

## The Ekegusii Determiner Phrase Analysis in the Minimalist Program

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### Abstract

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Among some of the recent syntactic developments, the noun phrase has been re-analyzed as a determiner phrase (DP). This study analyses the Ekegusii determiner phrase (DP) with an inquiry into the relationship between agreement of the INFL (sentence) and concord in the noun phrase (determiner phrase). It hypothesizes that the Ekegusii sentential Agreement has a symmetrical relationship with the Ekegusii Determiner Phrase internal concord and feature checking theory and full interpretation (FI) in the Minimalist Program is adequate in the analysis of the internal structure of the Ekegusii DP. In employing the Minimalist Program (MP), the study shall first seek to establish the domain of the NP in the Ekegusii DP and go ahead to do an investigation into the adequacy of the Minimalist Program in analyzing the Ekegusii DP. This study is also geared towards establishing the order of determiners in the DP between the D-head and the NP complement. The study concludes that the principles of feature checking and full interpretation in the minimalist program are mutually crucial in ensuring that Ekegusii constructions (DP and even the sentence) are grammatical (converge). This emphasizes the fact that the MP is adequate in Ekegusii DP analysis.

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**Keywords:** Determiner Phrase, DP Hypothesis, Minimalist Program, Feature checking, full interpretation

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## 1.0 Introduction

This paper establishes the structure of the Ekegusii Determiner Phrase (DP). This analysis goes further to investigate the domain of the NP in the Ekegusii DP. The study is part of the recent attempts to re-analyze the noun phrase as a determiner phrase (DP) (Beina, 2013; Basweti, 2005; Nyombe, 2004; Abney 1987 among others). The study further delves into the ascertainment of the order of the post modifiers of the noun or nominal element in the Ekegusii DP. The establishment of the Ekegusii DP structure under the Minimalist Program (MP) is a key pointer to the much emphasized similarity between the DP and IP (Sentence). This study will also locate the position of the widespread morphological agreement (AGR) and its role in the DP structure. It is also paramount that this chapter shows the various features that are checked, and in which positions in the structure building process of the Ekegusii DP. It is important to note that this determiner phrase analysis builds on the assumption that DP is a functional projection of the noun.

### 1.0.1 Background to the Language of Study

The language of analysis in this paper is Ekegusii, a Bantu language spoken in the South Western section of the Kenya Highlands in Nyanza Province. Ekegusii is spoken by the Abagusii people who occupy Kisii and Nyamira counties. These speakers, commonly known as the 'Gusii' people are bordered by fellow Bantu speakers and Nilotic speaking communities: the Abakuria (Bantu) towards the south together with the Luo (Nilotic) and the Maasai and Kipsigis (Nilotic), to the East and South East respectively. According to the Guthrie (1948) classification of Bantu languages, Gusii is grouped along with Kuria and Logoli in group 40 of zone E<sup>5</sup>. Guthrie's classification is based on a methodology whose criteria is grounded on oral traditions of Ekegusii speakers thus rendering him then to group languages whose speakers have a close affinity in such traditions. There is little or no dialectal variation in Ekegusii. Majority of the speakers of the language speak a uniform variety but for some slight variation in terms of vocabulary and pronunciation amongst Ekegusii speakers in South Mogirango Location. This study analyses data based on the assumption that the Ekegusii language has one uniform variety.

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<sup>5</sup> This zone was mainly composed of languages from the Bantu family that were spoken by speech communities that were very related.

## 2.0 Theoretical Framework

### 2.0.1 The Minimalist Program

The Minimalist Program is a fairly recent development from the Principles and Parameters Theory advanced by Chomsky (1981). The MP has its publication undertones in Chomsky (1989) but its full installation is in Chomsky (1993 and later in 1995) where the linguistics theorist presents a minimalist inquiry into linguistic theory. It is an advent from the Government and Binding grammatical levels of representation: D- structure, S-structure, Logical Form (LF) and Phonological / Phonetic Form (PF), to interface levels, that is just PF and LF. In this reductionist move, Chomsky has tried to minimize syntactic entities and principles for a plausible linguistic expression and explanation (interpretation). The PF interacts with sound / motor articulatory - perceptual faculties whereas the LF interfaces the meaning and conceptual modules of cognition like inference and conceptual - intentional reasoning.

### 2.0.2 Philosophical Background

The MP is basically Chomsky's most current Generative Grammar framework. It is thus of some impetus to look at the philosophical background of the Generative grammatical framework developed by Chomsky in the 1950s. Language is seen as being part of the natural world in Generative Grammar. This language exists as an innate 'language organ' (Newmeyer 1998:305) which is an endowment in the human mind.

