

Original Article

Pronouns and Pronominalization in Ògè

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Abstract - This research examines the morphology and syntax of pronouns in Ògè, a language spoken in Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria. Ògè faces endangerment as younger generations increasingly code-mix with Yoruba. Pronouns, fundamental to most languages, replace nouns for fluency and avoid repetition. The data for this study is based on fieldwork in which Ògè equivalents for the Ibadan 400-word list were collected, as were translations of sentences from Yoruba. The native speakers aged between 50 and 80 years were purposively selected because they better master the speech form than the younger generation, who cannot speak the speech form without code-mixing and code-switching. The wordlist and the sentences were dictated to the informants, and their responses were recorded and transcribed for analysis. Findings revealed that Ògè exhibits various pronoun types, including personal, possessive, anaphoric, interrogative, and demonstrative pronouns. Unlike many languages, Ògè pronouns lack inflection for gender or animacy. However, they do have morphological inflection for cases (nominative, accusative, and genitive) depending on their syntactic position in a sentence. The analysis reveals distinct forms for subject and object pronouns. Notably, the third-person singular object pronoun is phonetically zero, replaced by a copy of the verb's vowel and a tonal shift. Similarly, the second-person singular and plural object pronouns share the same form. This research serves as a part of the documentation of an aspect of the syntax of Ògè.

Keywords - Anaphoric, Reflexives, Pronominalization, Ògè.

1. Introduction

All languages of the world appear to have pronouns. This is so because pronouns are words used instead of nouns. Pronouns come in different forms depending on the syntactic position they appear in the sentence. Apart from the appearance of pronouns in different forms, pronouns also inflect for numbers and gender. This means there are first-person, second-person, and third-person singular and plural pronouns, subject and object. Scholars have discussed pronouns in different languages around the world over the years. However, no works on the pronoun exist in Oge, a speech form spoken in Akoko, Ondo State. This present research is an effort to fill this gap, and it is prompted by Crystal's (2000) clarion call that linguists should explore endangered languages for documentation before they go into extinction.

2. Literature Review

Works on Pronouns and pronominalization include Akanbi (2014), Regina (2016), and Nweke (2018), to mention a few. Akanbi (2014) examines the pronoun in Ahan, and he claims that pronouns in the language are conditioned by the tone of the verb immediately following it. He also claims that pronouns in Ahan also inflect for tense. This behavior, as explained, is not peculiar to this pronoun in Ahan alone. It is a phenomenon that cuts across many of the world's languages. On the issue of reciprocals, he posits that there is no clear-cut demarcation between reciprocals and reflexives in Ahan. Akanbi (*ibid*) posits that Pronouns in Ahan do not inflect features such as gender or animateness. However, pronouns in the language have morphological inflection. This makes the pronouns in



Ahan different forms for case endings, which depend on the syntactic position each pronoun occupies in a sentence. He posits that the third-person singular pronoun object in Ahan is phonetically zero.

Regina (2016) provides a descriptive analysis of Dangme (Kwa language) Pronominalization within the ambit of Government and Binding theory. She established that the pronouns in the language agree in number and person when they occur in a clause in Dangme. The concept of reflexivization, distribution of reflexive pronouns, locality constraints in reflexive pronouns, and the functions of reciprocal, anaphoric, and cataphoric pronouns in Dangme. She establishes that Dangme has personal pronouns in the first, second, and third-person domains. These are in the categories of emphatic, nominative, accusative and genitive pronouns. Also, Dangme has demonstrative, interrogative, relative and locative pronouns. She posits further that Dangme has a complex structure involving an abstract nominal.

She explained further that the forms for expressing subjective and genitive pronouns are identical, and object pronouns are distinct. She claims that except for the first-person singular pronoun, which changed its form from "I" to ye my", the possessive pronouns have the same form as the subject pronouns. Also, except the first-person emphatic pronoun whose form is mi/ami "I", instead of my "me" in the accusative case, all the emphatic pronouns have the form of the object pronouns. It came up that Dangme forms the reflexives in two ways: using an emphatic pronoun plus nitse "self" and using a possessive pronoun and a body fresh/skin word, he.

