Genitive Construction in Afaan Oromoo

Tolemariam Fufa

October 2022

Abstract

This paper attempts to describe Afaan Oromoo genitive construction. This paper is divided into 6 sections. The first section is an introduction to Afaan Oromoo genitive construction. Section 2 is discusses possessive genitives of Afaan Oromoo; the concern of this section is alienable possessive (ALP) and inalienable possessive (IAP) of Afaan Oromoo. Section three discusses descriptive genitive of the language. Section 4 deals with problem areas of genitive of genitives of Afaan Oromoo. Section 5 proposes solutions for problems of genitive of genitives. Section six concludes the paper.

Keywords:
genitive, possessive, descriptive, alienable, inalienable

1 Introduction

Genitive construction is treated in different ways in literature. For teaching and translation purposes genitive construction is often typed into 5 categories. These are possessive, subjective, source, objective and descriptive genitive (*The Genitive in English*, n.d.). Researchers such as Rosenbach categorize genitive construction into two categories; namely, possessive and descriptive genitive (Rosenbach, 2006; Gebregziabher, 2012).

Subjective and objective genitives are used when a noun is derived from a verb and modified by another dependent noun. If the dependent noun expresses the main noun that is derived from the original verb, it is claimed to be a subjective genitive; but, if the dependent noun (genitive) expresses the object of the main verb, the genitive is said to be objective genitive. In subjective genitive an action or idea is set forth as proceeding from the noun in subject position (Greenlee, 1950, 68). The subjective genitive expresses about the nature of subject of a sentence. It does't refer to possession.

In Afaan Oromoo subjective and objective genitives cannot distinguished morphologically or syntactically; they are expressed in the same with construction. Thus, subjective and objective ginitives are distinguished semantically. Therefore, context is the main determining factor in this case.

(1)
    nam-ni   isa   jaal-at-a
    man(people)-NOM him love-MID-3MSS
    'People loves him.'

(2)
    inni   nama   jaal-at-a
    he.NOM man(people) love-MID-3MSS
    'He loves people.'

(3)
    jaalala nama-a
    love   man(people)-GEN
    'People's love or love of people.'

As shown above *jaalala* 'love' is derived from the verb *jaalata* 'loves'. The dependent is *nama* 'people' in this context. The dependent *nama* express the subjective genitive on the bases of example (1) provided that people loves him. If we take into consideration example (2), *jaalala namaa* 'people's love' is also subjective genitive as long as *inni* 'he' dedicated to welfare of humanity. But if we are talking

about general observation love of human being for human being, *jaalala namaa* 'love of people' becomes objective genitive.

Moreover, a source can be expressed by a genitive case (Greenlee, 1950, 69).

(4) .
caama   bona-a
drought summar-GEN
'summer drought'

(5) .
lolaa ganna-a
flood winter-GEN
'winter flood'

In (4) *bona* 'summer' is considered to be the source of drought; and in (5) *ganna* 'Winter' happens to be the source of flood. In both cases genitive is marked by lengthening the final short vowels of the corresponding nouns, *bona* and *ganna* respectively.

In order to clarify source genitive, let us consider the following examples:

(6) .
buna   Kafaa
coffee Wallaggaa.GEN
'Kafaa coffee'

(7) .
k'amadii Arsii
wheat   Arsii.GEN
'Arsii Wheat'

(8) .
hoolaa Wolayitaa
sheep   Harar.GEN
'Wolayita sheep'

Examples given in (6-8) are source genitives. (6) expresses coffee is from *Kafaa*; the sources of wheat and bull are also expressed in the same way, namely from *Arsii* and *Wolayitaa* respectively. Because the dependent nouns in (6-8) have long final vowels, the genitive is marked by null morpheme.

Materials of which a thing is made can be expressed by the genitive case

3

(Greenlee, 1950, 69).

(9)   ̣
siree sibiilaa
bed   iron.GEN
'iron bed'

(10)   ̣
foon hoolaa
meat sheep.GEN
'mutton'

(11)   ̣
mana ɗagaa
house stone.GEN
'stone house'

In (9), the material from which a bed is made, in (10) a type of meat and in (11), a material from which a house is built are expressed by genitive *sibiilaa* 'iron', *hoolaa* 'sheep' and *ɗagaa* 'stone' respectively.

Not only materials of which a thing is made but also a purpose a material for which it is planned my be expressed by genitive. In this case word order is the reverse of examples given in (9-11).

(12)   ̣
siibiila siree
iron   bed.GEN
'bed iron'

(13)   ̣
foon hoolaa
meat sheep.GEN
'meat sheep'

(14)   ̣
ɗagaa manaa
stone house.GEN
'house stone'

As shown above word order of genitive phrases given in (12-14) are the reverse of examples given in (9-11) to show that purpose and material genitives are expressed

4

not only morphologically but also syntactically.

A whole thing from which only a part is to be focused may expressed by genitive construction known as the partitive genitive (Greenlee, 1950, :69). Although most partitive constructions refer to a quantity or amount, some are used to indicate quality or behavior.

