

THE NOUN PHRASE IN OKERE

BY

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THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA,
LEGON IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT
FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN
LINGUISTICS DEGREE.

JULY 2019

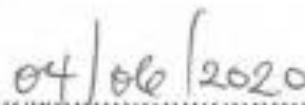
DECLARATION

I 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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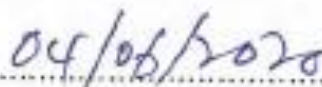


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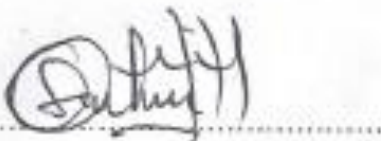


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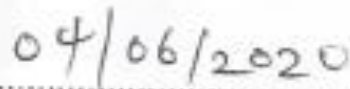


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DEDICATION

To my late father, Mr. Richard Kwame Oppong, who saw me start this program but could not live to see me finish. RK, may your soul Rest in Perfect Peace.

.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would first like to thank my thesis supervisors, Prof. Kofi Korankye Saah and Dr. Seth Antwi Ofori, for their mentorship in the writing of this thesis. Prof. Kofi Korankye Saah asked about my progress whenever we met and was always available to provide the relevant guidance whenever I needed one and consulted with him. Prof., I am very thankful for your time and, also, for believing in me. To Dr. Seth Antwi Ofori, I thank the Almighty God for your life for your openness and candidness. I benefitted greatly from your questions and suggestions. You were there for me always. God bless you for deciding to supervise my work and also for playing a father's role both in my private and academic life.

I would also like to thank all the lecturers of the Department of Linguistics, Legon. Special recognition goes to Prof. E. K. Osam, Prof. Kofi Agyekum, Prof. Nana A. A. Amfo, Dr. Paul Agbedor, Dr. Grace Diabah, Dr. Clement K. I. Appah, Dr. Fusheini Hudu, Dr. Reginald A. Duah, Dr. Yvonne Agbetsoamedo, Dr. Mercy Bobuafo and Dr. Kofi Dovlo, for the knowledge they imparted in me and their encouragements.

I would also like to thank my research consultants who were happy to work with me; with their support I was able to elicit the data that I needed for this thesis. I commend Mr. Atiemoh Michael, Mrs. Atiemoh Florence, Mr. Samuel Obiri, Mr. Kobby and BB, especially, for their assistance. God bless you all.

I would also like to thank my family for their support: Lydia Takyiwaa (my mother); Evelyn Yeboah and Mrs. Beatrice Bleppony (my sisters); and Richard Oppong, Richard Peasah Antwi, and Stephen Oppong (my brothers). God bless you, Family! To my colleague students, who all double as my brothers and sisters, I say God bless you. I would like to give special thanks to Mr Richard A. Lawer and Ms. Yvette Djabakie Asamoah for making my stay on campus lively. I say God bless you all for the nights we shared together learning. I thank the entire MPhil first year student for their encouragements. I thank Mr. Kelvin Godswill Tetteh for proofreading part of my work for me and encouraging me as well. Again, I am thankful to the non-teaching staff in the Department of Linguistics for their friendship and assistance.

My studies at Legon and the writing of this thesis could not have been possible without the support of the University of Ghana and, more importantly, without financial support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. I am most grateful to the University of Ghana for waiving my Tuition fees and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for providing me with a monthly stipend for the entire period of the study as well as a research grant for this thesis.

Overall, I am very thankful to the Almighty God for the encouragement, the courage, the insight, the love and the promises I received from His Word, with the passing of my father, while I was working on this degree.

