final stem marks masculine gender, whereas the suffix *-tuu* makes verbal nouns in feminine gender. Lexically, gender coding nouns distinguish between masculine and feminine genders by their contrastive final syllables as *-ssa* vs. *-ttii*. Such nouns that are derived from adjectives indicating gender distinction. Proper nouns may also code gender distinction by varying their final vowel like *Gaaddisaa* (m.) vs. *Gaaddisee* (f.) in Oromo.

Some nouns may end in derivational morpheme *-tuu*, and they are used with no gender distinction (they are epicene). Even though they seem to end in the feminine form, the nouns are gender neutral. Each example below is either masculine or feminine:

[3] (a) *hat-tuu* 'thief'
(b) *kaɗat-tuu* 'beggar'

In [3] (a) and (b), the roots are verbs. They become

Table 10. Nominative case on nouns.

Base forms	Inflected Forms	Meaning
siree	*siree-n*	'bed'
hirriba	*hirrib-ni*	'sleep'
morma	*morm-i*	'neck'
Bišaan	*bišaan-Ø*	'water'

nouns by the suffix *-tuu*. In Wallaga Oromo, non-human nouns, as the example [4], are syntactically used as feminine.

[4] (a) *aduu* 'sun (f.)
(b) *dačč*ee 'land (f.)'

Example [4] (a) and (b) shows that non-human nouns are considered as only feminine gender in Oromo. Such nouns can be used with feminine gender marker *-ittii*; however, its function is either feminine or diminutive marking. For example, *saree* 'dog' →*sar-ittii* 'dog-f'. The noun *saree* 'dog' is considered feminine gender or diminutive form so that they normally take the marker of singulative property in the feminine form (Baye, 1981: 18).

Case

The relational category, case, is a grammatical relationship of nouns or pronouns to other words in a sentence. Faarlund (2004: 16) defines case as a morphosyntactic category which is construed in its syntagmatic occurrence. Languages differ especially in morphological case rather than syntactic case. "Syntactic Case is universal, while morphological case is language-specific" (Mcfadden, 2004: 3). Wallaga Oromo marks nouns for case. According to Nordfeldt (1947: 22), there are six types of cases in Oromo: nominative, accusative, genitive, dative, ablative and vocative ones; he considers the absolutive case as the primitive form of nouns. Several cases exist in Oromo encompassing syntactic and semantic bases of case assignment[1] with distinct inflectional markers for each. These include: nominative, absolutive, genitive, dative, ablative, instrumental, beneficiary, vocative, locative cases. They show their semantic roles on the basis of syntactic relational structures.

Nominative

In Wallaga Oromo, nouns that are used as subject of intransitive verbs and agent of the transitive verbs take the inflectional morpheme for the nominative case. The nominative case is marked by four different morphs of allomorphic variation occurring in complementary distribution. The allomorphs for the nominative case are *-n*,*-ni,-i* and *Ø*.

The difference in the phonological realization of the nominative case markers arises from the phonological nature of the nouns. The marker *-n* occurs after a terminating long vowel of a noun, including the derived nouns. For a noun base that ends in short vowel, the final vowel is dropped and *-ni* is suffixed to mark nominative case. It makes either gemination or consonant cluster. The allomorph *-i* is appended to noun roots or -C_1C_1 and -C_1C_2 final stems. Nominative case can also be marked by zero morph when the noun ends in consonant as in the last noun in Table 10; the case is understood by considering placement of the noun and the syntactic function it conveys.

Some consider the unit *–ti* as a separate nominative case marker (Launhardt, 1973: 40; Griefenow-Mewis, 2003: 42). The morpheme *-ti* is used as an optional extension of genitive case marker as in *mana namaa-ti*' house of man' as it occurs after the genitive marker, vowel length (Gragg, 1976: 183). It is a copula in a possessive construction (Ishetu, 1981: 12). It can also be used as a phonological variant of the morpheme *-ni* in nominative case. The nominative case allomorph *–ni* undergoes phonological processes and gets changed to *-ti*, for example, *bofa* 'snake ABS' - *bof-ni* 'snake Nom' - *bof-ti* 'snake Nom' in which *-ti* results from partial assimilation process in the shares vocal feature between the segments /f/ and /t/. In some Oromo dialects it is pronounced as *bofni* without undergoing the phonological process.

When the focus marker *-tu*is suffixed to a noun in the subject position, no case marker is used. Debela and Ronny (2003: 165) and Baye (1988: 371) state that the morpheme *-tu* is a contrastive focus marker of nominal. Baye (1988) indicates that this contrastive focus phenomenon is construed in context because it contrasts the focused nominal with other presupposed constituents providing context.

[5] *nam-ičča-tu na waam-e*
man-Sing-Foc me call-Perf
'It is the man who called me'
Example [5] illustrates that the nominative case marker –

[1] Occurrences of core cases with their formal variations in Oromo are syntactic and morphological. On the other hand the morphological forms of peripheral cases like instrumental and genitive are semantic cases.

tu marks a focused subject in the contrastive context of the others.

Absolutive

The base form of noun is the unmarked one, the so called absolutive case in Oromo, it is an underlying noun that occurs in the object position without an inflectional suffix. In addition, we will be having all the final vowels with their long forms as markers of object paradigm if we consider Oromo as an object marked language. It usually ends in vowel(s) which Gragg (1976: 194) states as 'stem-formatives'. Owens (1985: 18) defines the absolutive case as the citation form used in the object paradigm. These forms are considered as inherent stems used in the position of direct object. Oromo is a marked-nominative language in which the object is unmarked. Inherent noun like *kitaaba* 'book' is treated in the absolutive case.

Consonant ending nouns occur with the suffix *–n* in the object position. Sometimes an object seems to be marked; for example, *Galaanii(n)* 'Galaan-(Emph)'. According to this example, in consonant ending nouns, it seems that the morpheme *-n* can be appended to citation form in the same way as pronouns; for example, *isaanii-n* 'them-Emph'. Perhaps, the suffix *-n* is a focus marker on object since the language is object unmarked in terms of case. Pronouns and demonstratives seem to be distinguishing between subject and object forms as in *is-ni* 'he-Nom' vs. *is-a* 'he-Acc'; however, this form is not compatible for all pronouns as well as nouns. It calls for more explanation.

Dative

Wallaga Oromo marks an indirect object known as dative case, which is also called oblique case. Dative case signals a noun that takes the position before or after the direct object with the function of telling 'for whom' or 'to whom' the action is done as semantic criteria. Two different markers can be suffixed to nouns in order to mark the dative case. Dative case uses*-f* as commonly occurring suffix in this case (Owens, 1985: 105). Consider the examples in Table 11.

The dative case markers are the two underlying morphs of inflectional suffixes which are *-f* and *-tti*. These morphs are distinctly used in Wallaga Oromo; their basic functional difference falls between the morph *-tti*, which is basically adpositional form (Owens, 1985: 112), signals goal or addressee whereas the suffix *–f* shows addressee with a sense of beneficiary in dative case. Another difference is that *-f* occurs after long vowel, but *-tti* can be appended to any noun in the same function (Table 11). Vowel length is used as a surface form in the same function on which the suffix *-f* is realized in the underlying form. The morpheme *-tti* occurs as in *muč'aa-tti* 'to boy', making the same construction with dative forms in semantic consideration.

The suffix *-tti* makes the sentence semantically distinct from the other marker (*-f*) in the dative case. For example, *k'aršičča isa-tti kenni* 'give the money to him'. In this sentence, the money is supposed to be staying with 'him' for a short period of time[3]. However, in the sentence *k'aršičča isaa-f kenni* 'Give him the money', indicates that the money will be possessed by 'him'. Therefore, occurrence of *–tti* and *-f* may signal semantic difference in Oromo.

According to Griefenow-Mewis (2003: 45), the dative case markers mentioned earlier (*-f* and *-tti*) are not the only ones used in Wallaga Oromo. It considers several markers inclusive of these suffixes. The dative case is marked by *-f* and *-tti* as the underlying inflectional forms which means they are the formal occurrences of inflection in our competence. However, when *-f* is appended to nouns that end in short vowel, the vowel needs to be lengthened being triggered by the suffix, because it behaves to occur after long terminating vowel. In the surface form, which is the uttered form, vowel length only seems to be a dative case marker, but it is only occurring in performance for utterance that it is not one of the allomorphs of the dative case; underlyingly, there exists the suffix *-f*.

Nouns that seem to end in consonants can also be suffixed by the dative case marker *-f* after vowel length. Such nouns can be followed by a high front vowel *-i* as a copula, so that the case is marked by adding the suffix *-f* following vowel length. Even though the noun *loon* ends in consonant as in Table 11, the underlying dative case form is done in the same way with that of *nama+f* which becomes *namaa+f.* It will be *loon(i)+f* which becomes *loonii+f*. The long vowel without the final *-f* can be said; for example, *ani loonii okaa haame* 'I cut grass for cattle'. In this sentence the noun *loonii* 'for cattle' is in the dative case paradigm whose underlying form is *loonii-f* 'for cattle'.

Genitive

The case marked on nominals for indication of possession is known as genitive case. Of course, genitive case is broader than possession inclusive of purpose, source, reference, etc. The marker of genitive case in Wallaga Oromo nouns is vowel length, which is lengthening a short ending vowel of a noun. According to Ishetu (1981:13), genitive case is formed in two ways: by prefixing *kan* and lengthening the last vowel (or suffixing *-i* to final consonant of the possessor noun; and by juxtaposing the thing possessed and the possessor in that order and lengthening the final vowel of the

[3]The preverbal clitic*as* can be used before a verb to indicate that the object remains with the addressee for a short time. For example, *ulee sana as kenni* 'Give me that stick'

possessor if it is short (or suffixing *-i* after -C). However, all about genitive is the vowel length only on the possessor noun. In possession, if the vowel of the noun possessor is already long, occurrence of the possessed noun just before the noun possessor signals the genitive case. Using *kan* before the possessor and lengthening the short terminating vowel is also the other way of constructing genitive forms in syntactic form. It does not make gender distinction in Wallaga Oromo; however, in some other varieties like Hararghe, varying the initial letter to /*t*/ makes gender difference. Thus, *tan i*s used referring to feminine gender. Table 12 may clarify the point more.

Vowel length is the marker of genitive case on a noun as in shown in Table 12. The vowel length on the genitive noun occurs by the position of the possessed noun right before. If the noun ends in short vowel, it is lengthened. When the noun base ends in long vowel, positioning the possessed noun right before the noun possessor indicates genitive case as a phrasal form like *uffata muč'aa* 'clothes of baby'.

Instrumental

The use of instruments or a means of doing something is termed as the instrumental case (Table 13). In Wallaga Oromo, it is marked by *-n*. The instrumental case marker is utilized based on the spelling of the nouns in almost similar way with that of the dative case as discoursed so far.

As is clear from the examples, the instrumental case marker is *–n* which occurs following long vowel. For a noun that ends in short vowel, the ending vowel is lengthened to append a marker of instrumental case. Nouns ending in consonant are followed by the copular vowel *-i* which is lengthened before suffixing the instrumental case marker *–n* in the same way with that of the preceding example. Other elements especially copulas can be suffixed to nouns preceding the instrumental case marker indicating cleft system in semantics as in the following example sentence.

[6] *kop'ee* *namaa-tii-n* *deem-i*
shoe man:Gen-Cop-Inst go-2sg:Imp
'Go in someone's shoe'

Copulas are placed before instrumental case marker *–n* to indicate the instrumental from in cleft system, but they are not applicable for the nouns that end in short vowel; for instance, **harka-ɗaa-n* 'hand-Cop-Inst'. They precede *-n* when the terminating vowel of the noun is long vowel and the case is instrumental, for example, *ʔeboo-n* 'Spear-Nom' or *ʔeeboo-ɗaa-n* 'spear-Cop-Inst'. Its sense shows that the copulas make the instrumental case easily understandable fulfilling that the suffix *-n* follows lengthened vowel rather than the already long vowel. In the cleft system, *ʔeeboo-ɗaa-n* "spear-Cop-Inst' is to mean *kan fajjadame ʔeeboo-ɗa* 'what he used is spear'. However, this thesis focuses on the overt morphology only that it does not enter into the details of the cleft system.