(15) .
halkan walakkaa
night   half.GEN
'middle of the night'

(16) .
lit'a   gannaa
beginning winter.GEN
'beginning of winter'

(17) .
baha gannaa
end   winter.GEN
'end of winter'

(18) .
barii Dilbataa
dawn Sunday.GEN
'dawn of the Sunday'

The above given examples indicate time. In (15), *halkan walakkaa* 'middle of the night' indicates not only amount of time (which is roughly 6 hours) but also quality or behavior linked to middle of the night which is silent and fearsome. Similarly, (16-18) indicate amount of time as well as behaviors associated with *lit'a gannaa* 'beginning of winter', *baha gannaa* 'beginning of winter' and *barii Dilbataa* 'dawn of the Sunday'. In the beginning of winter farmers prepare themselves for farming season. By contrast end of winter is associated with new year celebrations and time of happiness and joy. Dawn of the Sunday is also linked with time of rest, worship and socialization.

In Afaan Oromoo, genitive constructions marked in six ways:

(1) A noun ending in long vowel marked by null morpheme. For example, in *mana Jiraataa* 'Jiraataa's house' the dependent (possessor) *Jiraataa* has long final vowel; therefore, there is no overt genitive marking in such case. That is to say the possessor *Jiraataa* doesn't show any morphological change to indicate genitive construction.

(2) If a noun ends with a short vowel, we mark genitive case by lengthening the short vowel (Gragg, 1976; Gobena, Hagos, & Meyer, 2019, 183). For example, in *mana namaa* 'a man's house', *nama* 'man' has final short vowel in absolute form; the final short vowel becomes long in genitive construction.

(3) If a noun ends in consonant, we mark the genitive construction by suffixation of *-ii* (Gobena et al., 2019). For example in *wark'ii ilkaanii* 'golden teeth' the noun *ilkaan* 'teeth' ends with *n*, to which the genitive mark *-ii* is suffixed. A noun that got its vowel long is interpreted as the possessor of a noun that precedes it.

(4) The genitive can be made by placing the pronoun *kan* 'whose' between the head and dependent (possessor) nouns; for example *mana kan k'ottuu* 'a farmers's house' (Gragg, 1976, 183). In Meca dialect the pronoun *kan* is used for both masculine and feminine genders. But in *Harar, Borena and Tullama* dialects *kan* shows masculine while *tan* shows feminine gender. For example, *mana tan ishee* 'her house'.

(5) Genitves of genitives which are not final retain their absolute form (Owens, 1985, 104).

(19)　.
mana　nama-a
house man-GEN
'a man's house'

(20)　.
mana　nama Jimmaa
house man　Jima.GEN
'Jima man's house'

(20) is a genitive of (19). In (19), the dependent noun *namaa* 'man' has final long vowel to mark genitive construction. In genitive of a genitive shown in (20), *namaa* loses its final long vowel where another namely, *Jimmaa* becomes the second dependent.

(6) Genitive construction can also be indicated by possessive pronouns. For example,

(21)　.

6

mana koo
house my
'my house'

(22) .
mana kee
house your
'your house (sing)'

(23) .
mana ishee
house her
'her house'

(24) .
mana isaa
house his
'his house'

(25) .
mana keenya
house our
'our house'

(26) .
mana keessan
house your
'your house (pl)'

In this paper I categorize genitive construction into two types: possessive and descriptive genitives. Descriptive genitives are genitive constructions which are not possessives (Rosenbach, 2006).

2   Possessive Genitives

Genitive construction often employed to express possession (Greenlee, 1950, 68). In Afaan Oromoo, possessive genitive can be expressed either morphologically or syntactically.

(27) .

mana Tolasaa
house Tolasa.GEN
'Tolasa's house'

(28)   .
Tolasaa-n   mana qab-a
Tolasa-NOM house has-3MSS
'Tolasa has a house.'

(29)   .
obboleessa Boontuu
brother   Bontu.GEN 'Bontu's brother'

(30)   .
Boontuu-n   obboleessa qab-di
Bontu-NOM brother   has-3FSS
'Bontu has brother.'

As shown in the above examples possessive genitives in (27) and (29) are expressed morphologically while (28) and (30) are expressed syntactically using verb to have *qaba/qabdi*.

Possessive genitive is categorized into two types: alienable and inalienable possessions.

2.1 Alienable Possessive Genitive (ALP)

Alienable possessions refers to possessions which have not fixed semantic relationships between the possessor and the possessed nouns (Gebregziabher, 2012). That is to say alienable possessions can freely change ownership. These include materials such as car, house, computer, book, etc.

(31)   .
kitaaba barataa
book   student.GEN
'student's book'

(32)   .
konkolaataa barsiisaa
car   teacher.GEN
'teacher's car'

(33)   .
bilbila shamarree
phone girl.GEN
'girl's phone'

These examples indicate morphological ALP. ALP can be expressed syntactically by employing the verb to have *qab-*.

8

(34)　　.
Barataa-n　　kitaaba qab-a
student-NOM book　　has-3MSS
'A student has a book.'

(35)　　.
Barsiisaa-n　　konkolaataa qab-a
teacher-NOM car　　　　has-3MSS
'A teacher has car.'