ABSTRACT

A noun phrase is a phrase that behaves like a noun. The head of a noun phrase is technically the noun. In grammar, a noun phrase functions as subject and as object. The noun phrase is found in the grammar of all languages and, therefore, this thesis aims to examine it in ɔkere, a Guan language which is spoken in Ghana. This thesis examines the constituent structure of the noun phrase in ɔkere, with primary focus on determining the constraints on head-noun modification in the ɔkere noun phrase, and on establishing how constituent (morphological and syntactic) units are distributed or organized within the noun phrase in ɔkere. arranged. organized. modifiers are organized with respect to the head-noun in the noun phrase in ɔkere. The study is descriptive and is based on field-work data collected from the ɔkere-speaking communities in the Eastern region of Ghana. Some of the discoveries made about the noun phrase in ɔkere are as follows: the noun phrase in ɔkere has an obligatory head, which may or may not occur with a modifier. Head-noun modifiers exist as pre-modifiers or post-modifiers of the head-noun in the following sequential order: (Pre-Det) N (Adj) (Qt/Num) (Det) (RC). This distributional structure of constituent-units within the ɔkere NP is an evidence in support of the designation of ɔkere as a member of the Kwa sub-family of the Niger-Congo phylum.

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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
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
POSS	possessive
PST	past
RECG	Recognitional
REL	relativiser
SG	singular
SUBJ	subject

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This thesis examines the structure of the noun phrase in ɔkere. ɔkere is spoken on the hills of Akuapem. This thesis describes the structure of the simple and the complex NP in ɔkere. This chapter introduces this study. The background of the thesis is presented in section 1.2. This is followed by an insight into the ɔkere people in section 1.3 and the language in 1.4. The structure of the language is also presented in section 1.5. The problem statement, which drives this study, is presented in section 1.6. Besides, the chapter states the objectives of the study, the research questions and the significance of the study in sections 1.7, 1.8 and 1.9, respectively. These are followed by the research methodology employed in this study in section 1.11. In Section 1.12, I give an overview of the chapters in this thesis.

1.2 The Background of the study

The noun phrase (NP) is a phrase that is structured around a noun or pronoun which is the head (cf. Hawkins 2011 and Carnie 2013). For example: *The big chair* is an NP and *chair* is the head-noun. This implies that the head *chair* carries the semantic content of the phrase and it can be made to represent the entire phrase.

Hengeveld (2008) identifies two kinds of NP's, prototypical and non-prototypical noun phrases. The prototypical noun phrase has a noun as the head, but the non-prototypical NP does not have a noun as its head. In this type of NP, elements such as numerals, adjectives and demonstratives may head the NP. He refers to this kind of NP as a non-nominal NP (Hengeveld 2008). In this thesis, I describe the prototypical noun phrase in ɔkere.

As regards the head of the noun phrase, Hawkins (2011) argues that there are two views about it cross-linguistically. The first view concerning the noun phrase is that any element that is regarded as a noun phrase must be constructible (Hawkins 2011). This suggests that an NP should be composed of at least one word. Carnie (2013) also maintains that the simplest NP that we can have is the one that contains just a noun such as *Stephen*, *air*, and *dogs* or a pronoun such as, *she* and *him*.

The second view is that all elements that belong to the noun phrase should be able to qualify to be the head of the NP (Hawkins 2011). The elements are termed as modifiers. Adjectives, numerals, classifiers, linkers, possessives, relative clauses, etc. are all modifiers in the NP. These modifiers can come after the head of the NP or before it, depending on the syntax of the language.

1.3 The background of ɔkere People

The Akuapem traditional area has three divisions. The people of ɔkere form the Nifa division of the Akuapem traditional area (Gilbert 1997). The other two divisions are the Benkum and Adonten divisions. These divisions reflect the ethnic and linguistic variety of the communities. In the eighteenth century, the Guans and the ɔkere who occupied the two high ridges were referred to as the 'Akuapems' (Gilbert 1997). According to Kwamena-Poh (1973, cited in Gilberts 1997), the name literally meant *akuw-apem* 'thousand companies'. After the Akyem-Abuakwa people banished the Akwamu people from the hills and ruled over the Guans who are believed to be the first occupants of the area, the name Akuapem shifted to mean the Akan overloads (Gilberts 1997).

The ɔkere people are also referred to as Kyerepon by non-native ɔkere people (Opere 2004 and Animah 2015). According to Gilberts (1997), Kyerepon was used to refer to the ɔkere people in Awukugwa. This is because the Awukugua people migrated from ɔkerekpongo, which the Akan pronounced as Kyerepong. This name was later extended to all the ɔkere natives.

