

THE MORPHO-SYNTAX OF THE NOUN PHRASE IN SISAALI

BY

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DECLARATION

I do hereby declare that, with the exception of references that have been duly acknowledged, this dissertation is the result of my own original research and it has not been presented either in whole or in part for another degree elsewhere.

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DEDICATION

To

My parents

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the morpho-syntactic properties of the noun phrase in Sisaalt, a Gur language spoken in Ghana, with emphasis on the internal components of the noun phrase and how these elements are distributed in the phrase. The study examines the elements of both the simple and complex noun phrases. It shows that the Sisaalt noun phrase has an obligatory head and optional modifiers that may occur as post-nominal or pre-nominal elements.

The study also gives a detailed discussion on the Sisaalt relative clause as a modifier of the head noun. It shows how relative clauses are marked in Sisaalt and the various elements that are present in the Sisaalt relative clause. The grammatical positions that are accessible to relativization have been discussed. It also points out the position of the relativized noun in the embedded clause and the elements that can occur with the relativized noun. The study further shows the position of the relative clause when it occurs with other modifiers of the head noun.

There are dialectal differences as far as the internal constituents of the noun phrase are concerned and this study points out dialectal variations that occur in Sisaalt with regard to the internal constituents of the Sisaalt noun phrase.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

1	first person
2	second person
3	third person
COP	copula
DEF	definite
DEM	demonstrative
DET	determiner
FOC	focus marker
FUT	future
HAB	habitual
IMPERF	imperfective
INDEF	indefinite
LOC	locative
NOM	nominalizer
OBJ	object
PERF	perfective
PL	plural
PREP	preposition
PRES	present
PROG	progressive
PST	past
POST	postposition

PST	past
REL	relativiser
SG	singular
SUBJ	subject

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The structure of the noun phrase is one of the areas most studied by linguists cross-linguistically (Givon 2001, Boadi 2010; Issah 2013). Studies done on noun phrases have focused on the head noun in relation to its modifiers to identify the grammatical functions modifiers play in relation to the head noun. Some studies have examined what takes place when the elements in the phrase are combined in various ways. (Boadi 2010; Issah 2013).

The noun phrase is basically viewed as a phrase that has a noun as its head. Downing and Locke (1992) posit that the main function of the head is generally to specify the entity that the noun phrase refers to and it is responsible for the different syntactic relations that exist between all the other elements in the noun phrase. A single noun can appear as a noun phrase. In this situation, Aboh (2010) observes that this makes it possible for it to be focused, questioned, and relativized in most Kwa languages. Also, noun phrase may comprise a noun (head) and optional elements. These optional elements may include: adjectives, demonstratives, quantifiers, relative clauses, and numerals that provide additional information about the head of the noun phrase. The modifiers can be classified as pre-nominal or post-nominal elements and every language has its own distinct way of ordering the elements in the noun phrase. Some languages have strict ordering of the elements of the noun phrase while others ensure flexibility in their distribution. Creissels (2000) notes that the propensity for S-V-O languages to have the head noun as the final element in the

noun phrase is quite rare in African languages. A similar observation was made by Heine (1976) that demonstratives, numerals and adjectival modifiers come after the head noun and this is more frequent in most African languages where the noun-initial order is very common. Therefore, this study aims to provide a functional analysis of the structure of the noun phrase and determine the elements that can modify the head noun in Sisaalt, how these elements are distributed in the noun phrase and the functions they perform.

1.2 The Sisaalt Language

This section discusses the Sisaalt language and its people. It provides information about the dialects of the language, as well as some linguistic features of the morphology, syntax and phonology of the language.

1.2.1 The Sisaala People

Sisaalt is a Gur language that falls under the Grusi language group (Naden 1988:16). Sisaalt is spoken in the Upper West Region of Ghana and in some parts of Burkina Faso and the speakers of the language are known as Sisaala. Sisaalt is spoken in towns such as Tumu, Ziji, Bosie, Fonsie, Gbeloo, Kajukperi, Korru and Peperimi. Most Sisaalt speakers are multilinguals who can also speak Dagaare and Wale. This is because Dagaare is employed as a medium of instruction in basic schools 1 to 3 and it is taught as a subject from Primary 4 to Junior High Schools in the Sisaala communities. The main occupation in the various Sisaala communities is agriculture.

Luri (2009) notes that Sisaala speakers occupy 10,000square kilometers out of the 18,220 square kilometers land mass of the Upper West Region of Ghana.

1.2.2 Dialects of Sisaalt

Researchers have varied views with regard to the dialects of the language. Blass (1975) indicates that Sisaalt is made up of nine major dialects. Naden (1988:17) also classified Sisaalt into three major dialects known as Tumuluṅ, Debi and Pasaalt. However, Luri (2009) points out that the Sisaalt language is made up of seven (7) dialects. He further divided the Debi and Pasaalt into different dialects. He argues that Debi basically means upper and it refers to all the Sisaalt spoken in the Western part of Tumu. He listed Bosillu, Būwaalt and Gbieni as the dialects that fall under Debi. Again, Pasaal which refers to Southern part of Tumu is also made up of three dialects; Gelbaglt, Pasaalt and Kpatolie. He identified the following as the dialects of the language: Bosillu (northwestern dialect), Būwaalt (western dialect), Gbieni (central dialect), Gelbaglt (southeastern dialect), Kpatolie (southwestern dialect), Pasaalt (southern dialect) and Tumuluṅ (eastern dialect) in Ghana with Buunii (northern dialect), a variety in Burkina Faso very closely related to Bosillu in terms of mutual intelligibility (98%). Toupin (1995) and Luri (2009) note that some of the dialects of Sisaalt are not mutually intelligible.

1.2.3 The Phonology of the Language

This section provides information on the phonology of Sisaalt by focusing on the sound inventory of the language and its tonal system.

Sɪsaalt has seven phonetic vowels [a, e, i, o, u, ɔ, ɛ] and nine phonemic vowels /a, e, i, o, u, v, ɔ, ɪ, ɛ/ (Toupin 1995, Luri 2009). All the nine phonemic vowels can be distributed at the initial, medial and final positions of words. In addition to this, the language also displays ATR harmony where the vowels are grouped into +ATR (e, i, o, u) and –ATR (v, ɔ, ɪ, ɛ, a).

Sɪsaalt has twenty four (24) consonants [b, d, f, g, h, j, k, l, m, n, ŋ, p, r, s, t, v, w, y, z, gb, kp, ch, ny, ŋm]. However, Luri (2009) is of the view that the language has in addition a bilabial implosive /ɓ/. All the 24 consonants in their distribution can occur at the initial and medial positions of words, with the exception of [l, m, ŋ], which can only occur at the final position.

Sɪsaalt is a tonal language and tone plays important roles in the grammar and lexical inventory of the language. In Sɪsaalt, tone performs lexical functions which makes a distinction between words that are identical in nature. Also, tone performs a crucial role by marking grammatical categories such as tense and aspects, making a distinction between pronouns and imperatives. The grammatical tone as illustrated in examples 1 and 2 helps to make a distinction between the present and past tense of the verbs.

- (1) a. N ɔ̀sò.
 1SG.SUBJ sacrifice
 ‘I sacrifice.’

b. N ɔ́sɔ.
 1SG.SUBJ sacrifice.PST
 ‘I sacrificed.’

(2) a. O fò niye.
 3SG.SUBJ bath water
 ‘He bathes water.’

b. O fɔ́ niye.
 3SG.SUBJ bath.PST water
 ‘He bathed water.’

(Moran 2006: 94)

In (1a-b) and (2a-b), the verbs ɔsɔ ‘sacrifice’ and fɔ ‘bath’ are differentiated by tones to show present and past. The present tense of the verbs is marked by a low tone, whereas past tense bear high tone on their final syllable. Researchers such as Rowland 1966, Blass 1975, and Moran 2006 note that low tones that show the present form of the verbs are usually unmarked in Sɪsaalt.

1.2.4 The Morphosyntax

Sɪsaalt is an SVO language and the morphology is more related to the agglutinating type. Rowland (1966:23) explains that “the nouns in Sɪsaala may be assigned to groups on the basis of the suffixes for singular and plural”. Studies on the Sɪsaalt noun class system includes: Rowland (1966) who grouped the nouns into two (2) classes. Fembeti (2002) also identified five (5) noun classes in Sɪsaalt on his study

on the Sɪsaala-Pasaale dialect. Moran (2006) who researched on Isaalo (Western dialect) established four (4) noun classes and Dumah (2017) who also worked on the Gbieni dialect also grouped Sɪsaalt nouns into five (5) classes.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The Sɪsaalt nominal phrase has been discussed by McGill et.al (1999), Moran (2006) and Dumah (2017). Although McGill et.al (1999) have studied the Sɪsaalt noun phrase, their study mainly focused on the simple noun phrase and only the possessive as a complex modifier. The relative clause as a complex modifier of the noun phrase was not discussed in their study. Moran (2006) also discussed the Sɪsaalt noun phrase and his work only centered on the simple noun phrase. Dumah (2017) on the other hand took a look at the simple and complex noun phrases. However, her work did not outline the sequence of the modifiers of the simple and complex noun phrases. In addition, Dumah (2017) did not provide a detailed discussion on the modifiers since it was a paper presentation.

There are dialectal differences with regard to the components of the noun phrase and there has not been a complete description of the Sɪsaalt noun phrase. Thus, this study seeks to provide a detailed discussion on the noun phrase in the Kpatolie dialect of Sɪsaalt.

1.4 Research Objectives

This study seeks to achieve these aims:

1. To examine the internal constituents of the Sɪsaalt noun phrase.

2. To identify the sequential order of the elements in the noun phrase.
3. To explore the syntax of the relative clause in Sisaali.

1.5 Research Questions

This research seeks to answer the following questions

1. What are the internal constituents of the Sisaali noun phrase?
2. How are the elements in the noun phrase ordered?
3. What are the syntactic properties of the relative clause in Sisaali?

1.6 Significance of the Study

1. This study will be the first major work on understanding the morpho-syntax of the noun phrase in the Kpatolie dialect of Sisaali.
2. The study contributes much needed data from different dialects which may lead to a more comprehensive analysis and understanding of the noun phrase in Sisaali.
3. This study will add to existing literature in Sisaali.

1.7 Methodology

The data presented in this thesis are based on the Kpatolie dialect (southwestern dialect) which is spoken in Sisaala towns such as Kajuperi, Chala and Kinkele.

Both primary and secondary sources of data were employed for the study. The data were elicited through informal interaction with native speakers and they were recorded and transcribed. I also used the Ibadan wordlist to help identify the singular

and plural forms of nouns. Written literature on Sisaalt and the Sisaalt dictionary were consulted to ensure proper orthography.

1.8 Organization of Chapters

The thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter one is made up of the introduction, background of the study, background of the language, significance of the study, statement of the problem, research questions, and objectives of the study, methodology and the organization of chapters.

Chapter two consists of relevant literature review and the theoretical framework for this study and the relevance of the theoretical framework.

Chapter three focuses on the noun phrase. It centers on providing a morpho-syntactic properties of subtypes of nouns that function as the head of the noun phrase, it also provides a detailed discussion on bare nouns, the personal and possessive pronouns and show the differences between reflexives and reciprocal. It also gives insight into how elements in the noun phrase are distributed and the functions they perform.

Chapter four examines the relative clause and shows the element that serves as the relativiser in the language as well as various grammatical positions that can be relativized.

Chapter five provides the findings of the study, recommendations for further research and serves as the concluding part of the thesis.

1.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter serves as an introduction to the current study and it provided a discussion on the Sisaali language. It has also shown the necessity for the researcher to research on this study. In addition, it has pointed out the research questions as well as the objectives of the study. Finally, it has introduced the various issues that will be discussed in the subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature on noun phrases and presents the theoretical framework of the study.

2.2 Definitions of Nouns

Primarily, a noun may refer to place, people, things and name of persons. However, there are some nouns that do not refer to any of the aforementioned entities and they may refer to concepts, ideas, feeling or emotions. This includes; love, truth, etc. This shows that nouns may refer to other entities apart from the primary notion we all know about nouns. Also, Rijkhoff (2002) notes that there are languages that do not have nouns and nouns are not distinct from other lexical categories like adjectives and verbs. In this regard, it is quite difficult to define the concept of noun cross-linguistically. However, studies such as Payne (1997), Givon (2001) and Rijkhoff (2002) put forward some measures that help defined a noun. A word can be categorized as a noun depending on the morpho-syntactic and semantics characteristics of the word. Payne (1997) and Givon (2001) indicate that morphologically, a noun should mark number, gender or case and thus, with the syntactic properties, Payne (1997) shows that nouns can be defined on the basis of how words are distributed in phrases, clauses, and text. This is because nouns

function as heads of noun phrases, nouns assume the grammatical position of subject or objects in clauses and serve as topics of text.

Givon (2001) again argues that a noun can be defined by considering the syntactic role the word plays in the noun phrase. This has to do with the modifiers that can occur with the word. Usually, nouns may be modified by an adjective, an article, possessor, relative clause or even it can be modified by another noun as illustrated in (3b). The noun *child* is modified by a possessive while the noun *house* is modified by another noun.

- (3) a. Joe's child
b. A **dog**-house.

(Givon 2001:60)

With regard to the semantic characteristics, Givon (2001) indicates that nouns must exhibit the following features: Concreteness (code entities that exist in both space and time). Nouns may refer to concrete objects such as woman, book and house. Nouns may also show temporal stability. Nouns as a lexical category do not change their properties over a period of time. Givon (2001:51) asserts that "if it is a chair now, it is still likely to be a chair in five minutes, an hour, or a day". Therefore, nouns do not undergo any changes in their characteristics irrespective of the context in which they are used. Another semantic criteria is compactness. This implies that the referents of a noun are not distributed over space. This criteria shows that nouns are countable. Givon (2001) listed countability as one of the semantic properties of

a noun. Nouns are seen as individual items that are enumerated because the referent of the noun is seen as a single entity that can be counted. Givon (1993, 2001) posits that these semantic characteristics help define a prototypical noun. Consider the following sentences.

- (4) a. The **situation** was becoming **chaotic**.
b. The **weather** there is unpredictable.
c. The **tall man** then shot the **deer**.

Givon (1993: 54)

With reference to the above sentences, the noun phrases *situation*, *chaotic* and *weather* are non-prototypical nouns since these nouns are abstract and temporally unstable. However, *man* and *deer* are prototypical nouns because they are concrete, temporally stable and countable.

Rijkhoff (2002) also notes that shape and homogeneity are the semantic properties of nouns as they make distinctions between count and non-count nouns, mass and collective nouns. Therefore, a word can be categorized as a noun when it bears all the morpho-syntactic and semantic characteristics pointed out by these researchers. Chapter 3 of this current study discusses the morpho-syntactic properties identified by Payne (1997) and Givon (2010) to see whether a similar case is observed in Sisaalt.

2.3 Phrases and Clauses

Dixon (2010:429) defines a phrase as “a constituent which can fill a slot in clause structure, noun phrase in an argument slot and verb phrase in predicate slot” and a clause as “the description of some activity, state or property. Consists of an obligatory predicate which requires certain core arguments and may also have peripheral argument” (Dixon 2010: 424). Therefore, a phrase is a group of words that form a single unit without a subject and a verb. A phrase can be a noun phrase, adjectival phrase, verb phrase, prepositional phrase or an adverbial phrase. Phrases are distinguished from clauses on the basis of subject-verb component. This is because phrases lack these elements while they are present in a clause. Both phrases and clauses consist of group of words; however, clauses are group of words that have a subject and a verb. Consider the following:

- (5)
- a. The big black chair.
 - b. At the hospital
 - c. When we arrived at the occasion
 - d. Issah bought a car.