(36)　　.
shamarree-n bilbila qab-di
girl-NOM　　phone has-3FSS
'A girl has phone.'

These are genitive constructions expressed syntactically by employing the verb to have *qaba/qabdi*.

Concerning definite morpheme, ALP is symmetrical with analytical (syntactic) ALP. For example, the definite marker can get attached to the main noun in morphological ALP.

(37)　　.
kitaab-icha barataa
book-DEF　student.GEN
'a student's book/lit. a student's the book'

(38)　　.
konkolaat-icha barsiisaa
car-DEF　　　teacher.GEN
'a teacher's car/lit. a teacher's the car'

(39)　　.
bilbil-icha　　shamarree
phoone-DEF girl.GEN
'a girl's phone/lit. a girl's the phone'

In the above examples all the head nouns are marked for definite; and, all are grammatically correct.

The dependent noun in the possessive genitive can also be marked for definiteness.

(40)　　.
kitaaba　　barat-ichaa
book-DEF student.GEN.DEF
'the student's book'

Both the head noun and the dependent nouns may also be marked for definiteness

in Afaan Oromoo.

(41) .
bilbil-icha shamarr-ittii
phoone-DEF girl.GEN.DEF
'the girl's phone/lit. the girl's the phone'

Similarly, analytic ALP allows for the complement of the verb to have to be marked for definite.

(42) .
barataa-n kitaab-icha k'ab-a
student-NOM book-DEF has-3MSS
'A student has the book.'

(43) .
barsiisaa-n konkolaat-icha k'ab-a
teacher-NOM car-DEF has-3MSS
'A teacher has the car.'

(44) .
shamarree-n bilbil-icha k'ab-di
girl-NOM phone-DEF has-3FSS
'A girl has the phone.'

As shown above head nouns of genitive construction which are complements of the verb to have permits for the definite morpheme *-icha* to get attached to theme.
The head noun of the ALP can be a genitive construction.

(45) .
kitaaba herreega-a barataa
book maths-GEN student.GEN
'student's maths book'

(46) .
barataan kitaaba herreegaa qab-a
student book maths.GEN has-3MSS
'A student has maths book.'

As shown above in (43) and (44) the head noun is a genitive construction. In genitive structure such as shown in (43), *kan* 'of' can be added.

(47) .
kitaaba kan barataa
book of student.GEN

10

'student's book/book of a student'

(48)
    ﹘
kitaaba herreega-a kan barataa
book   maths-GEN of student.GEN
'student's maths book/maths book of a student'

The word *kan* is added after the head noun. In the analytic structure shown below the word *kan* 'of' can be optionally added. In this case it is not 'student's book of maths' but 'book of maths' as shown below.

(49)
    ﹘
barataan kitaaba kan herreegaa   qab-a
student book   of maths.GEN has-3MSS
'A student has a book of maths.'

If the head noun is modified by an adjective or a quantifier, the morphological ALP need the insertion of *kan* 'of' to be grammatical while the analytic structure of ALP doesn't.

(50)
    ﹘
*kitaaba guddaa barataa
book   big   student.GEN
'student's big book'

(51)
    ﹘
kitaaba guddaa kan barataa
book   big   of student.GEN
'student's big book'

(52)
    ﹘
*kitaab-ilee lama barataa
book-PL   two student.GEN
'student's two books'

(53)
    ﹘
kitaab-ilee lama kan barataa
book-PL   two of student.GEN
'student's two books'

(47) and (49) are ungrammatical because the head nouns of the possessive genitives are modified by an adjective and a quantifier. But, (48) and (50) are grammatical because the head nouns of the genitives are modified and the word *kan* 'of' is inserted preceding the dependent nouns.

By contrast, the analytic ALP is grammatical if modified by an adjective or a quantifier without an addition of the word *kan* 'of' as shown below.

(54)   .
barataa-n   kitaaba guddaa k'ab-a
student-NOM book   big   has-3MSS
'A student has a big book.'

(55)   .
barataa-n   kitaab-ilee lama k'ab-a
student-NOM book-PL   two has-3MSS
'A student has two books.'

As far as morphological ALP is concerned the more modifier stuff is added, the less the genitive construction becomes transparent and the less grammatical the structure would be.

(56)   .
*kitaaba herreega-a   guddaa barataa
book   maths-GEN of   big   student.GEN
'student's big maths book/big maths book of a student'

(57)   .
kitaaba herreega-a   guddaa kan barataa
book   maths-GEN of   big of   student.GEN
'student's big maths book/big maths book of a student'

(58)   .
*kitaaba herreega-a   guddaa sana barataa
book   maths-GEN of   big   that   student.GEN
'student's that big maths book/that big maths book of a student'

(59)   .
kitaaba herreega-a   guddaa sana kan barataa
book   maths-GEN of   big   that of   student.GEN
'student's that big maths book/that big maths book of a student'

As shown above (56) and (58) are less acceptable because in (56) an adjective *guddaa* 'big' is added to the already heavy main noun *kitaaba herreegaa* 'maths

book' as a result of which the meaning of ALP becomes less transparent. The same case is true with (58) where an adjective *guddaa* 'big' and a demonstrative *san* 'that' are added. But if the word *kan* 'of' is inserted preceding the dependent noun as shown in (57) and (59), both possessive genitives become acceptable.