Instrumental case is marked on the adjectives or demonstratives if any. When a noun is modified by an adjective, it is the adjective that is marked for the instrumental case. An exceptional usage of instrumental case in Wallaga Oromo occurs when the marker is seen on the verb just as on the noun; for example, *deem-ii-n* go-2sg:Imp-Inst 'use it to go'. This example is the verb inflection for case. Such form can also mean take this horse away in addition to the indicated meaning and function.

Ablative

The source, origin or from where a movement begins is expressed by the ablative case which is marked by vowel length in Wallaga Oromo. For nouns that end in long vowel, long *-aa* and *-ii* following copular elements *-ɗa* and-*ti* respectively are used to show ablative case. Table 14 provides the examples.

Vowel length is about lengthening of a short vowel, especially, referring to long *-aa* and *-ii* to mark ablative case. Nouns that end in long vowels are marked for ablative case by placing copulas *-ɗa* or its allomorph *-ti* before the lengthened final vowel of the case. The interesting point is that such form distinguishes ablative case from the object form of nouns in its morphology. For example, **Adaamaa ɗuf-Ø-e* 'He came to Adama'. In this sentence, the noun *Adaamaa* 'Adama' is the absolutive noun which may indicate locative or object or else ablative, but when it becomes *Adaamaa-ɗaa ɗuf-Ø-e* 'He came from Adama', the noun form *Adaamaaɗaa* 'Adama:Abl' is clear to be in the ablative form.

Locative

Locative case is marked by the suffix *-tti*, and tells location for some occurrence, goal or addressee. This case seems to be antonym to the ablative case in that it is "to" whereas the ablative case "from" is in the opposite direction. Owens (1985: 110ff) states *-tti* as locative case in addition to that it considers the morpheme (*-tti*) as suffix appended to human noun indicating goal as postposition.

Locative case as shown in Table 15 indicates location. It may also indicate goal or addressee as in *aangoo-tti* 'authority-Loc' which shows addressee, but it may indicate goal when appended to human as in *nama-tti* 'to man'.

Beneficiary

In Wallaga Oromo, gaining from the result of something is

Table 11. Nouns in dative case forms.

Base form	Inflected form	Meaning
nama	*namaa-f*/[*namaa*][4]	'for man'
muč'aa	*muč'aa-f*/[*muč'aa*]	'for baby'
loon(i)	*loonii-f* / [*loonii*]	'for cattle'
abbaa	*abbaa-tti*	'to father'
ǰaarsa	*ǰaarsa-tti*	'to father'
galaan	*Galaan(i)-tti*	'to father'

Table 12. Noun forms in genitive case.

Base form	Inflected form	Meaning
farda	*fard**aa***	'of horse'
bišaan	*bišaan**ii***	'of water'
muč'aa	*muč'**aa***	'of baby'

Table 13. Nouns in instrumental case forms.

Base forms	Inflected forms	Meaning
miila	*miilaa-n*	'by leg'
ʔeeboo	*ʔeeboo-n*	'by spear'
Summii	*summii-n*	'by poison'

Table 14. Nouns in ablative form.

Base form	Inflected form	Meaning
ǰimma	*ǰimm**aa***	'from Jimma'
Adaamaa	*Adaamaa-ɗ**aa***	'from Adama'
Šanan	*Šanan**ii***	'from Shanan'

Table 15. Nouns in locative case.

Base form	Inflected form	Meaning
Nak'amte	*Nak'amte-tti*	'at Nekempt'
Mana	*mana-tti*	'at home'
galma	*galma-tti*	'in hall'
aangoo	*aangoo-tti*	'by authority'

[4]All data of the language under analysis is written in phonemically transcribed form; wherever the phonetic form is needed brackets are used; which means, the uttered form is enclosed in brackets

marked on nouns by a suffix *–f* that follows long vowel, and called beneficiary or benefactive case. Beneficiary is used referring to gaining from result of some happening whereas benefactive case marks for benefitting from something. In this paper, such marking is indicated by beneficiary.

The paradigmatic forms indicate that the beneficiary marker *-f* after long final vowel on a noun point out that

there are gains from something. Since the same markeris appended for dative case, the verb type and semantic aspect determines beneficiary. The noun in the beneficiary occurs with intransitive verbs. Such constructions are widely used in Wallaga Oromo.

Although case marker and morphological form of dative and beneficiary seem the identical, the verb type with its arguments determines the case type (Tables 16 and 17). If the verb is constructed with direct and oblique objects, the oblique one is in the dative form whereas when the verb is intransitive or linking verb for the benefit of someone, the noun form is in the beneficiary case by using monovalent or bivalent verbs. Number of arguments and semantic features need to be considered for the distinction between dative and beneficiary cases.

Vocative

Some languages have vocative case which marks the noun representing the entity (animate) we address. It is a verbal means of calling attention. In Wallaga Oromo, there are various ways of marking the vocative case. One is using the word *'yaa'* referring to the addressee which is syntactic form.

The suffix *-na* which marks vocative case is appended to a noun which is two syllabic and ending in short vowel with harmonic occurrence of vowels (Table 18). Its full word form *nana* is used after nouns that end in long vowel; for example, *gurbaa nana* 'you boy!' It seems that the suffix *-na* occurs in allomorphic variant of its full word form *nana* as vocative case marker. Sometimes the suffix *-na* can be used representing the word *kana* 'this'; for example, *bara-na* 'this year'. It can be identified based on the syntagmatic occurrence of the nouns with such particle. The marker of vocative case with incorporation of strong feeling *-na* or its full word form *nana* can never be used with proper nouns.

Pronoun

Another declensional class in the nominals, which is inflected for a number of categories, is pronoun. Inflection of pronouns is complex because it is less regularly patterned than noun inflection. That is it contains several suppletive forms of inflection phonological forms in their functional variation. Pronouns are inflected for properties of number, gender, singulative and case like the noun inflection. Launhardt (1973) describes some forms of pronoun inflection in the attempt to provide how to learn the Oromo language.

Personal pronoun

Personal pronouns in Wallaga Oromo appear complex forms of inflectional indications. They distinguish their inflectional forms through their internal phonological forms or by suppletive forms in which complete replacement of the word indicates inflection in the language. The absolutive form of pronoun is the base form in the same way with noun that is the object form. It also distinguishes between masculine and feminine gender.

Regarding the core case distinction in pronouns, the nominative case is marked in the same way with nouns applying the four allomorphs. The first person plural *nu* 'us' in the object form is marked for nominative case by the allomorph *-i* as *nu-i* → *nu-t-i* 'we' (Table 19). The impermissible occurrence of V_1V_2 in Oromo is settled by the epenthetic consonant *-t-* which in other dialects is *-j-* becoming *nu-j-i* 'we'. Second person singular *si* 'you' does not have a clear root; it seems to be diacronically metathetic element from the root *is-* 'pronoun notion', because this root is applicable for all pronouns, except first persons (calls for more study). The nominative form of *si* 'you' is *ati* 'you:Nom' by suppletive form through complete replacement for grammatical function, so that it is not analyzed into **at-i* 'You-Nom' because its whole is inflected form. Although the object pronouns are from the meaningless roots /n-/ and /is-/, they are considered absolutive because there is no specific marker of object form.

In the pronouns 3sgm and 3sgf, *isa* 'him' and *ise* 'her', the final vowels show gender distinction. Vowel *-a* sound is associated to masculine, whereas the vowel *-e* sound is related with feminine gender as in *Nagaasa* 'masculine' vs. *Nagaase* 'feminine'. Therefore, they are like gender coding base forms of pronouns. In the 3sgf form, *ise→išee* undergoes phonological process of palatalization by movement of tongue *s →š* /-high-mid front vowel.

Second person plural pronoun *isin* and third person plural pronoun *isaan* are also used as honorific words referring to a single person. The citation or object forms are considered as the base forms of pronouns. Haymanot (1984: 8) distinguishes forms of 2pl pronoun *isin* and *isini* as object and subject forms, respectively showing the same form for 3pl *isaan* and *isaani*. However, consonant ending nominals are marked for nominative case by zero morpheme. The optional *-i* suffixed to nominals is for copular costruction as *kun isaan-i* 'these them-Cop'.

The controversial issue of marking pronouns in Oromo for accusative case is considered by several studies. Haimanot (1984: 19) used object pronouns in accusative case forms by the morpheme *-n* without describing their phonological distinction in advance; Debela and Meyer (2003: 174) marks pronouns of accusative case by *-Vn*. It puts two paradigms of object forms of pronouns as the base forms and the marked accusative forms.

The view of this is contrary with the works of the aforementioned studies, in this regard, that the issue of accusative case is never raised in this work. It has been

Table 16. Nouns in beneficiary case.

Base form	Inflected form	Meaning
Waak'a	*Waak'aa-f*	'for God'
Hoǰii	*hoǰii-f*	'for work'

Table 17. Difference between dative and beneficiary.

Case type	Base form	Inflected form	Meaning
Dative	*muč'aa*	*uffata muč'aa-f/ [muč'aa] biti*	'Buy the baby clothes'
	nama	*k'aršii namaa-f/ [namaa] kenni*	'Give the man money'
Beneficiary	*muč'aa*	*muč'aa-f ɗufe*	'he came for the baby'
	Nama	*namaa-f gammada*	'he gets happy for others'

Table 18. Vocative Nouns.

Base form	Inflercted form	Meaning
nama	*nama-na*	'(you) guy'
ǰara	*ǰara-na*	'(you) guys'

Table 19. Personal pronoun.

Person	Root	Citation/Object form	Subject	Possessive adjectives
1sg	*n-*	(*a*)*na*	(*a*)*n-i*	*koo*
1pl	*n-*	*nu*	*nu-i* [*nuti*]	*keeňňa*
2sg	*-*	*si*	*ati*	*Kee*
2pl	*is-*	*isin*	*isin-Ø*	*keessan*
3sgm	*is-*	*isa*	*is-ni*[*inni*]	*isaa* [*saa*]
3sgf	*is-*	*isee*[*išee*]	*išee-n*	*isee* [*šee*]
3pl	*is-*	*Isaan*	*isaan-Ø*[*isaan*]	*isaanii*[*saanii*]

indicated that Oromo is an absolutive language in which object is not marked for accusative case by particular morpheme(s) (Table 20). The base (citation) forms of the pronouns are absolutively the onject forms that we do not have object markers. Next, the marked form is incompatible for 3sg pronouns that they have to remain in their base forms. The other, the morpheme *-Vn* will be *-VVn* for the C-final nouns. Therefore, the discourse related marked forms of the object pronouns can be seen in Table 21.

Pronouns in object forms are marked by the morpheme *-n* which triggers the preceding vowel to be lengthened if it is short. Several morphemes behave like occurring after vowel length only. The marked object forms of pronouns are functionally for showing emphasis; not accusative case as we already have the absolutive case in object forms. These forms are situation based that they are understood more in discourse. For example, *Inni isaanii-n waam-Ø-e* he-Nom them-Emph call-3sgm-Perf 'he called them' has the meaning 'it is them whom he called' in relation with other participants of the discourse. The equivalent forms for 3sg pronouns seem to be suffixing the copula *-ɗa* for emphasis as *isa-ɗa* 'him-Emph' and *išee-ɗa* 'her-Emph'.

The nominative and objective forms of the pronouns can be seen in Table 21. Pronouns are inflected for several types of cases. The dative case is marked by *-f* and *-tti*. However, in some cases pronouns in the oblique case remain in the object form as in *gaaffii si gaafate* 'he asked you a question'; no any marker. The base form of a pronoun functions as dative case.

[7] *is-ni[inni] bišaan sii-f*[*sii*] *kenn-Ø-e*
he:Nom water you-Dat give-3sgm-Perf
'He gave you water'

Example [7] uses *–f* to indicate dative case whereby

Table 20. Object pronouns

Persons	Object pronouns	
	Without suffix -*Vn*	**with suffix –*Vn***
1sg	*na*	*ana-an*
2sg	*si*	*si-in*
1pl	*nu*	*nu-un*
2pl	*isin*	*isin-iin*
3pl	*isaan*	*isaan-iin*

Debela and Meyer (2003: 174)

Table 21. Object pronouns and emphatic forms.

Persons	Object pronouns	
	Absolutive	**Emphatic**
1sg	*na*	*anaa-n*
2sg	*si*	*sii-n*
1pl	*nu*	*nuu-n*
2pl	*isin*	*isin*(*ii*)*-n*
3pl	*Isaan*	*isaan*(*ii*)*-n*

Table 22. Pronouns in ablative form.