Examples (5a and b) are phrases because they do not have the subject-verb component. However, (5c and d) are clauses since they have subjects ‘we’ and ‘Issah’ and verbs ‘arrive’ and ‘buy’. Therefore, a noun phrase may be defined as group of words that have a noun as their head. Dixon (2012: 106) states that “ a noun phrase

can consist of just a noun, or have a noun as head, accompanied by number of modifiers” The noun phrase may consist of only one element which serves as the head of the phrase or two or more elements consisting of an obligatory head and optional modifiers.

2.4 The Head of the Noun Phrase

The head of the noun phrase is regarded as the compulsory element in the phrase as it regulates the various grammatical functions that occur in the noun phrase. With respect to the head, Downing and Locke (1992) show that the head noun is an obligatory element and functions as the central element of the noun phrase. The head noun of the noun phrase tends to carry the core meaning which is implied by the whole phrase. Dakubu (2005: 49) notes that, “the head noun is the head of the construction, the only word that is indispensable if we are to have a nominal phrase at all.” This implies that for us to have a noun phrase, there should be a head that is present in the noun phrase. Consider the following examples:

- (6) a. The **man** who helped the children is here.
- b. The **man** is here.
- c. * The who helped the children is here.

The lexical word ‘man’ is the head of the above noun phrases and when the man is omitted as shown in (6c), it yields ungrammatical structure.

Usually, common nouns serve as heads of noun phrases. However, Dixon (2010) indicates that apart from the common nouns as heads of the noun phrase, proper noun, free pronoun, demonstrative and interrogatives are likely to be the head of the noun phrase. When these elements serve as the head, the set of structural possibilities of each of them might be restricted as compared to a common noun. These elements cannot occur with all the modifiers in the language and their distribution in the noun phrase is limited. Unlike common nouns as heads, they are able to occur with the fullest set of structural possibilities. Dixon (2010) indicates that common nouns are usually modified by one or more adjectives, a number or quantifier, demonstrative or article a relative clause and often a modifying time or place phrase. He adds that the proper noun as the head may occur with another common noun in the phrase that modifies it. Common nouns as modifiers may refer to sex ('man child'), material ('metal door') or purpose ('dog biscuits) and in most cases, they serve as modifiers under particular grammatical conditions. For instance, the noun must be in the genitive form.

Dixon (2010) further mentions that, in some languages, adjectives may function as heads of noun phrases. This usually happens when the adjective forms a full noun phrase. However, he believes that such a noun phrase can be viewed as phrase whose head noun is omitted. This is because, when adjectives function as heads of the phrase, they do not receive any syntactic modification. Dryer (2004) views this form of a noun phrase as headless and argues that usually, when a noun phrase without a noun is used, the speaker might have talked about the noun and it is

- (8) a. Dogs eat meat.
 b. * Dog eat meat.

(Chang 2006:798)

In (8a), *dogs* is a bare plural count noun and it has generic interpretation which implies that all dogs exhibit this trait while in (8b), the sentence becomes ungrammatical which requires a plural marker to make it generic.

Aboh (2010) notes that in Kwa languages, indefiniteness can be expressed by the use of bare nouns. He mentions that since these nouns do not take determiners, they tend to be generic. He further explains that they do not mark definiteness or number, so their interpretations are context-dependent. This situation is presented in the Gungbe example below:

- (9) a. ùn nyín wán ná àsé
 1SG COP sentiment PREP cat
 ‘I love cat(s) in general

(Aboh 2010: 13)

Sulemana (2012) also mentions that bare nouns in Buli are interpreted as indefinite and they convey generic meaning. Sentence (10a) shows that in Buli, the bare noun *bū:k* ‘goat’ is seen as indefinite with generic interpretation.

- (10) a. bū:k à-ŋɔbī vá :tà
 goat.INDEF PRES-chew leaves
 ‘A goat chews leaves.’

(Sulemana 2012: 48)

The discussions on bare nouns will help to examine the various interpreted that are associated with bare nouns in Sɪsaalt.

2.6 Types of Noun Phrases

Dryer (2004) and Issah (2013) show that noun phrases can be grouped into subtypes depending on the elements that are found within the phrase. According to Dryer (2004) a noun phrase may be classified as headless when a noun is not found within the noun phrase. Issah (2013: 203) also mentions that a cross linguistic research on the structure of the noun phrase indicates that noun phrases can be divided into three different classes.

- (11) a. The simple noun phrase which consists of only a pronoun or comprises of a noun and simple modifiers such as articles, adjectives, demonstratives, or numerals.
- b. The complex noun phrase which contains complex modifiers such as the genitive or possessive modifiers and relative clauses.
- c. Noun phrases that lack a head noun.

Dumah (2017) states that Sisaali has simple and complex noun phrases. This study will explore on the elements of the simple and complex noun phrases.

2.7 Functions of the Noun Phrase

The functions of the noun phrase can be determined depending on the structural position of the various arguments in the sentences. The position of the noun phrase in relation to the verb specifies the function the noun phrase plays. Broekhuis and Keizer (2012) discussed the syntactic functions of noun phrases and points out that the noun phrase can serve as the (nominative) subject of the clause, the (accusative) direct object, the (dative) indirect object and as well as the complement of a preposition as illustrated in the Dutch examples below.

(12) a. Subject

De **man** was afwezig.
'The man was absent'

b. Direct object

Hij genas de/een **man**.
'he healed the/a man'

c. Indirect object

Hij gaf de/een **man** nieuwe hoop.
'He gave the/a man new hope.'

d. Complement of PP

Hij gaf het boek aan de/een man.
 ‘he gave the book to the/a man.’

(Broekhuis and Keizer 2012: 1052)

2.8 Elements of the Noun Phrase

The head of the noun phrase may occur with optional elements that post or pre-modify it. This section discusses literature on the elements of the noun phrase and their distributional properties.

Bendor-Samuel (1971) proposes that noun phrases in Gur languages are very simple because they usually consist of a noun and a numeral that follows the noun or it could consist of a noun followed by a demonstrative. According to him, adjectives or string of adjectives that follow a noun are rare in Gur languages. However, studies by most Gur researchers show that this assertion does not hold in Gur languages (Dakubu 2005, Danti 2007, Issah 2013). Studies on the noun phrases in Gur languages reveal that a noun can be followed by an adjective or string of adjectives within a noun phrase and thus, noun phrases may have complex structures. Consider the following Kasem example in (13a) and Dagbani examples in (14a-b) respectively.

- (13) a. **Ka-** kamun-nazwon-dedɔɔ tu ywo
 woman-big-black-tall came here
 ‘A big, tall, black woman came here.’

(Danti 2007:122)

- (14) a. **Pay'** kur' ze' wayin' bie' titali maa
 woman old fair tall ugly big DEF
 'The tall old fair big ugly woman'
- b. **Bi'** kur' ze' kpul' ji' viel' yoli maa
 child old fair portable short nice naughty DEF
 'The old fair portable short nice naughty child'
- (Issah 2013: 205)

Dakubu (2005), McGill et.al (1999), Issah (2013) and Hudu (2014) show that in Gur languages, adjectives and the head noun form a single constituents. Adjectives are attached to the head noun they modify. This may account for Bendor-Samuel's assertion on adjectives in Gur languages.

Bodomo (1997) shows that noun phrases in Dagaare may have complex structures. Thus, the head noun may be modified by several post and pre-modifiers as illustrated in (15a) where the head noun *gan* 'book' is modified by several elements.

- (15) a. A n bie nga sukuuli **gan** bil zi
 DEF my child this school book small red
 wog son-ne ata ama zaa paa poo
 long good-PL three these all intens among
 'Among all these three small red long good school books of
 this my child.'
- (Bodomo 1997:48)

The Sisaalt noun phrase has been studied by McGill et.al (1999), Moran (2006) and Dumah (2017). McGill et.al (1999), discussed the Sisaalt noun phrase in Pasaale dialect and note that adjectives, limiters, determiners (articles, demonstratives and quantifiers) are the modifiers of the head noun. They mention that, *duŋ* ‘alone’ is the most common limiter in Pasaalt and it occurs at the final slot of the noun phrase. The limiter can modify pronouns as exemplified below in (16b).

- (16) a. Badare **duŋ**
 spider alone
 ‘Spider alone.’
- b. **I** duŋ wigyun.
 You.sg alone wisdom
 ‘Wisdom of you alone.’

(McGill et.al 1999: 28)

The Pasaalt dialect has the article *hu* and *no*. Moran (2006) indicates that the Western Sisaalt has the morphemes *na* and *ne* as determiners and Dumah (2017) shows that Gbieni dialect has the determiners *hu* and *ni*. All dialects express the determiner as a post nominal element and the determiner is not sensitive to number.

McGill et.al (1999) and Dumah (2017) point out that the Pasaalt and the Gbieni dialects have *no* ‘this/these’ and *haŋ* ‘that and those’ as demonstratives. *Haŋ* ‘that/those’ is a pre-nominal element which cannot occur on its own. It always appear with the determiner *hu* ‘the’. However, the demonstrative *no* ‘this/these’ is a post-nominal and it does not occur with the determiner *hu* ‘the’.

- (17) a. **haaŋ no**
 woman this
 ‘This woman’
- b. **haŋ haaŋ hu**
 that woman the
 ‘That woman’

(McGill et.al 1999: 30)

Adjectives as modifiers in Sisaalt also behave like adjectives in other Gur languages. McGill et.al (1999), Dumah (2017) indicates that adjectives do not occur on their own. They are attached to the root form of the nouns they modify as shown below.

- (18) a. **Diya**
 ‘House’
- b. **Dii-fiyaŋ-bal**
 house-red-big
 ‘A big red house’

(McGill et.al 1999: 23)

In (18b), the adjectives *fiyaŋ* ‘red’ and *bal* ‘big’ are attached to the root form of the head noun *dii* ‘house’.

McGill et.al (1999) show that the elements in the Sisaalt noun phrase can be ordered and provided the following as the order of the elements in the noun phrase of the Pasaalt dialect.

Table 2.1: Ordering of the Elements in the Noun Phrase

+/Possr.	+/- det	+ head	+/-det	+/-Num	+/-Quant	+/- limiter
possessor noun phrase←	haŋ→ →	noun pronoun numeral possd head	→hu no	any number	buloŋ badomɔŋ	duŋ

(McGill 1999:32)

Moran (2006) also shows that noun phrases in Sisaalt are ordered as the following in the Western dialect of Sisaalt.

Noun (adj) (pl) (det) (quant)

The above distributions clearly stipulate that the head noun is an obligatory element in the noun phrase while all the other elements are optional. Dumah (2017) further adds that apart from the simple noun phrase, Sisaalt has complex noun phrases made up of possessives and the relative clauses. Modifiers in Sisaalt can be post or pre-nominal elements. All the studies on the Sisaalt noun phrase did not

provide detailed discussions on all the modifiers and failed to outline the sequential ordering of modifiers of both simple and complex noun phrases. Also, there are dialectal differences with regard to the constituents of the noun phrase. Therefore, this study seeks to provide a detailed discussion of the Sisaalt noun phrase in the Kpatolie dialect of Sisaalt to fill the gap created in the literature.

Okrah (1999) revealed that in Nafaanra, apart from possessive constructions that occur as pre-nominal elements in the language, all the other elements are post modifiers. With regard to the distribution of the elements in the noun phrase, the possessive element occurs first and it is then followed by the head noun, the adjective and the determiners (demonstratives and articles). He posits that occasionally, when demonstratives and articles occur together in the same noun phrase, the demonstrative precedes the article. This phenomenon is illustrated below:

- (19) a. Kaan **ke** na ka
 stick the PST break
 ‘The stick broke’
- b. Kaan **nga-ke** na ka
 stick this the PST break
 ‘That stick broke’

(Okrah 1999:42)

Okrah (1999) again notes that in Nafaanra, adjectives, quantifiers and determiners show number concord with the head noun and adjectives make distinctions between animate and inanimate head nouns.

- (20) a. tinge **finge**
 tree white
 ‘A white tree’
- b. Sanyuu **fiun**
 bird white
 ‘A white bird’

(Okrah 1999: 37)

As illustrated in (20a and b), the modifiers *finge* and *fiun* ‘white’ make distinction between the inanimate *tinge* ‘tree’ and the animate *sanyuu* ‘bird’ respectively.

Dakubu (2005) observes that in Dagaare, elements that are present in the noun phrase are ordered in a particular manner and the head noun is an obligatory element in the nominal phrase. The distribution of the elements is presented as follows:

[Article Noun-Qualifier Head-Noun Adjective(s) Numeral Demonstrative
 Specifier Quantifier Intensifier]

(Dakubu 2005:49)

Also, the Dagaare noun phrase may show number and human-ness agreements. Numerals that are higher than “one” are inflected for plurality. They occur with the plural prefixes that show agreement with the plural suffix on the noun or adjectives.

- (21) a. Gama a-ta
 'Three books'
- b. Gan-sun-**ni** a-ta
 'Three good books'

(Dakubu 2005:49)

Boadi (2010) also discusses the Akan noun phrase from the morpho-syntax and semantics perspectives and states that modifiers are ordered in Akan as follows: the pre-determiner *saa* 'as aforementioned', the associative phrase, the participle, the adjective, the demonstrative, the relative clause and the quantifier. He shows that all the modifiers are post elements except the pre-determiner *saa* and the associative phrase. The pre-determiner *saa* 'as aforementioned', cannot occur on its own. It occurs with deictic demonstratives and anaphoric determiner and the relative clause but cannot occur with the non-definite *bi* or the zero determiner. Boadi (2010: 19) listed the following as demonstratives in Akan: *no* 'that, the' *yi* 'this' *bi* 'some, a certain' and the determiner-like morpheme *ko* 'particular' which is usually used to refer to unique entities.

He further argues that the participle and the adjective should be viewed as separate modifiers because they have different syntactic properties. For instance, adjectives can occur with a comparative phrase while the participle cannot.

- (22) a. ɔ a-yɛ **den** sɛ ne wura
 she/he PERF-become hard like 3SG.AS master
 'She/he has become as hard as his/her master.'

- b. * ε a-yε **how-eε** sε aburoo
 it PERF-become grill-particle like maize
 ‘It has become grill-particle like maize.’
 (Boadi 2010: 58)

However, Amfo et.al (2007) classify the participle under adjectives. They believe that they are adjectives derived from verbs.

Sulemana (2012) also indicates that modifiers in Buli are post-nominal elements. Adjectives, numerals, quantifiers, relative clause and possessives are the modifiers that are found in Buli. The linear order of modifiers in Buli is presented as: Noun- Adjective- Numeral- {Determiner/Relative clause}-Quantifier.

- (23) a. núr màṅ-sà bà -nù mà dé mé:ná
 man good-PLU CL-five DEF DEM all
 ‘All these four good people.’
 (Sulemana 2012:105)

Example (23a) presents a Buli noun phrase where all the constituents are present. He further states that Buli has a strict order in the distribution of the modifiers. Adjectives occur as the first post-nominal element followed by the numeral, then, the determiner or the relative clause and the quantifier. Sulemana (2012) further states that determiners in Buli are sensitive to number. Determiners can be marked morphologically to show definite singular and plural and indefinite singular and plural.

Issah (2013) studied the nominal phrase in Dagbani and observed that modifiers have strict ordering in the noun phrase. He mentioned that the head noun is the initial element and it is followed by the adjective, numeral, article, quantifier, and the demonstrative determiner. He further shows that in Dagbani, definiteness is expressed morphologically while indefiniteness is coded by a bare noun as illustrated below:

(24) a. bia la da-Ø nimdi la
 child DEF buy.PERF meat DEF
 ‘The child has bought the meat.’

b. **bia** da-Ø **buku**
 child buy.PERF book
 ‘A child has bought a book.’

(Issah 2013: 206)

He again points out that cardinals can modify the head noun directly while ordinals are expressed as a relative clause. Example (25a) shows an ordinal that directly modify the head noun while (25b) illustrates an ordinal that has been expressed as a relative clause.

(25) a. bi-hi anahi
 child.PL four
 ‘Four children’

- b. bi-a ɲuni pahi-ri anahi
 child.SG REL add.IMPERF four
 ‘a fourth child’

(Issah 2013: 209)

Ansah (2014) also discussed the simple noun phrase in Leteh. She emphasized that modifiers show number agreement with the head noun with the exception of the definite article.