Regina (ibid) asserts that the antecedents have their referent, which they agree with in number. She explained that reflexive formation in the language does not occur at the left periphery of the clause as a referent to any NP in a clause. On the contrary, the emphatic pronouns and nitse "self" can be co-referential to both subject and object and occur at the periphery of the clause. Unlike in the body fresh word he, where the plural is marked only on the possessive pronoun that precedes it, it was realized that in the use of the emphatic pronouns and nitse, nitse is also marked for plural with the morpheme -me. The data confirms that, as in other languages, there is a link between the relationship of an antecedent nominal and a pronoun, which is co-referential in a sentence in Dangme. Regina (ibid) also makes a distinction between English reciprocals and that of Dangme, and she asserts that Dangme creates a distinction between pronouns used to mark the reciprocal, he or a sibi "each other" and nyε sibi „one another". She explained that he or a sibi "each other" and nyε sibi „one another" cannot occur as syntactic subjects but as objects.

Nweke (2018) examined the role of pronominalization in traditional grammar. He established that there are five basic functions of pronominal in traditional Igbo grammar: subject, object (direct and indirect), possessive, and pleonastic functions. Here, five basic functions have been identified as pronominal functions in traditional Igbo grammar. They are subjects, direct and indirect objects, possessives and expletives. From these functions, it is clear that pronominalisation has a core role in Igbo traditional grammar. Having reviewed the previous works on the pronoun system of Ahan, Dangme and Igbo languages. Evidently, the speech form under study has the same pronoun structure as the languages reviewed, with fewer differences. The remaining section of the work will investigate Oge's pronoun and pronominalization system.

3. Methodology

The research adopts a purposive sampling technique. Data used for this research are sourced through direct interviews. Two hundred sentences with both pronoun and pronominalization paradigms drafted by the researcher were dictated to the informants, and their responses were recorded in both long and short forms for correct transcription analyses and tone marking process. Four native speakers of the language were selected, aged between 50 and 70. The older native speakers were selected because they speak a purer language than the younger generations.

4. Pronouns in Ògè

A pronoun is a word that replaces or refers to a noun or noun phrase, often used to avoid redundancy and enhance fluidity in a language. According to Adegbija (1998, p.21), “pronoun is a word that can be used in place of a noun”. Since pronouns are used in place of nouns, they perform the same function as nouns (Akande 2004, p.15). There are many types of pronouns. The categories include personal pronouns, possessive pronouns, reflexive pronouns, demonstrative pronouns and interrogative pronouns. Just like in other languages, the following pronoun types are attested in Ògè;

- Personal pronoun
- Possessive pronoun
- Anaphoric pronoun
- Interrogative pronoun
- Demonstrative pronoun
- Relative pronoun

4.1. Personal Pronoun

In Ògè, the usual single categories of the speaker, addressee, and other are coded by three distinct morphemes, as is common in most pronominal paradigms throughout languages. These three coded morphemes are referred to as first, second, and third person, respectively. The tables (a and b) below display the several forms of Ògè pronouns in the subject and object positions.

4.1.1. Data 1

Table 1. Subject

Person	Singular	Plural
First	mu “I”	èwo “we”
Second	ò “you sg.”	ò “You pl”
Third	u “S/he/it”	o “they”

Table 2. Direct Object

Person	Singular	Plural
First	nà “me”	wò “us”
Second	ò “you sg.”	ò “You pl”
Third	θ “him/her”	iva “them”

Pronouns in Ògè do not inflect features such as gender or animateness, which, from my observation, is a phenomenon common to all Benue-Congo languages. However, pronouns in the language do have morphological inflection. This makes the pronouns in Ògè in different forms for case endings, which depends on the syntactic position each pronoun occupies in a sentence. The case endings of each pronoun are nominative, accusative and genitive cases. As will be presented from the various examples, the morphological form these pronouns take, either in the subject or object position, is always different. It is also established that the third-person singular pronoun object in the language under analysis is phonetically zero. In the following examples, the various pronouns identified in Ògè, which are listed in (Data 1) above, are used in a sentence.