Base form	Inflected form	Meaning
ana	*ana-irraa* [*narraa*]	'from me'
Si	*si-irraa* [*sirraa*]	'from you'

vowel length can also be used as its surface form. The morph *-tti* can also mark dative case as in *išee-n ergaa na-tti him-t-e*, 'she told me a message' on the basis of meaning though in other contexts it can function as adposition. For example, *saree-n na-tti fig-Ø-e* 'A dog ran to me' in which *–tti* is an adposition showing goal to mean towards.

Double usage of dative case pronouns is permissible in Wallaga Oromo. The pronoun which is placed before the direct object shows focus on the indirect object, and is suffixed by-*f* whereas the second one appears in vowel length only whose underlying form is the same. The examples below illustrate more:

[8] (a) *is-ni anaa-f baɗaasa naa-f*[*naa*] *kenn-Ø-e*
he-Nom me-Dat award me:1sg-Ben give-3sgm-Perf
'He gave me an award'
(b) *in-ni išee-f kop'ee bit-Ø-ee-fii*
he-Nom her-Dat shoe buy-3sgm-Conv-Ben
'He bought her shoes'

As in example [8] (a), the first person pronouns can be used in double form. It seems that when the dative pronouns occur before the direct object, the pronoun is suffixed by *-f* and it conveys focus. However, the pronoun of the dative case which is placed after the direct object uttered in vowel length only whose underlying form is with the suffix *-f*. Sentence [8] (b) indicates that third person pronouns do not allow the double appearance of the dative pronouns because on the final position of the sentence, *-fii* is suffixed to the verb following a lengthened vowel whose function is similar with the doubled pronouns in other pronouns.

Personal pronouns are also inflected for ablative case. The adpositional particle *–irraa* marks ablative case on pronouns.

The ablative forms of pronouns indicating source is made by using the adposition *-irraa* because this adposition has got the meaning 'from' in its long final vowel (Table 22). It seems that this is the only marker of ablative case on pronouns.

Wallaga Oromo distinguishes between possessive adjectives[5] and possessive pronouns. Possessive adjectives are used with nouns being encliticized whereas

[5]Pronouns that are used with a noun and somehow modifying the noun in terms of its kind and identity are used as possessive adjectives. They are pronouns used as adjectives.

Table 23. Reflexive pronouns (Subject).

Base form	Reflexive form	Meaning
ana	*ofiikoo*	'myself'
si	*ofiikee*	'yourself'
isa	*ofiisaa*	'himself'
išee	*ofiišee*	'herself'
nu	*ofiikeeňňa*	'ourselves'
isin	*ofiikeessan*	'yourselves'
isaan	*Ofiisaanii*	'themselves'

Table 24. Cases in intensive pronouns.

Case type	Intensive form	Meaning
Nominative	*mataa-n-koo*	'myself'
	mataa-n-saa	'himself'
Objective	*mataa-kee*	'yourself'
	mataa-šee	'herself'
Dative	*mataasaa-f*	'for himself'
	mataakee-f	'for yourself'

possessive pronouns are used alone in sentences, and thus they are syntactic forms. The particle *kan* is prefixed to the possessive adjectives to form possessive pronouns that can stand alone in a sentence to indicate possession as in *kankoo* 'mine'. Such forms are usually constructed with the copulas *ďa* or *-ti*. The obligatory difference in the usage of the copulas is that the first and second person plural possessive pronouns *kankeeňňa* 'ours' and *kankeessan* 'yours' are used with the copula *ďa* only. The copular element *-ti* can be used with the other possessive pronouns ending in long vowel; but *ďa* can be used replacing *-ti* for the purpose of focus on the possession.

Reflexive and intensive pronouns

Both reflexive and intensive pronouns are differently used in Oromo. According to Launhardt (1973: 234), both the markers *of(i)-* 'self (reflexive)' and *mataa* 'self (intensive)' are for reflexive pronouns; however, from syntactic constructions we can understand that the former is for reflexive whereas the latter makes intensive pronouns (Table 23).

Reflexive pronouns

Reflexive pronouns show that an action refers back to the subject. They are formed by prefixing the particle *of(i)*-on possessive adjective forms of pronouns. A reflexive pronoun may come either right after its antecedent or after some words in a sentence and it remains reflexive regardless of changing its syntactic placement. Launhardt (1973: 233) indicates that subject and object cases are similarly unmarked.

Reflexive pronouns are inflected for several cases like nominative case as in *ofiisaanii ijaarani* 'themselves built it' and dative case as in *ofiikee-f* 'yourself-Dat'. Dative case is marked by *–f* on the reflexive pronouns (Table 23).

Intensive pronouns

Intensive pronouns are formed in different ways from that of the reflexive ones. The intensive form *mataa* is procliticized to the possessive adjective form and it is syntactic aspect. Nominative case markers are suffixed to the word *mataa* preceding the possessive adjectives occurring with the intensive marker because it is usually placed right after its antecedent. Pronouns of this category are inflected for subject, object, dative cases and beneficiary.

Intensive pronouns emphasize the subject. The nominative case marker *–n* is suffixed to the intensive pronoun *mataa* 'self (intensive)' in the subject paradigm (Table 24). The intensive pronouns come right after the nominative nouns or pronouns to indicate intensity or

Table 25. Demonstratives.

Base form	Nominative form	Gloss
kana	*kun*(*i*)	this:Nom 'this'
sana	*sun*(*i*)	that:Nom 'that'

emphasis. The object forms of intensive pronouns occur in the absolutive form. Intensive pronoun occurs in the dative case being suffixed by the marker *-f* on the intensive pronoun. In both object forms and dative cases the intensive pronouns occur right after the object or citation forms of pronouns or after corresponding nouns.

Intensive pronouns are used in subject or object positions following their antecedent nouns or pronouns; hence, they are inflected for nominative case. They are also inflected for dative case by the marker *-f* suffixed to the intensive pronoun.

[9] *Dabaloo-n ana mataa koo-f t'alayaa erg-ee jir-a*[*erg-ee-ra*]
Dabaloo-Nom me self my-Dat letter send:3sgm-Conv Aux-Impf
'Dabalo sent me a letter'

When an intensive pronoun is used as a dative case, the direct object noun or pronoun is followed by intensive pronoun. The intensive pronoun is inflected for the case, whereas the pronoun in the direct object form remains in its base form as in example [8].

Demonstrative and interrogative pronouns

Demonstratives and interrogative pronouns have case as their common inflectional category, though the latter is marked for more number of cases than the former in Wallaga Oromo. Demonstrative adjectives occur after nouns to modify the noun (antecedent), whereas demonstrative pronouns are used alone in a sentence either in subject or object positions. Interrogative pronouns are marked for nominative, genitive and dative cases.

Demonstratives

Inflection of demonstrative adjectives and pronouns distinguishes between nominative and absolutive forms. When demonstratives are used with nouns as adjectives as in *man-ni kun-i* 'this house', they are marked for nominative case following the nouns they are modifying. Demonstrative pronouns are also marked for nominative case as in *kun-i mana* 'this is a house'.

The distinction between the absolutive and nominative forms is not the final vowel change, but the internal vowel /*u*/ makes the inflectional form in the use of ablaut in which vowel change shows inflection (Table 25). Occurrence if *-i* at the end in the nominative case as *kuni* 'this:Nom' and *suni* 'that:Nom' is dialectal variation.

Even though these are basically pronouns, they can be used as adjectives modifying nouns. The plural form *kanneen* 'these' points to near things in object form. However, it is also possible to opt with the singular demonstrative pronouns *kana* 'this' for plural antecedents in Wallaga Oromo.

[10] *nam-oota kanneen waam-i*
man-pl:ABS these call:2sg-Imp
'call these persons'

As in example [10], demonstrative adjective or pronoun can be used in plural form, but its singular correspondent can also occur without meaning change as in *ǰabb-oota kana fuud-ii deem-i* 'Take these calves away'. The singular form *kana* 'this' can also be used along with plural forms.

Interrogative pronouns

Interrogative pronouns undergo inflection for different grammatical properties. They are marked for number distinguishing between plural and singular (Table 26). In addition, they are marked for cases as subject, object, genitive and dative forms. Launhardt (1973: 246) states that *–tu* suffixed to the object form in order to mark focus in the nominative case.

Nominative forms of interrogative pronoun are used in focused forms by the morpheme *-tu* which is a nominal focus marker. It indicates focused subjects used in the nominative case. Both dative and beneficiary cases are formed in the same morphology that they both are marked by the morpheme *-f*. The distinction between them is syntactic and semantic. The genitive case marker, vowel length, can be used with interrogative pronouns as in Table 26. Interrogative pronoun *eeňňu* is marked by *-n* in the object form. The morpheme is basically functional for showing emphasis but it occurs with the interrogative pronoun embodying the sense of objective indication.

[11] *eeňňuu-n waam-t-e?*
who-Emph call-2sg-Perf
'Whom did you call?'

Table 26. Interrogative pronouns.

Case	Base form	Inflected form	Meaning
Dative	*Eeňňu*	*eeňňuu-f*	'for whom'
	maal(*i*)	*maalii-f*	'for what'
Beneficiary	*Eeňňu*	*eeňňuu-f*	'for whom'
	maal(*i*)	*maalii-f*	'for what'
Genitive	*eeňňu*	*Eeňň**uu***	'whose'
	maal	*maal**ii***	'of what'
Foc.(Nom.)	*eeňňu*	*eeňňu-tu*	'who'
	maal(*i*)	*maat-tu*	'what'

Table 27. Indefinite pronouns.

Base forms	Inflected form	Meaning
nama	*nam-uu*	'nobody'
eeňňu	*eeňňu-llee*	'whomever'
kam	*kam-llee* [*kam-i-llee*]	'whichever'
Eessa	*eessa-llee*	'wherever'

Example [11] shows that interrogative pronoun occurs in object form being suffixed by *-n* whose function is marking an emphatic object.

Indefinite and reciprocal pronouns

Indefinite pronouns

Several indefinite pronouns are available in Wallaga Oromo and they undergo inflection. They are marked for number and case. The case indicated by indefinite pronouns between nominative and absolutive cases is rather syntactic because it is not morphologically distinctly marked. Indefinite pronouns can be marked for genitive and dative cases also. Launhardt (1973: 247) classifies indefinite pronouns into three based on their usage. According to him, there are indefinite pronouns referring to person only, those referring to animals and things only, and those referring to persons, animals and things. Indefinite pronouns are marked for few inflectional categories.

The morpheme *-llee*, which means 'ever', gives the property of indefiniteness to pronouns when it is appended to them (Table 27). These indefinite pronouns are mostly used in negative constructions especially in jussive and imperative forms. The indefinite pronouns make contrastive relation between nominative and absolutive cases in syntactic forms though they are morphologically the same. Here is an example sentence:

[12] (a) *namuu daree hin ǰeek'-n-e*
man:Nom class Neg disturb-Neg-Perf
'Nobody disturbed the class'

In example [12] (a), the indefinite pronoun is in the nominative case though it can also be used in the object position. The suffix *-uu* makes indefinite pronouns when they are suffixed to the lexical item *nam-* which basically serves as a noun root when considered alone. It adds the property of indefiniteness as the stem *namuu* 'nobody'.

Reciprocal pronouns

In Wallaga Oromo, reciprocity is expressed by *wal(i)* 'each other'. This particle is inflected for dative, beneficiary cases as follows. The base form *wal* is as an object object.

The reciprocal pronoun used as dative case is formed by suffixing *-f* whereas the next example in Table 28 indicates that *wal* is suffixed by the same morpheme *-f*for beneficiary cases. The difference is construed from their syntagmatic forms.

The reciprocal pronoun can be suffixed by *–n* to mean 'together' though the marker seems to occur with the reciprocal pronoun only.

[13] (a) *Marartuu-fi Immiruu-n walii-n ǰiraat-u*

Table 28. Reciprocal pronouns.

Case	Base form	Inflected form	Meaning
Dative	*wal*	*walii-f*	'for eachother'
Beneficiary	*Wal*	*walii-f*	'for eachother'

Table 29. Plural forms of adjectives.