ɔkere is spoken in seven communities. These are Abiriw, Dawu, Awukugwa, Adukrom, Apirede, Abonse and Aseseeso (see Figure (3) for a map showing all the villages where ɔkere is spoken). The people of ɔkere celebrate Ohum and Odwira. They celebrate Odwira because the Akuapems also celebrate

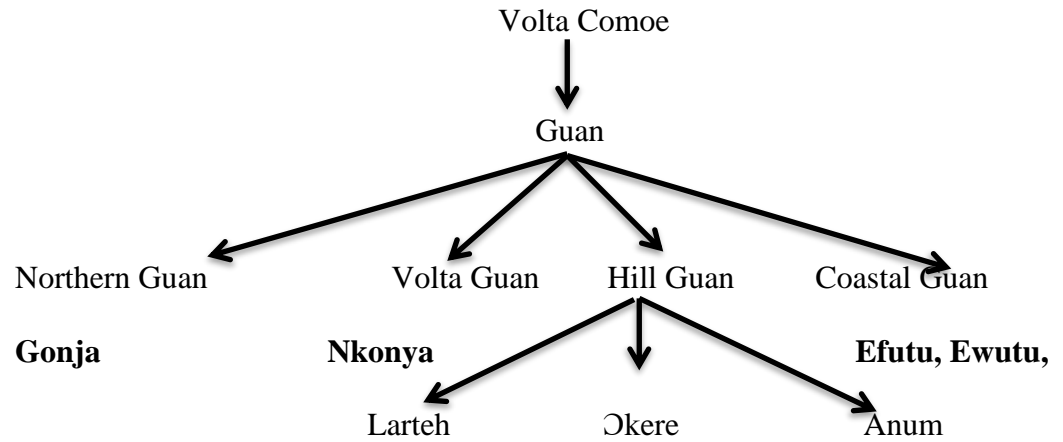
Odwira but Ohum is their festival (Gilbert 1997). The people of ɔkere also practice the patrilineal system of inheritance.

1.4 The Genetic affiliation of ɔkere language

ɔkere is one of the four Guan languages. Guan languages are affiliated to the Volta Comoe family, which is a member of the Kwa language family. Broadly speaking, ɔkere belongs to the Niger-Congo family. Guan languages are grouped into four- Hill, Coastal, Volta and Northern (Dakubu 1988). ɔkere is a Hill Guan. This is because it is a Guan spoken on a hill (see Figure (2) for a language map of Ghana showing where ɔkere is spoken). All the towns where the language is spoken are found in the ɔkere constituency within the ɔkere district in the Eastern region.