- (26) a. A-yirebi ɔ-he mɔ.
 SG-child SG-red DEM
 ‘This light-skinned child’.

- b. N-yirebi ε-he mɔ-εnε.
 PL-child PL-red DEM-PL
 ‘These light-skinned children’.

(Ansah 2014: 9)

The adjective *ɔhe* ‘red’ and the demonstrative *mɔεnε* agree in number with the head noun *nyirebi* ‘children’ in both (26a and b)

The discussions so far show that modifiers can be post or pre-nominal elements and this is determined by the language in question. We have also seen that some of the modifiers in Gur languages exhibit similar characteristics. All these studies will contribute to the current study as they will serve as guide for the analysis.

2.9 Theoretical Framework

This study is purely descriptive but adopts the functional approach to grammar. The functional approach is championed by linguists such as Halliday 1994, Dik 1997, Givon 2001. This approach advocates that the human language serves as a tool for communication. According to Dik (1997: 3) the human language is “an instrument of social interaction among human beings, used with the intention of establishing communicative relationships” DeLancey (2000:4) also asserts that “human language is not simply a device for presenting and pointing to interesting objects and events in the world. It is a set of tools for communicating our experience, and its structure is fundamentally informed by the structure of our experience and our cultural models of experience.” Thus, functionalists view language as an instrument for communication and as a social interaction. The human language is perceived as the instrument that helps the individual to express and share his or her thoughts to meet the communicative goal. And for communication to be effective, context should be taken into consideration to ensure that the right meaning is conveyed. As indicated by Dixon (2010:22), the central function of language is “the communication of meaning”. This shows that the human language is not a set of rules but it should be appreciated based on its context to bring about meaning in order to achieve communicative goals.

Within the functionalist approach, the structure of the human language is dependent on its functions. This implies that the form of the language must be examined in relation to the functions it performs. Therefore, we cannot analyze the structure of the human language without taking into consideration its functions.

Moreover, the concept of diachrony is of much relevance to the functionalist. The human language is dynamic as it changes over time therefore, the structure and the function of language must be integrated to suit the changing needs of human.

2.9.1 Relevance of the Functional Approach

I adopt this approach to provide a functional analysis of the noun phrase. This approach will help to examine the Sisaalt noun phrase by not focusing only on its structure but also take into consideration the functions that modifiers play in the noun phrase and the context in which modifiers are combined in various forms.

2.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided literature which are essential to the study of the noun phrase. Various issues that are mostly associated with the head of the noun phrase has been discussed. It has also drawn our attention to the interpretations that are associated with bare noun and again, identified some properties of the noun phrase that make the noun phrase distinct from other phrases. It has also discussed theoretical framework for the study.

CHAPTER THREE

THE NOUN PHRASE

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a discussion of the aspects of the noun phrase in Sisaalt. The chapter begins by looking at subtypes of nouns and their distribution. I then identify the distribution and function of pronouns, reflexives and reciprocals. The chapter also examines the elements of the noun phrase and show their morpho-syntactic properties. It finally shows how possessive is marked and its distribution as well.

3.2 Nouns

There has been an ongoing debate with regard to what constitutes a noun universally (Payne 1997; Givon 2001; Rijkhoff 2002). Rijkhoff (2002:12) points out that nouns can be defined universally when languages of the world are grouped into three categories. First, languages without a major word class of nouns; then, languages in which nouns cannot be distinguished from other word classes (verbs, adjectives) and languages with a distinct class of nouns. Sisaalt can be categorized under the third group because nouns in Sisaalt are distinguished from other lexical categories. Studies such as (Payne 1997; Givon 2001; Rijkhoff 2002) also show that, the concept of noun can be defined by considering the morpho-syntactic and semantics properties of a word. The morpho-syntactic and semantic properties help to define a prototypical noun. Therefore, this section looks at the morpho-syntactic properties of nouns by analyzing the structural composition of the nouns and their distributional properties. Nouns can be classified into the various subtypes:

Figure 3.1: Subtypes of Nouns

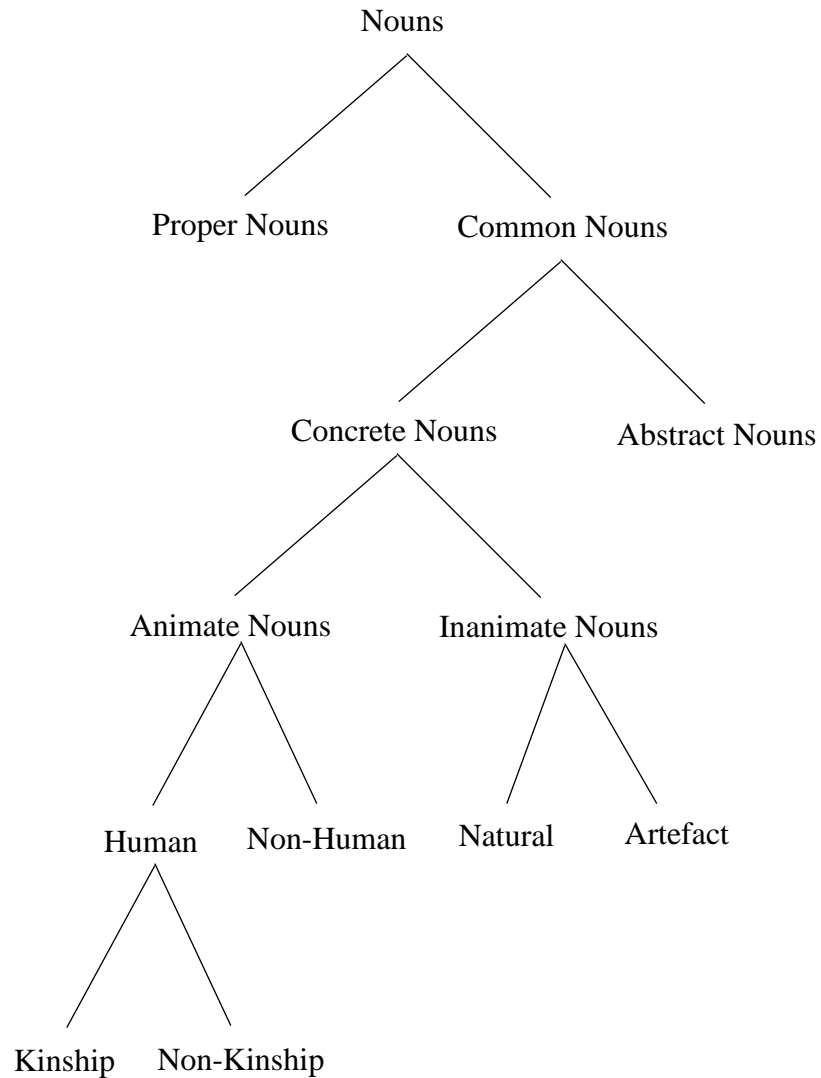


Figure 3.1 shows that a noun can be a proper noun or a common noun. Nouns are the grammatical categories that function as heads of the noun phrase and a noun phrase may function as subject or object in a sentence as illustrated in (27a-b).

- (27) a. **A haan-a a-yu yila.**
 DET woman-PL PROG-sing song
 ‘The women are singing.’
- b. **Fati faɲli a bie.**
 Fati slap.PST DET child
 ‘Fati slapped the child.’

The noun phrases *a haana* ‘the women’ and *Fati* are the subjects of the verbs *yu* ‘sing’ and *faɲli* ‘slap’ respectively. In (27b), the NP *a bie* ‘the child’ acts as the object of the verb *faɲli* ‘slap’.

3.2.1 Syntactic Properties of Subtypes of Nouns.

This section discusses the syntactic distribution of subtypes of nouns in the noun phrase. It focuses on identifying the modifiers these subtypes of nouns can occur with.

A. Proper Noun

These are nouns that refer to particular entities such as personal names, name of place (towns), months, days of the week and festivals.

- (28) a. Example of proper nouns in Sisaalt are¹:
- i. Zini ‘town’

¹ Examples of proper nouns were drawn from the *Handbook of Sisaalt: Sisaalt Orthography Guide*

- ii. *Gwollu* ‘town’
- iii. *Kajukperi* ‘town’
- iv. *Wulumbele* ‘February’
- v. *Zaginnuɔ* ‘June’
- vi. *Talaata* ‘Tuesday’
- vii. *Azuma* ‘Friday’

A proper noun can occur as the head of the NP. These nouns express particular or specific entities that the speaker and the listener are aware and in most cases, they do not require a determiner. A determiner or demonstrative that occurs with the head noun provides a specific reference of the head noun. Since proper nouns may have unique reference, they do not require a determiner as shown in (29a-c).

- (29) a. **Kajuperi** re yaa ŋ bee.
 Kajuperi FOC is 1SG town
 ‘Kajuperi is my hometown.’
- b. **Atani** yaa kyɛ-wiehii re
 Monday is day-rest FOC
 ‘Monday is a holiday.’
- c. **Hamza** yaa ŋ chana.
 Hamza is 1SG friend
 ‘Hamza is my friend.’

However, there are proper nouns that can occur with these modifiers.

Consider the following examples.

- (30) a. **A Hamza** aa ko daha.
 DET Hamza REL come.PST here.
 ‘The Hamza that came here.’
- b. Fati fa we daha maŋ ne **Alahadi hu**.
 Fati PST is here on FOC Sunday DEM
 ‘Fati was here on that Sunday.’
- c. A bii-hi hi mu ba lulla lee re
 DET child-PL FUT go 3PL parent visit FOC
Wulumbele nu maŋ.
 February DEM on
 ‘The children will visit their parents this February.’
- d. * A bombii-hi juŋ **Zini nu** re.
 DET boy-PL know Zini DEM FOC
 ‘The boys know this Zini ’

Examples (30a- c) show that the proper noun *Hamza* occurs with a determiner and *Lahadi* ‘Sunday’ and *Wulumbele* ‘February’ occur with the demonstrative while the head noun *Zini* which is a name of a town cannot occur with the demonstrative. It seems that, the proper noun *Hamza*, the days of the week and the month can occur with these elements since we can have several people who bear the name *Hamza*.

Also, we can have Monday recurring in a month. Monday could be last week Monday, last two week's Monday or next week Monday. Also, the month of February could be last year's February, this year's February among others. Because these proper nouns keep on occurring in every week or year, they are able to take a demonstrative and a determiner that make their references more specific. However, with the proper noun *Zini*, we have only one town bearing that name and there is no other *Zini*. Therefore, this noun does not occur with the demonstrative or the determiner since it has only one reference. Another observation about proper nouns is that, they can be modified by a possessor as shown below:

- (31) a. **Issah chana** yoo lɔɔri re.
 Issah friend buy.PST car FOC
 'Issah's friend bought a car.'

(31a) shows that proper nouns can be modified by a possessor. However, proper nouns cannot occur with other modifiers such as numerals, adjectives and quantifiers.

- (32) a. ***Jepva**-bénéé bádòmóŋ bánàà
 August-old.PL some four
 'Some four old August'
- b. * A **Hamza**-nééréé bádu búlòn
 DET Hamza-fat.PL six all
 'All the six fat Hamzas.'

- c. * A **Kajukperi**-wélí hú.
 DET Kajukperi-nice this
 ‘This nice Kajukperi.’

This indicates that apart from demonstrative, determiner and possessives that can occur with proper nouns, they cannot occur with other modifiers of the head noun. Therefore, proper nouns have limited distribution in the noun phrase.

B. Common nouns

Common nouns may include concrete and abstract nouns. *Concrete nouns* refer to visible things we can feel and touch. They include *kpaha* ‘chair’, *galí* ‘cloth’, *bie* ‘child’ *vaha* ‘dog’, *daaŋ* ‘tree’. On the other hand, *abstract nouns* are invisible and usually refer to concepts, ideas feelings or emotions. Examples of abstract nouns are *wotii* ‘truth’, *chori* ‘love’, *bari* ‘bravery’, *wvnyali* ‘lie’, *nyaa* ‘poverty’

Common nouns, unlike proper nouns do not have limited distribution. A common noun can occur with all the modifiers of the head noun in the noun phrase. Modifiers includes determiner, demonstrative, adjective, numeral and a quantifier as exemplified below.

- (33) a. Mary báhí **hákìl-wól-é** bádù.
 Mary say.PST idea-new.PL six
 ‘Mary raised six new ideas.’

- b. Hamza **chóri-títtí** tíà ú náá.
 Hamza love-true for 3SG mother
 ‘Hamza’s true love for his mother.’
- c. **Kpàhí-fél-é** bádòmóŋ bánàà
 chair-new-PL some four
 ‘Some four new chairs.’
- d. A **búú-bálá** bápè búlòŋ
 DET goat-big.PL seven all
 ‘All the seven big goats.’

The syntactic properties of both proper nouns and common nouns show that common nouns do occur with all the modifiers of the head noun while proper nouns may only occur with determiner, demonstrative or possessives.

3.2.2 Morphological properties

This section focuses on the morphological properties of proper nouns and common nouns by considering how these nouns are inflected for number. Sisaalt is a noun class language that makes distinction between plural and singular nouns. In Sisaalt, nouns are put into different classes depending on their plural suffixes. Studies such as Bodomó (1994) and Cahill (2000) show that Gur languages have noun class systems. The Sisaalt noun class system is presented in table 3.1 following Fembeti’s (2002) classification which groups the nouns into five classes on the basis of their number marking.

Table 3.1: Noun class system

Class	Singular marker	Plural marker	Singular noun	Plural noun	Gloss
1	++V/-∅	+Vowel (+ATR)/ -ATR)	gaal-ɪ hól suwoŋ nɛl	gaal-a hól-ɔ suwon-o nɛl-ɛ	thief charcoal bean person
2	++V/-∅	-hi/hɪ	gbap-a bɔgɔ bie kuori	gbap-hɪ bɔgɔ-hɪ bii-hi kuori-hi	calabash farm child chief
3	-∅	-ni/nɪ	kpaha vaha nyu fo	kpahɪ-nɪ vahɪ-nɪ nyu-ni fo-ni	chair dog head river
4	+consonant (l)	-lɪ	kɔlaa sɔmpɔlaa hakila fɔkɔlɔ	kɔɔl-lɪ sɔmpɔɔl-lɪ hakil-lɪ fɔkɔl-lɪ	mouse toad mind streams
5	-∅	-ma	kuwo naa yila hila	kuwo-ma naa-ma yila-ma hila-ma	father mother aunt In-law

The five classes identified are motivated by the morphological properties of the nouns. Morphologically, the nouns are grouped based on their plural suffixes. All the nouns in each class have the same plural markers. Apart from the morphology, the plural markers in classes A-C are phonologically conditioned. The nouns in each class select one of the plural markers based on the Advanced Tongue Root (ATR) harmony. Vowels in Sisaalt are grouped into +ATR (e, i, o, u) and -ATR (v, ɔ, ɪ, ɛ,

a). A plural suffix that is added to the noun depends on the final vowel in the stem of the noun. A final vowel in the stem of the noun that bears +ATR feature selects a plural suffix that is +ATR. Likewise, if the final vowel in the stem bears –ATR feature, the plural marker should also bear the same –ATR feature. For example, as shown in class 2, the nouns; *gbana* ‘calabash’ and *kuori* ‘chief’ have their plurals as *gban-hi* ‘calabashes’ and *kuori-hi* ‘chiefs’ respectively. They select their plural suffixes based on the final vowel in their stems. In *gbana* ‘calabash’ the final vowel is –ATR therefore it selects the plural suffix that also bears the –ATR feature. Also, the final vowel in *kuori* ‘chief’ bears the +ATR feature so the noun selects *hi* as its plural suffix. Similar situation is observed in classes A and B.