Form of inflection	Singular	Plural m./f.
Lexical coding	*sooressa* 'rich:m.' *bayeessa* beautiful:m *koʔeettii* 'busy:f.'	*sooreyyii* 'riches' *bayeeyyii* 'beautifuls' *koʔeeyyii* 'busies'
Reduplication	*guddaa* 'big' *furdaa* 'fat' *č'imaa* 'strong'	*gud-guddoo* [*gur-guddoo*] 'bigs' *fur-furdoo* [*fu-furdoo*]'fats' *č'i-č'č'imoo* 'strongs'
-(o)ota	*hamaa* 'cunning' *gowwaa* 'foolish' *gamna*'wise'	*ham-oota* 'cunnings/bads' *goww-oota* 'foolishes' *gamn-oota*'wises'

Marartuu and Imiruu-Nom each other-Loc live:3Pl-Impf
'Marartu and Imiru live together'

The suffix *-n* as in example [13] represents the shortened form of *wal-wajjin* 'together' which has undergone the diachronic process of grammaticalization in which meaning and lexical form is reduced into grammatical form and function. Adpositions like *–tti* 'toward' and *–irraa* 'from' are used with reciprocal pronouns showing goal and source respectively as *wal-tti* [*wal-i-tti*] eachother-Loc 'eachother-toward', and *wal-irraa* each other-Abl "from each other". They are appended to the pronouns as adposisions are morphological in Oromo. The adpositions *-tti* and *-iraa* are used in morphology of nominal indicating the meaning 'towards' and 'from' respectively. The reciprocal pronoun *wal* can also be used as a direct object occurring just before verb in its unmarked form (absolutive) as in *isaan wal ǰaallatu* 'they love each other'.

Adjectives

In Wallaga Oromo, adjectives are inflected following the nouns they modify in a sentence. That is, when the noun is in the nominative case, the adjective is marked for the same case; the same is true when they occur with nouns in object paradigm. They mostly occur in harmony with nouns. Adjectives can be considered as a peripheral word class of inflectional morphology as they mimic nouns, they modify in several ways. This section attempts to describe inflectional categories of adjectives and occurrence patterns of their markers. Almost all adjectives end in vowel sounds in which change of the vowels or suffixing markers account for inflection of the adjectives.

Inflectional categories of adjectives

The inflectional categories or properties of adjectives are the same with that of nouns. Adjectives are inflected for number, gender, singulative and case like nouns; however, sometimes they are marked differently from nouns. For instance, adjectives, unlike nouns, are inflected by reduplication to mark plurality.

When adjectives occur with nouns in sentences, number is marked on both of them. Nouns are marked for plurality (cf. section 4.1.1), but adjectives are marked for number by reduplication of its initial syllable (CV, CVC), or by the plural suffix *-(o)ota*. In the former way of marking plurality, the initial syllable reduplication co-occurs with the final vowel shift from *-aa* to *–oo* when the adjectives end in long *-aa*. The latter way of marking number in adjectives is the same with that of nouns. According to Baye (1981: 29) and Launhardt (1973: 313), the suffix *-(o)ota* shows plurality in adjectives. Table 29 shows the different ways of marking plural adjectives with examples.

The lexically coded adjectives distinguish between singular and plural forms by their contrastive final syllables *-ssa* and *-ttii*. The plural number is also marked by reduplication whereby the final vowel shifts from long *-aa* to *-oo* occurs for most adjectives of such form.

Table 30. Marked gender on adjectives.

Masculine	Feminine
ham-aa 'cunning/bad:m.'	*ham-tuu* 'cunning/bad:f.'
ɗeer-aa 'tall/long-m.'	*ɗeer-tuu* 'tall/long-f.'
furd-aa 'fat:m.'	*furd-oo* 'fat:f.'
k'alʔaa 'thin:m.'	*k'alʔ-oo* 'thin:f.'

Table 31. Noun phrases (Nouns and Adjectives) in the nominative case.

Inflected forms	Meaning
nam-nigowwaa-n	'a foolish man'
nam-oot-ni ɗe-ɗɗeeroo-n	'long men'

Reduplication of the initial CV or CVC syllable can be a marker of plural number. This occurs on adjectives that are formed from other part of speech and on the compound adjectives like *harka-k'alʔeessa* 'poor:sg' →*harka-k'alʔeeyyii* 'poor:pl'. The third row of Table 29 shows that the suffix *-(o)ota* is also a marker of plurality on adjectives.

In Oromo, the base forms of adjectives are normal to be used with masculine as in *gurraačča* 'black:m.', that is, they are basically masculine related. Inflection occurs when we make them fit for the feminine as *gurraattii* 'black:f.'. Variation of the final syllables on these adjectives is lexical form seemingly suffixal forms of feminine gender *–ittii* and *-ičča* of masculine. This is for adjectives that can also be used as nouns. Adjectives that are invariable between gender distinctions also exist in Oromo. Table 30 shows some examples of Marked Gender on Adjectives.

For many adjectives that end in long *-aa*, the morpheme *–tuu* is suffixed dropping the long vowel *-aa* so that it marks feminine gender. However, some adjectives ending in long *-aa* can be marked by shifting the final *-aa* to *-oo.* Some adjectives like *garraamii* 'kind' happen with no inflection to mark gender that means the same form is used for both masculine and feminine. There are adjectives indicating gender to distinguish between masculine and feminine (Mohammed and Zaborski, 1990). They are used after the noun they refer to. For example, *saree kormaa* vs. *saree ɗaltuu* can be considered in which then adjectives *kormaa* and *ɗaltuu* are gender distinguishers coming after those nouns. Markers of singulative property *–ičča* (for masculine) and *-ittii* (for feminine) occur on adjectives also as for nouns. Singulative markers are not used on both a noun and adjective at the same time. When noun is marked, adjective is not and the vice versa.

[14] (a) *muk-ni*[*muk-ti*]*ɗeer-ičč-i*
stick-Nom long-Sing-Nom
'The long stick'
(b) *muk-ičč-i ɗeeraa-n*
stick-Sing-Nom ling-Nom
'The long stick '

Singulative markers occur on either an adjective or a noun when they are used together as in examples [14] (a) and (b). Adjectives are marked for singulative especially when they occur after the relative pronouns *inni* and *išeen* as in (a). Marking singulative property on both noun and adjective is ungrammatical **muk-ičč-i ɗeer-ičč-i* 'the long stick' because the singulative marker is appended on both the adjective and noun.

If a noun is marked for nominative case, an adjective following it will also be marked for the same case. Table 31 clarifies the point. The phrases in Table 31 exemplify that adjectives following a nominative noun are marked for nominative case whether the adjective is occurring either in suffixation or reduplication. The same rules (markers) of nouns apply for the adjectives for nominative case.

As indicated in Table 32, the nominative case is marked by four allomorphs whereas the absolutive case is the unmarked object form. Dative case is marked by the underlying suffixes *-f*. Genitive case is marked by vowel length on the noun or pronoun possessor. The instrumental and beneficiary cases are marked by *-n* and *-f* respectively. These are suffixed to the nouns or pronouns under the case.

Inflections of verbs

Verbs are the most significant class in undergoing several inherent and agreement inflection and thus complexity of conjugational occurrences is noticeable. As Katamba (1993: 220) indicates, "in most languages the

Table 32. Summary of case inflection realized on adjectives.

Case	Marker	Example
Nominative	*-n, -ni, -i*	*furdaa-n* fat-Nom *gamn-i*wise-Nom
Absolutive	No marker	*guddaa*big/respected-ABS *gamna* wise-ABS
Dative	*-f*	*c'imaa-f* strong-Dat 'for strong' *adii-f*white-Dat 'for white'
Genitive	Vowel length	*ham**aa*** cunning/bad-Gen 'of cunning/bad' *guraacc**aa***black-Gen 'of black'
Instrumental	*-n*	*ɗeeraa-n* tall/long-Inst 'by tall/long' *k'alʔoo-n*thin-Inst 'by thin'
Beneficiary	*-f*	*muraasaa-f* few-Ben 'for few' *gudaa-f*big/respected-Ben 'for big/respected'

verb shows greater morphological complexity than any other word class".

Verbs and inflection

In the Oromo language, the base stems of verbs are the infinitive (verbal noun) forms ending with morpheme *-uu* as in *mur-uu* cut-VN 'to cut/cutting'. We can classify the verbs in Oromo into three types as action/stative, auxiliary and copula. The action verbs can be used in different derivational forms like causative and passive constructions. Auxiliary verbs, which occur as helping verbs, can be considered as action/main verbs when they are used in the absence of another action verb in a sentence. They are basically functioning as helping verbs being with other action verbs in a sentence. The invariable particles functioning as copula do exist in the language. They are *ɗa* and its negative form *miti*, but the positive copula *ɗa* can be varied to *-ti*, which usually occurs in genitive construction or *-i*, which occurs with nouns or pronouns ending in consonant.

Verb inflection happens for inherent and agreement properties. Inherent properties are the basic members of a word class triggering inflection on that word class whereas agreement properties indicate inflection of a word class for properties out of its members (cf. section 2.4). Besides inflection of their inherent properties, verbs are inflected for agreement purposes based on forms of their root or stems. We can identify two types of verbs according to the root forms and their agreement properties. The majority of verbs are conjugated in a regular manner to occur in agreement with subject as Oromo refers to a subject agreement inflection on verbs. The other rare verbs whose root ends in consonants /ʔ/, /h/, /ɗ/, /j/ and whose inflected forms happen in special ways with their vowel change seem to be irregular verbs. The conjugational pattern of the regular and irregular verbs can be shown as in Table 33.

In Table 33 conjugation of the verb root *raf-*, the perfective marker *-e* which is varied to *-i* used with second and third person plural pronouns. The morpheme *-t-* marks person on verbs as an agreement suffix. However, in other context, it marks person and gender as a cumulative morpheme. Therefore, the morpheme can be considered as an agreement marker of person and gender on verbs. Here, are examples:

[15] (a) *an-i* *raf-Ø-e*
I-Nom sleep-1sg-Perf
'I slept'
(b) *at-i* *raf-t-e*
you-Nom sleep-2sg-Perf
'You slept'

In example [15] (b), the morpheme *-t-* marks second person singular pronoun in contrast with its unmarked (zero morphemic) correspondent on first person singular as in example [15] (a). It also conveys a feminine gender when the verb is used with the third person singular pronoun as is seen in Table 34. Haimanot (1984: 11) indicates that the morph *-t-* is a person agreement marker for second singular and plural, third singular feminine types of pronouns; the rest are marked by zero

Table 33. Conjugation of action verbs in positive form.

Verb	Person	Verb root	Agreement		Perf.	Inflected Form	Gloss
			Per.	Num			
Regular verb	1sg	*raf-* 'sleep'	-Ø	-	-e	*raf-Ø-e*	'I slept'
	2sg	*raf-* 'sleep'	-t	-	-e	*raf-t-e*	'you slept'
	3sgm	*raf-* 'sleep'	-Ø	-	-e	*raf-Ø-e*	'he slept'
	3sgf	*raf-* 'sleep'	-t	-	-e	*raf-t-e*	'she slept'
	1pl	*raf-* 'sleep'	-Ø	-n	-e	*raf-n-e*	'we slept'
	2pl	*raf-* 'sleep'	-t-	-an	-i	*raf-t-an-i*	'you slept'
	3pl	*raf-* 'sleep'	-Ø-	-an	-i	*raf-an-i*	'they slept'
Irregular verbs	1sg	*ɗaw-*'weave'	-Ø	-	-e	*ɗaw-Ø-e*	'I weaved'
	2sg	*ɗaw-* 'weave'	-t	-	-e	*ɗaw-t-e* [*ɗoofte*]	'you weaved'
	3sgm	*ɗaw-* 'weave'	-Ø	-	-e	*ɗaw-Ø-e*	'he weaved'
	3sgf	*ɗaw-* 'weave'	-t	-	-e	*ɗaw-t-e*[*ɗoofte*]	'she weaved'
	1pl	*ɗaw-* 'weave'	-Ø	-n	-e	*ɗaw-n-e* [*ɗoofne*]	'we weaved'
	2pl	*ɗaw-* 'weave'	-t-	-an	-i	*ɗaw-t-an-i* [*ɗooftani*]	'you weaved'
	3pl	*ɗaw-* 'weave'	-Ø-	-an	-i	*ɗaw-an-i*	'they weaved

Table 34. Consonat deletion in conjugational forms.

