**Genitive Construction in Afaan Oromoo**

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**Abstract**

In this paper, I describe Afaan Oromoo Genitive Construction. In Afaan Oromoo, genitive constructions are marked by lengthening a final vowel of a noun. A noun that got its vowel long is interpreted as the possessor a noun that precedes it. The interpretation of Afaan Oromoo genitive construction where two nouns are involved is straightforward; but, if more than two nouns are involved ambiguities arise. This means that if a genitive construction is formed by three nouns, the second noun can be interpreted either as possessor (concerning the preceding noun) or as the possessed noun (concerning the following noun). I hypothesize that a genitive construction that involves more than two nouns is a borrowed instance that lacks an established phrasal pattern. These ambiguities are the source of public arguments. In the first part of this paper, I shall discuss problem areas of the topic by citing examples from social media. Moreover, I shall discuss more complex examples of Afaan Oromoo genitive constructions by citing sample MA thesis titles. In the second part, I shall discuss literature reviews on Afaan Oromoo genitive construction. The third part proposes solutions and concludes the paper.

**1. Introduction**

This article aims to describe Afaan Oromoo genitive construction. In Afaan Oromoo genitive consturections are widly employed as titles of many government offices in Oromiya Reginal State. As an example many websites of Oromiya Regional Bureaus can be sited:

Biiroo Eegumsa Fayyaa Oromiyaa ‘Oromiya Health Bureau’

Mana Murtii Waliigalaa Oromiyaa ‘Supreme Court of Oromiya’

Biiroo Qonnaa Oromiyaa ‘Oromiya Bureau of Agriculture’

Biiroo Bishaaniifi Inarjii Oromiyaa ‘Oromiya Bureau of Water and Energy’

Biiroo Barnootaa Oromiyaa ‘Oromiyaa Education Bureau’

Komishinii Karooraafi misoomaa Oromiyaa ‘Oromiya Planning and Economic Development Commission’, etc.

In Afaan Oromoo, a typical genitive case is formed by adding a genitive case morpheme **-a** to a possessor noun. For exampe, in **bishaan laga – a** ‘river water’, the morpheme **-a** indicates genitive case. Such genitive case is widley used in Oromiya for the purpose of naming regional government offices. But, the problem is that formation of genitive cases for naming of offices doesn’t follow the same pattern. For example, the following two phrases are used in parallel on websites:

a. Mana Murtii Waliigalaa Oromiyaa ‘Oromiya Supreme Court’

b. Mana Murtii Waliigala Oromiyaa ‘Oromiya Supreme Court’

2a) Biiroo Barnootaa Oromiyaa

2b) Biiroo Barnoota Oromiyaa

3a) sirna awwaalcha goota keenyaa

3b) sirna awwaalchaa gootaa keenya

Such inconsistencies happen to be a source of arguments and misunderstandings. It creates irregular patterns in the writing system of the language. If such inconsistencey continues, standardization of the language cannot be attained in a short period of time. Therefore, reseach need to be conducted to solve the problem.

Both of these genitives are used and often happen to be the cause of arguments. Similarly, the following are used:

My hypothesis is that if two genitive constructions are merged to build one bigger genitive construction, then the preceding genitive marker, in this case, the long vowel becomes short or get deleted while the last one remains intact. This is similar to causative construction where the preceding long vowel becomes short and the vowel in the last cusative moropheme remains long.

4a) bak’-e ‘melt’

4b) bak’s-e ‘cause to melt’

4c) bak’s-iise ‘got sb. Cause to melt’

4d) bak’-s-is-iis-e ‘got sb. Cause sb. Got cause to melt’

This article will give answer to the following questions:

a) How many types of genitive constructions Afaan Oromoo has?

b) What are structures of genitive construcion in Afaan Oromoo?

c) What is the semantics of Afaan Oromoo genitive construction?

4. Research objectives

The following are research objectives of the article:

a) The article describes different types of Afaan Oromoo genitive constructions,

b) The article describes structures of Afaan Oromoo genitive constructions,

c) The article describes the semantics of Afaan Oromoo genitive costructions.