4.1.2. Data 2

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1sg. Subject | 1 pl. Subject |
| i. mu pu àran | èwo pu àran |
| 1sg kill goat | 1pl kill goat |
| ‘I kill the goat’ | ‘We killed the goat’ |

ii.	mu dà bàtà 1sg buy slipper 'I bought slippers'	èwo dà bàtà 1pl buy slipper 'We bought slippers'
	2sg. Subject	2pl. Subject
i.	ø sun àgbàdo 2sg roast corn 'You roasted a corn'	ø sun àgbàdo 2pl. roast corn 'You roasted a corn'
ii.	ø dà ìwé 2sg buy book 'You bought a book.'	ø dà ìwé 2pl. buy book 'You bought a book.'
	3sg. Subject	3pl. Subject
i.	u ju ísín 3sg eat yam 'She ate yam'	o ju ísín 3pl. eat yam 'They ate yam'
ii.	u bo ùji 3sg drink water 'She drank water'	o bo ùji 3pl. drink water 'They drank water'

The various pronouns in the subject position in Ogè are used in (Data 2), as seen from the examples above. First, second and third-person pronouns are used in their singular and plural forms at the subject position. A close observation of the second person singular and plural in the examples above reveals that there is no distinct marker(s) that evince the plurality of the pronoun. The distinction is always made by utilizing numerals to indicate the plurality in the speech form. However, it should be noted that the 3sg OBJ is phonetically zero in context. The language speakers use a copy of the contiguous vowel of the verb, and the tone of the pronoun gets polarized. Consider the examples below which back up this notion.

- | | | | |
|----|--|-----|---|
| i. | Akin ju ísin
Akin eat yam
'Akin ate yam' | ii. | Akin ju ú
Akin eat it
'Akin ate it' |
|----|--|-----|---|

From the examples above, it is present that the 3sg pronoun is phonetically zero. The copy of the vowel of the verb is used to replace the noun in Ogè. This assertion here is also similar to that of the Yoruba language, which does not have a 3sg. In the same vein, the 2sg pronoun object and 2pl pronoun object also have the same morphological form. In the data below, we present the usages of these pronouns in the object position.

4.1.3. Data 3

i.	1sg. Object Òjó rí na NP see 1sg OBJ 'Ojo sees me'	1pl. object Òjó rí wò NP see 1pl OBJ 'Ojo sees us'
ii.	2sg. Object Ù jì ø 3sg beat 2sg OBJ 'She beats you.'	2pl. Object Ù jì ø 3sg beat 2pl OBJ 'She beats you.'
iii.	3sg. Object Mu pu ú 1sg kill 2sg OBJ 'I killed him'	3pl. Object Mu pu iva 1sg kill 3pl OBJ 'I killed them'

The data in (Data 3) show the various occurrences of the personal pronouns in Ògè at the object position. It will be observed that the same pronoun is realized in different forms, even in the same syntactic position, exempting the 2sg with the same morphological realization for singular and plural. For instance, first person singular pronoun is realized as na in (1sg OBJ) and wò in (1pl OBJ). There are two things to note. One, there is a change of tone; two, there is a change of form. However, there is no change of tone in (2sg and 2pl OBJ); the form does not change. In this case, it can be posited that the reason there is no change in form and tone here is subject to the language not inflecting for numbers.

4.2. Possessive Pronouns

Possessive pronouns are used to indicate what belongs to a person. They show possession. Examples in Ògè are:

Table 3. Genitive

Person	Singular	Plural
First	ran "my"	wò "our"
Second	sè "your"	sè Your"
Third	wò "his/her"	va "theirs"