Person	Root	Inflected form	Agr.		Asp.	Gloss
			Per.	Num		
1sg	*moʔ-*	*moʔ-Ø-e*	*-Ø-*	-	*-e*	'I won'
2sg	*moʔ-*	*moʔ-t-e* [*moote*]	*-t-*	-	*-e*	'you won:sg'
3sgm	*moʔ-*	*moʔ-e*	*-Ø-*	-	*-e*	'he won'
3sgf	*moʔ-*	*moʔ-t-e* [*moote*]	*-t-*	-	*-e*	'she won'
1pl	*moʔ-*	*moʔ-n-e* [*moone*]	*-Ø*	*-n*	*-e*	'we won'
2pl	*moʔ-*	*moʔ-t-an-i* [*mootan*(*i*)]	*-t-*	*-an*	*-i*	'you won:pl'
3pl	*moʔ-*	*moʔ-an-i*	*-Ø*	*-an*	*-i*	'they won'

morphemes. However, the agreement marker *-n-* seems to be a cumulative morpheme conveying person and number functions in first and third plural pronouns. Example, *raf-n-e* 'We slept' in which the suffix *-n-* agrees with the first person and plural pronoun. In general, the suffix *-t-* marks the verb to distinguish between genders or persons which are contextually identified. Negative forms of the verb conjugation in Table 33 above are done by using the negative proclitic *hin-* and the dependent suffix *-n-* after the verb. For instance, *hinraf-n-e* '*Neg sleep-Neg-Perf*' is the negative form for all the varied forms in the table. In negative perfective aspect, the verb form is uniform across the paradigm. No agreement marker is used. The perfective marker is similarly *-e* which follows the dependent negative suffix *-n-*. In imperfective forms, the suffix *-u* can be considered as the dependent negative marker along with the proclitic *hin* except for second and third person plural pronouns whose marker is *-an* instead. These are also the markers of imperfective aspect.

Transitive and intransitive verbs whose roots end in the glottal phonemes /ʔ/, /*h*/, the implosive /ɗ/ and the palatal /j/ (like *hoɗ-* 'suck', *ɗoʔ-* 'explode' and *moʔ-* 'win'), behave differently conjugating when they take any consonant initial morph and hence the agreement markers of such forms. They are not followed by a consonant. Based on this, when a suffix that begins in consonant is to happen on a verb root or stem that ends in one of these segments, they are deleted and followed by the preceding vowel length. However, in some cases the preceding vowel may be changed. The following table can make it clearer.

As Table 34 indicates, a marker that begins with consonant causes deletion of the terminating glottal segments `and others /*j*/ and /*ɗ*/which is followed by the preceding vowel length. Such form does not occur with 1sg, 3sgm and 3pl subjects because the conjugational agreement morphemes of these subjects do not begin with consonant; there is no change with status of the vowel because the morphs appended are vowel or

Table 35. Autobenefactive verbs in conjugation.

Person	Stem	Inflected form	Agr.		Asp.	Gloss
			Per	Num		
1sg	*bitat-*	*bitat-ɗ-e [bitaɗɗe]*	*-ɗ-*	-	*-e*	'I bought:ABen'
2sg	*bitat-*	*bitat-t-e*	*-t-*	-	*-e*	'You:sg bought:ABen'
3sgm	*bitat-*	*bitat-Ø-e*	*-Ø*	-	*-e*	'he bought:ABen'
3sgf	*bitat-*	*bitat-t-e*	*-t-*		*-e*	'she bought:ABen'
1pl	*bitat-*	*bitat-n-e*	*-Ø*	*-n*	*-e*	'We bought:ABen'
2pl	*bitat-*	*bitat-t-an-i*	*-t-*	*-an*	*-i*	'You:pl bought:ABen'
3pl	*bitat-*	*bitat-Ø-an-i*	*-Ø*	*-an*	*-i*	'They bought:ABen'

vowel initial.

With regard to the verbs that may also change their preceding vowels usually from low *a* into the high mid vowels. This occurs in both transitive and intransitive verbs. Example, *gaj-s-e→geesse* 'she reached', *ɗaw-n-e→ɗoo-f-n-e* 'we weaved', *kaaj-s-e → keesse* 'she put'. These can be considered as irregular verbs since their inflectional forms are special. Phonological process of total assimilation accounts for the change of the palatal segment /j/ into /s/. What makes these forms irregular is that they not only change their consonant which might be attributed to phonological process but also vowel change occurs. On the other hand, the low vowel can be realized as back, high-mid vowel being in length and the segment *f* happens by phonological process of partial assimilation in its conjugation as in *ɗaw-n-e → ɗoo-f-n-e* 'we weaved', in which the change of vowels from low *a* into high-mid vowels is subject to irregularity. Therefore, they tend to be construed as irregular verbs.

Verb stems are formed by several markers including the passive *-am-*, the causative -s- or *-si(i)s*, and the autobenefactive or the middle voice /*-at-*/ suffixed to the verb roots or other stems. The conjugational forms might vary across different types of verbs.

Table 35 shows that verb stems are inflected by occurring with the markers of grammatical functions that occur following the derivational suffixes. Autobenefactive verbs show distinct conjugational form with 1sg subject in occurrence of agreement morphemes in verbs. The autobenefactive verb with this subject is suffixed by the morpheme *-ɗ-* as its agreement marker. Mohammed and Zaborski (1990: 22) considers *-aɗɗ* as a morpheme of reflexive, middle voice and hence autobenefactive which is appended to verb root. However, I argue that the agreement marker *-ɗ* should be considered here, because if we consider *-aɗɗ* itself as one morpheme it could be difficult to stripe the roots out on the verb forms like *ňaat-ɗ-e*'I ate' which distinctly shows the functional differences of the morphemes. The agreement autobenefactiv/middle voice suffix is *-at* which undergoes phonological process of assimilation with the agreement marker *-ɗ-*. The suffix *-ɗ-* shares its features to the final /t/ of the marker *-at* as *bitat-ɗ-e→bitaɗ-ɗ-e* 'I bought:ABen'. The occurrence pattern of these markers is regular in that way with such verbs.

Verbs

Different inherent and agreement grammatical categories account for the inflection of verbs in Oromo. The inherent ones are aspect, mood, and voice whereas the agreement properties include person, number, gender and case. Several studies, especially the earlier ones, consider tense in the inflectional categories of verbs in the Oromo language (Hodson and Walker, 1922: 29; Nordfeldt, 1947:117; Launhadt, 1973: 71; Gragg, 1976: 189; Mohammed and Zaborski, 1990: 7; Griefenew-mewis, 2003: 72ff). From the three major tenses present, past and future, Oromo mainly identifies between past and non-past in its morphology, because the morphological markers do not distinguish each tense types. For example, present and future tenses are not distinctly marked in the morphology of the language when tense is considered. Owens (1985: 82) distinguishes between past and imperfective in which the imperfective conveys present and future tenses. Therefore, the morphological distinctions that are overtly marked on verbs point to aspect rather than tense (Dabala and Meyer, 2003: 162; Kebede, 2009: 41). However, some extent of tense related concept is also found in the Oromo language. Some grammatical forms need tense-wise consideration which can be categorized under the two aspect types.

Inherent inflectional properties of verbs

Booij (1995: 2) identifies verbal inflection as tense, aspect, mood and voice adding that the important categories are three being tense, aspect and mood. The three main functional domains of inherent verb inflection in the Oromo language are aspect, mood and voice with some indications of tenses.

Aspect

Comrie (1976: 3) states, "Aspects are different ways

Table 36. Aspectual distinction on verbs.

Verb type	Root	Perf form	Gloss	Impf form	Gloss
Action	*kuf-*	*kuf-e*	'fell-Perf'	*kuf-a*	'fall-impf
Auxiliary	*jĭr-*	*jĭra* (present)	'exist-Perf'	*jĭra* (present)	'exist-Impf'
	tur-	*ture* (past)	'exist-Perf'	*ture* (past)	'exist-Impf'

of viewing the internal temporal constituency of a situation". According to his view, in aspect languages, perfective aspect has relation with inchoative[6] forms that it conveys state changes. Aspect is context related which morphologically distinguishes between completeness and incompleteness of an action. It is bound with situation and duration unlike tense which is just about time of an event in relation with the speech time. In the Oromo language the roots or stems of verbs, usually ending in consonant, take inflectional morphemes showing distinction between perfective and imperfective aspects (Dabala and Meyer, 2003:162). Heine (1981), as stated in Kebede (2009:41), notes, "these two aspects are distinguished primarily by their suffix vowel, which is *-a* (and its allomorphs *-i* and *-u*) for the imperfect and *-e* (and its allomorph *-i*) for the perfective." The continued actions are categorized as imperfective aspect whereas a short and completed action can be considered as perfective aspect. Dehl (1985) as stated in Bybee and Dehl (1989:84) says a perfective verb denotes a single event that happens which is seen as a whole regardless of duration. In their two major parts showing past and non-past, Oromo verbs are marked for such distinction of aspect. Perfective aspect can, of course, be illustrated in connection with a sense of past tense. The concept of perfectness is that an action is prior to a specific moment in time whereas the imperfectness is connected with an action in process or in progress.

[16] *išee-n hoǰ-ičča t'umur-t-e*
she-Nom work-Sing finish-3sgf-Perf
'She finished the work'

The perfect form indicates an action is complete at a specific time in the past as in example [16]. Imperfective aspect indicates a longer lasting action as in *ɗufaa jĭra* 'he is coming'. When an action in progress is indicated by applying an auxiliary verb, it occurs with a sense of existing in some kind of experience. Therefore, the marker-*aa* of progressive suffix is appended to the action verb in its semantic compatibility with the auxiliary as. The progressive marker *-aa* seemingly a verbal noun is converbally used in Oromo being grammaticalized for present progressive form (Banti, 2003).

Oromo identifies between past and non-past which can be considered in aspectual property. The markers of perfective and imperfective aspects *-e* and *-a* respectively occur on main verbs. When tense is considered, the perfect tenses and progressive tenses occur with auxiliaries *jĭr-* (present form) and *tur-* (past form) with their forms of agreement in inflection. Hence, the agreement markers are suffixed to the auxiliary verbs. The auxiliary verb always follows the main verb in a sentence. The aspect is, mainly, noticed on the converbal or progressive verb forms.

The difference between perfective and imperfective is marked on the main verbs, so that when the auxiliary verbs are used, the converbal forms with the auxiliaries distinguish between and imperfective aspect in connection with tense (Table 36). The markers of perfective and imperfective aspects are *-e* and *-a* on action verbs respectively. The converbal form with *-ee* as in *ɗuf-ee* 'come-Conv' is perfective whereas the progressive form with *-aa* as in *ɗuf-aa* 'come-PRG' is imperfective with tense considered. Look at the following examples in sentences.

[17] (a) *Fufaa-n mana bul-ee jĭr-Ø-a*
Fufaa-Nom home spend night-Conv:Perf Aux-3sgm
'Fufa has spent the night at home.'
(b) *Fufaa-n mana bul-ee tur-Ø-e*
Fufaa-Nom home spend night-Conv:Perf Aux-3sgm
'Fufa had spent the night at home'

As in examples [17] (a), the perfect form but present is like present perfect tense form provided by auxiliary verb*jĭr-* 'exist'. The converbal forms *bulee* 'spend night-Conv' determines aspect of the sentence. Both of the sentences (a) and (b) above are perfective aspect based on the forms of the converbs, and the perfective aspect marker *-e* is noticed on those verbas. Utilization of the auxiliary verbs shows the sense of tense. Considering the final vowels of the auxiliaries in aspect distinction is irrelevant. Shifting the converb marker-*ee* to the progressive marker *–aa* changes the aspect of both sentences into imperfective aspect in the same construction. What determines in the aspectual distinction is the inflectional form of the action verb occurring before the auxiliaries in a sentence. In progressive and perfect tense forms, when the first person singular noun or pronoun becomes subject of a sentence the obligatory

[6] Verbs that show change of state on its own are inchoative forms.

Table 37. Summary of perfective and imperfective aspects.