In class A, the nouns *gaal-i* ‘thief’, *hɔ́l* ‘charcoal’ and *suwoŋ* ‘bean’ have their plural forms as *gaal-a* ‘thieves’, *hɔ́l-ɔ* ‘charcoals’ and *suwoŋ-o* ‘beans’ respectively and their plural markings are determined by the final vowel of the noun. Class 3 shows that the noun may have *ni* or *ni* as a plural marker because of the final vowel of the noun. The NP *Nyu* ‘head’ occurs with the morpheme *ni* because the final vowel *u* is +ATR.

However, the nouns in classes 4 and 5 have only one form in their plural formation. In class 4, McGill et al. (1999) and Fembeti (2002) assert that these nouns have their final consonant as *l* and their plurals are formed by adding the morpheme *li*.

Class 5 is also made up of kinship nouns and this may account for why the nouns have *ma* as their plural suffix. However, there are few kinship nouns that do

not have *ma* as their plural suffixes therefore, they do not fall into class 5. This is shown in the table below:

Table 3.2: Kinship Nouns without Ma as a Plural Suffix

Singular	Plural
munabie ‘younger sister/brother’	munabii-hi ‘younger sister/brother’
hilbaal ‘father in law’	hilbaal-a ‘father in laws’
hilhaan ‘mother in law’	hilhaan-a ‘mother in laws’

Inferring from table 3.2, these kinship nouns do not have *ma* as their plural suffixes and therefore, they fall into different classes. An observation made about these nouns is that, they are all compound words and they tend to take the plural suffixes of the final word in the compound. The noun *munabi-e* ‘younger sister’ is made up of *maana* ‘elder’ and *bie* ‘child/small’. The final word; *bie* ‘child’ has its plural as *bii-hi* ‘children’ and this account for why the noun has its plural suffix as *hi* and not *ma*. Similar situation occurs in the other nouns. *Hilbaal* ‘father in-law’ is realised as *hila* ‘in law’ and *baal* ‘male or man’ and the plural form for man is *baal-a* ‘men or males’. Therefore, *hilbaal* ‘father in-law’ selects the vowel *a* as its plural suffix because of *baal* ‘man’. The same interpretation is given for *hilhaan* ‘mother in law’. The discussion so far shows that, these nouns are grouped into different classes because of their morphological make up.

The various classes do not show any agreement with determiners, demonstratives, numerals, adjectives, quantifiers among others. I now discuss how proper and common nouns are inflected for number.

A. Proper nouns and common nouns

Proper nouns do not undergo any morphological changes. They cannot be inflected for number. Common nouns on the other hand, can occur with plural suffixes to mark number. Let us consider the following sentences:

- (34) a. Kpaht-**ni** baliya
 chair- PL two.
 ‘Two chairs.’
- b. * Kajukperi-**ni** baliya
 Kajukperi-PL two
 ‘Two Kajukperi’

In (34a), the common noun *kpaha* ‘chair’ can be inflected for number. However, the proper noun; *Kajukperi*, which is a name of a town, does not mark number.

Givon (2001) notes that concrete nouns may be count or mass nouns and abstract nouns may also appear as count or mass. This section gives an insight into this phenomenon. Examples (35a-b) illustrate abstract and concrete count nouns respectively.

- (35) a. Hakil-**h** fi
 idea-PL ten
 ‘Ten ideas.’
- b. Baal-**a** badu
 man-PL six
 ‘Six men’

The abstract noun *hakila* ‘idea’ and the concrete noun *baal* ‘man’ are inflected for number and these nouns can be counted.

Boadi (2010: 161) shows that “a count noun designates a single discrete (individuated) object with a definite outline” and a mass noun “designates an object with a fuzzy, no definite, outline”. This implies that count nouns consist of different kinds of items that are viewed as separate entities while mass nouns are not seen as separate entities but they consist of items of the same kind. In Sisaalt, abstract nouns such as *tari* ‘failure’, *nyaa* ‘poverty’, *bari* ‘bravery’ are viewed as mass nouns. These nouns cannot be inflected for number. Also, concrete nouns such as *yhi* ‘salt’, *taha* ‘sand’; *lu* ‘water’, *mia* ‘millet’ *miili* ‘rice’, *nvv* ‘oil’ are viewed as mass nouns in Sisaalt and these nouns are not inflected for number. These nouns can mark number when they occur in mensural classifiers that will specify their exact number.

- (36) a. * Taha-**hu** baliya
 sand-PL two
 ‘Two sand.’

- b. Miili **bɔrɩ-hɩ** baliya
 rice bag-PL two
 ‘Two bags of rice’
- c. Lii **bɔkɔtɩ-hɩ** banaa
 water bucket-PL four
 ‘Four buckets of water.’
- d. Nɔɔ **galɔn-hɩ** banaa
 oil gallon-PL four
 ‘Four gallons of oil.’

Example (36a) shows that the mass noun *taha* ‘sand’ cannot be inflected for number and thus, it cannot appear as a count noun. Examples (36b-d) illustrate mass nouns that appear with the mensural classifiers *bɔrɩ* ‘bag’ *bɔkɔtɩ* ‘bucket’ *galɔn* ‘gallon’ to mark number.

In addition, these mass nouns can also occur with other modifiers when they appear in mensural classifiers as exemplified below.

- (37) a. *U yɔ́ á **miili-bálá** bápè búlòŋ
 3SG.SUBJ buy.PST DET rice-big.PL seven all
 ‘She bought all the seven big rice.’
- b. U yɔ́ á **miili bɔrɩ-hɩ** bálá bápè
 3SG.SUBJ buy.PST DET rice bag-PL big.PL seven
 búlòŋ
 all
 ‘She bought all the seven big bags of rice.’

Example (37a) shows that the concrete mass noun cannot occur with other elements such as numerals, adjectives and quantifiers unless they occur in containers as illustrated in (37b).

The discussions have shown that proper nouns, mass nouns and abstract nouns have limited syntactic distribution. Also, these subtypes of nouns lack morphological marking therefore, these nouns cannot serve as prototypical heads to the noun phrase.

3.3 Bare Nouns

Alexandre and Hagemer (2007:37) define bare nouns as “noun phrases without overt determiners”. In Sisaali, bare nouns may have different interpretations depending on the context in which they occur. They either show indefiniteness or convey generic meaning. Consider the following sentences that are associated with indefinite interpretations.

- (38) a. **Ŋ** **bóri** **dááj**
 1SG.SUBJ break.PST stick
 ‘I broke a stick’
- b. **Váhà** à-cháj **hògí.**
 dog HAB-chew bone
 ‘A dog chews a bone.’

- c. Géliì à-kàṅ kóláà.
 cat HAB-catch mouse
 ‘A cat catches a mouse.’

The bare nouns *daaŋ* ‘stick’, *vaha* ‘dog’, *geli* ‘cat’, *hogi* ‘bone’ and *kɔlaa* ‘mouse’ in sentences (38a- c) express indefiniteness. The indefinite determiner is covertly realised in the bare forms of the nouns *daaŋ* ‘stick’ *vaha* ‘dog’ and *geli* ‘cat’ *hogi* ‘bone’ and *kɔlaa* ‘mouse’. Sɪsaalt does not have an indefinite marker to show indefiniteness and due to this, the language expresses indefiniteness by the use of the bare form of the noun. Sulemana (2012) indicated that in Buli, indefiniteness is expressed by a bare noun and they are interpreted as generic as illustrated below.

- (39) a. Bū:k à ŋ ɔ̄-bī vá :tà
 goat.INDEF PRES-chew leaves
 ‘A goat chews leaves.’

(Sulemana 2012: 48)

Bare nouns may also convey generic interpretations. In this regard, the noun usually refers to characteristics that are related to a certain group or class of species. With reference to (40a and b), the bare nouns *bɔgɔ* ‘farm’ and *ɔɔbɔ* ‘market’ convey generic meaning. The bare nouns *bɔgɔ* ‘farm’ and *ɔɔbɔ* ‘market’ in this context refer to any farm or market in general as illustrated below.

(40) a. **Bà** **báŋ** **b̀̀gɔ́.**
 3PL go farm
 ‘They go to the farm.’

b. **U** **nàá** **ỳ̀b̀̀.**
 3SG see.PST market
 ‘He saw the market.’

3.4 Pronouns

Pronouns can function as heads of the noun phrase. Pronouns as heads of noun phrases do not appear with a modifier but may function as subject or object of a sentence as nouns.

(41) a. **Bà** **t̀̀ŋ** **v̀̀.**
 3PL.SUBJ send.PST 3SG.OBJ
 ‘They sent it.’

b. **D** **j̀̀ŋ** **báál** **nú.**
 1SG.SUBJ know man this
 ‘I know this man.’

The pronouns *ba* ‘they’ and *v* ‘it’ in (41a) are noun phrases that are functioning as the subject and object in the sentence respectively. In (41b), the pronoun *ŋ* ‘I’ also forms a noun phrase that functions as the subject in the sentence.

In Sisaalt, the personal pronouns are marked for number and persons. Table 3.3 presents the personal pronouns for both the subjects and the objects:

Table 3.3: Personal pronouns

	SUBJECT PRONOUN	OBJECT PRONOUN
1 st person SG	ŋ 'I'	ŋ 'me'
2 nd person SG	ɪ 'you'	ɪ 'you'
3 rd person SG	ʊ 'he, she, it'	ʊ 'him, her, it'
1 st person PL	à 'we'	mà 'us'
2 nd person PL	mà 'you'	mà 'you'
3 rd person PL	ba 'they'	ba 'them'

With reference to the table 3.3, the subject pronouns are the same as the object pronouns except the 1st person plural that occurs as *mà* 'us' at the object position.

Consider the following examples:

- (42) a. **ŋ** nàá báàl h́.
 1SG.SUBJ see.PST man that
 'I saw that man.'

b. Báàl hù nàá ṇ̃.
 man that see.PST 1SG.OBJ
 ‘That man saw me.’

(43) a. l túŋ hááŋ nú.
 2SG.SUBJ send.PST woman this
 ‘You sent this woman.’

b. Háàŋ nú túŋ ì.
 woman this send.PST 2SG.OBJ
 ‘This woman sent you.’

(44) a. U ñmáá á bié
 1PL.SUBJ beat.PST DET child
 ‘He beat the child.’

b. A bié ñmáá ṿ.
 the child beat.PST 3SG.OBJ
 ‘The child beat him.’

(45) a. A pèé hááŋ nú
 3PL.SUBJ help.PST woman this
 ‘We helped this woman.’

b. * Hááŋ nú pèé à
 woman this help.PST 3PL.OBJ
 ‘This woman helped us.’

c. Hááŋ nú pèé **mà**
 woman this help.PST 3PL.OBJ
 ‘This woman helped us.’

(46) a. **Mà** pír váhà nú
 2PL.SUBJ hurt.PST dog this
 ‘You hurt this dog.’

b. Váhà nú pír **mà**
 dog this hurt.PST 2PL.OBJ
 ‘This dog hurt you.’

(47) a. **Bà** tùhí hántólibì-hí hú
 3PL.SUBJ insult.PST girl-PL those
 ‘They insulted those girls.’

b. Hántólibì-hí hú tùhí **bà**
 girl-PL those insult.PST 3PL.OBJ
 ‘Those girls insulted them

The above sentences show that both the subjective and objective pronouns have the same form except the 1st person plural where the subjective pronoun is **à** ‘we’ and the objective pronoun is **mà** ‘us’ as illustrated in (45a and c). Also, the objective pronoun of 1PL and the subject or the object pronoun of 2PL take the same form. In this situation, the interpretation of pronoun ‘*mà*’ as a 1PL or 2PL becomes

a bit difficult. The only way one can interpret the form as either 1PL or 2PL depends on the context in which the pronouns are used.

3.5 Reflexives and Reciprocals

Reflexives and reciprocals are anaphors. Both reflexives and reciprocals indicate that in a sentence, there are two NPs that are co-referential, in that the reflexive or the reciprocal has an antecedent that refers back to it.

3.5.1 Reflexives

Heine and Miyashita (2008:169) define a reflexive construction as “a singular referent A acts on himself or herself.” Lichtenberk (1985:26) also indicates that the participants that perform the actions in a reflexive construction may “stand in some relation to himself/herself/itself rather than any other”. Therefore, in reflexive constructions, the referent undergoes the action by him/ herself.

Cross-linguistically, every language has a distinct way of marking reflexives. As observed by Faltz (1977), some languages employ free morphemes for reflexives while others use bound morphemes. Saha (1987:215) observes that the co-referential entities in a reflexive construction may be realized as “a word, particle or an affix”. Heine and Miyashita (2008:174) mention that cross-linguistically, a language may use personal pronouns, use a body-noun and possessive attribute, or use an adverbial ‘alone’ or ‘only’ as range of strategies for marking reflexives. Saah (1989) and Osam (2002) also show that reflexives in Akan are morphologically formed by a possessive pronoun (POSS) and the morpheme *ho* (self). Reflexives in Sisaalt are also

morphologically marked. They are formed by a personal pronoun and the morpheme *tu* 'self' as demonstrated in the examples below:

- (48) a. Fatimah píř v- tí.
 Fatimah hurt.PST 3SG-self
 'Fatimah hurt herself.'
- b. Bà kèrí bà-tí.
 3PL.SUBJ cut.PST 3PL-self
 'They cut themselves.'

In (48 a-b), the pronouns *v* 'him' and *ba* 'them' are added to the morpheme *tu* 'self' to mark reflexives. Table 3.4 presents the reflexive pronouns in Sisaali.

Table 3.4: Reflexive

REFLEXIVE	
1 st person SG	ŋtu 'myself'
2 nd person SG	itu 'yourself'
3 rd person SG	vtu 'himself, herself, itself'
1 st person PL	atu * matu 'ourselves'
2 nd person PL	matu 'yourselves'
3 rd person PL	batu 'themselves'

In table 3.4, it is observed that the subject personal pronouns and the morpheme *tu* ‘self’ are employed to mark reflexives in Sisaali. This is evident in the 1st person plural which has different forms in the subject and object positions as shown in table 3.4.

3.5.2. *Reciprocals*

According to Gaby (2008: 259), in reciprocals, “the Actor of one instantiation of the event is also the Undergoer of another instantiation of the same event (A1 = U2) while the Undergoer of the first instantiation is the Actor of the second (U1 = A2)”. This implies that reciprocals require plural antecedents who act on each other. Consider the following sentences:

- (49) a. **A** háánj kpú ù-tíí
 DET woman kill.PST 3SG-self
 ‘The woman killed herself.’
- b. **A** háán-à kpú bà-tíí.
 DET woman-PL kill.PST 3PL-self
 ‘The women killed each other/themselves.’

Example (49b) is a reciprocal construction while (49a) is not. (49b) involves plural antecedents who act on each other. However in (49a), only a single referent is involved and this single referent acts on him/herself. Therefore, the construction

cannot be seen as reciprocal. It is reflexive. This indicates that reciprocals require only plural antecedents in their formation.

In Sisaali, it is realized that reflexive constructions with plural antecedents are also viewed as reciprocal constructions. In this regard, the construction becomes ambiguous whether it is interpreted as a reflexive or reciprocal. However, Heine and Miyashita (2008) are of the view that language speakers are able to make a distinction between reciprocals and reflexives when the language employs the same expression for both concepts. Consider the following sentences.

- (50) a. Issah béé Amina àjàà **bà-tíí.**
 Issah and Amina like 3PL-self
 ‘Issah and Amina like each other/themselves.’
- b. Bà péé **bà-tíí.**
 3PL help.PST 3PL-self
 ‘They helped each other/themselves.’
- c. A bómbì-hí báliyà fànlí **bà-tíí.**
 DET boy-PL two slap.PST 3PL-self.
 ‘The two boys slapped each other/ themselves.’
- d. A ηmáá **à-tíí.**
 1PL beat.PST 1PL-self
 ‘We beat each other/ourselves.’

Examples (50a-d) are ambiguous between reciprocal and reflexive readings. Although reflexive constructions with plural antecedents are also interpreted as

reciprocals, there are some verbs that are seen as prototypical reciprocal verbs. Thus, they cannot be associated with reflexive interpretations irrespective of the fact that these verbs require plural antecedents within a construction. Consider the following sentences.