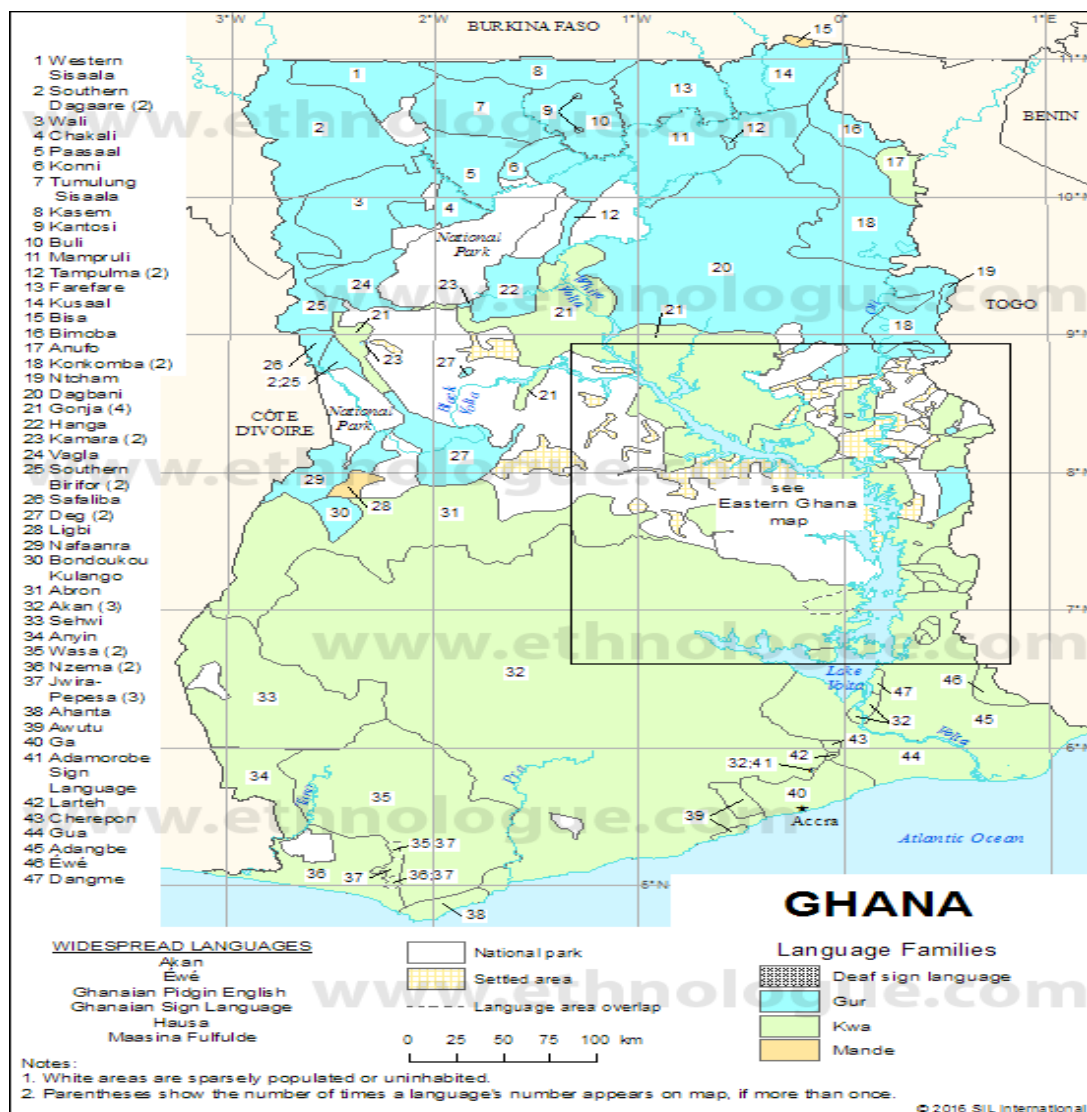
The people in this community speak ɔkere as their first language and the Akuapem language as their L2, since it is the ‘superior’ language in the area (Animah, 2015). As illustrated in figure (1), together with Larteh and Anum, they form the three main Hill Guan Languages.

Figure 1. Classification of Okere language



Source: Adapted from Animah (2015: 6)