Aspects	Person	Root *mur-* 'cut'	Agreement		Asp.	Inflected form
			Per.	Num.		
Perfective	1sg	*mur-*	-Ø	-	-e	*mur-Ø-e*
	2sg	*mur-*	-t	-	-e	*mur-t-e*
	3sgm	*mur-*	-Ø	-	-e	*mur-Ø-e*
	3sgf	*mur-*	-t-	-	-e	*mur-t-e*
	1pl	*mur-*	-Ø	-n	-e	*mur-n-e* [*mur-r-e*]
	2pl	*mur-*	-t	-an	-i	*mur-t-an-i*
	3pl	*mur-*	-Ø	-an	-i	*mur-an-i*
Imperfective	1sg	*mur-*	-Ø-	-	-a	*mur-Ø-a*
	2sg	*mur-*	-t-	-	-a	*mur-t-a*
	3sgm	*mur-*	-Ø-	-	-a	*mur-Ø-a*
	3sgf	*mur-*	-t-	-	-i	*mur-t-i*
	1pl	*mur-*	-n-	-	-a	*mur-n-a* [*mur-r-a*]
	2pl	*mur-*	-t-	-	-u	*mur-t-u*
	3pl	*mur-*	-Ø-	-	-u	*mur-Ø-u*

agreement marker *-n* follows the lengthened forms of the markers of converbal construction as in *mana bul-ee-n tur-e* 'I had spent the night at home'. The agreement marker *-n* functions to keep the meaning of the sentence if the independent subject pronoun is left out. The subject is understood from the verb suffix. The occurrence of the suffix *-n* is for the purpose of the subject agreement. Different forms of sentences in perfective aspect can be the same in their negative constructions. For example, the sentence *Fufaan mana hin bul-n-e* [*bul-le*] 'Fufa did not spend the night at home' is the negative form for different forms in the perfective aspect. It is formed by the preverbal negative particle *hin* and the dependent suffix on the verb *-n-*. Both of these elements are used together at the same time.

Table 37 shows the suffixal vowels *-e* and *-a*, essentially, distinguish perfective and imperfeciive aspects as is noticed in the Oromo language. However, the allomorph *-i* is used with 2pl and 3pl subjects for perfective aspect marking. On the other hand, *-i* marks imperfective aspect when it is used with 3sgf subject, and the suffix *-u* is an imperfective aspect marker occurring with 2pl and 3pl subjects. Therefore, the markers *-i*, and *-u* are allomorphs of the aspect marker *–a* occurring in complementary distribution whereas the marker *-i* occurs as allomorphic variant of *-e* for perfective aspect. When the auxiliaries are used in the perfect and progressive tenses, the auxiliaries are followed by converbal form of main verbs, and aspect is also shown on the converbal or progressive verb forms.

Mood

Mood is the attitude of the speaker towards an utterance. It is originally from the word 'mode' which means a specific way of doing something. Modality, which is also originated from 'mode', is more ideal and is about the existence of a particular way of speaking. According to Arin (2003: 15), modality is connected with the involvement of the speaker's attitude and non-factivity in any utterance whereas the factive is truth or reality. In connection with the styles of speech which arises from involvement of feeling, Oromo has several types of moods from which four modal forms indicative, imperative and jussive are considered in this work.

Indicative mood: which involves making statements and asking questions constitutes the most common clause type in Oromo. In its construction, yes/no question is similar with declarative sentence except the final vowel length along with intonational relevance on the question form (Debela and Rooney, 2003:182).

[18]*Boruu-n kitaaba barreess-Ø-e*
Boruu-Nom book:ABS write-3sgm-Perf
'Boru wrote a book'

The subject is placed at the beginning of declarative sentences as in examples [18]. However, in interrogative sentences also, the subject is placed at the beginning. What makes interrogative is intonational variation. Actually, the subject can be placed either at the beginning or at the end of a sentence in both declarative and interrogative sentences. This is a kind of topicality shift from subject to object or theme in syntactic consideration.

Imperative mood: In Oromo, the imperative begins by the object as it precedes the verb in word order of the

Table 38. Imperative form by suppletive.

Person	Verb root	Inflected form	Marker	Meaning
2sg	*ɗuf-*	*koott-u*	*-u*	'(you) come'
2pl	*ɗuf-*	*koott-aa*	*-aa*	'(you guys) come'

Table 39. Affirmative and negative verbs in the imperative mood.

Verb types	Affirmative Imperative				
	Person	**Verb root**	**Imp**	**Inflected Verb**	**Gloss**
Action	2sg	*bit-*	*-i*	*bit-i*	'(you sg) buy'
	2pl	*bit-*	*-aa*	*bit-aa*	'(you pl) buy'
ABen.	2sg	*bit-at-*[*bit-aɗ-*]	*-u*	*bit-at-u* [*bitaɗɗu*]	'(you sg) buy:ABen'
	2pl	*bit-at-*[*bit-aɗ-*]	*-aa*	*bit-at-aa* [*bitaɗɗaa*]	'(you pl) buy:ABen'

	Negative Imperative							
	Person	**Neg.**	**Verb root**	**Imp**	**Neg**	**Imp**	**Inflected verb**	**Gloss**
Action	2sg	*hin*	*bit-*	*-i-*	*-n*	*-*	*hin bit-i-n*	'Don't buy'
	2pl	*hin*	*bit-*	*-*	*-n*	*-aa*	*hin bit-i-n-aa*	'Don't buy'
ABen.	2sg	*hin*	*bit-at-*[*bit-at-*]	*-i-*	*-n*	*-*	*hin bit-at-i-n*	'Don't buy:ABen'
	2pl	*hin*	*bit-at-*[*bit-at*]	*-*	*-n*	*-aa*	*hin bit-at-i-n-aa*	'Don't buy:ABen

language. Intransitive verbs are used at the beginning of the sentence in the form of the subject 'you' understood. However, it may happen following motion verbs like *deemuu* 'to go' or *kaʔuu* 'to stand' in their converbal forms. The motion verbs often precede the objects of transitive verbs, and they happen in the terminating vowel length.

A verb in its agreement form of number may occur at the before an imperative verb. Such form of verb is used in a converbally marked verbas in *kaʔ-ii deem-i* 'stand and go-2sg:Imp', it can be followed by either an intransitive verb or an object of a transitive verb.

[19]*kitaaba sana fid-i*
book:ABS that:ABS bring-2sg:Imp
'Bring that book'

Sentence [19] implies that an object in its absolutive form often occurs at the beginning of imperative sentences. Modifiers of the object may occur following it as sister words in the noun phrase in the object form. In addition to verbs and objects, modifiers of verbs (adverbs) may also occur at the beginning of an imperative sentence as in *ǰabeess-ii k'ab-i* 'catch firmly'. When the modifiers or other verbs begin the imperative verb, they agree with the subject in harmony with the imperative verb.

Imperative verbs are also inflected by suppletive form using a completely different word of inflection. For example, the word *koott-* 'come' which is inflected for singular and plural number by the markers *-u* and *-aa* respectively is used only in the imperative form. The verb *ɗuf-* is not used in imperative construction but in the indicative form.

The verb root *koott-* is an imperative form of the verb root *ɗuf-* 'come' (Table 38). After it becomes in imperative mood by inflection through the use suppletive form, it identifies between the understood subject 2sg and 2pl form by agreement markers *-u* and *-aa* respectively. This suppletive form is typical to imperative form whereby the other modal forms occur with the verb root *ɗuf-* instead. Therefore, occurrence of the verb *ɗuf-* in imperative form is ungrammatical as in **ɗuf-i* 'come-Imp'. In affirmative imperative sentences, the converb agrees with the subject in number and occurs in harmony with the imperative verb in its final vowel.

Negative forms of verbs in imperative sentences occur in a little bit special way. The particle *hin* and the dependent suffix *-n* both mark negativity. The suffix *-aa* marks mood and plural number the verb of an imperative form.

Table 39 indicates distinct forms of imperative verbs in their affirmative and negative occurrences. It shows that in the positive form, imperative mood with singular subject is marked by *-i-* and *-u* on ordinary verbs and autobenefactive/middle verbs respectively. When plural subject is used, the marker of mood together with number will be *-aa* for normal verb and for the autobenefactive and the middle voice ones. The markers *–u* and *-aa* in positive imperatives occurring with autobenefactive verbs are preceded by the morpheme *-ɗ-* which marks the

Table 40. Summary of marking Jussive mood.

Jussive Mood						
Person	**Jussive**	**Root**	**Agr.**	**Asp.**	**Inflected form**	**Gloss**
3sgm	*Haa*	*deem-*	*-Ø-*	*-u*	*haa deem-u*	'Let him go'
3sgf	*Haa*	*deem-*	*-t-*	*-u*	*haa deem-t-u*	'Let her go'
3pl	*Haa*	*deem-*	*-an*	*-i*	*haa deem-an-i*	'Let them go'
1pl	*Haa*	*deem-*	*-n-*	*-u*	*haa deem-n-u*	'Let us go'

Negative Jussive Mood						
Person	**Neg**	**Root**	**Agr**	**Neg**	**Inflected form**	**Gloss**
3sgm	*Hin*	*deem-*	-	*-n*	*hin deem-i-n*	'Don't let him go'
3sgf	*Hin*	*deem-*	-	*-n*	*hin deem-i-n*	'Don't let her go'
3pl	*Hin*	*deem-*	-	*-n*	*hin deem-i-n*	'Don't let them go'
1pl	*Hin*	*deem-*	-	-	-	-

mood being with the agreement markers. In the negative forms of imperatives, the same marker *-i-* marks the person, number and mood occurring before the dependent negative suffix when singular subject is used. The same way applies for autobenefactive or the middle verbs. However, a plural subject along with mood is marked by *-aa* which is appended after the dependent negative suffix *-n* for both the autobenefactive and normal verbs.

When a verb occurs at the beginning of the negative imperative form, the converbal form marked by *-ee* or *-ii* is used. The terminating long vowel on the converb functions for identifying singular and plural numbers respectively. The interesting point is that in the negative form of imperative mood with plural subject, the second person singular marker *-i-*seems to be still occurring as in Table 32. Its function seems, but, no more related with person, number and mood marking, it will change to be like an epenthetic element for keeping the occurrence of the dependent suffix *-n* after vowel (which will be lengthened); for example, *hin k'ab-n-aa* → *hin k'ab-i-n-aa* 'Don't catch-Ep-Neg-2pl' in which the vowel *-i* has the function of epenthesis.

Jussive Mood: Debela and Meyer (2003: 182) states that imperative and jussive have semantic and morphological features in common. Jussive mood is marked by the pre-verbal particle *haa* and the dependent suffix *-u* or *-i* on the verb. They co-occur in a sentence to mark mood and aspect. The suffixes mainly mark imperfective aspect. This construction is, however, rather syntactic. Here are few examples:

[20] (a) *gurb-ičč-i haa ɗuf-Ø-u*
boy-Sing-Nom Juss come-3sgm-Impf
'Let the boy come'
(b) *isaan haa ɗuf-an-i*
they:Nom Juss come-3pl:Impf
'Let them come'

Jussive sentences are constructed with the types 3sgm, 3sgf, 1pl and 3pl subjects. All the subjectsin the jussive sentence occur in the nominative case. Examples [20] (a) and (b), indicate that the suffixes co-occurring with the preverbal particle *haa* are *-u* and *-i* that are used with singular and plural subjects respectively. Jussive mood is basically conveyed in the preverbal particle *haa* in the syntactic form.From the seven pronouns in Oromo, four of them, as mentioned above in comment of examples [20], are constructed in jussive form whereas the two second person singular *ati* and plural *isin* are in imperative form. The first person singular pronoun *ana* 'I' does not occur in jussive form. Here are few examples:

Negative forms of the jussive sentences is similar across the pronouns used which means the verb in the negative jussive doesn't occur agreeing with subject in number and person. The negative jussive sentences are formed by the proclitic *hin* along with its coexisting dependent suffix *-n* on the verb. First person plural subject occurs only in positive jussive form.

The suffix *–u* and its allomorph *-i*, occurring with the preverbal particle *haa*, marks jussive mood in positive construction. The morph *-u* is suffixed to verb root or stem with 3sgm, 3sgf, and 1pl subjects whereas *-i* occurs with 3pl subjects in jussive mood (Table 40).
In positive jussive forms the verb occurs in agreement with the subject in number and person whereas in negative, it doesn't distinguish among the subjects. The form *hin deemiin* which literally means 'don't go' is used with all the three person types except with the first person plural one. Of course, negative form in the jussive mood is rare and situation based in which this expression might occur in giving a negative response to the question *haa deemuu?* 'Shall we let him go?' whicn will be *hin deem-i-*

*n*Neg go-Juss-Neg ‘don’t let him go’. Before the dependent negative marker *-n*, the vowel *–I* marks jussive mood being supported by the context.