In Saussurean terms, the human language faculty is composed of '*langue*' and '*parole*' components which in Chomskian terms are referred to as 'competence' and 'performance' respectively. Competence (I-language) is the general component responsible for the actual knowledge of the language(s) of a speaker(s) that enables him or her to: make both grammatical and acceptability judgements on constructions in that language; produce well-formed constructions and make an analysis of the syntax of his or her language. Using the knowledge of the grammar of the language, such a speaker is expected to generate an infinite number of correct sentences. In this context, generative grammarians explicate the notion of grammar (Webelhuth 1995:4).

Native speakers of a language have a more superior and specialized competence of their natural language as compared to those to whom the language is a second language (L2). The component of performance (E language) entails the use of language in the day to day situations and experiences. Among the factors that influence performance is a speaker's linguistic competence. However, a good examination of a speaker's competence ought to be an indirect task of observing a speaker's linguistic performance. Chomsky (1965:4) thus epitomizes performance as the 'actual use of language in concrete situations'.

Therefore, it is worth noting that Generative Grammar satisfies the three levels of grammatical adequacy for they make up the essence of what Chomsky sought to attain: observational, explanatory and descriptive adequacy. A grammar capable of distinguishing grammatical and ungrammatical and syntactic senses is said to be observationally adequate. In achieving descriptive adequacy, this grammar comes up with its own set of rules based on the intuition of a native speaker's linguistic competence in determining well-formed or ill-formed structures. An explanation of the existence of the rules of a language or a grammar generally makes up the explanatory adequacy of this model.

Chomsky's pursuit of a universal theory of human language since all human beings have a biological endowment for language (Cowper 1992:5) makes him develop a Universal Grammar (UG) with clear universal bonds and/or constraints within which it operates. The "*pre-programmed* [nature of human beings] with a basic knowledge of how languages are like and how they work" (Aitchison 1999:28) forms the core of any natural language. Minimalism is thus one of such informed insights towards developing a theory which is simple enough for easy description of a language.

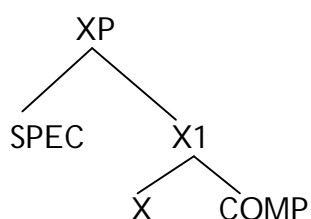
### 2.0.3 Computation from the Lexicon to Interface

In this section, the study looks into the computational system in which derivations conditioned by morphosyntactic properties of a language occur. By interacting with the lexicon of a particular language, the computational system gives rise into two interface levels of representation: the PF and LF that is after what this study later refers to as 'spell-out'.

From the lexicon, morphosyntactic and lexical information can be obtained in a process called numeration. The morphosyntactic and lexical elements are joined to form projections and partial trees through a computational process called merge. What initially used to be referred to as D-structure is GB as a link between the lexicon and the surface structure [syntactic representation] is not provided for in the MP. This is the structure building process of the minimalist program.

The X-bar theoretical assumptions of specifier – head, head – head and head complement relationships are retained in the MP [Chomsky 1993:6]. The diagram below shows the X bar maximum projection:

1.



Although the Maximal Projection Principle (Chomsky 1981) projected a wide variety of phrases from the lexicon, the MP structure building process representations are strictly driven by necessity. Structures built must be licensed by morphosyntactic and lexical evidence from the lexicon of a language. Various positions are thus easily avoided by allowing partial trees with just a head without a complement.

Movement of constituents in GB was spearheaded by the Move X theory which simply implied move anything anywhere although a number of parameters<sup>6</sup> were put in place to contain the movement and limit wild over generation (Cowper 1992: 127) whereas such movement was the link between D-structure and the S-structure, movement now in the MP is basically motivated by the feature - checking circumstances. Some positions like SPEC positions are created in the structure building process for the purpose of case checking in the Checking Theory.

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<sup>6</sup> Some of these parameters include: X Bar Theory - to ensure that move X is structure preserving; Theta theory to ensure NPs only move from and to theta positions; Case filter to ensure that lexical NPs receive case during derivations; Recoverability of traces and linking S-structures to single D-structures; Subadjacency, to limit the distance of movement and the C-command condition on anaphora of upward movement and C-commanding of traces and their antecedents

Focusing on both the INFL and the NP in the checking process, the correctness of inflectional features is checked *vis a vis* their structural positions in the sentence. On the other hand, in nominal morphosyntax, the feature case of a noun is checked in its right SPEC position. Marantz, in Webelhuth (1995:363), argues that checking process is meant to eliminate morphological features thus preventing a derivation from crashing / failing to converge<sup>7</sup>.