**2. Review of literature**

There are 5 types of genitive construction. These are possessive, subjective, source, objective and descritptive (<https://www.eltconcourse.com/training/inservice/lexicogrammar/genitive.html>).

The genitive case is referes to ownership, source, orgin and description. In Afaan Oromoo case is marked. In this language we know who did what to whom by by the presence or absence of the case mark on a noun, and by word order. In all cases the subject comes first and marked for nominative case by -n, -i, or -ni . The object of a sentence follows the subject and unmarked for accusative case.

In Afaan Oromoo, the genitive case is expressed in two ways. The first one is morphological. The morpheme -**a** is attached to the possessor noun. For example,

mana Tolasaa

kitaaba Boontuu

The second one is syntactically. In such case **qab-** ‘to have’ is used. For example,

Tolasaan mana qaba

Boontuun kitaaba qabdi.

Similarly, possessive pronouns can be used. For example,

mana keenya

mana keessan

mana isaanii

mana koo

mana kee

mana ishee

mana isaa

possessive pronouns can be used with genitive consturctions in different ways. For example,

mana Tolasaa keenya.

Kitaaba Boontuu koo.

Biiroo Godinaa keessanii.

**2. 1. Possessive**

Possessive genitive can be expressed either morphologically or syntactically. For example,

1a. mana Tolasaa (we can also say mana isaa when isaa referes to Tolasaa, and eventually we can say mana Tolasaati, \*mana Tolasaadha)

1b. Tolasaan mana qaba

2a. obboleessa Boontuu

2b. Boontuun obboleessa qabdi.

The above examples are possessive genitives. They are expressed morphologically and syntactically. These are known as alienable genitive constructions. As compared to these genitives, an inalienable genitives cannot expresseed morphologically. For example,

3a. Gaaddiseen refeensa dheeraa qabdi.

3b. \*rifeensa dheeraa Gaaddisee

4a. Waariyoon ilkaan kaarruu qaba

4b. \*ilkaan kaarruu Waariyoo

**2.2. The subjective genitive**

The subjective genitive expresses about the nature of the subject of a sentence. It doesn’t refer to possession. The subjective genitive can be expressed morophologically as well as syntactically as shown below:

5a. Fayyisaan aare. (we can also say Fayyisaan aarii qaba, arii isaa)

5b. aarii Fayyisaa

6a. Qananiisaan fiige

6b. fiigicha Qananiisaa (we cannot say Qananiisaan fiigicha qaba, but we can say fiigicha isaa)

**2.3. Source/Origin**

Source genitive refers to the origin of a noun. For example,

7a. buna Wallaggaa (we cannot say buna isaa/ishee since Wallaggaa is non-human, we can say buna Wallaggaati, \*buna Wallaggaatdha)

7b. \*Wallagga buna qaba

8a. murtee ummataa

8b. \*Ummatni murtee qaba.

**2.4. The objective genitive**

The objejective genitive refers to the nature of the object of a sentence. This type of genive construction can be expressed morophologically as well as syntactically as shown below:

9a. nama gargaare

9b. gargaarsa namaa (we can say gargaarsa nama keenyaa, \*gargaarsa namaa, gargaarsa namaati, \*gargaarsa namaadha, gargaarsa namaa qaba, gargaarsa namaa argate)

10a. Mana ijaare

10b. Ijaarsa manaa

**2.5. The Descriptive genitive**

11. Digrii Lammaffaa (Digrii lammaffaa qaba, digrii lammaffaa koo, digriii lammaffaa argate, digrii lammaffaadha, \*digrii lammaffaati)

12. Gulantaa lammaffaa

13. Itti aanaa Ministeeraa

Akkuma armaan olitti argamu kana, (11) akaakuu digirii ibsa, (12) ammoo akaakuu gulantaa yoo ibsu (13) ammoo sadarkaa aangoo ibsa.