Voice

Voice is a verb form that relates action of a verb with its participants (or arguments). It tells us if the subject performs or receives the action indicated by the verb. When the subject performs the action the voice is active whereas the form in which the subject receives the action is passive voice. Using sentence types in which the verb form is changed for the purpose of such grammatical function is inflectional. According to several theories like Government and Binding theory and minimalist approach, passive formation is a syntactic process in which the subject object exchange happens so that subject in active becomes object in the passive form and vice versa. The lexical-functional approach treats passive formation as a morphological process. Being in favor of the Lexical-functional approach, Wondwossen (2012:10) considers that passive formation in Oromo is purely morphological as it is formed by adding the morpheme *-am* on transitive verbs. Based on the Lexical-functional approach, this thesis treats voice as morphological form in inflection. The passive morpheme *-am*, in Oromo, is an invariable morpheme across subjects and aspects. Voice involves all valency changing verb forms including causative and middle; however, my consideration in this thesis is the most common ones – active and passive forms. Here are few examples in Table 41.

In Table 41, the examples indicate verb forms for voice change in perfective aspect. In both perfective and imperfective aspects, the morpheme *-am-* invariably marks the passive voice in contrast with the unmarked active form. The verb form contains the morpheme *-am* in its passive voice. Although lexical-functional approach is applied and hence morphological inflectional occurrence of voice is dealt with, in the syntactic consideration, the demoted agent subjects become object with the suffixed instrumental marker *-n* which occurs after vowel length in passive construction.

Copular constructions

A copula is a kind of verb that functions to link a subject with predicate nominative or predicate adjective. The invariable copulas in the language are *ɗa* and its negative form *miti*. Other copulas *-ti* (in genitive constructions) and *-i* (with nouns that end in consonant) are also functional in the language. In addition to these copular words or suffixes, the final short vowels on some nouns and adjectives can be considered as copula in the language.

Nominas that end in short vowel, especially, in *–a* are understood for the covert copula in sentences as in *nuti tokko* ‘we are one’. Zero morpheme in the Table 42 is to indicate that the copula is understood in a sentence to exist with no any phonological form. The vowel *-i* is a copula on -C final nominal which can formally and functionally be identified in the language, Oromo. According to Debela and Meyer (2003: 172), the copula *-ɗa* is a focus marker. It states that direct objects are marked for contrastive focus by the copula *-ɗa*, and adjuncts are also used with this copula in focus indication. As can be seen in Table 42, the function of the copula *-ɗa* is pervasively for focus marking except after long vowel in which its occurrence is obligatory the function is linking the subject to the complement. Therefore, the final short vowels can be considered copula whereas the copula occurring with such forms is contrastive marker of predicate adjective or object the copular verb itself. Ishetu (1981: 9ff) treats *-ɗa* as a morpheme with allomorphic occurrence with *-i*, *-ti*, and *Ø*, but it is a morphological copula that functions as focus marker being a verbal nature semantically.

When -C final nominal is suffixed by *-i* and *-ɗa* at the same time, it will be clear that the vowel *-i* is copula, and the copula *-ɗa* is functionally shifted to focus marking. This is because the copula *-ɗa* is optional element and it does not bring meaning change if it is removed. The remaining *-i* makes sense of copular function in the presence of *-ɗa* and in its absence. We can also understand this from occurrence of the negative correspondent of *-ɗa* which is *miti*. It does not occur with vowel *-i* at copular position, **kun bišaan-i-miti* ‘This is not water’ because both are copulas that they cannot be used together. The negative copula can be used instead of all the positive copulas.

[21] (a) *kun* *bišaan-i*
this:Nom water-Cop
‘This is water’
(b) *kun* *bišaan-i-ɗa*
this:Nom water-Cop-Foc
‘This is water’

These two sentences in example [21] (a) and (b) are the same in content, except the focus phenomenon that the copula *-ɗa* adds on sentence (b). The positive copula *ɗa* occurs in the function as verb when it follows long vowel.

The copula *-ti* occurs in genitive construction only so that it is in complementary distribution with the other copulas mentioned above. Ishetu (1981: 12) indicates that the morpheme *-ti* is a copula used in genitive construction, and it is contrary to analysis of Gragg (1976: 183 which considers it as optional possessive marker. Owens (1985: 105) considers *-ti* as an intrusive element following genitive case marker (vowel length). This work is on the side of Ishetu (1981); the copular variant *-ti* has the function of linking a genitive nominal in the predicate with a subject. It can be used twice if the double genitive forms are noticed in a sentence.

Table 41. Active and passive verbs.

Voice	Root	Marker	Inflected form	Meaning
Active	*kut-*	-	*kut-e*	'cut'
	gurgur-	-	*gurgur-e*	'sold'
Passive	*kut-*	*-am-*	*kut-am-e*	'was cut'
	gurgur-	*-am-*	*gurgur-am-e*	'was sold'

Table 42. Copular forms.

Base forms	Copular forms	Meaning	Copulas for focus	Meaning
farda	*farda-Ø*	'is horse'	*farda-ɗa*	'is horse'
isa	*isa-Ø*	'is him'	*isa-ɗa*	'is him'
goota	*goota-Ø*	'is brave'	*goota-ɗa*	'is brave'
bišaan	*bišaan-I*	'is water'	*bišaan-i-ɗa*	'is water'
loon	*loon-i*	'are cattle'	*loon-i-ɗa*	'are cattle'
aannan	*aannan-i*	'is milk'	*aannan-i-ɗa*	'is milk'
raammoo	-	-	*raammoo-ɗa*	'is worm'
muč'aa	-	-	*muč'aa-ɗa*	'is baby'
adii	-	-	*adii-ɗa*	'is white'

[22] *kun* [*mana* [*abbaa koo-ti(i)*]-*ti*]
this:Nom house father my-Cop -Cop
'This is the house of my father'

The double genitive form in a sentence makes the copula *-ti* to be duplicated with the number of the genitive forms in Wallaga Oromo. This shows that the copula is tied with the genitive marker as in example [22]. It seems that the negative copula *miti* also occurs in the same way taking the place of the second copula as *kun* [*mana* [*abbaa koo-ti*] *-miti*]. However, in dialectal variation, only one copula is also used.

Agreement properties of verbs

Agreement, which can be construed as an instance of inflection, is a change in a form of a word depending on the other word/words to which it relates. Several grammatical features are marked by agreement properties. The agreement inflection occurs on a word when it is triggered by the grammatical categories that do not refer to its domain of the inherent inflectional/ grammatical categories. Inflection of agreement occurs based on the context of a sentence and it is an additional marker to corroborate (or confirm) the argument[7] used. Booij (2009:7) states that a contextual inflection tends to be peripheral to inherent inflection. Therefore, the contextual or agreement properties function to confirm the appropriateness of relating the syntactic arguments and the theme of the verb on the basis of the grammar of a particular language. Verbs are marked by different agreement markers in Oromo.

Suffixes of agreement in Oromo

Oromo is a suffixing language in which other affix types do not exist. Its agreement markers are for the subject agreement only. Kebede (2009:43) considers that verbs are marked for person by *-n* (1pl), *-t* (2sg) and *-ti* (3sgf) on roots or stems. However, the agreement morpheme for third person singular feminine is rather *-t* instead of *-ti*. The verb occurs in agreement with subject in person, number and gender in Oromo. Zero morphemes are also used on verbs for some properties especially for third person singular masculine subject agreement. Some agreement properties are indicated by syncretism in which different grammatical functions are marked by the same form.

Table 43 shows the agreement between the subject pronouns and verbs by the markers suffixed on a verb. For the plural person types (subjects), the verb is marked for agreement separating person and number unlike the singular subjects whose agreement morpheme represents both person and number features of agreement. The two way agreement marking, as seen in Table 43, is clearly noticed on 2pl subject that marks person and number by

[7]A sentence may use one or two or three arguments based on the content of syntactic theme. The participants (subject, object, etc.) of an action of a verb are arguments in a sentence.

Table 43. Person, number and gender agreement markers in verbs.

Person	Verb root	Agreement		Asp.	Inflected form	Gloss
		Per.	Num.			
1sg	*ɗuf-*	-Ø-	-	*-e*	*ɗuf-Ø-e*	'I came'
2sg	*ɗuf-*	-t-	-	*-e*	*ɗuf-t-e*	'You (sg) came'
3sgm	*ɗuf-*	-Ø-	-	*-e*	*ɗuf-Ø-e*	'He came'
3sgf	*ɗuf-*	-t-	-	*-e*	*ɗuf-t-e*	'She came'
1pl	*ɗuf-*	-Ø	-n	*-e*	*ɗuf-Ø-n-e*	'We came'
2pl	*ɗuf-*	-t	-an	*-i*	*ɗuf-t-an-i*	'You (pl) came'
3pl	*ɗuf-*	-Ø	-an	*-i*	*ɗuf-Ø-an-i*	'They came'

Table 44. The agreement suffix *-(a)n*.

Base form	Inflected form	Gloss
leenč'a	*leenč'a-n*	lion-1sg
harʔa	*harʔa-n*	today-1sg
Harka	*harkaa-n-an*	'hand-Inst-1sg'
Waak'a	*Waak'aa-f-an*	'God-Ben-1sg'
ɗufuu	*ɗuf-ee-n*	'come-Conv-1sg'
Kana	*kana-n*	'this-1sg'
č'imaa	*č'imaa-n*	'strong-1sg'

distinct morphemes *-t-* and *-an* respectively.

The first person singular pronoun shows special occurrence of agreement. The pronoun suffix occurs, especially, with copulas and auxiliary verbs and in progressive tense forms. It can be marked on verbs by zero morpheme whereas it is also marked by *-(a)n* appended on verbs or on other word types in predicate. For example, *mugaa-n ǰira* 'I am slumbering'. In this sentence, the subject is understood to be 'I' from the suffix *-n* on the progressive verb. It's clear that subject agreement on verbs is realized verb internally that is before aspect markers; however, 1sg pronoun can occur at the final position of verbs. Of course, it does occur not only with verbs but also with different word categories in the predicate phrase. Debela and Meyer (2003: 179) states that the morpheme *-(a)n* is an agreement marker for first person singular subjects. It seems that the suffix *-(a)n* is the pronoun itself behaving as a morphological element appended to different word classes in the predicate phrase. Wherever it occurs, its function is distinguishing the subject in the form of agreement.

Table 44, all the words occurring with the morpheme *-(a)n* are different either in word category or in their paradigmatic function though some of them are clearly distinguished when they are put in sentence. Here is one example sentence:

[23] *an-i barataa č'imaa-n fil-e*
I-Nom student:VN strong-1sg select-Perf
'I selected an intelligent student'

The suffix *-n* on the adjective *č'imaa* 'strong' in example [23] functions as an agreement marker for the subject. In such occurrence of the morpheme *-(a)n* in a sentence, the presence of the subject *an-i* 'I-Nom' is not obligatory as the morpheme distinguishes it. It occurs just for emphasis of the nominative case. When two converbs occur in a sentence, the agreement marker of first person singular subject can occur on either of them.

[24] *deem-ee ilaal-ee-n deebiʔ-a*
go-Conv watch-Conv-1sg return-Perf
'I will go, watch and come back'

In example [24], the first two verbs are in converbal construction either of which can be suffixed the 1sg marker *-(a)n*. In Wallaga Oromo, the form *ilaal-ee-n*'watch-Conv-1sg' can also be used as *ilaal-ee-t-an* 'watch-Conv-Ep-1sg', in which the epenthetic consonant *-t-* is inserted between the converbal suffix and the pronoun suffix when the the morpheme begins with the optional vowel *-a-* which can be varied to *-i-* as in *bor-in* 'tomorrow-1sg' (dialectal). The morphemic pronoun *-(a)n* can also occur with functional words like the focus marker *hin* which marks action of a verb in focus. Several studies like Baye (1988: 368); Debela and Meyer (2003: 166) state that the preverbal element *hin* marks focus on the verb seemingly obligatory with intransitive verbs in declarative sentences. My point is apart from explaining focus marking systems; but it is to show the relation between *hin* and *nan* both occurring preverbally to avoid

Table 45. Preverbal elements *nan* and *hin*.

Person	Root	*nan* 'Foc'	*(h)in* 'Foc'
1sg	*fid-*	*nan fid-a*	-
2sg	*fid-*	-	*hin fid-t-a [fid-d-a]*
3sgm	*fid-*	-	*hin fid-Ø-a*
3sgf	*fid-*	-	*hin fid-t-i [fid-d-i]*
1pl	*fid-*	-	*hin fid-n-a [fin-n-a]*
2pl	*fid-*	-	*hin fid-t-u [fid-d-u]*
3pl	*fid-*	-	*hin fid-an-i*

the confusion in the functional and formal occurrences between the two.