As compared to morphological ALP analytic ones remain grammatically acceptable whether or not an adjective or a demonstrative added to modify the main noun of the genitive.

(60)   .
    barataa-n   kitaaba herreegaa   guddaa k'ab-a
    student-NOM book   maths.GEN big   has-3MSS
    'A student has a big maths book.'

(61)   .
    barataa-n   kitaaba herreegaa   guddaa sana k'ab-a
    student-NOM book   maths.GEN big   that has-3MSS
    'A student has that big maths book.'

In the analytic ALP, the word *kan* 'of' can be optionally inserted preceding the verb to have *k'ab-* 'has'.

(62)   .
    barataa-n   kitaaba kan herreegaa   guddaa k'ab-a
    student-NOM book   of   maths.GEN big   has-3MSS
    'A student has a big book of maths.'

(63)   .
    barataa-n   kitaaba kan herreegaa   guddaa sana k'ab-a
    student-NOM book   of   maths.GEN big   that has-3MSS
    'A student has that big book of maths.'

If the complement of the verb to have is not a genitive itself, the word *kan* 'of' cannot be used in the analytic ALP.

(64)   .
    *barataa-n   kitaaba kan guddaa k'ab-a
    student-NOM book   of   big   has-3MSS
    'A student has a big book.'

(65)   .
    *barataa-n   kitaaba kan guddaa sana k'ab-a
    student-NOM book   of   big   that has-3MSS
    'A student has that big book.'

2.2 Inalienable genitive

Inalienable genitives are possessive cases which can be expressed morphologically. 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

Gebregziabher, K. (2012). The alienable-inalienable asymmetry: Evidence from Tigrinya. In Selected Proceedings of the 42nd Annual Conference on African Linguistics (pp. 161-182).

Genitive construction can be classified into two main categories; namely, possessive genitive and descriptive genitive constructions. Possessive genitives are further classified into two main categories; these are alienable possession (ALP) and inalienable possession (IAP). ALP and IAP are mainly differentiated on the bases of their corresponding semantic relationships. IAP forms a fixed semantic relationship between the possessor and the possessee (Gebregziabher, 2012: 161). For example,

The genitive construction usually associated to owenership of something. But, close investigation shows that genitive construction includes possession, source, origin and description. In Afaan Oromoo the genitive case is is marked in five ways: (1) By zero morpheme (2) By lengthening the short final vowel of the possessor; (3) By adding long vowel -ii to a possessor ending in consonant; (4) By putting the pronoun kan/to between the head and the dependant (possessor) nouns; (5) By applying dissimilation to genitive of genitives;

The genitive case is often treated as possessive case. But all issues concerning genitive case are not explainable interms of possession. For example,

1a. aarii-n nam-icha-a kolfa dubartii sana-af qab-u guddaa-dha. rage-NOM man-DEF-POSS laughter woman.POSS that-to has-INF big-be 'The rage of the man towards laughter a woman is high.'

(1a) informs us about rage and laughter of two participants. Eventhough, the sentence is a gentive case it fails to explain the issue interms of possession because it is not likely we consider a rage and a laughter as something one possesses. in aarii-n nam-icha-a 'the man's rage' the genitive is marked by lengtheing the final short vowel while in kolfa dubartii 'a woman's laughter' the gentive is marked by zero morpheme.

It is possible to express analytical aarii namicha and kolfa dubartii as in: 2a. Nam-ich-i aarii qab-a man-DEF-NOM rage has-3MSS 'The man has rage.'

2b. Dubartii-n kolfa qab-d(t)i. woman-NOM laughter has-3FSS 'A woman has laughter.'

Inalienable possessions and alienable possessions. 1a. gurra mucaa ear child 'a child's ear'

1b. abbaa gurbaa father boy 'a boy's father'

As different from IAP, ALP doesn't form a fixed semantic relationship between the possessor and the possessee. The semantic relationship between the possessor

and the possessee depend on the context (Gebregziabher, 2012: 161). For example,

1. mana barsiisaa house teacher 'a teacher's house'

As shown in (2), there is no fixed semantic relationship between 'house' and 'teacher' because 'a teacher's house' can be interpreted as a house that a teacher bought, built, rented and so on. Some languages like Tigrinya make a grammatical distinction between inalienable and alienable posssesions (Gebregziabher, 2012: 161); while others like Afaan Oromoo do not make a grammatical distiction between the two.

3 Descriptive Genitive

The interpretation of Afaan Oromoo genitive construction is clear if two nouns are involved; 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). A genitive construction that involves more than two nouns happens to be ambiguous and becomes source of public arguments.

1. how do descriptive genitives differ from possessive genitives?