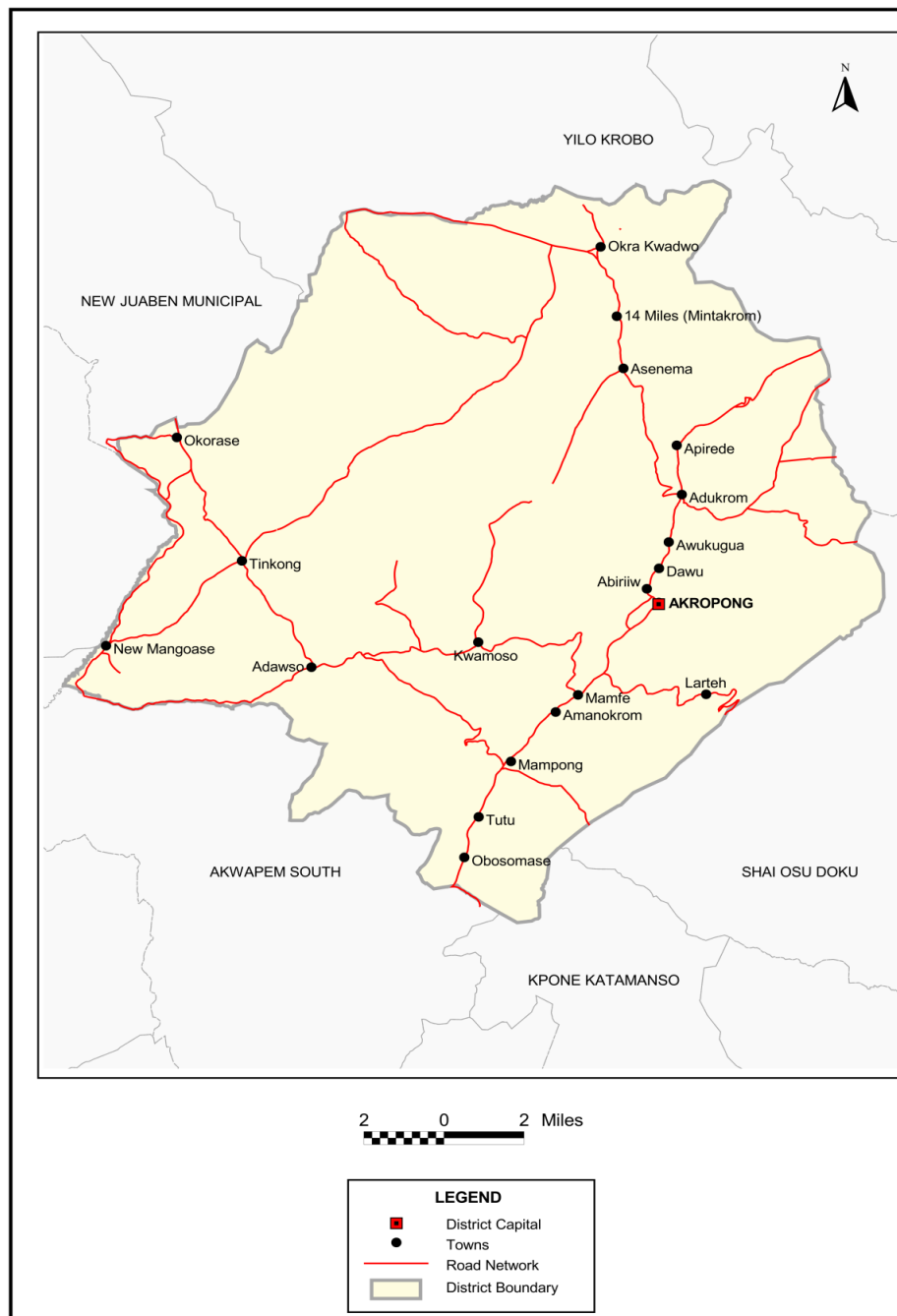
Figure 2. The language map of Ghana



The number 43 is where Okere is spoken.

Source: Ethnologue 2016

Figure 3. A map showing where Okere is spoken



Source: 2010 Population and Census Report, District Analytical Report, Akwapem North Municipal.

1.5 The Structure of the ɔkɛrɛ language

This sub-section gives a brief insight into the linguistic structure of the language. The focus is on the phonology and syntax of the language. Section 1.5.1 looks at the phonology of ɔkɛrɛ while in section 1.5.2, I take a cursory look at the syntax of the language.