The preverbal element *nan* is formed from combination the reducible focus marker *(h)in* and the 1sg marker *-(a)n* under phonological processes of deletion. It forms up a portmantou [*nan*] by combining the two separate elements.

(h)in 'Foc' +*(a)n* '1sg' →*inan*→ [*nan*]

It means, the preverbal element *nan* portrays both focus and 1sg marking. This is because of several reasons: 1, the 1sg marker *-(a)n* can occur with different words in the predicate phrase (cf. Table 45) which means inclusive of the functional elements like *hin*. 2, the 1sg pronoun does not occur with the focus marker *hin* but with *nan* instead which means *nan* can replace the function of *hin* 3, the preverbal element *nan* restricts the subject whereas *hin* does not function like this.

When *nan* occurs preverbally in parallel with the occurrence of *(h)in*, its function is focus marking in the obligatory form hand in hand with 1sg marking. Therefore, when the 1sg marker *-(a)n* is a 1sg pronoun marker which can also combine with *(h)in* for focus marking. Haimanot (1984: 9) considers *nan* as an obligatory prefix for first person singular pronoun in the same function with the focus marker *hin* though it does not describe its internal form in terms of function. However, it is, in my view, a portmantou[8] like preverbal element containing both *(h)in* of focus and *-an* of first person singular pronoun.

Autobenefactive and middle voice are marked by the suffix *-at-* in Oromo. Even though both are marked by the same morpheme, they are semantically distinct. The autobenefactive form indicates that a subject performs something for its own benefit whereas the middle voice is about an action that is more closely connected with the subject for the same function in being benefactive.

In Table 37, the morpheme *-at-* functions to mark an middle verb form (Table 46), because the action is performed on the affected agent, though, it is for the purpose of getting benefitted. The same marker *-at-* indicates the autobenefactive voice in which the action is performed on another thing (compare with ABen – Table 35); the benefitted subject is more affected in the middle form than the one in the autobenefactive counterpart (Shimelis, 2009: 4). The morpheme *-at-* can be followed by the agreement marker *-ɗ-* with first person singular subject as *inɗik'-at-ɗ-e→ɗik'-aɗ-ɗ-e* 'bought for myself', or it can be followed by *-n-* with first person plural subject as in *ɗik'-at-n-e → bit-an-n-e* 'bought for ourselves. It undergoes phonological process of assimilation forming *-aɗɗ* and *-ann* respectively which seem to be variants of the autobenefactive or the middle forms.

Adverbs in inflection

Basically, many adverbs are derived from other parts of speech in Oromo. However, some words are fit to be categorized as adverbs (Nordfeldt, 1947:184). Almost all adverbs including the derived ones can be suffixed by *-uma* which makes the point of the adverb in focus. Example, *as-uma tur-n-a* [*tur-r-a*] 'We will stay here'. Derived words from other parts of speech or phrasal forms are prominently used as adverbs in the language. Some stems derived from other word classes undergo inflection to agree with the subject in a sentence. The agreement marker is applied, particularly, on the adverbs that are derived from verbs.

[25] *inni barfat-ee ɗuf-Ø-e*
he:Nom late-Conv come-3sgm-Perf
'He came late'

The adverbs that occur in agreement with subject are those which are derived from verbs. They occur in harmony with verbs showing agreement with subject in person, number and gender. As example [25] shows, the adverbs occur in the form of converbs with final vowel length.

Adverbs behave like nominal for that they can occur in nominative case taking the suffixes *-i*, *-n* and *-ni* of the nominative markers. During this, they are used as an

[8]When two or more elements of different form and function are combined together as one functional unit we call it a portmantou. It seems one element containing two separate forms.

Table 46. The middle voice verb forms.

Subject	Root	Inflected forms
1sg	*ɗik'-*	*ɗik'-at-ɗ-e [ɗik'-aɗ-ɗ-e]* 'wash'
2sg	*ɗik'-*	*ɗik'-at-t-e* 'wash'
3sgm	*ɗik'-*	*ɗik'-at-Ø-e* 'wash'
3sgf	*ɗik'-*	*ɗik'-at-t-e* 'wash'
1pl	*ɗik'-*	*ɗik'-at-Ø-n-e* 'wash'
2pl	*ɗik'-*	*ɗik'-at-t-an-i* 'wash'
3pl	*ɗik'-*	*ɗik'-at-Ø-an-i* 'wash'

Table 47. Adverbs in nominative case.

Base form	Inflected form	Meaning
harʔa	*harʔ-i*	'today'
bakkee	*bakkee-n*	'outside'
ala	*al-ni* [*al-li*]	'outside'

adverbial noun subject. Adverbs are basically categories of predicate phrase that they cannot be treated in nominal inflection because they modify verbs. According to Baye (1986: 65) illustration, although adverbs are functionally verb restricting words, they behave like nominal taking markers of nominative case. It considers adverbs as part of nominals based on their inflectional behavior and that they occur with adpositions taking *-f* meaning 'for' as in *harʔaa-f* 'for today' whereas adpositions are basically occurring with nominals only.

Adverbs in the nominative case are used as nominal they occur with the nominative case markers as shown in Table 47. However, their basic function and lexical class is predicative that the function as verb modifiers which, obviously, can be categorized in the predicate phrase of a sentence.

Adverbs undergo inflectional morphology for the agreement purposes. Agreement properties like number, gender and person are marked on the adverbs derived from verbs and they are constructed in converbal forms. Many adverbs can be inflected for case in which the markers of nominative, locative, ablative cases can be suffixed to adverbs.

Conclusion

Oromo is a suffixal language in both derivational and inflectional morphology. The root form is usually meaningless and ends in consonant. Almost all word classes undergo inflectional morphology. Since several forms are indicated by the suffixes, there is a tendency to convey wider message in a short sentence that means fewer words may represent wider message in the language. A single morpheme has several grammatical functions as cumulative form. Syncretism and zero morphemes are significant, especially, in verb inflection. These are the tokens for justifying that the Oromo language is highly fusional, in which morphs are fused together for grammatical functions. Concatenation of the morphs seems complex. Inflection of nominals follows the system in which all sister words of a noun in a noun phrase are declined in the same ways with the head noun. Nominals are inflected for the inherent grammatical categories of number, gender and singulative along with the relational category, case. Both definite and indefinite nouns are not clearly and morphologically marked. Definiteness, though, can be conveyed under singulative markers having no any marker of its own. Masculine and feminine gender is distinctly marked by *-icca* and *-ittii* respectively for singulative property. Pronoun inflection is declined for the same grammatical categories with the noun and follows almost the same rule of inflection. However, it involves more complex morphemic elements and suppletive forms than that of nouns. Double usage of pronoun in the dative case is permissible in Wallaga Oromo; one is placed before the direct object for emphatic purpose and the other is after. First person singular pronoun can be considered to occur in special agreement inflection. The 1sg marker-*(a)n* occurs as a suffix on one of the word classes in the predicate part with a covert or overt subject. It is also suffixed to the functional element *hin* to form a portmantou like element *nan* combining *hin* and *nan* through phonological process as *(h)in* + *an* → *inan* →[*nan*] which is used in parallel with *hin* as focus marker. Verbs distinguish between past and non-past and the forms indicate perfective and imperfective aspects in their inflectional morphology. A sense of tense also exists in the language though aspectual forms are more pervasive than tense.

Agreement markers realized in verbs for plural subjects is two-way system in which person and number is separately marked by separate morphemes. This is contrastive singular forms in which one cumulative morpheme conveys both person and number features of agreement.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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Abbreviation

Brings, Changes to; ***,** ungrammatical; **1,** first person; **2,** second person; **3,** third person; **Abl,** ablative; **ABS,** absilutive; **Asso,** associative; **Aux,** auxiliary; **ABen,** auto benefactive; **Ben,** beneficiary; **CAUS,** causative; **Conv,** converb; **Cop,** copula; **Ep,** epenthesis; **Emph,** emphasis; **f,** feminine; **Foc,** focus; **Gen,** genitive; **Imp,** imperative; **Impf,** imperfective; **Ind,** indefinite; **Inf,** infinitive; **Inst,** instrumental; **Juss,** jussive; **Loc,** locative; **m,** masculine; **MD,** middle voice; **Mod,** modality; **Neg,** negative; **Nom,** nominative; **Ø,** zero morpheme; **Pas,** passive; **Perf,** perfective; **pl,** plural; **PRG,** progressive; **Ref,** reflexive; **sg,** singular; **Sing,** singulative; **VN,** verbal noun.

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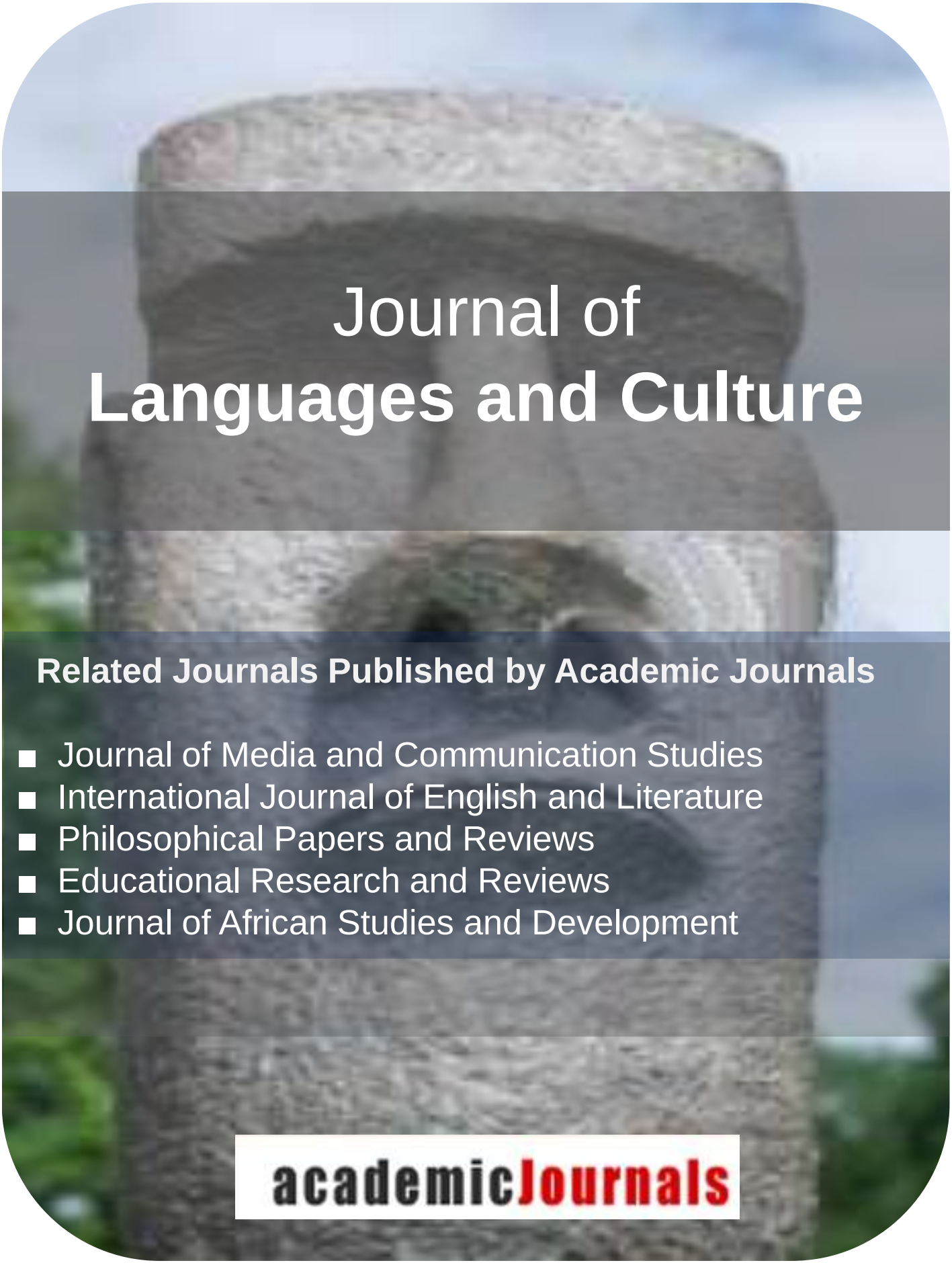

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