2. Are descriptive genitives syntactic, morphological or compounds?

3. How do descriptive genitives differ from N + N sequences?

Possessive genetives expands nominals into noun phrases. Semantically, possessive genitives specify (in)definiteness and establish reference within the NP. In Afaan Oromoo the head can be separately determined by definite article or by other reference tracking devices: 1a. -kitaaba Guyyoo 1b. -Kitaabicha Guyyoo (*the Johon's book)

2a. -kitaaba namichaa 2b. -kitaaba namichaa kana (*this the man's book)

Semantically, the possessor Guyyoo in (1a) functions like the definite article, specifying the referent of the NP. In this example Guyyoo specifiees whose book it is, namely Guyyoo's. From a cognitive-pragmatic and semantic point of view the possessor can be viewed as an 'anchor' that narrows down the referent of the NP (Rosenbach, 2006:80).

In Afaan Oromoo the possessor can be postmodified and can be headed by a final determiner (note that English possessor can be pre- as well as postmodified and can be headed by an initial determiner): 3a. kitaaba namicha guddaa [the big man]NP's book 3b. kitaaba namicha kaleessa argitee [the man you saw yesterday]NP's book

Genitive constructions in which the possessor functions as a determiner have NP status and they denote a specific entity. In 'kitaaba namichaa' the noun 'kitaaba' is a specific book.

In contrast the dependant in descriptive genitives is not an NP but usually a noun. 4a. mana dhagaa 4b. *mana dhagichaa 4c. manicha dhagaa In (4b) the definite article -icha- can only belong to the dependant 'dhagaa' and cannot belong the the head 'mana'. Semantically, (4b) is different from (4a). Therefore, the depandant is a nominal rather than a full NP in such cases can be seen from the ungrammaticality of (4b). This shows that the dependent cannot have a determiner of its own. In (4c) -icha belongs to the head 'mana'. That is to say, the final determiner goes with the head (and not the dependent). Therefore descriptive genitives are themeselves not full NPs but nouns or nominals and, in contrast to determine genitives, they denote properties and not specific entities.

Semantically, the dependent in descriptive genitives contributes to the denotation of the head noun, not specifying in (4a) whose house it is (as in a corresponding determiner genitive) but rather what type of house. As such, the the dependant has a classifiying function in such genitives. As a classifier, the dependent is not referential and does not refer to a specific referent. Not that in 'mana dhagaa' reference is not made to specific stone 'dhagaa' but to stone 'dhagaa' in general.

The semantic difference between determiner genitives and descriptive genitives as discussed above are reflected in different positions in Afaan Oromoo noun phrases. Word order in the noun phrase is iconically determined in that any element contributing to the denotation of the head noun is positioned adjacent to the head, while anything contributing to the reference of the noun phrase will be most distantly located away from the head noun (p,81).

5a. hoolaa foonii 5b. *hoolaa foonichaa 5c. hoolaa namicha sanaa 5d. hoolaa adii namicha sanaa (5a) shows word order of descriptive genitives. As shown in (5b) descriptive genitives prohibit the expansion, prefer the dependant to be adjacent to the head. (5c) shows determiner genitives which allows expansion of the noun phrase. In (5c) the determiner -icha and the 'sana' are added to the noun 'nama' which specifies sheep 'hoolaa'. Further, the adjective 'adii' is inserted between the possessor and the head noun to expand the noun phrase to (5d) is determiner genitive construction.(p,82).

A descriptive genitive can be classifying, metaphorical, and generic one. It specifies another noun.

1. Digrii Lammaffaa

2. Gulantaa lammaffaa

3. Itti aanaa Ministeeraa

ARE DESCRIPTIVE GENITIVES SYNTACTIC PHRASES OR COMPOUNDS?
(a) Coordination test
Rosenbach, A. (2006: 83) gives three criterion to test if descriptive possessors are syntactic or cmpound. First criterion is Coornation test. In Afaan Oromoo, coordination of dependant is common with descriptive genitives. 9a. foon hoolaa 9b. foon reettii 9c. foon hoolaafi reettii 10a. mana dhagaa 10b. mana mukaa

10c. dhagaa manaa 10d. dhagaafi muka manaa 11a. reettii foonii 11b. hoolaa foonii 11c. reettiifi hoolaa foonii 12a. hoolaa hormaataa 12b. reetti hormaataa 12c. reettiifi hoolaa hormaataa

Because compounds do not allow a third element to be inserted between theme, these examples indicte taht descriptive genitives are syntactic phrases and not compounds.

(b) Modification of the dependent

If an N + N construction is a compound, then it should not be possible to separtely modify the first noun.

13a. foon hoolaa 13b. foon hoolichaa

In fact it should be noted that the dependent in descriptive genitives gives a different interpretation after modification. In hoolaa'sheep' is not a determiner, it expresses a type, not specifying foon 'meat'.

(c) Modification of the head

As Rosenbach, A. (2006: 85) says, the strongest test for phrasehood is the ability of a modifier to intervene between the dependent and the head noun as shown below: 14a. foon hoolaa 14b. foonicha hoolaa 15a. boojjitoo marqaa 15b. boojjitoowwan marqaa

As shown above -icha and -oowwan are added to the head by intervening between the dependent and the head noun to rule out compound status.

HOW DO DESCRIPTIVE GENITIVES DIFFER FROM N + N SEQUENCES? (p, 89) (there is no N + N) in Afaan Oromoo

Descriptive genitives shown so far are known as classifying genitives. These genitives are said to be the prototypical cases Rosenbach, A. (2006: 91).