1.5.1 The Phonology of ɔkɛrɛ

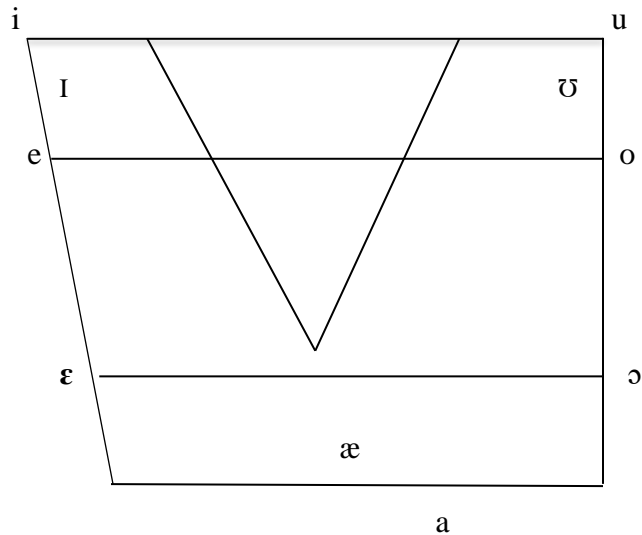
Here, I describe the tonal system and also the sound systems of the language. Tone is contrastive in ɔkɛrɛ, with two contrastive tones in the language (Animah 2015). The data in (1) show the contrastive use of tone in ɔkɛrɛ.

- (1) a. àkyí ‘lady’
b. ákyì ‘knife’

Example (1) has two words with the same set of sounds but different in meaning as a result of tone. In example (1a), there is a low and a high tone and in (1b) there is a high and a low tone. These tones bring about the differences in meaning between àkyí ‘lady’ and ákyì ‘knife’.

According to Sulemana (2011) and Animah (2015), ɔkɛrɛ has seventeen (17) vowel phonemes. Out of these vowels, there ten (10) oral vowel /i, ɪ, e, ɛ, æ, a, u, ʊ, o, ɔ/ and seven (7) are nasal vowels (Animah 2015).

Figure 4. A vowel chart showing ɔkere oral vowels



Source: Adapted from Animah (2015: 32)

Animah (2015) argues that the seven nasal vowels have oral counterparts, except /e/, /o/ and /æ/. Table (1) below gives example of oral vowels in ɔkere and how they are orthographically represented.

Table 1. Representation of ɔkere oral vowels in words

Sound	Orthography	Example	Gloss
/i/	i	abobi	animal
/ɪ/	i	intɛ	drink
/e/	e	eni	meat
/ɛ/	ɛ	ɛne	us
/u/	u	hu	head
/ʊ/	o	koto	hat
/o/	o	otobi	beads
/ɔ/	ɔ	ɔta	cloth
/æ/	a	adekye	
/a/	a	asa	broom

In addition to the vowel sounds, figure (5) shows consonant sounds in ɔkɛrɛ, and their articulatory information such voicing, place of articulation and manner of articulation.

Figure 5. ɔkɛrɛ consonant sounds

	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Labial-velar
Plosive	P b		t d		k g	kp gb
Affricate			ts	tʃ ʃ		
Nasal	m		n	ɲ	ŋ	
Lateral			l			
Trill			r			
Fricative		f	s			
Approximant	w			y		

Source: Adapted from Dakubu (1988:81) and Animah (2015: 31)

Some consonant sounds in have different orthographic representation. The alveolar nasal /n/, palatal nasal /ɲ/ and velar nasal /ŋ/ are all represented orthographically by ‘n’. The /tʃ/ sound is represented orthographically by ‘ky’ as in *akyibi* ‘child’.

1.5.2 The Syntactic Structure of ɔkɛrɛ

This sub-section briefly describes the basic sentence structure in ɔkɛrɛ. ɔkɛrɛ is a subject-verb-object (SVO) language like many Kwa languages. That is, the subject

precedes the verb, which may be followed by an object, as shown in (2) and (3) below.

(2) me-mɔ ɔwɔ
 1SG.NOM-kill.PST snake
 ‘I killed a snake’

(3) n-kyì-bí à yo boɛfiew
 PL-girl-DIM DEF be.PRES beautiful
 ‘The girls are beautiful’

The structures above are unmarked declarative sentences in ɔkɛrɛ. In focus construction, however, the verb or the object can precede the subject (see eg. Animah 2015). Consider the examples below.