- (51) a. Bà **ká** kááhì.
 3PL fight.PST fight.
 ‘They fought a fight.’
- b. À háán-à báliyà **káá** dómón̄.
 DET woman-PL two quarrel.PST each other
 ‘The two women quarreled’
- c. A chàn̄-hí báliyà **bàhí** wia.
 DET friend-PL two talk.PST word
 ‘The two friends had a chat.’
- d. A bombii-hi báliyà **púú** dómón̄.
 DET boy-PL two meet.PST each other
 ‘The two boys met’

The above sentences are associated with plural NPs that are co-referential. These NPs are said to be associated with reciprocal action rather than reflexive. It is observed that the verbs employed in the sentences require the various arguments or referents to act on each other rather than acting on themselves.

In reflexive and reciprocal constructions, the reflexive and the reciprocal depend on their antecedents for their interpretations. The reflexive and the antecedent are marked with the subscript j to show that they co-refer to each other while the reflexive and the antecedent with subscript j and k respectively indicate nonreferentiality as illustrated below.

- (52) a. **Báàl_j** hú pìr **ù-tíí_j**
 man that hurt 3SG-self
 ‘That man hurts himself.’
- b. **Báàl_j** hú pìr **ù_k**
 man that hurt 3SG
 ‘That man hurts him.’
- c. **Báàl-a_j** hú pìr **bà-tíí_j**
 man-PL that hurt 3PL-self
 ‘Those men hurt themselves/each other.’
- d. **Báàl-a_j** hú pìr **bà_k**
 man-PL that hurt 3PL
 ‘Those men hurt them.’

Examples (52a and c) are reflexive constructions while (52c) is reciprocal. In (52a), the reflexive *ùtíí* ‘himself’ refers back to its antecedent *baal* ‘man’ and in (52c), the reflexive or the reciprocal *bàtíí* ‘themselves/each other’ and the NP *baala* ‘men’ are co-referential. However, (52b and d) are not reflexive or reciprocal constructions. This is because the NPs *baal* ‘man’ and *v* ‘him’ are not co-referential.

Similar situation is observed in (52d) where the NP *ba* ‘them’ does not refer back to its antecedent; *baala* ‘men’.

It is very necessary to note that reflexives in Sisaalt are marked for number and persons. When the antecedent is a plural entity, the reflexive must also appear in the plural form and when it is singular, the reflexive is also singular. This is realised in the subject personal pronouns that are attached to the morpheme *tii* ‘self’. The pronoun is inflected for number while *tii* ‘self’ remains in the same form as illustrated in the examples below.

- (53) a. **Ñ** chògí ñ-tíí.
 1SG destroy.PST 1SG-self
 ‘I destroyed myself.’
- b. **U** píí ù-tíí.
 3SG hurt.PST 3SG-self
 ‘He hurt himself.’
- c. **Bà** fàŋlí bà-tíí.
 3PL slap.PST 3PL-self
 ‘They slapped themselves.’
- d. **A** tùùhí à-tíí.
 1PL insult.PST 1PL-self
 ‘We insulted ourselves.’

Sentences (53a-b) show reflexive constructions that have their antecedents as singular NPs while (53c-d) illustrate reflexives with plural antecedents.

In the distribution of reflexive and reciprocals, the antecedent always occurs at the subject position. The antecedent always precedes the reflexive/reciprocal in a reflexive/reciprocal construction. The sentence becomes ungrammatical when the reflexive/reciprocal appears as the initial NP as demonstrated below:

(54) a. **Bà** pír bà-tí.
 3PL hurt.PST 3PL-self
 ‘They hurt themselves/each other.’

b. * **Ba- tí** pír bà.
 3PL-self hurt.PST 3PL
 ‘Themselves /each other hurt them.’

(55) a. A biihi leŋ ba niina kerí
 DET child-PL make.PST 3PL mother cut.PST
 v-tii bee a sie.
 3SG-self with DET knife
 ‘The children made their mother cut himself with the knife.’

b. * A biihi leŋ v-tii kerí ba niina
 DET child-PL make.PST 3SG- self cut.PST 3PL mother
 bee a sie.
 with DET knife
 ‘The children made himself cut their mother with the knife.’

- (56) a. Fati bahu tia ŋ baa v **bala** aa paane
 Fati speak.PST to 1SG that 3SG husband HAB blame
v-tu yɛ ba bie sɔɔ wia.
 3SG-self EMPH 3PL child death matter
 “Fati told me that her husband blames himself over the death
 of their child.”
- b. * Fati bahu tia ŋ baa **v-tu** aa paane v
 Fati speak.PST to 1SG that 3SG-self HAB blame 3SG
bala yɛ ba bie sɔɔ wia.
 husband EMPH 3PL child death matter
 “Fati told me that himself blames her husband over the death
 of their child.”

Example (54b), (55b) and (56b) show that the reflexives/reciprocals cannot precede their antecedents. This implies that antecedent always comes before the reflexive/reciprocal.

Saah (1989) reveals that in reflexive constructions, the antecedent and the reflexive are clause mates. A reflexive construction requires that the two NPs (antecedent and reflexive) appear in the same clause. When the antecedent and the reflexive are found in different clauses, it renders the sentence ungrammatical. This is the case for Sisaalt also.

- (57) a. [[U bahu [baa **ba** kpú **ba-tí.**]]
 3SG.SUBJ say.PST that they kill.PST 3PL-self.
 ‘He said that they have killed themselves.’

- b. *[[U báhí [bàà bà kpú ṿ-tíí.]]
 3SG.SUBJ say.PST that they kill.PST 3SG-self.
 ‘He said that they have killed himself.’
- (58) a. [[A júnj [bàà Hamza pír ṿ-tíí.]]
 1PL.SUBJ know.PST that Hamza hurt.PST 3SG-self.
 ‘We knew that Hamza hurt himself.’
- b. *[[A júnj [bàà Hamza pír à-tíí.]]
 1PL.SUBJ know.PST that Hamza hurt.PST 3PL-self.
 ‘We knew that Hamza hurt ourselves.’

The above examples show that the antecedent requires the reflexive to occur with it in the same clause. In (57a), the antecedent *ba* ‘they’ and the reflexive *batu* ‘themselves’ are found in the same clause and the construction is grammatical in that context. However in (57b), the antecedent *v* ‘he’ and the reflexive *vtu* ‘himself’ are found in different clauses and this makes the reflexive construction ungrammatical. Also, in (58a), the antecedent *Hamza* and the reflexive *vtu* ‘himself’ are found in the same clause while in (58b) when the antecedent *a* ‘we’ and *atu* ‘ourselves’ are found in different clauses and this makes the construction ungrammatical.

Associative constructions can also serve as antecedents in a reflexive construction. This is illustrated in the sentences below.

- (59) a. **Issah mááná pír v̀-ítí**
 Issah elder sister hurt.PST 3SG.OBJ-self
 ‘Issah’s elder sister hurt herself.’
- b. **Amina báàlá k̀erí v̀-ítí.**
 Amina husband cut.PST 3SG.OBJ-self
 ‘Amina’s husband cut himself.’

We have seen that in reflexive and reciprocal constructions, the antecedent and the reflexive are co-referential entities and clause mates. Again, it was noted that reflexives with plural antecedents also have reciprocal readings and their interpretations are context bound.

3.6 Elements in a Noun Phrase

This section examines the morpho-syntactic properties of elements which occur in the noun phrase. It seeks to identify which of the elements are post or pre-elements and the position that they assume in the noun phrase.

3.6.1 Determiners.

Determiners modify the head noun in Sisaalt. Any determiner that occurs with the head noun does not only exhibit a syntactic relationship with the head noun but it also serves referential purposes. Kpatolie dialect has the definite article ‘*a*’ which is a pre-nominal element. However, McGill et.al (1999), Dumah (2017) point out that Sisaalt does not have an indefinite article. A similar situation occurs in the Kpatolie

dialect. Indefiniteness is not morphologically marked but expressed by the use of a bare noun. Consider the following sentences.

- (60) a. **Bómbié** tíŋ ò.
 boy send.PST 3SG
 ‘A boy sent him.’
- b. **A** **bómbié** tíŋ ò.
 DET boy send.PST 3SG
 ‘The boy sent him.’
- (61) a. Bà yòó **piéhu**.
 3PL buy.PST sheep
 ‘They bought a sheep.’
- b. Bà yòó **a** **piéhu**.
 3PL buy.PST DET sheep
 ‘They bought the sheep.’

Sentences (60a) and (61a) show that Sisaalt does not have an indefinite article but indefiniteness is covertly expressed by the bare NPs *bombie* ‘boy’ and *piehu* ‘sheep’. Examples (60b) and (61b) illustrate head nouns that occur with the definite article ‘a’ in the noun phrase. The definite article precedes its head in the above constructions. However, the definite article has a different distribution in the other dialects of Sisaalt. For instance, Bowaalt dialect has different distribution with regard

to the position of the definite article. The dialect displays the definite article *na* as a post-modification element rather than a pre-modification element. The position of the definite article in Buwaali is illustrated in the sentences below:

- (62) a. **ŋ** yowe pieso **na**.
 1SG buy.PST sheep DET
 ‘I bought the sheep.’
- b. Ba kaŋ gaara **na**
 3PL catch.PST thief DET
 ‘They caught a thief.’
- c. Baal **na** ko re.
 man DET come.PST FOC
 ‘The man came.’

The above sentences show that the definite article *na* occurs right after the head nouns *pieso* ‘sheep’, *gaara* ‘thief’ and *baal* ‘man’ in (62ac) respectively. Fembeti (2002) also notes that the definite article *hv* in the Paasaal dialect occurs after the head noun as demonstrated in the noun phrases below:

- (63) a. Haan **hv**
 woman DET
 ‘The woman.’

- b. Diya **hv**
house DET
‘The house.’

(Fembeti 2002: 25)

The definite article *hv* in the Paasaal dialect occurs after the head nouns *haan* ‘woman’ and *diya* ‘house’. Therefore, the definite article in Kpatolie is a pre-modification element whilst it is seen as a post modification element in the Pasaalt and Gbieni dialects.

The definite article in Kpatolie and Paasaal dialects are not sensitive to number. Buwaalt dialect shows that the definite article can be inflected for number as shown below:

- (64) a. Ba kaŋ **gaara** **na.**
3PL catch.PST thief DET
‘They caught the thief.’

- b. **Baal-a** **wanyaa** ko rɛ.
man-PL DET come.PST FOC
‘The men came.’

The morphemes *na* and *wanyaa* are used to make a distinction between singular and plural head nouns respectively.

3.6.2 Demonstratives

Demonstratives are post nominal elements in Sisaali. Diessel (1999) observes that demonstratives exhibit deictic features; they show the closeness of an entity to the deictic center (speaker). Demonstratives can be expressed in two forms, proximal and distal. Proximal demonstratives are used when the referent is near the deictic center, while distal demonstratives are used when the referent is far away from the deictic center or the speaker. The two demonstratives, *nv* and *hv* can be identified in the Kpatolie dialect. The former is proximal, and the latter is distal. This is demonstrated in the examples below:

- (65) a. Báàl **nú** yàà ñ kúwò chàná
 man DEM is 1SG father friend.
 ‘This man is my father’s friend.’
- b. Váhà **hù** à-húòsì yúgò.
 dog DEM HAB-bark a lot
 ‘That dog barks a lot.’

In (65a), the NP *baal* ‘man’ is right in front of the speaker while in (65b), there is a relative distance between the speaker and the referent *vaha* ‘dog’.

Demonstratives are not sensitive to number. A similar situation is also observed by McGill et.al (1999) and Dumah (2017) in Paasaal and Gbieni dialects respectively. Number can only be exhibited by the head noun in question. The head noun appears as a singular or plural entity while the demonstrative appear in the same form in both singular and plural constructions as illustrated in the sentences below:

- (66) a. **Hááŋ nú** à-yélè mílí yòbò má.
 woman DEM HAB-sell rice market at
 ‘This woman sells rice at the market.’
- b. **Háán-à nú** a-yélè mílí yòbò má.
 woman-PL DEM HAB-sell rice market at
 ‘These women sell rice at the market.’
- (67) a. **Háŋtòlibié hú** tùhí ù náá.
 girl DEM insult.PST 3SG mother
 ‘That girl insulted her mother.’
- b. **Háŋtòlibì-hí hú** tùhí bà náá.
 girl-PL DEM insult.PST 3PL mother
 ‘Those girls insulted their mother.’

Sentences (66a) and (67a) show demonstratives with singular heads *haan* ‘woman’ and *han̄tòlibie* ‘girl’ while sentences (66b) and (67b) have plural heads *haana* ‘women’ and *han̄tòlibihi* ‘girls’.

However, demonstratives in Buwaal̄ dialect are inflected for number. Nouns phrases with singular heads are marked differently from those with plural heads. Consider the following sentences:

- (68) a. **Haal nee** ka ŋ yala.
 woman DEM is 1SG aunt
 ‘This woman is my aunt’

b. **Haal-a wanyan** ka η yala-wa.
 woman-PL DEM are 1SG aunt-PL
 ‘These women are my aunts.’

c. **Baal na** ka namballa.
 man DEM is hunter
 ‘That man is a hunter.’

d. **Baal-a wanyaa** ka namballa.
 man-PL DEM is hunter
 ‘Those men are hunters.’

As shown in (68a-b) and (68c-d) respectively, the proximal demonstrative *nee* ‘this’ is realised as *wanyan* ‘these’ when the head is a plural entity and the distal demonstrative *na* ‘that’ is also expressed as *wanyaa* ‘those’ when the head is a plural noun.

McGill et.al (1999) and Dumah (2017) show that in Paasaali and Gbieni dialects respectively, the distal demonstrative *haη* ‘that/those’ is a pre-nominal element and it occurs with the determiner *hu* which is a post-nominal element. McGill et.al (1999) further mentions that the distal demonstrative *haη* cannot occur on its own unless it is attached to the determiner while the proximal demonstrative *no* ‘this/these’ can occur on its own and it cannot occur with the determiner *hu*.

- (69) a. **Haaj no**
 woman this
 ‘This woman.’
- b. **Haaj haaj hu**
 that woman the
 ‘That woman.’

McGill et.al (1999: 30)

However, the Kpatolie dialect shows that both the proximal and the distal demonstratives are independent morphemes and they can occur with the determiner as show below:

- (70) a. **A bombie nu**
 DET boy DEM
 ‘This boy’
- b. **A vaha hu**
 DET dog DEM
 ‘That dog’

3.6.3 *Adjectives*

An adjective also modifies the head noun in Sisaalt. It occurs after the head noun they modify. Schachter (1985:13) defines adjectives as “words that denote qualities and attributes”. Adjectives usually help to define, describe and identify referents of

head nouns. Adjectives in Sisaalt are in two forms; there are adjectives derived from verbs and those which are non-derived.

- (71) a. A gáá mómá-wáh-è
 1PL steal.PST maize-roast-NOM
 ‘We stole a roasted maize.’
- b. U cháj nàmí-hál-è
 3SG chew.PST fish-fry-NOM
 ‘He chewed a fried meat.’

The above examples show adjectives that are derived from verbs. The adjectives *wahε* ‘roasted’ and *halε* ‘fried’ that serve as modifying elements to the head nouns *mvmay* ‘maize’ and *namia* ‘meat’ are derived from the verbs *hali* ‘to fry’ and *wahu* ‘to roast’ respectively.

An observation made by Bodomo (1997) Dakubu (2005), Hudu (2014) about adjectives in Gur languages indicate that, they are attached to the head nouns they modify and the two elements form a single constituent. The suffix of the head noun has to be dropped before the adjective is added. Bodomo (1997) & Dakubu (2005) point out that in Dagaare, adjectives and the noun they modify form a compound. Adjectives are attached to the head noun they modify. Issah (2013) & Hudu (2014) also show that a similar situation is observed Dagbani. Consider the following Sisaalt noun phrases.