3.1   TYPES OF DESCRIPTIVE GENITIVES

Rosenbach, A. (2006: 92) argues there are three different functions of descriptive genitives: classifying, metaphorical and generic ones. Classifying genitives are the ones usually referred to in the literature as 'descriptive genitives' (p, 92). These genitives are used to name certain objects and they can convey various degrees of lexicalization, from completely oqpaque expressions to fully semantically transparent ones (p, 92). 16a. ija bunaa 16b. gumaa garbuu 16c. arraba ibiddaa 16d. guyyaa dubartootaa, Seera Makkoo Billii, 16e. harbuu Bantii 16f. buqqee seexanaa (sheexanaa) (it includes, idiomatic expressions, plant names, insect names, named after person (p, 92). Product names, others

```
girl's school, writers block, spider's web ...etc (p, 93)
```

In this naming function descriptive genitives are those that most clearly correspond to the term 'classifying genitives' as their basic function is type restriction. However, thhis only holds for semantically endocentric cases, where the dependent clearly restricts the denotation of the head noun. In these cases the meaning of the head is the meaning of the whole genitive NP, i.e. St Valentine's day designates a certain day, women's undrwea a certain type of underwear and smoker's cough

a certain typeof cough, while a baby's head is not a type of head but a steak and kidney pudding. Similarly in (33d) the meaning of the whole genitive construction is not deducible compositionally from the meaning of the head and the dependent attribute.. Rather, in these cases teh descriptive genitive refers to a complete mess (dog's breakfast) or to a specific type of balcony (widow's walks). While they are not as such transparent, knowledge of the etymology of these idiomatic expressions makes them fully compositional in the figurative world, so to speak. For example, the term widow's walks (for porches on the roof) goes back to the fact (or rather legend?) that the wives of seafarers used to to climb up there to watch out for the return of their husbands. Note, however, that even in the transparent cases (33e-g) the meaning of calassifying genives is much more restrictive than in a corresponding determiner genitive. Electrician's tape, for example, describes a specific type of tape, while a corresponding deterinmer genitive ([the elecrician's]tape) could mean various things: the tape the electrician possesses, uses, wants to have, dreams of, or whatever. It is in the nature of possession to allow for all these meanings. As the function of the classifying genitives in (33) is to uniquely designate a specific object, it is clear that not all these possessive meanings carry over and taht , so to speak, one possessive meaning gets 'frozen' in these cases. It is this 'freezing' of meaning which makes them so prone to undergo lexicalization and acquire lexeme status. It is presumably for this reason that Huddleston & Pullum (2002: 470) regard this type fo genitive as 'a somewhat unproductive category'. They note, for example, taht while we can have a summer's day and a winter's day, a spring's day or an autumn's day are very quest;able (they mark the latter two with a?). It is tru that the last two expressions are far less common than the first two. (p, 93).

Syntactic processes are by definition productive; it is usually only in the domain of word formation that the notion of productivity is evoked at all. As argued above descriptive genitives (in the sense of the calassifying genitive discussed here0 can be syntactic phrases, and as such they should also be 'productive'. However, even when perceiving classifying genitives as being formed by the rules of word fromation, productivity is usually defined as the ability of a form to coin new expressions (p,94). That is, what matters is not how often a particular collection is used, but whether it is possible to coin it in the first place. In the examples above, it is the actual frequency of use that makes the difference. Thus, notice that both 'a spring's day and 'an autumn's day' can be used perfectly well to refer to a certain type of day; it is just that for seme reason they don't happen to be particularly frequent . . . p, 94. While frequency of use may give us an indication as to the degree of lexicalization, it doesn't tell us anything about the productivity of the form/construction.

Note that, in general, new classifying genitives can be easily formed on the spot wheneve we perceive something as defining a type. Classifying genitives are fully productive (p, 94).

3.1.1 Metaphorical genitives

Another type of descriptive genitives is used to describe an object, experience, state etc. in terms of another (p, 94). one.

1. akka dhala sooressaa (meeshaa mi'aawaa bituu jaalata)

2. hamma baallee shimbirroo hin'ulfaatu

3.

In (37a) the weight fo a swan's feather is used to describe the (light) weight of a person. In (37b) the well-known sound of a a dentist's drill characterizes the (ghastly) sound of a person's voice. The strength/intensity of the wind is compared in (37c) to a prize fighter's blow. In (37d) the inner state of a person is described by means of the image of a child's inflatable toy. Note that in this last example the whole context is already in the metaphorical world: a word cannot lift a person literally. Rather, what is meant is that the word raises the person's spirits/mood, and the way to get this image to the reader is to stay in this 'lifting' - metaphor and compare it with an inflatable toy (which can easily be lifted). The face in (37e) is compared to a child's pink ballon from which most of the air has escaped, i.e. this image reinforces the description of the face as puffed and crumpled, and the colour of the ballon (pink) resembles the colour of the face. While in the examples in (37) the comparison is always made explicitly, most typically by expressions such as as, like , it reminded x of (p, 95).