The theory develops a slightly distinct view on the two functional categories: TNS and AGR. Credit is attributed to Pollock (1989) whose Split - INFL - Hypothesis saw the split of projection of the function heads: TP and AGRP hence AGRs, TNS and AGRo. The two projections: TNS and AGR help in checking the tense features of the verb. The case and phi-features (agreement features like class and number) off the DP (Originally NP) are also checked off in the process by raising them to SPEC to SPEC - AGRs and SPEC AGRo positions. These processes occur at any derivational stage between the lexicon and the interface levels. All the abstract features are checked because they are not supposed to surface at the interface representation (Cook & Newson 1996:321).

In the process of derivation, that is the computation of a grammatical representation, a point reaches when the structure is split into two interface levels PF& LF. This point IS referred to as spell out and it determines the kind of movement that influences the phonological form that is in terms of pronunciation (especially movement occurring before spell-out) and movement to LF, which doesn't necessarily shape the PF.

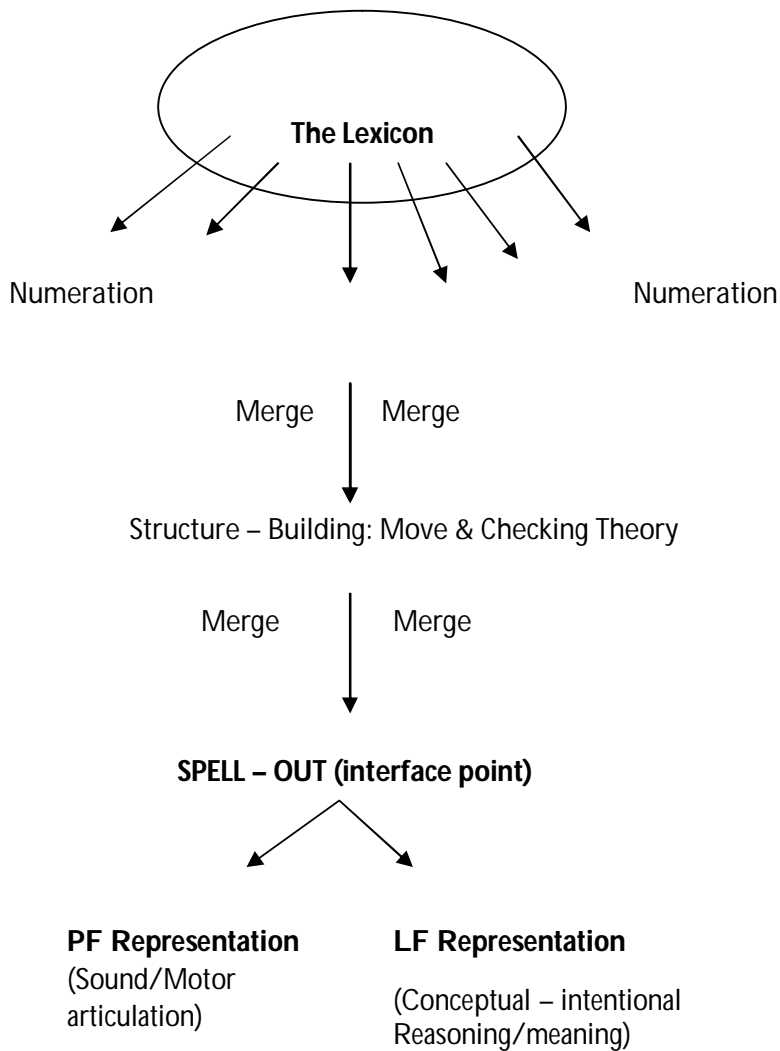
Ideally, operations between spell out and the two components of interface are computed separately so as to avoid crashing thus encouraging convergence.<sup>8</sup> The diagram below shows the representation of the computational process that sees the production of the two interface levels after the point of spell out:

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<sup>7</sup> If a derivation converges, the construction will be grammatical but if it is ungrammatical, it will be said to have crashed.

<sup>8</sup> A derivation crashes when phonological and semantic information gets in both of the interface levels: PF & LF making a structure even ungrammatical. Conversely, a derivation converges when the PF and LF conditions are met and the structure is definitely grammatical.

2.



*Source:* Basweti (2005:9)

Two principles interact in the spell out process: the Full Interpretation and Economy Principles. Whereas Chomsky's Economy Principle is based on the Last Resort principle that champions the shortest move preference, (Chomsky 1993, 1995) the Principle of Full Interpretation constrains the appearance of unlicensed lexical or morphological elements.

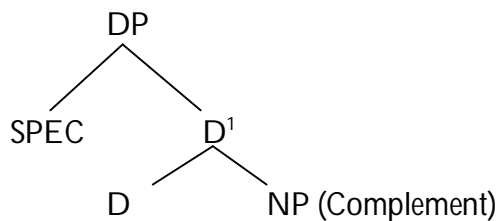
In fact, FI is more or less a consequence of the Economy of representation requirement: that representation of syntactic structure should not contain more than what is necessary (Cook & Newson 1996:312-13).