(72) a. * A **báal-á** **fiáŋ-hì** we daha maŋ.
 DET man-PL fair-PL are here in
 ‘The fair men are here.’

b. A **bá-fiáŋ-hì** we daha maŋ.
 DET man-fair-PL are here in
 ‘The fair men are here.’

(73) a. * U kaŋ **héŋè** **biŋ** ne.
 3SG has bowl black FOC
 ‘She has a black bowl.’

b. U kaŋ **héŋ-biŋ** ne.
 3SG has bowl-black FOC
 ‘She has a black bowl.’

As shown in (72a-b) and (73a-b), the suffixes of the NPs *baala* ‘men’ and *heŋe* are dropped before the adjectives *fiáŋhi* ‘fair’ and *biŋ* ‘black’ were added.

Adjectives in Sisaali can be used attributively and predicatively. Predicative adjectives use the copula ‘yaa’ to link the head noun and the adjective while the attributive adjectives follow the head noun as illustrated below:

(74) a. A **pié-pùlúŋ** díé à kídiílèe
 DET sheep-white eat.PST DET food
 ‘The white sheep ate the food.’

- b. A píéhú yàà kí-pùlúŋ
 DET sheep be thing-white
 ‘The sheep is white.’

- (75) a. A nàmíá we á hèn-bìŋ ma.
 DET meat LOC DET bowl-black POST
 ‘The meat is in the black bowl.’

- b. A hènè yàà kí-bìŋ
 DET bowl be thing-black
 ‘The bowl is black.’

Sentences (74a) and (75a) show adjectives that have been used attributively whilst (74b) and (75b) illustrate the predicative use of the adjective. In (74a and 75a), the adjectives *pvlvŋ* ‘white’ and *bìŋ* ‘black’ occur after the head nouns *piehv* ‘sheep’ and *hènɛ* ‘bowl’ while in (74b) and (75b), the NPs *piehv* ‘sheep’ and *hènɛ* ‘bowl’ are linked to the adjectives *pvlvŋ* ‘white’ and *bìŋ* ‘black’ by the copula *yaa*.

In predicative adjectives, the head nouns appear in their full forms as demonstrated in (74b) and (75b) while in the attributive use of the adjective, the suffix of the head noun is removed before the adjective is attached to it as shown in (74a) and (75a). It is observed that, the NPs *piehu* ‘sheep’ appear as *pie*’ and *hènɛ* ‘bowl’ as *hèn*’ in (74a) and (75a) respectively. Issah (2013) also notes that Dagbani requires only the root form of the noun in an attributive adjective as it is also seen in Sisaalt.

It is worth mentioning that adjectives in Gur languages are sensitive to number (Dakubu 2005, Sulemana 2012). Adjectives in Sisaalt are also sensitive to

number and singular adjectives have their plural forms in Sisaalɩ. The table below presents adjectives in their singular and plural forms.

Table 3.5: Singular and Plural Adjectives

ADJECTIVES	
Singular	Plural
biŋ ‘black’	bine ‘black’
fiaŋ ‘red’	fiaŋht ‘red’
pɔlɔŋ ‘white’	pɔŋht ‘white’
doli ‘tall’	dole ‘tall’
woli ‘beautiful’, ‘nice’	wole ‘nice’, ‘beautiful’
fɛlt ‘new’	fɛle ‘new’
balt ‘big’	bala ‘big’
benu ‘old’	benɛɛ ‘old’
nɛru ‘fat’	nɛrɛɛ ‘fat’

Consider the following sentences that show NPs with singular and plural heads.

- (76) a. A **há-biŋ**.
 DET woman-dark
 ‘The dark woman.’

b. * A háan-a bìn-é
 DET woman-PL dark- PL
 ‘The dark women.

c. A **há-bìn-é**
 DET woman-dark- PL
 ‘The dark women.’

(77) a. A **galaal-fiaŋ.**
 DET dress-red
 ‘The red dress.’

b. * A galaal-ε- fiaŋ-hu.
 DET dress-red-PL
 ‘The red dresses’

c. A galaal- fiaŋ-hu
 DET dress-red-PL
 ‘The red dresses’

Since the head noun and the adjective form a compound word, only the root form of the head noun appears while the adjective occurs with its plural suffix to mark number as illustrated in (76a-c) and (77a-c).

Adjectives in Sisaalt also make a distinction between human and non-human nouns when they are used predicatively.

(78) a. A gáláal-è yàà **ki**-bìn-e.
 DET dress-PL are thing-black-PL
 ‘The dresses are black.’

b. A dááŋ yàà **ki**-dólí.
 DET house is thing-long
 ‘The tree is long.’

(79) a. A báál-a yàà **ní**-dól-é.
 DET man-PL are human-tall-PL
 ‘The men are tall.’

b. A hááŋ yàà **ní**-bùŋ
 DET woman is human-dark
 ‘The woman is dark.’

The morpheme *ki/ki* depending on the initial sound in the adjective is added to the predicative adjective to show that the head noun is a non-human NP as seen in (78a and b) whilst the morpheme ‘*ni/ni*’ is attached to the predicative adjective to show that the head noun is human as illustrated in (79a and b). The morphemes ‘*ki/ki*’ which is added to the adjectives is derived from the word *kiŋ* ‘thing’ while the morpheme *ni/ni* is also derived from the word *nel* ‘human’.

The Gbieni dialect also makes a distinction between human and non-human entities in predicative adjectives. Consider the following Gbieni sentences:

- (80) a. Baalo na ka **bi**-fiɛmɔ
 man DET is human-fair.
 ‘The man is fair.’
- b. Haano na ka **bi**-bino.
 woman DET is human-dark
 ‘The woman is dark.’
- (81) a. Vaha na ka **be**-fiɛmɔ.
 dog DET is thing-red
 ‘The dog is red.’
- b. Pieso na ka **be**-bino
 sheep DET is thing-black
 ‘The sheep is black.’

The Bwaaɓɓi dialect also employs the morphemes ‘*be*’ and ‘*bi*’ to make a distinction between human and non-human nouns respectively in a predicative adjective.

It is possible for adjectives to occur successively within a noun phrase. Moran (2006) observes that adjectives in Sisaalɓ do not have any specific order of arrangement in the noun phrase. Although adjectives do not have any sequential order, adjectives of dimension and colour usually occur at the initial position. These adjectives often precede other adjective types as shown in (82a-c).

- (82) a. A há -dól fíáŋ wól-é.
 DET woman-tall fair beautiful-PL
 ‘The fair tall beautiful women.’
- b. A galaal-bii biŋ woli.
 DET dress-small black nice
 ‘The small black nice dress.’
- c. A kpaht bal yuhi bɔŋ binii.
 DET chair big heavy dirty old
 ‘The big heavy dirty old chair.’

Amfo et.al (2007) show that adjectives in Akan, Ga and Ewe can also express comparative or superlative degree. In this case, verbs that can be glossed as ‘exceed/surpass’ are used. Boadi (2010) also indicates that adjectives in Akan can be modified by a comparative verb phrase. Similar phenomenon occurs in Sisaalt. Sisaalt employs *gehi/ bɔŋ* ‘more than’ to show the comparison as illustrated in (83a-b)

- (83) a. A baal doli **gehi/bɔŋ** Hamza.
 DET man tall more than Hamza
 ‘The man is taller than Hamza.’
- b. U rɛ woli **gehi/bɔŋ** u.
 3SG FOC beautiful more than 3SG
 ‘She is more beautiful than her.’

3.6.4. Numerals (Ordinals and Cardinals)

Numerals also modify the head noun in Sɪsaalt. Numerals refer to both ordinals and cardinals which serve as post nominal elements in the noun phrase.

B. Cardinals

Cardinals specify the sum of what is being counted and they occur as post modifiers in Sɪsaalt.

- (84) a. Kúorì-hì **bónóŋ**
 chief-PL five
 ‘Five chiefs’

As illustrated above, the cardinal *bónóŋ* ‘five’ occurs after the head noun *Kuorihì* ‘chiefs’. Cardinals agree in number with the head noun they occur with as demonstrated in (85a and b) and (86a and b)

- (85) a. Ba káj **gáál-á báliyà.**
 3PL catch.PST thief-PL two.
 ‘They caught two thieves.’
- b. Ba káj **gáálí kídìgí**
 3PL catch.PST thief one
 ‘They caught a (one) thief.’

(86) a. U káŋ **háán-à** **bánàà**
 3SG has wife-PL four
 ‘He has four wives.’

b. U káŋ **háán** **kìdìgí**.
 3SG has wife one
 ‘He has a (one) wife.’

In (85a) and (86a), the cardinals *baliya* ‘two’ and *banaa* ‘four’ agree with head nouns *gala* ‘thieves’ and *haana* ‘wives’ respectively while in (85b) and (86b), the cardinal *kìdìgí* ‘one’ agrees with the head nouns *gaali* ‘thief’ and *haay* ‘wife’. The formation of cardinals from one to hundred is illustrated below:

Formation of cardinals

<i>kìdìgí</i>	‘one’
<i>baliya</i>	‘two’
<i>boto</i>	‘three’
<i>banaa</i>	‘four’
<i>bɔnɔŋ</i>	‘five’
<i>badv</i>	‘six’
<i>bapɛ</i>	‘seven’
<i>kyori</i>	‘eight’
<i>nibi</i>	‘nine’
<i>fì</i>	‘ten’
<i>fì bee kìdìgí</i>	‘ten and one’

<i>fi bee baliya</i>	‘ten and two’
<i>mɔɔlaa</i>	‘twenty’
<i>mɔɔlaa bee kɪdɪɪ</i>	‘twenty and one’
<i>mɔɔlaa bee fi</i>	‘twenty and ten’
<i>mɔɔlaa bee fi bee kɪdɪɪ</i>	‘twenty and ten and one’
<i>mɔɔliya</i>	‘twenty times 2’
<i>mɔɔliya bee kɪdɪɪ</i>	‘forty and one’
<i>mɔɔliya bee fi</i>	‘forty and ten’
<i>mɔɔliya bee fi bee kɪdɪɪ</i>	‘fifty and one’
<i>mɔɔto</i>	‘twenty times three’
<i>mɔɔto bee kɪdɪɪ</i>	‘sixty one’
<i>mɔɔto bee fi</i>	‘sixty and ten’
<i>mɔɔto bee fi bee kɪdɪɪ</i>	‘seventy and one’
<i>mɔɔnaa</i>	‘twenty times four’
<i>mɔɔnaa bee kɪdɪɪ</i>	‘eighty and one’
<i>mɔɔnaa bee fi</i>	‘eighty and ten’
<i>mɔɔnaa bee fi bee kɪdɪɪ</i>	‘ninety and one’
<i>kɔɔ</i>	‘hundred’
<i>kɔɔ bee kɪdɪɪ</i>	‘hundred and one’

With reference to the formation of numerals in Sisaalt, it is observed that the numeral is either a mono-morphemic word or a compound word. Numerals 1 to 10, 20 and 100 are made up of single morphemes while the other numerals are formed

by combining two or more morphemes. The compound forms are either as a result of addition or multiplication. For instance, the numerals 11, 12 and 30 are derived on the basis of addition. 11 is derived by adding 10 to 1 *fi bee kɪdɪgɪ*, 12 is also written as *fi bee baliya* (10+2) and 30 as *mɔɔlaa bee fi* (20+10). Numerals such as 40, 60 and 80 are also expressed by the multiplication of the base. For example: the numeral 40 is obtained by multiplying 20 by 2, 60 as 20 by 3 and 80 as 20 by 4. When the compound formed is as a result of multiplication, the two numerals that are combined to form the compound word are reduced in form. It is seen that *mɔɔliya* ‘forty’ is derived by the combination of *mɔɔlaa* ‘twenty’ and *baliya* ‘two’ which means 20 by 2 where the suffix of the initial numeral and the prefix of the final numeral are dropped. Similar situation is observed in 60. The morphemes *mɔɔlaa* ‘twenty’ and *boto* ‘three’ are joined to derive *mɔɔto* ‘twenty times three’. It is very important to note that numerals that are formed as a result of addition do not reduce in form whilst numerals that are formed on the basis of multiplication are reduced in form.

Hurford (1975) notes that most languages employ three main strategies to express a numeral that has a complex structure. Languages usually use multipliers (M), units (U) and remainders (R) for complex numeral expressions. This assertion also holds in Sisaalt. For instance, the complex numeral 41 is made up of these three components. *Mɔɔliya bee kɪdɪgɪ* ‘forty one’ is made up of *mɔɔlaa* ‘twenty’, *baliya* ‘two’ and *kɪdɪgɪ* ‘one’. The numerals; *mɔɔlaa* ‘twenty’ and *baliya* ‘two’ are joined to derive the structure *mɔɔliya* ‘forty’. This implies that forty 41 is obtained by multiplying the Unit (*mɔɔlaa* ‘twenty’) and the multiplier (*baliya* ‘two’) and adding the remainder (*kɪdɪgɪ* ‘one’). Also, the numeral 81 has a complex structure. *Mɔɔnaa*

bee kidiḡi ‘eighty one’ comprises of *mɔɔlaa* ‘twenty’, *banaa* ‘four’ and *kidiḡi* ‘one’. *Mɔɔlaa* ‘twenty’, *banaa* ‘four’ are also joined to obtain *mɔɔnaa* ‘eighty’ and *kidiḡi* ‘one’ is added. In this regard, the U (*mɔɔlaa* ‘twenty’) and the M (*banaa* ‘four’) are multiplied and the R (*kidiḡi* ‘one’) is added to obtain the numeral.

B. Ordinals

Ordinals show the order of the item in a set as they indicate the positions of items. In Sisaali, ordinal can be expressed in various forms. Below are noun phrases that appear with ordinals

- (87) a. U hɔŋ **kpàhá -liyà** **túna** maŋ nɛ
 3SG sit chair-two fellow on FOC
 ‘She is sitting on the second chair.’
- b. U yɔɔ a **gálaáli-nàà** **túna** rɛ
 3SG buy.PST DET dress-four fellow FOC
 The fourth dress.’

As shown in (87a-b), ordinals can be derived from cardinals by blending the head noun and the cardinal which is then followed by the morpheme *tuna* ‘fellow’.

Ordinals in Sisaali can also be expressed in a form of a clause as demonstrated in (88a- b).

- (88) a. Kpàhá nú pé báliyà
 chair this add two
 ‘This chair adds up to be two.’(Second chair)
- b. Gáláálì nú pé bánàà
 dress this add four
 ‘This chair adds up to be fourth.’(Fourth dress)

In Sisaali, it is possible to have the sequence of adjective and numeral after the head noun. Consider the examples below:

- (89) a. A náá **bá-bìn-é** **báliyà.**
 1PL see.PST man-dark-PL two
 ‘We saw two dark men.’
- b. Ba yóó **kpàhí-bál-á** **bónóy.**
 3PL buy.PST chair-big-PL five
 ‘They bought five big chairs.’
- c. D káŋ gá-fél-é fí.
 1SG have cloth-new-PL ten
 ‘I have ten new clothes.’

As illustrated above, adjective precedes the numeral while the head noun precedes the adjective. Sentences (89a-c) show that the adjectives *bine* ‘dark’, *bala* ‘big’ and *fɛlɛ* ‘new’ precede the numerals *baliya* ‘two’ *bónonɔ* ‘five’ and *fi* ‘ten’

respectively. Adjectives can occur with determiner, demonstrative and the numeral in the noun phrase as well.

- (90) a. A bá-bìn-é báliyà yòó piéhú.
 DET man-dark-PL two buy.PST sheep.
 ‘The two dark men bought a sheep.’
- b. A gá-fél-é fí yàà bà-kín
 DET dress-new-PL ten are 3PL-thing
 ‘The ten new dresses are theirs.’
- c. D yòó a kpàhí-bál-á bónóhù hù.
 1SG buy.PST DET chair-big-PL five those
 ‘I bought those five big chairs.’
- d. D hí yélè a nánṭò-wólí kídìgí nú.
 1SG FUT sell DET shoe- nice one this
 ‘I will sell this one nice shoe.’