In (38a) the person gives a yowl typical of cats. The person in (38b) does not of course literally have a puppy's eyelashes, but eyelashes that look like those of a puppy. And in (38c) the child described is not a tennis umpire. In fact, the whole setting is not a tennis setting, but it describes the settting of a play rehearsal by childeren, with the 'stage director' being physically located above her caste. That is, she does not literally have a tennis umpires's advantage of height but only metaphorically -like a tennis umpire. (p, 95-96).

Note also that these metaphorical genitives can often be found in ellipitical constructions (p,96).

In all these constructions the head of the genitive construction is omitted and refers back to a previously mentioned noun. This indicates taht such metaphorical genitives are phrases and not words. In many cases it is not clear whether the initial article (usually the indefinet article) belongs to the dependent ofr to the whole genitive NP; however, examples (39a and c) show that (at least in these case) the singualr articcle goes with the (singular) dependent and not whth the (plural) head. That is, structurally these genitives behave like determiner genitives. So, what -if anything - justifies their classification as descriptive genitives?

Note that in all the exampes avove the dependent is very clearly not specific. In fact, it cannot be, since the whole possessive NP is not specific -as said, it serves as teh vehicle to transport a certain image into the (specific) context. Semantically,

therefore, these construction are like descriptive genitives. They do not have the functin of a typical determiner, i.e. the referential anchoring of a referent, since the whole possessive NP as such is not specific. Rather, they evoke a certain typicl property (hence, they are akin to what Strauss, 2004, calls 'propert-denoting possessives') (p, 96).

Under this view, we may regard these metaphorical uses of genitives as a type of determiner genitive operation in a 'subordinate mental space', facilitatin the identificaton of the referent of the (fictional) source domain. In this scenario we would first construe teh image of a fictioanl referent, i.e. a puppy, and then connect it to its eyelashes.. In this case we might argue that within this fictional context, i.e. this subordinate mental space, a referent exists. That is, the dependent is specific in some irreal, fictious world, but clearly unspecific in the 'real' world of discourse. Alternatively, however, we may also view them as a special case of classifying genitive which is already akin to -but not identical with -determiner genitives. Under this view, then, the unspecific dependent would not help to identify a (fictional) referent but a property. In this scenario, we construe eyelashes that are typical of puppies (in general), resulting in a nonsepecific interpretaion of the dependent. Emperically, it is very difficult to decide which of the two conceptualization routes language users take (and see also section 4.1. on such constructional ambiguity). In any case, such metaphorical uses are very common. Not surprisngly, they are most often found in fictional texts, such as novels, where metaphor is a common device to get across certain imaginative images or ideas. Metaphorical genitives are productive in the same way that determiner genitives ar, since they are modelled on them (p, 96-97)

3.1.2 Generic genitives

So far, we have only looked at the specificity of the dependent as a typical property distingushing determiner and descriptive genitives. Under this view, the depedent in a descriptive genitive is unspecific in its naming function and in tis comparing function, while it is specific in a determiner genitiv. However, specificity alone cannot account for all the referential properties genitive-marked dependents can have in English (Afaan Oromoo???). In this section I argue that it is important to distinguis,, within the calass of nonspecific dependents, nonreferring dependents from referring (generic) dependents.

Nonspecificity and genericity are often treated alike, but they are different notions with different properties. While specificity is a notion used to capture the referential properties of indefinite NPs, 'generic noun phrases are those in which reference is made to an entire class' (C.Lyons, 1999:179). While specificity is a term usually only applied to indefinet NPs, generic NPs can also be expressed by definite NPs (The lion is a dangerous animal). Genericity is a concept that can apply to both sentences and NPs. On the NP level, generic NPs have been considered as 'kind-referring' NPs by Krifka et al. (19995), as opposed to 'object-referring' NPs, which denote a specific object/individual. A crucial difference be-

tween generic and nonspecific entities then is taht generics refer (to kinds), while nongeneric, nonspecific NPs don not refer at all.

Now, how does all this relate to desriptive genitives? In (41) the dependent (a testator) is clearly not referring to a specific testator. However, it does refer, as is evident from the susequent anaphor his which refers back to the dependent(a testator). In contrast to determiner genitives this is not reference to a specific testator but referne to the kind 'testaror', i.e. the dependent is 'kind-referring', i.e. generic.

(41) Under family-provision legislation a testator's moral responsibility to provide for his dependents had become a legal obligation in 1938 (p, 98).

In contrast to metaphorical genitives, these genitives are not used to compare a referent in terms of another referent (or the referent's properties) but to describe a specific referent by setting it in relation to its kind. Note again that in the examples in (42) there is a specific refernt in the context that matches the generic possessor, a woman in (42a) 'a thin woman's apology', and a man in (42b) 'a man's horrible, humiliting sobbing'. In all these cases the possessor abstracts away from the specific individuals, transcending them as examplars of a kind. Sometimes, this affinity of a specific referent in the context to its kind is even makde explicit, in a kind of mocking way, as in (43), or or as describing the kind first and then finally identifying the matching (and co-present) referent, as in (44).