### 3.0 The DP Hypothesis as Motivation for Ekegusii DP Analysis

The DP Hypothesis was an attempt and indeed a proposal by Abney (1987), who, after working on Turkish, Hungarian and English data, came up with a proposal that there is an AGR functional head in the NP. Abney analogized that just like the clausal INFL-head, the NP can also have its equivalent, and this was to be the Det (ermine) – head which forms the functional category - DP. Zamparelli (2000:19) captures this as thus “The determiner projection becomes the category that introduces the noun phrase, much like IP introduces the sentence; NPs corresponding to VPs, are embedded inside it.” It is with this background and initiative by Abney that saw the birth of the DP with the D-head as its functional element which has selectional properties that enable it to select the NP complement or stand on its own<sup>9</sup>.

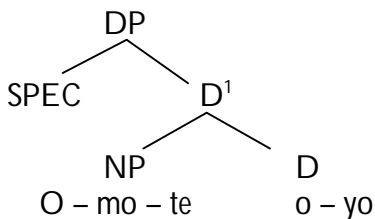
The Ekegusii NP thus is not left out in the argument that having projected the functional DP, it turns out to be a complement in the structure. Thus;

3.



Adopting the Abney (1987) framework, the Ekegusii DP could thus generate a structure such as (4).

4.



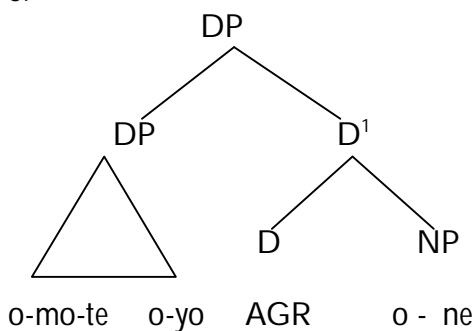
<sup>9</sup> Functional elements may or may not take a specifier.



3AGR. Tree      3AGR. this  
 "This tree"

The argument for AGR and determiners found in the D of a DP as a parallel of the AGR and TNS in a sentence can also generate a structure such as the one in (5) below (following structure (4) above).

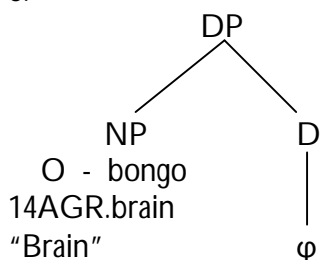
5.



3AGR.tree.this 3AGR      3AGR.my  
 "This tree is mine (this my tree)"

In the DP analysis, this study acknowledges the Abney (1987) and Longobardi (1994) argument for the uniform application of the DP Hypothesis assumptions within nominal syntax thus seeing the generation of null determiners. Radford (1997), Nyombe (2004) and Kaviti (2004) in studying such languages as English, Bari and Kikamba respectively also take up this argument. Null determiners or what Kaviti (2004:163), following Radford (1997:152) call *bare nominals* are normally symbolised as  $\varphi$ . This argument generates a structure (6) below:

6.



This study, however does not take up this argument because it doesn't relate to Ekegusii as such.

### 3.1 The Determiner Phrase

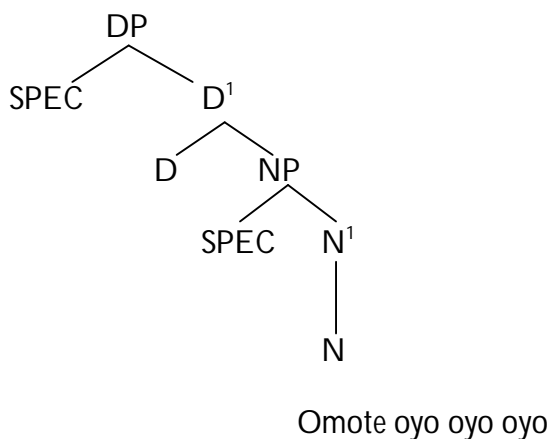
In analyzing the Ekegusii DP, this study adopts the Abney (1987) approach but later makes a series of changes by way of recommendations. Following the current trends in the syntax of various languages across the world, as Guisti (1992) puts it, there is evidence that within the DP there is a number of elements that modify the Noun. The NP now exists as a complement of the D in the DP. In Ekegusii, as noted earlier in this study, demonstratives, possessives and quantifiers together with adjectives are all modifiers of N inside the DP. Of all the Ekegusii determiners, the demonstratives are marked because three demonstratives can modify a noun towards the right as in example (7) below:

7.