The above constructions show that the determiner is the first element that occurs in the NP. The head noun is the next element that follows the determiner, then the adjective. The numeral comes after the adjective and the demonstrative is the final modification element in the noun phrase.

3.6.5 Quantifiers

Quantifiers are used to show the amount of quantity of something referred to by a noun. They are different from numerals because they indicate an approximated amount rather than the exact amount. Quantifiers in Sisaalt includes;

- a. *badɔmɔŋ* 'some'
- b. *yugɔ* 'many' or 'plenty'
- c. *mɔ́hɔ́* 'few'
- d. *búlòŋ* 'every' or 'all'
- e. *duŋa* 'only'

Quantifiers occur after the head noun in a noun phrase as demonstrated in the sentences below:

- (91) a. Báàl-à **bádɔ́mɔ́ŋ** káŋ móóbìì.
 man-PL some have money.
 'Some men have money.'
- b. Nélé **yúgɔ̀** a-dohi suonuŋ.
 people many HAB-plant beans
 'Many people plant beans.'

The quantifiers *badɔmɔŋ* 'some' and *yugɔ* 'many' come after the head nouns *baala* 'men' and *nala* 'people' in (91a and b) respectively. Quantifiers differ with respect to the head noun with which they occur. Count and non-count nouns (mass)

differ with regard to the quantifiers they can occur with. Consider the following noun phrases:

- (92) a. * Yìhí m̀òhù
salt few
'Few salt'
- b. Báàl-à m̀òhù
man-PL few
'Few men'
- (93) a. Yìhí m̀òfú
salt little
'Little salt'
- b. * Báàl-à m̀òfú
man-PL little
'Little men'
- (94) a. * Mia badòmɔŋ
millet some
'Some millet'
- b. Vahɪ-nɪ badòmɔŋ
dog-PL some
'Some dogs'

With reference to (92a-b), (93a-b) and (94a-b), it is not any quantifier that occurs with any subtype of noun. There are quantifiers that appear with countable nouns and those that appear with non-countable nouns. In the above noun phrases, the countable nouns occurred with the quantifiers *badɔmɔŋ* ‘some’ and *mvhv* ‘few’ but could not occur with the quantifier *mvfu* ‘little’. However, the non-countable nouns (mass) only appeared with the quantifier; *mvfu* ‘little’ and not the others that occurred with the countable nouns. Sisaalt allows the sequence of quantifiers and adjectives in the nominal phrase as demonstrated below:

- (95) a. **Bá-fiáŋ-hì** **m̀̀hú** féé kó daha.
 man-fair-PL few EMP come.PST here.
 ‘Few fair men came here.’
- b. U naa **bá-dól-é** **yúgà** .
 3SG see.PST man-tall-PL many
 ‘He saw many tall men.’
- c. **Há-wólí** **búlòŋ** a-chuoɛ Wɪhi.
 woman-good every HAB-pray God.
 ‘Every good woman prays’.

The head noun is the initial element and it precedes the adjective and the quantifier. The quantifiers; *mvhv* ‘few’. *yugɔ* ‘many’ and *bulon* ‘every’ occur after the adjectives *fianhi* ‘fair’, *dole* ‘tall’ and *woli* ‘good’ in (95a-c). The sequence of

numerals and quantifiers is also permissible in Sɛsaalt. Consider the following sentences.

- (96) a. Haŋtolibii-hi **banaa** **badɔmɔŋ** a-yu yɪla.
 girl-PL four some PROG-sing song
 ‘Some four girls are singing.’
- b. Bii-hi **badɔ** **duŋa** kó.
 child-PL six only come.PST
 ‘Only six children came.’

In (96), the head nouns precede all the elements in the noun phrase. Also, the quantifier is the final element in the noun phrase which is preceded by the numeral. The numerals *baliya* ‘two’ and *badɔ* ‘six’ precede the quantifiers; *badɔmɔŋ* ‘some’ and *duŋa* ‘only’

Quantifiers can also occur with the determiner, demonstrative, numeral and adjective in the noun phrase. This sequence is permissible in Sɛsaalt. Consider the following sentences:

- (97) a. **A** ba-**bin-e** **fii** **bulɔŋ** na kò.
 DET man-dark-PL ten all have come.
 ‘All the ten dark men have come.’
- b. **A** ha-**wol-e** **bapɛ** **badɔmɔŋ** pɛɛ ma.
 DET woman-beautiful-PL seven some help.PST 3PL
 ‘Some of the seven beautiful women helped us.’

- c. **Ba-bin-e** **fii** **nɔ** **bulɔŋ** nà kó.
 man-dark-PL ten these all have come
 ‘All these ten dark men have come.’
- d. **Ha-wol-e** **hɔ** **bapɛ** **badɔmɔŋ** pɛɛ ma
 woman-good-PL those seven some help.PST 3PL
 ‘Some of those seven good women helped us.’

Sentences (97a and b) show that the determiner is the first element in the noun phrase, followed by the head noun. The adjective comes right after the head noun and it is also followed by the numeral. The quantifier appears as the final element in the noun phrase. In (97c and d), the head noun is the initial element, followed by the adjective and then the numeral or the demonstrative. The demonstrative may come before or after the numeral as shown in (97c and d). The quantifier is the final element found in the phrase.

3.7 Possessives

In possessive constructions, the possessum is construed as the head and the possessor is the modifying element as illustrated in (98a-c) where *ba* ‘their’, *Amina* and *gboro* ‘door’ are the possessors and *dia* ‘house’, *kidiilee* ‘food’ and *nɔŋ* ‘hand’ are the possessum (the head). In this regard, the possessor is seen as a pre-modification element to the head noun (possessum). The possessor is a pre-nominal element that modifies the possessum (head). Also, possessive is not overtly realised but it is expressed by juxtaposing the possessor and the possessum.

- (98) a. Ba dia
3PL house
'Their house.'
- b. Amina kidiilee
Amina food
'Amina's food'
- c. A gboro nɔŋ
The door hand
'The door's hand'

With reference to the (98a-c), the possessor precedes the possessum. Sisaalt has both predicative and attributive possessive constructions. Heine (1997) observes that all languages are able to make a distinction between predicative (or verbal) and attributive (or nominal) possession constructions syntactically. Consider the following sentences:

- (99) a. U fuwonamiya
3SG fish
'His fish.'
- b. U kaŋ fuwonamiya
3SG has fish
'He has a fish.'

(100) a. A búuŋ
 3PL goat
 ‘Our goat.’

b. A kaŋ búuŋ
 3PL have goat
 ‘We have a goat.’

(101) a. Ali lɔɔre
 Ali car
 ‘Ali’s car’

b. Ali kaŋ lɔɔre
 Ali has car
 ‘Ali has a car’

(102) a. Issah haan-a
 Issah wife-PL
 ‘Issah’s wives’

b. Issah kaŋ haan-a
 Issah has wife-PL
 ‘Issah has wives’

The NPs (99a), (100a), (101a) and (102a) show the attributive use of possessives while sentences (99b), (100b), (101b) and (102b) illustrate predicative

possessive constructions. In the attributive constructions, the possessor comes immediately after the head noun and the possessor is viewed as the head. Therefore, *v* ‘his’ *à* ‘our’ *Ali* and *Issah* are the pre-modification elements to the head nouns; *fuwonamiya* ‘fish’ *búuŋ* ‘goat’ *lɔɔre* ‘car’ and *haana* ‘women’ respectively. The predicative use of the possessive requires a copula *kaŋ* that links the possessor and the possessum as portrayed in sentences (99b) (100b), (101b) and (102b).

The same pronouns are used to express both possession and the personal pronouns of the language. It is observed that the possessive pronouns take the same form when they serve as modification elements to the possessor except *the 1st person singular possessive* which differ with respect to the noun that it is attached to. It may be realised as ‘*m*’ or ‘*ŋ*’ depending on the initial sound of the head noun. The possessive ‘*m*’ occurs with head nouns that begin with the sounds (p, b and f) while ‘*ŋ*’ occurs with the rest of the sounds. This phenomenon is illustrated below.

- i. *m piehu* ‘my sheep’
- ii. *m bɔɔɔ* ‘my farm’
- iii. *m bala* ‘my husband’
- iv. *m fiŋfenniŋ* ‘my soap’
- v. *m foto* ‘my photograph’
- vi. *ŋ duubie* ‘my bird’
- vii. *ŋ galaali* ‘my dress’

The possessives pronouns in Sisaalt are presented below:

Table 3.6: Possessives

	Possessive Pronouns
1 st person SG	ŋ ,m ‘my’
2 nd person SG	ɪ ‘your’
3 rd person SG	ʊ ‘his, her, its’
1 st person PL	a ‘our’
2 nd person PL	ma ‘your’
3 rd person PL	ba ‘their’

3.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter has examined the morpho-syntactic properties of the noun phrase. It has shown the subtypes of nouns that can serve as prototypical heads to the noun phrase. Again, it has identified the various interpretations that can be associated with bare nouns. This chapter has established the fact that reflexives with plural referents are also interpreted as reciprocals and has shown that in some context, reciprocal constructions can be distinguished from reflexives. It has also examined the elements that can occur with the head noun as well as their distribution in the noun phrase. This chapter has also shown the distribution possessives.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE RELATIVE CLAUSE

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the syntax of relative clauses. It shows how relative clauses are marked, presents the elements that are found in the Sisaalɔ relative clause. It also shows the various grammatical positions that are accessible to relativization and the distribution of the relative clause when it occurs with other modifiers of the noun phrase.

4.2. The Structure of the Clausal Modifier in Sisaalɔ

Relative clauses function as modifiers of the noun phrase. Languages have diverse ways of forming a relative clause. Dixon (2010:338) pointed out that, there are various ways by which languages mark relative clauses. He stated that, a relative clause may be marked by one intonation contour across the relative clause construction, by the position of the relative clause within the main clause, by prosodic means, by an inflection on the verb of the relative clause, by a relative marker or by a relative pronoun. In Sisaalɔ, the relative clause is introduced by a relativizer *aa* as illustrated below.

- (103) a. A bombie àà Ø kpú á géli hú.
 DET boy REL kill.PST DET cat DEM
 ko daha.
 come.PST here
 ‘The boy who killed that cat came here.’

b. ŋ kyɔ́ɔ á géli á báál àà kpú.
 1SG cook.PST DET cat DET man REL kill.PST
 ‘I cooked the cat which the man killed.’

c. A naa buki a tikya aa sebe.
 1PL see.PST book DET teacher REL write.PST
 ‘We saw a book which was written by our teacher.’

As shown in (103a-c), relative clauses in Sɪsaalt are marked by the relativizer; *aa*, noting that the relativizer is an obligatory element and when it is omitted from the relative clause, it renders the relative clause ungrammatical.

(104) a. U naa kyɔɔ a kidiílèè bà àà díé
 3SG mother cook.PST DET food 3PL REL eat.PST
 ‘His mother cooked the food which they ate.’

b. * U naa kyɔɔ a kidiílèè bà ∅ díé
 3SG mother cook.PST DET food 3PL REL eat.PST
 ‘His mother cooked the food which we ate.’

(105) a. A juŋ a bií-hì á báál-à àà ŋmáá
 1PL know DET child-PL DET man-PL REL beat.PST
 ‘We know the children who the men beat.’

- b. * A juŋ a bií-hì á báàl-à Ø ŋmáá
 1PL know DET child-PL DET man-PL REL beat.PST
 ‘We know the children who the men beat.’

How the relative clause is marked in Sisaalt is similar to that of Akan. Saah (2010) shows that relative clauses in Akan are also marked by a relative clause marker which is an obligatory element in the relative clause.

Apart from the relativizer, there are other elements that are present in the relative clause. As show in (104a-b) and (105a-b), the relativized noun appears at the initial position and it can occur with a definite determiner or a demonstrative. There is also a relativizer *aa* that introduces the relative clause and a gap \emptyset that indicates that the head noun is realised as null in the embedded clause.

4.3 The Relativized Noun and Other Elements

A relativized noun can appear in its bare form or it can occur with other elements to show grammatical function. The relativized noun without any determiner or demonstrative expresses indefiniteness in Sisaalt.

- (106) a. U yoo **naŋtoɔ** aa kii ki-weli yugo.
 3SG buy.PST shoe REL look thing-nice very
 ‘She bought a shoe which looks very nice.’
- b. A naa **galaalt** aa kyeaha rɛ a kpaha maŋ.
 1PL see.PST dress REL tear.PST FOC DET chair on.
 ‘We saw a dress which is torn on the table.’

- c. Ba kaŋ **geli** aa kyo kidiilee yɔga
 3PL have cat REL like food very much
 ‘They have a cat that likes food very much.’

Sisaalt does not have an indefinite article and thus, indefiniteness is expressed by the bare form of the noun. The relativized nouns *nanɔɔbɔ* ‘shoe’ and *galaali* ‘dress’ and *geli* ‘cat’ in (106a-c) respectively appear in their bare forms to mark indefiniteness.

The relativized noun can also appear with the definite article. The definite article is the first element, followed by the relativized noun and the embedded clause as shown below.

- (107) a. **A dia** aa yaa v kɔwo tiŋii re ba yeɛ.
 DET house REL is 3SG father belong FOC 3PL sell.PST
 ‘The house which belongs to his father has been sold.’

- b. **A báàl-a** àà kpú á gèli hú.
 DET man-PL REL kill.PST DET cat DEM
 ko daha.
 come.PST here
 ‘The men who killed that cat came here.’

- c. Ŋ kyɔɔ **a kidfilèe** à àà díé
 ISG cook.PST DET food 1PL REL eat.PST
 ‘I cooked the food which we ate.’

As shown in (107a – c), the relativized nouns *dia* ‘house’, *báàla* ‘men’ *kidiilee* ‘food’ appear with the definite article to make the relativized nouns definite. The relativized noun can also occur with a demonstrative. The demonstrative occurs right after the relativized noun. Demonstratives that occur with the relativized noun provide deictic functions. It shows how the relativized noun is closer or far away from the deictic center. Consider the following examples.

Proximal Demonstrative

(108) a. Báàl **nó** àà kpú á géli hú
 man DEM REL kill.PST DET cat DEM
 ‘This man who killed that cat.’

b. Bii-hì **no** á báàl-à àà ñmáá
 child-PL DEM DET man-PL REL beat.PST
 ‘These children who the men beat.’

Distal Demonstrative

(109) a. Báàl **hú** àà kpú á géli hú
 man DEM REL kill.PST DET cat-SG DEM
 ‘That man who killed that cat.’

b. Bii-hì **hú** á báàl-à àà ñmáá
 child-PL DEM DET man-PL REL beat.PST
 ‘These children who the men beat.’

The demonstratives *nv* ‘this/these’ and *hv* ‘that/those’ appear with the relativized nouns *baal* ‘man’ and *biihi* ‘children’ to serve deictic functions.

It is worth mentioning that the relativized head can also occur with both the definite article and the demonstrative. In this regard, the definite article appears as the initial element, followed by the relativized head, the demonstrative and the embedded clause.

Proximal Demonstrative

- (110) a. **A** báàl **nv** àà kpú á géli hú
 DET man DEM REL kill.PST DET cat DEM
 ‘This man who killed that cat.’

- b. **A** juŋ **a** bíi-hì **nv** á báàl-à àà
 1PL know DET child-PL DEM DET man-PL REL
 ŋmáá
 beat.PST
 ‘We know these children who the men beat.’

Distal Demonstrative

- (111) a. **A** haan **hv** aa yeε milli ko daha.
 DET woman DEM REL sell rice come.PST here.
 ‘That woman who sells rice came here.’

- b. **A** báàl-à báliyà **hú** àà kpú á géli
 DET man-PL two DEM REL kill.PST DET cat
 ‘Those two men who killed the cat.’