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1sg. Possessive
i. Bàbá ran ve móslásí
Father 1sg. Poss go mosque
'My father goes to mosque'
ii. Ade dà bàtà ran
NP buy shoe 1sg. Poss
'Ade bought my shoes' | 1pl. Possessive
Bàbá wò ve móslásí
Father 1pl. Poss go mosque
'Our father goes to mosque'
Ade dà bàtà wo
NP buy slipper 1pl. Poss.
'Ade bought our slippers' |
| 2sg. Possessive
i. Bàbá sè pu aran
Father 2sg. Poss kill goat
'Your father goes to mosque'
ii. Mama sè ve aja
Mother 2sg. Poss go market
'Your mother goes to mosque' | 2pl. Possessive
Bàbá sè pu àran
Father 2pl. Poss go mosque
'Your father goes to mosque'
Mama sè ve aja
Mother 2pl. Poss go market
'Your mother goes to market' |
| 3sg. Possessive
i. Ìwé wo a èhè
Book 3sg be here
'His book is here'
ii. Mama wo ve aja
Mother 3sg. Poss go market
'His mother went to mosque' | 3pl. Possessive
Ìwé va a èhè
Book 3pl be here
'their books are here'
Mama va ve aja
Mother 3pl. Poss go market
'Their mother went to market' |

The examples above reveal the syntactic distribution of the possessive pronouns in the language. Presently, all the pronouns have distinct markers except the 1pl and the 3sg, which have the same form but different tones; one bears a mid-tone, and the other bears a low tone. It should be noted that the syntactic distribution of the pronouns is after the noun to which they modify.

4.3. Interrogative Pronouns

Interrogative pronouns in Oge are presented in the table below:

Table 4. Interrogative pronouns in Oge

Màselè	"why"
Nè	"Who"
Mà	"what"
Hè	"where"
Ijó	"When"

Consider the examples below:

4.3.1. Nè 'Who'

This interrogative pronoun is used to enquire about humans. It is only used to refer to entities that possess human features. This is illustrated below:

Declarative sentence	Interrogative sentences
i. Ade ju isi Ade eat yam "Ade ate the yam"	Nè ju isí? Pro eat yam. "Who ate the yam?"
ii. Akin ve móslásí Akin go mosque "Ade went to mosque"	Nè ve móslásí Pro go mosque 'Who went to the mosque?'

4.3.2. Hè 'Where'

This interrogative pronoun is used to inquire about the location or the position of someone or something. Examples can be seen below:

Declarative sentence	Interrogative sentences
i. Akin ve hi móslásí NP go prep mosque "Ade went to mosque"	Hè Ade ve hi ? Pro go mosque Pre. 'Where did Ade go to?'
ii. Bólá ju isí hi ajá NP eat yam Prep market "Bola ate the yam at the market"	Hè Bólá ju isí hi Pro. NP eat yam Pre. 'Where did Bola eat the yam too?'

4.3.3. Ijó 'When'

This interrogative pronoun is used to inquire about the timings of an action. Examples can be seen below:

Declarative sentence	Interrogative sentences
i. Bólá vàdi ádá NP, come morning "Bola came in the morning"	ijo Bólá vàdi? Pro Bola come 'When did Bola come?'
ii. Akin pu àran ádá NP kill goat morning "Akin killed the goat in the morning"	ijo hi Akin pu àran? Pro foc. Akin kill goat 'When did Akin kill the goat?'

4.3.4. MÀ 'What'

This interrogative pronoun is used to enquire about one's problem with the present situation or what has happened in the past, and it is used to question entities that have (\pm animate) features. Examples are illustrated below:

Declarative sentence i. Ade ju isi NP eat yam "Ade ate yam" ii. Ade dà ìwé Ade buy book "Ade bought book"	Interrogative sentences MÀ Ade ju ? Pro Ade eat 'What did Ade eat?' MÀ Ade dà? Pro Ade buy 'What did Ade buy?'
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4.3.5. Màselè 'Why'

This interrogative pronoun is used to discuss the reason behind a particular event or circumstance and may be used to ask questions about what causes something or an action. Examples can be seen below:

Declarative sentence i. Bábá gwo àgbo semé se Father drinks herbs conj. sleep "Father drank herbs to sleep" ii. Ade ve úrá semé ká osàn Ade go farm conj. Pluck orange "Ade went to the farm to pluck oranges"	Interrogative sentences Màselè bàbá gwo àgbo? Pro Ade drink herbs 'Why did Father drink herbs?' Màselè Ade ve úrá? Pro Ade go farm 'Why did Ade go to the farm?'
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4.4. Demonstrative Pronoun