Biiroo

Biiroo Misoomaa

Biiroo Misooma Qabeenyaa

Biiroo Misooma Qabeenya Bishaaniifi Inarjii Oromiyaa

Biiroo Barnootaa

Biiroo Barnoota Eegumsa Fayyaa

Biiroo Barnootaa Eegumsa Fayyaa Oromiyaa

Tafarii Baqqalaafi Waaqgaarii Dullumee “To’annaa Dambileefi Qajeelfamoota Bakka Bu’insaan Ba’anii: Haala Qabatamaa Oromiyaa” *Joornaaliii Seeraa Oromiyaa* (Jiil.8, Lak.1, 2011)

possessive + genitive

ijoollee Oromoo keenya

our Oromo Children

if possessive + genitive, then copula -dha is used.

Example:

isaan ijoollee Oromoo keenyadha.

\*isaan ijoollee Oromoo keenyati.

But, if only genitive shows up, copula, -ti is used.

Example:

kun Biiroo Barnootaa Oromiyaati.

\*kun Biiroo Barnootaa Oromiyaadha.

keenya can be used with inalienable genitive consturuction as well.

Example:

kun hadha manaa Tolasaa keenya.

Rifeensi Boontuu ti.

Rifeenas Boontuu keenya.

-Which one is correct?

a) hiikamuu gaggeessitoota Siyaasaa

b) hiikamuu gaggeessitootaa Siyaasaa

a) qabsoo uummata Oromoo

b) qabsoo uummataa Oromoo

a) hidhamtoota Siyaasa Oromoo

b) hidhamtoota Siyaasaa Oromoo

a) waajjiraa Barnoota Godina Shawaa Kaabaa

b) waajira Barnootaa Godina Shawaa Kaabaa

a) Pireezidantii Baankii Daldala Itiyoophiyaa

b) Pireezidantii Baankii Daladalaa Itiyoophiyaa

a) Sirna awwaalcha goota keenyaa

?b) sirna awwaalcha gootaa keenya – funeral of hero

c) sirna awwaalchaa gootaa keenya – our system of funeral

d) sirna awwaalchaa goota keenya – our hero

From General to specific

a) Sirna

b) sirna awwaalchaa

c) sirna awwaalchaa gootaa

d) sirna awwaalchaa gootaa keenyaa

From specific to general

a) keenya

b) goota keenya

c) awwaalcha goota keenyaa

d) sirna awwaalcha goota keenyaa

Screenshot Data

1. Jiraattota godina addaa naannawa Finfinnee aanaa Aqaaqii

2. Pireezidaantii Itti aanaa Tajaajila Deegarsa Hawaasaafi Qorannoo Yuunivarsiitii Mizan Teeppii

**Structure of the genitive construction**

man**a** nam**aa**

haadha manaa

haadha manaa nam**aa**

haadha manaa nam**a** biyyaa

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farda namaa

farda nama biyyaa

farda nama biyya fagoo

a. mana isaa -possessive pronoun

b. mana Tolasaa -nominal

c. a palladian villa – adjectival

A determiner-like possessive pronoun:

a. mana Tolasaa – genitive

b. manicha Tolasaa – Genetive + deteriminer

c. mana kan Tolasaa – prepositional

Possessive (adjective like)

a. mana koo ‘my house’

b. manicha koo ‘the my house’

c. manicha koo kana ‘this the my house’

Genetive (adjective like)

a. mana Guyyoo ‘Guyyoo’s house’

b. manicha Guyyuu ‘The Guyyoo’s house’

c. manicha Guyyoo kana ‘this the Guyyoo’s house’

Thematic

a. daldala Tolasaa -verbal argument

b. mucaa Barii – kinship term

c. harka Bookaa – body part term

d. guutuu manaa – part whole relation

e. hiriyyaa dubartii – walitti dhufeenyaa tasa uumame

Thematic

a. mormii uummataa – agent

b. filatamuu Jaalannee – theme

c. sodaa Bultumaa – experiencer

d. dabalee xalayaa – goal

e. bishaan xarmusii - container-content