The definite article *á* ‘the’ that occurs before the relativized heads with demonstratives can be omitted without any semantic implication on the relativized noun as illustrated in (112a-b) and (113a-b).

(112) a. **A** hááŋ **hú** [àà pír á hántólíbié]
 DET woman DEM REL hurt.PST DET girl
 ‘That woman who hurt the girl.’

b. Hááŋ **hú** [àà pír á hántólíbié]
 woman DEM REL hurt.PST DET girl
 ‘That woman who hurt the girl’

(113) a. **A** báàl-a **nú** [àà kpú a géli]
 DET man-PL DEM REL kill.PST DET cat
 ‘These men who killed the cat.’

b. **Báàl-a** **nú** [àà kpú á géli]
 man-PL DEM REL kill.PST DET cat
 ‘These men who killed the cat.’

In addition, we can have both the proximal and the distal demonstratives with the relativized head. In this situation, the proximal demonstrative appears as the initial element followed by the distal demonstrative. When this sequence occurs, prominence is given to the proximal demonstrative and the sequence is interpreted as proximal indicating that the relativized noun is far away from the speaker. Consider the following.

Proximal and Distal Demonstratives

(114) a. Báàl **nó** **hú** àà kpú á géli
 man DEM DEM REL kill.PST DET cat
 ‘This man who killed the cat.’

b. Bìi-hì **nv** **hú** á báàl-à àà ηmáá
 child-PL DEM DEM DET man-PL REL beat.PST
 ‘These children who the men beat.’

Distal and Proximal Demonstratives

(115) a. * Báàl **hú** **nó** àà kpú á géli
 man DEM DEM REL kill.PST DET cat
 ‘That man who killed the cat.’

(116) b. * Bìi-hì **hú** **nó** á báàl-à àà ηmáá
 child-PL DEM DEM DET man-PL REL beat.PST
 ‘These children who the men beat.’

It is observed that the sequence of the proximal demonstrative *nv* and the distal demonstrative *hv* is permitted to occur with the relativized noun. However, the sequence of the distal demonstrative and the proximal demonstrative is not permissible and yield ungrammatical forms as shown in (115a and 116a). This shows that the proximal demonstrative is required to always appear first before the distal demonstrative in this sequence and the construction is seen to provide a proximal function rather than distal.

Moreover, the sequence of the proximal and distal demonstratives can also occur with the optional definite article. This implies that the presence or the absence of the definite article does not change the implied meaning carried by the head noun and the demonstrative.

(117) a. **A** báàl **nú** **hú** àà kpú á géli hú.
 DET man DEM DEM REL kill.PST DET cat DEM
 ‘This man who killed that cat.’

b. Báàl **nú** **hú** àà kpú á géli hú
 man DEM DEM REL kill.PST DET cat DEM
 ‘This man who killed that cat.’

(118) a. **A** bíi-hì **nv** **hú** á báàl-à àà ñmáá
 DET child-PL DEM DEM DET man-PL REL beat.PST
 ‘These children who the men beat.’

b. Bíi-hì **nv** **hú** á báàl-à àà ñmáá
 child-PL DEM DEM DET man-PL REL beat.PST
 ‘These children who the men beat.’

4.4 Relative Clauses and Other Elements

Relative clauses can occur with other elements that also modify the head noun. This section discusses relative clauses and other modifiers and show the distribution of the relative clause in the noun phrase.

- b. A naŋtɔ- woli ŋ aa yɔbɔ lii Tumu.
 DET shoe-nice 1SG REL buy.PST from Tumu
 ‘The nice shoe which I bought from Tumu.’

4.4.3 Relative Clauses and Quantifiers

Relative clauses that appear with quantifiers occur as the final modifier in such a sequence. The quantifier comes first followed by the relative clause. As shown in (121a-c), the quantifiers *badɔmɔŋ* ‘some’ and *yuga* ‘many’ precede the relative clauses.

- (121) a. U naa bombii-hi **badɔmɔŋ** aa **kii**
 3SG see.PST boy-PL some REL look
ni-wol-e
 human-handsome-PL
 ‘She saw some boys who look very handsome.’
- b. Ŋ juŋ haŋtolibii-hi **yuga** aa **bee** **mu**
 1SG know girl-PL many REL NEG go
sukuu..
 school
 ‘I know many girls who do not attend school.’

4.4.4 Relative Clauses, Adjectives, Numerals and Quantifiers

This sequence is also permissible in Sisaali. The adjective appears as the initial element in the noun phrase since it is attached to the relativized noun. It is then

followed by the numeral and the quantifier. The relative clause is the final element in the noun phrase.

- (122) a. **Sukuu bii-fɛl-ɛ nibi badɔmɔŋ aa ko**
 school child-new-PL eight some REL come.PST
a sukuu gyinaŋ tenni-fiala rɛ yɔga.
 1PL school today body-cool FOC very
 ‘Some eight new students who came to our school today were very happy.’

- b. **A loore puŋɩ bato buloŋ aa we a dia**
 DET car white.PL three all REL are DET house
sidenj maŋ yaa a tikya tiŋji rɛ
 in front on is DET teacher belong FOC
 ‘All the three white cars which are in front of the house belong to our teacher.’

4.4.5 Relative Clauses with Possessives, Determiners, Demonstratives, Adjectives, Quantifiers, and Numerals

This section looks at both the post and pre-nominal elements of the noun phrase. It shows the syntactic slot that is prescribed for each of the element in the noun phrase. Consider the following examples.

- (123) a. **A bombi-hi bádù búlòŋ àà gáá á piéhú**
 DET boy-PL six all REL steal DET sheep
 ‘All the six boys who stole the sheep.’

- b. Baal-a **dól-é** **bápè** **hú** **búlòṅ** àà ṅmáá á
 man-PL tall-PL seven those all REL beat.PST DET
 bié
 child
 ‘All those seven tall man who beat the boy.’
- c. A v **tuntunne-fel-ε** **hu** **nibi** **badɔmɔṅ** aa
 DET 3SG worker-new-PL DEM eight some REL
 juu Tumu **maṅ** ko a lee re.
 live Tumu in come 1PL place FOC
 ‘Some of those eight new workers of his who live in Tumu
 came to visit us.’
- d. A naa **kpahi-bii-hi** **boto** **duṅ** nε aa
 1PL see.PST chair-small-PL three only FOC REL
leme a **ɔta** **maṅ**
 leave.PST DET house in
 ‘We found only three small chairs which were left in the
 room.’
- e. A t **chaṅ-hi** **baliya** aa gi ko lee
 DET 2SG friend-PL two REL always come place
 ‘The two friends of yours who always visit you’.

Examples (123 a- e) show that relative clauses can occur with other elements that modify the head noun. The relative clause can occur with the determiner, demonstrative, numeral, adjective and the quantifier in a noun phrase. All the

examples show that, when the relative clause appears with other elements within the noun phrase, it occupies the final slot in the noun phrase. Therefore, the elements in the noun phrase are order as:

[(DET) (POSS) HEAD (ADJ) (NUM/DEM) (QUANT) (REL)]

The determiner and the possessive are pre-nominal elements in the noun phrase and the determiner always precedes the possessive as shown in (123c and e). The head noun occurs after these two pre-nominal elements. Adjectives occur right after the head noun since they are always attached to it. The numeral may come before or after the demonstrative then followed by the quantifier. The relative clause is the final element in the noun phrase.

4.5 Grammatical Positions That Are Accessible To Relativization.

Keenan and Comrie (1977) on their typological study on relative clauses proposed the Accessibility Hierarchy which states that there are NP positions that are more accessible to relativization than others. In Sisaali, the subject, object and indirect objects are accessible to relativization.

Subject Relativization

- (124) a. A **bombie** àà ημάά á bié hú
 DET boy REL beat.PST DET boy DEM
 kó daha.
 come.PST here.
 ‘The boy who beat that child was here.’

Direct object relativization

- (125) a. A naa a bié á báàl àà ñmáá.
 1PL see.PST DET child DET man REL beat.PST
 ‘We saw the child the man beat.’

Indirect object relativization

- (126) a. Fatima tia a bósúlúmbié àà ko daha
 Fatima give.PST DET orphan REL come.PST here
 gáláálì
 dress.’
 ‘Fatimah gave the orphan who came here a dress.’

It is also possible to relativize oblique in Sisaali. In (127a), the locative *kpaha* ‘chair’ as the oblique has been relativized in (127b).

Oblique relativization

- (i) Locative

- (127) a. Fati léŋ á gáláálì ré á **kpàhá** mánŋ
 Fati leave.PST DET dress FOC DET chair on
 ‘Fati left the dress on the chair.’
- b. Á **kpàhá** mánŋ Fati àà léŋ á gáláálì
 DET chair on Fati REL leave.PST DET dress
 bori.
 break.PST
 ‘The chair on which Fati left the dress is broken.’

The possessor is also accessible to relativization in Sisaalt. In (128), the possessor *baal* ‘man’ who possesses the money has been relativized.

Possessor

- (128) a. A bié ré gáá á **báal** móóbii
 DET boy FOC steal.PST DET man money
 ‘The child stole the man’s money.’
- b. Á báal móóbii á bié àà gáá
 DET man money DET child REL steal.PST
 ‘The man whose money the child stole.’

Also, objects of comparison can be relativized. In (129), the object of comparison is *á bómbié* ‘the boy’ which has been relativised in (129b)

Object of comparison

- (129) a. Hamza wíí bóŋ á bómbié
 Hamza weep.PST more the boy
 ‘Hamza wept more than the boy.’
- b. Á bómbié Hamza àà wíí bóŋ
 The boy Hamza REL weep.PST more
 ‘The boy who Hamza wept more than.’

It is noted that the subject, object, indirect object, oblique, possessor and object of comparison are grammatical positions that are accessible to relativization in Sisaalt.

4.6 The Head Noun within the Embedded Clause

Comrie (1989) points out that, the head noun within the embedded clause may be associated with a particular role. Cross-linguistically, the head noun in the embedded clause may be realised as a pronoun retention, a gap or a relative pronoun. In Sisaalt, the relativized noun is seen as a gap in the embedded clause. Consider the following examples.

Subject Relativization

(130) a. **A háán-à** àà pír á hántólíbì-hì ko
 DET woman.PL REL hurt DET girl-PL come.PST
 daha.

here

‘The women who hurt the girl came here.’

b. * **A háán-àj** àà **baj** pír á hántólíbì-hì
 DET woman.PL REL **they** hurt DET girl-PL

‘The women who hurt the girl.’

(131) a. **A báàl** àà ηmáá á bìé
 DET man REL beat.PST DET child

‘The man who beat the child.’

- b. * A báàlj àà ðj ηmáá á bié
 DET man REL **he** beat.PST DET child
 ‘The man who beat the child.’

Object Relativization

- (132) a. U kyɔɔ a kɪdɪlèè bà àà díé.
 3SG cook.PST DET food 3PL REL eat.PST
 ‘She cooked the food which they ate.’

- b. * U kyɔɔ a kɪdɪlèèj bà àà díé vj.
 3SG cook.PST DET food 3PL REL eat.PST it
 ‘She cooked the food which they ate.’

- (133) a. ŋ juŋ a bɪí-hì á báàl-à àà
 1SG know.PST DET child-PL DET man-PL REL
 ηmáá.
 beat.PST
 ‘I know the children who the men beat.’

- b. * ŋ juŋ a bɪí-hìj á báàl-à àà ηmáá
 1SG know.PST DET child-PL DET man-PL REL beat.PST
ba_j
 them
 ‘I know the children who the men beat.’

With reference to the above examples, the relativized nouns in the embedded clause are realised as gaps as illustrated in the subject and object relative clauses

above. Similar observation is made by Hiraiwa (2003). He also notes that the relativized subjects and objects in Buli are seen as gaps in the embedded clause. However, Bodomo & Hiraiwa (2004) point out in Dagaare, relativized nouns are also realised as gaps with the exception of relativized possessors which are seen as resumptive pronouns in the embedded clause.

4.7. Extra Posed Relative Clause

In most cases, relative clauses follow the antecedent NP in their distribution. However, Givon (2001) and Saah (2010) note that there are situations where other elements are introduced after the antecedent NP before the relative clause appears. Consider this example by Givon (2001).

(134) a. A man **came in yesterday** who lost his wallet.

(Givon 2001:207)

It is realised that the head noun *man* is not adjacent to the relative clause *who lost his wallet*. A similar situation is observed in Sisaalt. The examples below give an insight into this phenomenon.

(135) a. Bómbié **wè déŋ** [àà hì kaŋ ù mù diá.]
 boy is there REL FUT send it go house
 ‘There is a boy who will send it home for you.’

- b. Nèl kírìì wè dɛŋ [àà dàŋ á bìi-hí
 Person one is there REL cater the child-PL
 ‘There is someone who will cater for the children.’

The above examples show that the antecedents; *bombie* ‘boy’ and *nèl kírìì* ‘someone’ are followed by the verb phrase *wè dɛŋ* ‘is there’ before the embedded clause appears. Therefore, the verb phrase *wè dɛŋ* ‘is there’ separates the relativized nouns from the embedded clauses.

4.8 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a detailed analysis of the relative clause in Sɪsaalt. It has shown the structure of the relative clause and pointed out the elements that are found in the relative clause. It has also discussed the various grammatical positions that can be relativized. It has shown that the relative clause is the final element in the noun phrase when it occurs with other modifiers.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This study has been geared towards the description of the noun phrase in Sisaalt, by placing emphasis on the elements of the noun phrase and their sequential order. This chapter provides a summary of the aspects of the noun phrase discussed in each chapter and the recommendations for further study.

5.2 Summary of the Chapters

Chapter one has been concerned with the general introduction to this thesis. It provided the background for the study by looking at the Sisaalt language and its people, the research problem, the research questions, the objectives and the significance of the study. It also pointed out the various issues that were discussed in the subsequent chapters and showed how the thesis is organized.

Chapter two dealt with the review of literature that are relevant and related to the study. It presented the controversies surrounding the definition of a noun from both morpho-syntactic and semantics perspectives. It also discussed what a phrase is and distinguished it from a clause which helped to define a noun phrase. Issues with regard to what constitute the head of the noun phrase were also highlighted. The chapter again discussed studies on noun phrases which focused on the internal components of the noun phrase and how these elements are ordered.

Chapter three examined the nominal phrase in Sisaalt. The chapter began by analyzing the morpho-syntactic properties of subtypes of nouns and showed that common nouns serve as prototypical heads to the noun phrase. It again discussed bare nouns in Sisaalt and note that bare nouns are interpreted as generic or indefinite. The chapter provided a detailed discussion on reflexives and reciprocals. Determiners, possessives, adjectives, numerals, quantifiers, demonstratives and relative clauses were identified as modifiers in Sisaalt. It has also shown that the internal constituents of the noun phrase differ with regard to the dialect in question. Kpatolie dialect presents the determiner as a pre-nominal element which can occur with the demonstrative to exhibit deictic feature. Adjectives make distinctions between human and non-human nouns when they are used predicatively. Also, because adjectives and the head noun are joined together, the adjective is always the first post-nominal element in the noun phrase. Discussions on numerals also show that ordinal as modifiers can be expressed in various forms. The sequential order of the elements in the relative clause is realised as:

[(DET) (POSS) NOUN (ADJ) (NUM/DEM) (QUANT) (REL)]

Chapter four discussed the syntax of the clausal modifier, highlighting on the elements found in the clausal modifier. Relative clauses in Sisaalt are post modifiers and the final modifiers in a noun phrase when they occur with other modifiers. Again, a relative clause is marked by an obligatory relativizer and the relativized noun is realised as a gap in the embedded clause. Also, it has pointed out the various grammatical positions that are accessible to relativization.

5.3 Recommendations for Further Study

This study has been concerned with providing insight into the morpho-syntactic properties of the Sisaalt noun phrase. However, there are aspects of the Sisaalt noun phrase which this study could not cover. Further studies on the noun phrase in Sisaalt could examine the noun phrase in relation to its semantics.

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