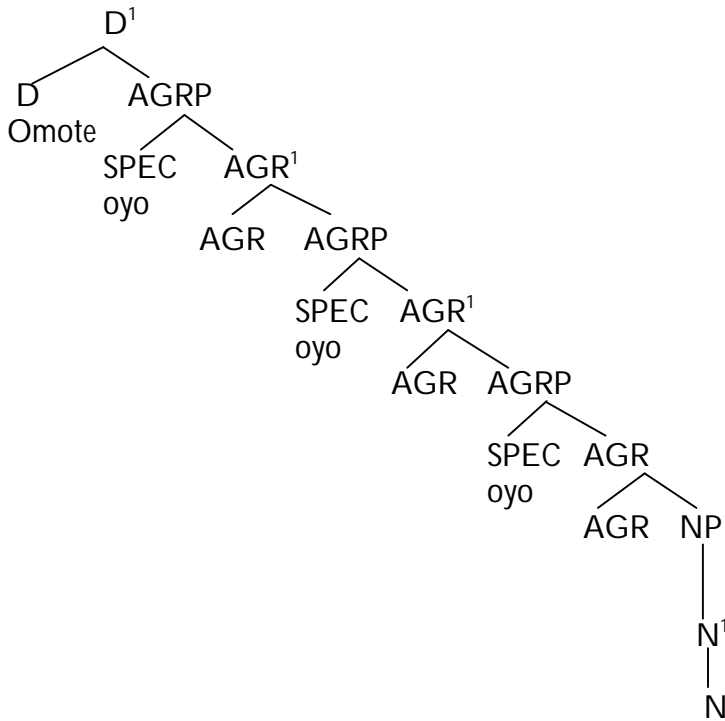
O - mo - te	o - yo	o - yo	o - yo
3AGR.tree	3AGR.DEM	3AGR.DEM	3AGR.DEM
"This specific tree"			

Such a DP (7 above) will elicit a structure demanding that there be three intermediate agreement phrases whose spec positions will be targets of movement of the demonstratives from the N. The noun complement 'omote' also moves head up the tree, crossing over the SPEC-AGRP - positions, and settles at the empty D up in the tree. The structure that emerges is shown in (8) below:

(8a)



(8b)



In the structures built above, the AGR node accounts for the class agreement feature. From example (8a) and (4) above, this study notes that the Ekegusii DP is normally right-branching before the derivation starts to take place. (8b) is a result of movement of both the noun complement and the demonstratives for checking purposes. The justification of the selection of the noun and the demonstrative(s) is the parallel between the sentence (IP) and DP addressed in chapter 3. This study thus proposes that all the determiners (modifiers of the noun) are generated at the N-head before any movement or the structure starts to be built. The SPEC - DP in (8b) above is not projected as constrained by Chomsky (1995) Economy principle.

It is, however, worth noting that projecting pre-modifying demonstratives results in ungrammatical thus unacceptable constructions. Note this in example (9) below:

- 9.
- a) O - mo - ibi  
1AGR thief  
'Thief'

- b) \*O - yo                      o - mo - ibi  
 1AGR.DEM                    1AGR thief  
 'This thief'
- c) o - mo - ibi              o - yo  
 1AGR. thief    1AGR.DEM  
 'This thief'
- d) O - mi - ibi              o - yo              o - yo  
 1AGR thief    1AGR.DEM    1GR.DEM  
 'This very thief'

From the above examples, Ekegusii DP takes the noun-initial order based on the Headedness Parameter of the Principles and Parameters in Chomsky's search for a universal grammar (UG) theory. In Ekegusii, the demonstrative can be used to show definiteness; however, if the argument for its indefinite specification of a noun can be brought forth, it will be more of a semantics argument, which is extraneous to this study. Therefore, example (9b) is neither grammatical nor acceptable because the projection of the SPEC DP as a landing site for the demonstrative 'oyo' will go against the Ekegusii noun-initial order of its Headedness Parameter, which allows for the specification/modification of the noun towards the right of the noun only in the derivation of example (9c and d), a similar structure-building as (8) above will occur but (9) will have a single intermediate agreement phrase whereas (43b) will need two, so as to assist in the checking of the agreement features. Since the noun 'omoibi' in (9a) above has no modifier, its structure, with which it ought to agree in number and class, needs not have an AGRP<sup>10</sup>.

Although Abney (1987) suggests that the agreement features (number and person, for Ekegusii) are base generated at D, which is the head of the DP, the projection of agreement phrases instantiates the claim that, the spec of these phrases (AGRPs) is the landing site; after the agreement features have been checked at the head. As proposed in the following section, spec positions of other agreement functional projections in the DP are only landing sites.