Demonstrative pronouns in Ògè are two in number; these are mé 'this and these' and ìgéró 'that and those'. Presently, the demonstrative pronouns in the language do not inflect for numbers. It is observed that plurality in the language is marked through numerals. Consider the examples below:

'This' i. mé ìwé a èhèn Det book be here 'This book is here' ii. mé isí a èhèn Det yam be here 'This book is here'	'These' mí iyí ìwé a èhèn Det two book be here 'These books are here.' mí iyí isí a èhèn Det two yam be here 'These books are here.'
'That' i. Ìgéró ìwé a èhèn Det book be here 'That book is there' ii. Ìgéró isí a èhèn Det yam be here 'That book is here'	'Those' Ìgéró iyí ìwé a èhèn Det two book be there 'Those books are there' Ìgéró iyí isí a èhèn Det two yam be here 'Those books are here'

The distinction in Ògè demonstratives is that two markers are used for "this & these" and "that & those". The distinction present shows that the plurality is in context.

4.5. Relative Pronoun

A relative pronoun, also known as a subordinating conjunction, performs a grammatical function by linking a matrix clause with an embedded clause. The language under analysis has a single relative pronoun, "nè". Consider the examples of its occurrences in both subject and object environments.

Declarative	Subject NP Relativized sentence
1a. Èlége da àgbàdo Women buy maize 'The woman bought Maize'	1b. Èlége _i nè t _i da àgbàdo women Rel buy maize 'The woman who bought maize'
Declarative	Object NP Relativized sentence
2a. Èlége da àgbàdo woman buy maize 'The woman bought Maize'	2b. Àgbàdo _i nè Èlége da t _i maize Rel woman buy 'The maize that the woman bought'
Declarative	Subject NP Relativized sentence
3a. Ade dà ìwé Ade buy book 'Ade bought the book'	3b. Ade _i nè t _i da ìwé Ade Rel buy the book 'Ade that bought the book'
Declarative	Object NP Relativized sentence
4a. Ade dà ìwé Ade buy book 'Ade bought the book'	4b. Iwei _i nè Ade da t _i Ade Rel buy the book 'Ade that bought the book'

It is evident in the examples above that the relative marker occurs structurally after the relativized element.

4.6. Anaphoric Pronoun

Cornish (1986) defines anaphor as a fairly simple and unproblematic process in which one avoids repetition or duplication by taking on a semantically (and, perhaps, lexically and phonologically) impoverished statement in place of the lexicalized whole expression originally employed. The abbreviated statement (the anaphor) copies the indicated or established sense when used with the latter as "antecedent". The above assertion can be rewritten to mean that anaphora prevents repeating a previously mentioned item in one part of a structure in another. Anaphors are classified into two categories in literature: reflexives and reciprocals. Reciprocals and reflexives are similar in Ògè. It is established that there is no particular way of distinguishing the two (reciprocals and reflexives) in the language.

Zeller (2011) maintains that the difference between the two types of anaphora, reflexives and reciprocals, cannot be established by many African languages. Ajiboyè and Amorskaite (2005) explain that in Yorùbá, there is no necessary correlation between form and meaning in reflexive and reciprocal construal. Yorùbá, like the other Kwa languages, does not distinguish between reflexive and reciprocal construal. Thus, in Yorùbá, one sentence has three different meanings. Several linguists have pointed out that most Benue-Congo languages of Bantu origin are of the type where reciprocals and reflexives are extremely difficult to separate. English is one of the languages with definite differences between the two classes. Ògè is not. Hein and Miyashita (2008) are of the opinion that languages acquire their reflexive anaphors from a range of quite different forms ranging from pronouns, noun phrases and adverbial modifiers. In addition to this point, the authors have put the table below to show how world languages usually acquire their reflexives.

Table 5. World languages usually acquire their reflexives

S/N	Label	Strategy
1	Pronoun	Use personal pronoun
2	Intensifier	Add an intensifier (-self)
3	Body	Use of a body-noun (+ possessive attribute)
4	Alone use	An adverbial "alone" or "only."
5	Other sources	Mostly opaque

The following examples are taken from Hein and Miyashita (2008), who presented each derivation of reflexives in the table above.