(43). So. What you're about, MrC.Shepherd. You here as the hopeful answer to a maiden's prayers? .., (44) He was wanting a woman with a woman's way and a woman's knowledge, one who'd be as necessary to him as he was her. And you're that kind of woman, Val. . . . (p, 98).

There are other cases where the whole context is generic, and where therefore no potential specific referent is co-present and hence no ambiguity between the modes of speaking arises; example (45a) a woman's fear of breats cancer, (45b) a reader's respect, (45c) a woman's thought . . . (p, 98).

In all these examples the genitive NP receives a generic interpretation via the overall generic 'scripts' or 'frames' of the contexts . . . That is, the overall context is generic and it is because of this overall generic setting that the genitive therein is generic, too. However, withn this generic context the abstract refernts get individualized.

Note that we can also find generic dependents which are definite, while it was typical of the metaphorical genitives discussed in in secion 3.2. to have indefinete dependents. In fact, teh definite singual is often regarded as teh prototypical generic expression . . .

In the examples in (46), 'the bad child's impulse to cry, the oversleepers's panicked sense of having fallen behind, the optimistic Victorian's deep faith in progresss' . . . the definite dependent is not specific but kind-referring; example (47) 'And he could do noting about his complexion, swarthier than the average Englishman's' illustrates that such generic definite dependents can also occur in ellipitic construction (p, 99).

Like metaphorical genitives, generic genitives behave structurally like determiner genitives, but semantically like descriptive genitives (with respect to their

21

nonspecific dependent). Like metaphorical genitives, generic genitives are as productive as determiner genitives, as every individualized referent can be conceived of as a representaitve of its kind. (p,99).

As shown in the above examples (11) describes second degree, (12) grade and (13) position.

4 Problems Related to Genitive of Genitive in Afaan Oromoo

Biiroo Biiroo Misoomaa Biiroo Misooma Qabeenyaa Biiroo Misooma Qabeenya Bishaaniifi Inarjii Oromiyaa

Biiroo Barnootaa Biiroo Barnoota Eegumsa Fayyaa Biiroo Barnootaa Eegumsa Fayyaa Oromiyaa

The Flexibility of genitive in Afaan Oromoo Example Signaling koomee durba amuruu 'a physical attribute' obboleessa koo isa hangafa 'a blood relationship' abbaa manaa Uumee 'a non-blood relationship' alaqaa barreessituu 'a hierarchical relationship' hiriyaa barataa 'a social relationship' garee Biiftuu 'membership' beeksisa dhaabaa 'performance' mana Jaalataa 'ownership' gadda uummataa 'emotional state' ergaa abbaashee 'origin' kitaaba abbaashee isa jalqabaa 'human creation' dhimma biyyaa 'topic' dhibee namichaa 'suffering/undergoing' meeshaa manaa 'containing' huccuu bardheengaddaa 'the time of' foddaa gamoo 'constituent part charjerii komputeraa 'associated part' madda odeeffannoo 'cause' miidhaa waraanaa 'result'

The genitive determiner and pronoun system in Afaan Oromoo:

Person, Gender, Number Possessive Determiner Possessive Pronoun 1st person singular (all genders) koo (kitaabakoo) koo (kun kooti)

1st person plural (all genders) keenya (kitaabakeenya) keenya (kun keenyadha)

2nd person singuar (all genders) kee (kitaaba kee) kee (kun kitaabakeeti)

2nd person plural (all genders) keessan (kitaaba keessan) keessan (kun kitaaba keessanidha)

3rd person singular masculine (all dialects isaa (ktaabasaa) isaa (kun kitaabasaati)

3rd person singular feminine (all dialects) ishee (kitaabashee) ishee (kun kitaabashee)

3rd person plural all genders isaanii (kitaabasaanii) isaanii (kun kitaabasaaniiti)

3rd person singular neuter ——— —————-

5 Proposed Solution to Genitive of Genitive Problems in Afaan Oromoo

6 Conclusion

References

Gebregziabher, K. (2012). The alienable-inalienable asymmetry: Evidence from tigrinya. In *Selected proceedings of the 42nd annual conference on african linguistics* (pp. 161–182).

The genitive in english. (n.d.). `https://www.eltconcourse.com/training/inservice/lexicogrammar/` (Accessed:2022-09-30)

Gobena, W. O., Hagos, D., & Meyer, R. (2019). The verb k'ab-in oromo. *ZENA-LISSAN (Journal of Academy of Ethiopian Languages and Cultures)*, *28*(1), 102–131.

Gragg, G. (1976). Oromo of wollega. *Non-Semitic Languages of Ethiopia*.

Greenlee, J. H. (1950). The genitive case in the new testament. *The Bible Translator*, *1*(2), 68–70.

Owens, J. (1985). *A grammar of harar oromo (northeastern ethiopia)* (Vol. 4). Buske.

Rosenbach, A. (2006). Descriptive genitives in english: a case study on constructional gradience. *English Language & Linguistics*, *10*(1), 77–118.

Acronyms and symbols

c=palatal,
DEF=definite
lit.=literal
plosive, affricate
GEN=genitive
MID=middle
pl=plural
sing=singular