### 3.2 Agreement of Elements in the Ekegusii DP

#### 3.2.1 Possessives

<sup>10</sup> Its agreement features will be checked *in situ*.

Just like the above modifiers (demonstratives), possessives also have a similar distribution in the Ekegusii DP. Their uniqueness is demonstrated in example (10) below:

10.

- a)      a – ba - na                                      b - ane  
           2AGR children 2AGR.POS  
           “My children”
- b)      \* ba - ne                                      a – ba - na  
           2AGR.POS                                      2AGR children  
           “My children’
- c)      a- ba - na                                      ba                                      Mogusii  
           2AGR children                                      2AGR of                                      Mogusii  
           “Mogusii’s children”

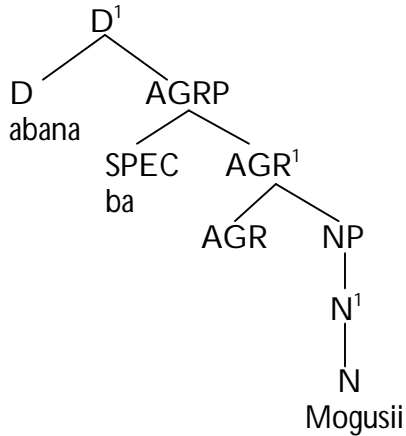
Notice that, the example in (10b) becomes ungrammatical when the possessive pre-modifier (precedes) the noun complement which contravenes the structure of the Ekegusii DP. Since Ekegusii does not project SPEC – DP so as to accommodate the possessive ‘bane’ in (b) above, it is ill formed. (10a) needs an AGRP whose SPEC/head will check the agreement features of both the noun ‘abana’ and the possessive ‘bane’.

In (10c) above, the noun ‘abana’ agrees with the genitive ‘ba’<sup>11</sup>, therefore, in the structure built AGRP to check its agreement features. The genitive noun moves from N *to the agreement head to check its agreement features then to SPEC-AGRP*. The other noun ‘Mogusii’ remains *in situ* lower in the tree. This is shown diagrammatically below:

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<sup>11</sup> It is the possessed and the genitive that should agree but not the possessor and the genitive.

11.



### 3.2.2. Agreement of Demonstratives and Possessives

The Ekegusii DP allows co-occurrence of demonstratives and possessives both as modifiers of the N - complement. The examples in (12) below are either present or not in the language:

12. a) E - sese            e - ye            y - ane  
 AGR.dog            9AGR.DEM    9AGR.POS  
 "This dog of mine" OR "this my dog"
- b) \*E - sese                    y - ane            e - ye  
 9AGRdog                    9AGR.POS    9AGR.DEM  
 "My dog this" OR "my dog is here"
- c) E - sese                    e - ye            e - ye            y - ane  
 9AGRdog                    9AGR.DEM    9AGR.DEM    9AGR.POS  
 'This specific dog of mine"
- d) ?\* E - sese                    e - ye            y - ane            e - ye  
 9AGRdog                    9AGR.DEM    9AGR.POS    9AGR.DEM  
 "My dog is here"

It is quite interesting to note that (12) above, (b and d) are realized as sentences in the language and not as determiner phrases because structurally, they appear as DPs. This is quite strange but it is at PF that is depending on the pronunciation and LF (based on what a speaker wants to put across) that this comes into play.



“These two people of mine”