4.6.1. German (*Pronoun Strategy*)

- Ich habemich verletzt
- I have me hurt
- "I've hurt myself."

4.6.2. Irish (*Intensifier Strategy*)

- Ghortaighseán é féin
- Hurt Sean himself
- "Sean hurt himself."

4.6.3. Yagaria-Papuan (*Body Strategy*)

- d-ouva-dibegi-d-u-e
- my-body-my beat-pst-1sg-ind.
- "I hit myself."

Regarding reciprocal reflexive ambiguity, many other languages also do not make a clear demarcation. Heine and Miyashita (ibid.) cite examples of some world languages without clear-cut demarcation between the reciprocal and reflexive. Lango and Luo, two West Nilotc languages of the Nilo-Saharan language family spoken in Kenya, use the same morpheme for both the reciprocal and reflexive. The examples below, taken from Hein and Miyashita (2008: p. 191) are examples.

4.6.4. wá-lwóko-rê [Luo]

- 1pl wash.Prf-Refl/Recp. 1pl
- "We have washed ourselves."
- "We have washed each other."

4.6.5. gínògjɔ́ye [Lango]

- They 3.pl.beat.Mid.Prf.
- "They beat themselves."
- "They beat each other."

They (Heine and Miyashita) explain that the suffix rê in (a) is historically derived from a noun meaning body and that this marker is used both for reciprocal and reflexive meaning. From the above explanation, as posited by Hein and Miyashita (ibid), Ògè uses a body noun (+ possessive attribute) to indicate anaphors in the language.

5. Reflexive Pronouns in Ògè

Ògè language manifests some reflexive expressions that can be used to indicate that a semantic or a syntactic argument of a predicate is co-referent with another argument of that predicate, typically, the subject. The following examples show the reflexive anaphor:

- i. Muí rí iji raní
1sg. see body my
'I saw myself'

ii. Oí rí iji sèi
2sg. see body you
'You saw yourself.'

iii. Uí rí iji wòi
3sg. see the body of his
'He saw himself.'

iv. ewoí rí iji wòi
1pl. see body his
'We saw ourselves'

v. Oí rí iji sèi
2pl see body your
'You saw yourselves.'

vi. Oí rí iji vái
3pl see body them
'They saw themselves'

6. Analysis of Anaphoric Pronouns in Ògè

The Government and Binding Theory was employed in this study to map the Binding Theory used in the anaphor analysis of the given language. The Binding Theory (BT) below is a theory that deals with the distribution of reflexive and pronominal pronouns across languages. Chomsky (1981, 1986, 1995) and Carnie's (2013) Binding Theory categorizes nominal expressions into three broad categories:

- Anaphors (reflexives),
- pronominals, and
- R-expressions.

Anaphors (reflexive pronouns) are typically characterized as expressions that lack a semantic potential for reference. Anaphors are also employed for reciprocals. Haegeman (1994:228) says that three principles determine the interpretation of the established nominal. The expression on which the anaphor depends for meaning is called the antecedent. The structural relationship between a reflexive and an antecedent is described in the application of c-command. Haegeman (1994:212) says a node A c-commands a node B if

- A does not dominate B;
- B does not dominate A; and
- the last branching node dominating A also dominates B.

He writes, however, that pronominal is an abstract symbol for NP feature, which may be referentially dependent but must be free in a particular syntactic domain. It may be implied from these definitions that an anaphor (reflexive pronoun) will always have a local or a "near" antecedent within some given syntactic unit to which it will be related, but a pronominal may but need not have its antecedent in the same syntactic domain.

6.1. Binding Principle A

The binding principle A states that an anaphor must be bound in its binding domain (Carnie 2013:155). The binding domain is the clause containing the DP (anaphor pronoun, R-expression).

- Akiní pu iji raní
- Akin kill body his
- “Akin kill himself.”

In the example above, Akin c-commands “himself.”