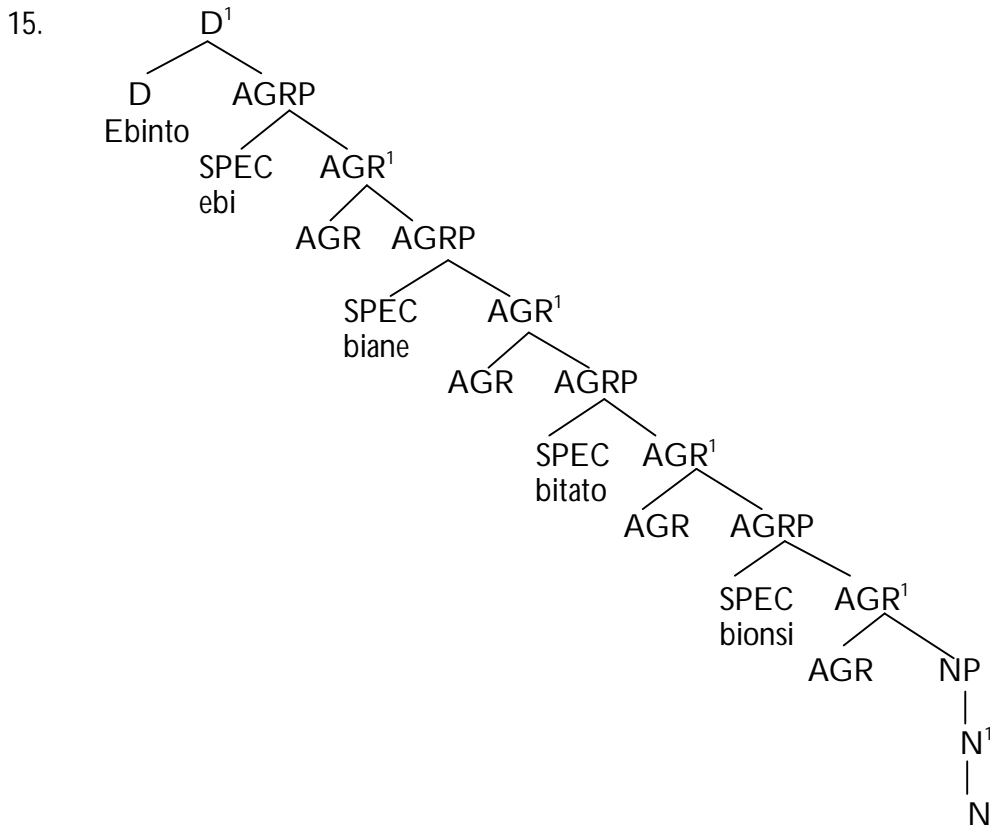
The co-occurrence above is proof that numerals also participate in the agreement pattern in the Ekegusii DP. This study adopts the argument that an AGRP is generated as a functional category in handling numerals. SPEC of this AGRP is a target of movement of the numeral. Using the above data, one expects the AGRP to be the third most imbedded functional phrase from D high in the tree. In a while, this study demonstrates this in a tree structure (15). In Ekegusii, quantifiers have a function similar to that of adjectives - modifying the N-complement. Example (14) below shows this:

14. a)        E - bi - nto                         bi - onsi  
              8AGR things                         8AGR.Q  
              “All things”
- b)        E - bi- nto        e - bi             bi - onsi  
              8AGR. things 8AGR.DEM    8AGR.Q  
              “All these things”
- c)        \*E - bi - nto                 bi - onsi             e - bi  
              8AGR .things                 8AGR.Q             8AGR.DEM  
              “All things these”
- d)        E - bi - nto        e - bi             bi - ane             bi - onsi  
              8AGR.things    8AGR.DEM    8AGR.poss        8AGR.Q  
              “All these things of mine”
- e)        \*E - bi - nto                 bi - onsi             e - bi             bi - ane  
              8AGR.thigns                 8AGR Q             8AGR.DEM        8AGR.POS  
              “All these things of mine”
- f)        E - bi - nto        e - bi             bi - ane             bi - tato             bi - onsi  
              8AGR. things    8AGR.DEM    8AGR.POS        8AGR.NUM8AGR.Q  
              “All these three things of mine”
- g)        \*E – bi - nto                 e - bi                     bi – ane             bi-onsi             bi- tato  
              8AGR. Things     8AGR.DEM    AGR.POS        8AGR.Q8AGRNUM  
              “All these three things of mine”

From the data in 48 above, there seems to be an accepted order of occurrence of elements in an Ekegusii DP, which has a quantifier, numeral, possessive and demonstrative.



What can be made out of the example is that the elements are selected out of the NP lower in the tree, one after the other beginning with the demonstrative that moves spec to spec to settle at SPEC AGRP in the highest AGRP, followed by the possessive, then the numeral and lastly the quantifier. The noun then moves from N across SPEC-AGRPs, onto the D checking its agreement features with each and every modifier now at these spec positions. The structure below represents (14f) in a tree (15):



The second lowest and lowest AGRP projected in the structure above are both functional heads<sup>12</sup> to accommodate number and the quantifier.

### 3.4. Adjectives

In the Ekegusii DP, adjectives behave just like the other 'determiners'.

<sup>12</sup> These categories also function like the sentential TNS and /or AGRP.

This statement, however, excludes their recursive character<sup>13</sup> because the aim of this section is to show that indeed adjectives in the Ekegusii DP can co-occur with other modifying elements and agree in class and number with the noun complement. Guisti (1992) draws a parallel between quantifiers and adjectives. Nyombe (2004) also in computing the adjective phrases in the Bari DP argues:

“because adjectives have same structural characteristic as demonstratives - adjectival phrases should be amenable to the same treatment as demonstratives and possessives” (2004:35).

In the Ekegusii DP, the various instances where the adjective may or may not occur are exemplified in (50) below:

16.

- a)      A- ma - iso                      a - ma - ya  
           6AGR.eyes                    6AGR.nice  
           “Nice eyes”
- b)      \*A-ma-ya                      a-ma-iso  
           6AGR.nice                    6AGR.eyes  
           “Nice eyes”
- c)      A - ma - iso                      a - ya      a - ma-ya  
           6 AGR.eyes                    6AGR.DEM    6AGR.nice  
           “These nice eyes”
- d)      A-ma-iso                      a-ne      a - ma-ya  
           6AGR.eyes                    6AGR.POS    6AGR.nice  
           “My nice eyes”
- e)      A-ma-iso                      a - ya      a - ito      a - ne      a-ma-bariri  
           o-nsi  
           6AGR.eyes    6AGR.DEM    6AGR.POS    6AGR.NUM    6AGR.ADJ  
           6AGR.Q  
           “All these four red eyes of ours”

<sup>13</sup> Recursiveness of adjectives entails their ability to be heaped upon each other without necessarily making a construction ungrammatical. Their ordering is, however, not random but it is dictated by the grammatical order of adjectives in the language. Polome (1967:143) supports this, relative to the ordering of determiners, by pointing out that the order depends on the relatedness or closeness of semantic association of the determiners/adjectives *vis a vis* the ‘N-head’.

- f) \*A-ma-iso a-ma-bariri a-ya a - ito a - ne o-nsi  
 6AGR.eyes 6AGR.ADJ 6AGR.DEM 6AGR.POS 6AGR.NUM 6AGR.Q  
 "All these four red eyes of ours"
- g) \*A-ma-iso a - ya a - ito a - ne o - nsi a-  
 ma-bariri 6AGR.eyes 6AGR.DEM 6AGR.POS 6AGR.NUM  
 6AGR.Q 6AGR.ADJ "All these four red eyes of ours"

In the above example, the unacceptability of (16 b, f and g) together with the ordering of the acceptable examples from (a) to (e) confirms that like other Ekegusii nominal modifiers, adjectives target a specific position in the structure – building, especially when they co-occur with demonstrative(s), possessive(s), numeral(s) and quantifier(s). Therefore from the data provided, for the structure to be grammatical (have full interpretation), from the NP head where it is combined with the other determiners before movement for the checking of agreement features, the adjectives target the spec of the second lowest functional(Agreement Phrase) category. It is the spec of this AGRP that selects the ADJ before the noun moves up the tree head to head thus triggering head spec agreement. If the adjective is selected to any other position the structure crashes - this explains the ungrammaticality of (f & g) above.

### 3.5 Summary and Conclusions

This paper has analysed the Ekegusii DP exploring through some of the modifiers of the noun. The noun (NP) in this case is analysed as a complement of the determiner (DP) - in fact, in morpho-syntax terms, the DP is a functional projection of the NP. This is likened to the IP which is a functional projection of the VP. This study has further shown how the various modifiers of the noun agree with it in number and class and tried to account for the same. Just like in a sentence where elements are generated in the VP ahead of movement for checking as demonstrated in chapter three, the noun and its determiners (modifying elements) are all generated in the NP and each targets different positions in the structure building.

Whereas the noun moves head to head up to the D head that is empty, the determiners target the different spec positions of the various intermediate functional projections between the DP and NP.

This study aimed at ascertaining the applicability of the M.P in analyzing the Ekegusii Determiner phrase so as to be able to establish the symmetry that exists between the Ekegusii sentential agreements with the concord in the DP. In so doing the function of the agreement comes out clearly. This was done by subjecting Ekegusii data through a critical analysis of the Ekegusii DP under the NP.

From the study, the following conclusions are established: 1) The principles of feature checking and full interpretation in the minimalist program are mutually crucial in ensuring that Ekegusii constructions (DP and even the sentence) are grammatical (converge). This emphasizes the fact that the MP is adequate in Ekegusii DP analysis; 2) The Agreement system in Ekegusii is best accounted for by feature checking. In a sentence, abstract accusative and nominative case features are checked by noun movement and tense features are checked by verb movement. In the Ekegusii DP, the movement of the elements is aimed at checking Agreement that is between the noun and its modifiers or what this study broadly labels determiners; 3) The Ekegusii NP is headed by a functional category, the DP. The NP in this case is a lexical complement of the DP. In the Ekegusii DP structure built in this study, internal concord is evident in the various intermediate functional phrases between the DP and NP; 4) Movement of elements across SPEC-AGRPs and the other functional categories checks agreement features between the determiners and the noun; 5) The Ekegusii DP is headed by a functional category (AGRPs).

This study recommends further research to be carried out more especially an extended analysis of the Ekegusii determiner phrase that explores all that happens in clausal Determiner phrases, and a minimalist account of empty categories like null determiners if indeed they exist in the NP.

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