6.2. Binding Principle B

The binding principle B states that a pronoun must be free in its binding domain, which is Free: Not bound (not c-commanded by and co-indexed with another NP). See the example below:

- ewoí rí iji wòi
- 1pl. see body his
- ‘We saw ourselves’

6.3. Binding Principle C

The binding principle C states that an R-expression must be free everywhere. No domain is mentioned because the reference for R-expressions does not change. They refer to entities out in the world. These three principles govern the distributional properties of pronominals and reflexive pronouns in languages. Consider the distribution of the above examples.

- i. Muí rí iji raní
1sg. see body my
'I saw myself'
- ii. Oí rí iji sèi
2sg. see body you
'You saw yourself.'
- iii. Uí rí iji wòi
3sg. see body his
'He saw himself.'

Consider the configurational tree, which accounts for the co-indexation of the pronouns and their anaphors.

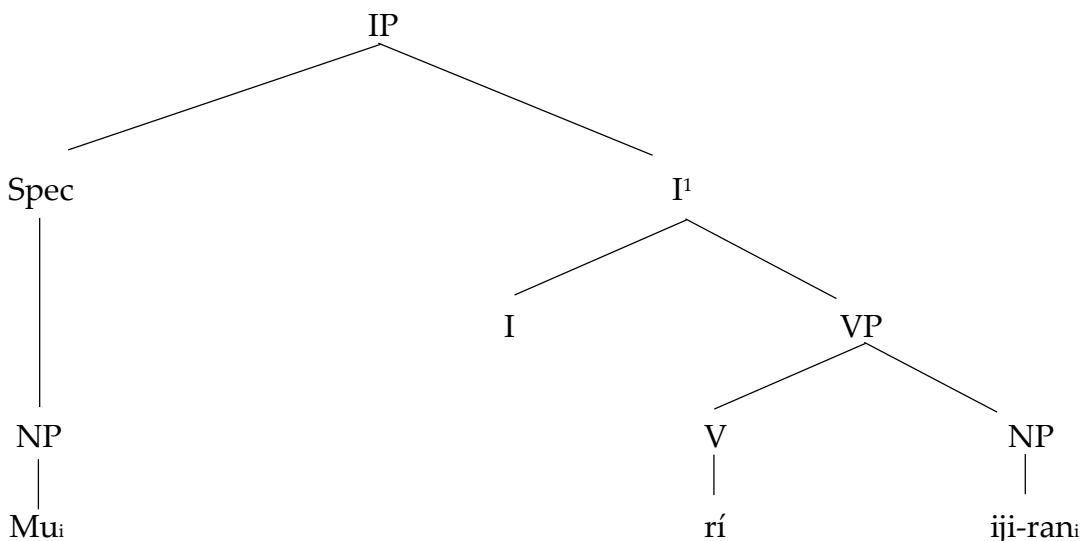


Fig. 1 Configurational tree

From the configurational tree above, it is present that the Subject NP no c-commands the anaphors since there is no structural relationship between the subject NP “*Mui*” and the anaphor “*iji-rani*”.

7. Conclusion

This study has examined the pronoun system of Ògè, unveiling its morphological and syntactic characteristics and placing it in comparison to other languages of similar types, such as Ahan, Dangme, and Igbo. The findings confirm that Ògè shares typical structural features with other Benue-Congo languages, such as the absence of gender inflection and the phonetic zero realization of specific pronouns.

In contrast to much of the Indo-European family, Ògè pronouns are not inflected for numbers but rather use contextual indicators such as numerals to signal plurality. Another contribution of this study is the systematic description of Ògè's pronominal system, which supports language preservation efforts for endangered languages. Furthermore, the research also uncovers unique syntactic strategies in Ògè, including subject-object distinctions and possessives.

Notably, the second-person singular and plural pronouns are morphologically identical, while the third-person singular object pronoun is phonetically null, opening up potential avenues for investigating the historical and typological characteristics of Benue-Congo languages. As a result of the scant literature on Ògè, this study serves as a foundation for further investigation, which would look into differences in dialects, semantics, and comparative analysis with closely related languages to enhance knowledge concerning the linguistic status of Ògè. Lastly, documentation of such linguistic features is important to theoretical linguistics and the preservation of threatened languages.

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