(4) a. Kya a so ne anyemi a yérí.
 Building DEF top FOC boy DEF stand.CONT
 ‘It is on THE BUILDING that the boy is standing’
 (Animah 2015: 73, ex (69d))

b. E-gua ne a-né-guà.
 NOML-run FOC 3SG-PROG-run
 ‘RUNNING he is doing.’/ ‘He is running.’
 (Animah 2015: 76, ex (75a))

Example (4a), is an object focus construction in ɔkɛrɛ. The object *Kya* ‘building’ precedes the subject *anyemi* ‘boy’ in this construction. Also, (4b) is a typical

example of a predicate focus in ɔkɛrɛ. In (4b), the verb precedes the subject. As stated earlier, the constructions in (4) are marked declarative sentences in ɔkɛrɛ.

1.6 The Problem Statement

Studying African languages have been a major concern to linguists, particularly African linguists. ɔkɛrɛ is one of the Guan languages which have not received much attention in research. Bramson (1981) focused on the varieties of ɔkɛrɛ that are spoken in Abiriw, Dawu and Apiredi. Sulemana (2011) did a sketch of ɔkɛrɛ phonology, and Collins (2011) studied the Tense and Aspect of the language. Animah (2015) worked on the syntax of ɔkɛrɛ where she studied focus marking in the language. No study has paid attention to the details of the NP in ɔkɛrɛ; therefore this study fills this gap. By focusing on the NP, this thesis describes an important part of the syntax of the language this is because the internal structure of the NP includes other complex syntactic structures in the language.

1.7 The objectives of the Study

The study aims at documenting an aspect of ɔkɛrɛ syntax, the noun phrase. Therefore, the specific objectives of this thesis are to:

- (a) examine the constituent structure of the ɔkɛrɛ noun phrase,
- (b) examine the sequential order of modifiers in ɔkɛrɛ NPs relative to the head noun, and

- (c) Examine the structure of the complex NP in ɔkere: the relativized NP and consequently the structure of the relative clause and possessive constructions in ɔkere.

1.8 Research question

The study is guided by the following research questions.

- (a) What is the constituent structure of the NP in ɔkere?
- (b) How are modifiers ordered with respect to the head noun in the simple ɔkere NP?
- (c) What is the structure of the complex NP in ɔkere?

1.9 The Significance of the Study

The study gives an insight into the simple and the complex NP in ɔkere.

It contributes to the efforts aimed at documenting the ɔkere language and therefore, will serve as reference material for future research on the syntax of ɔkere.

1.10 The scope of the Study

The study is limited to only one of the Guan languages, ɔkere. The study focuses on the ɔkere that is spoken at Abiriw and Adukrom. Furthermore, this thesis concentrates on an aspect of the syntax, of ɔkere, the NP.

1.11 Methodology

This section discusses the research methodology employed in this study. Here, I discuss the research design, the research site, the research population and sample and sources of data.

1.11.1 Research Design

This thesis is structured within the qualitative research approach. Qualitative research is an exploratory kind of research that is executed in a natural setting (Creswell 1998). Thus, the study employed the documentary approach using fieldwork methods to collect a diverse set of data. The study also used elicitations for the collection of data using the SIL Comparative African Wordlist.

The study chooses a qualitative research approach because it provides the avenue for appreciating a natural phenomenon. This approach allows us to give comprehensive information about the situation.

1.11.2 Research Site

To collect data, the study selected two of the ɔkere villages, Abiriw and Adukrom. Abiriw and Adukrom are selected because the ɔkere people in these two towns speak the same dialect of ɔkere according to Animah (2015). In addition, to be consistent, the study focuses on the ɔkere spoken in Abiriw and Adukrom.

1.11.3 The Sources of Data and Data Collection

The study makes use of both primary and secondary data. The greater part of the study relies on primary data. The primary data was gathered through extensive fieldwork. Works written about ɔkere and in ɔkere and other Kwa languages were used as secondary data in this study; these include Sulemana (2011), Collins (2011), Animah (2015) and Saah (2010).

Data for this study were collected from various sources. Some of the data were collected using the SIL Comparative African Wordlist. The SIL Comparative African Wordlist was employed to elicit some lexical items (Snider and Roberts 2004). As such, it was used to collect data on nouns in the language. Some of the data were collected from radio conversations and were translated with the help of respondents. The study made use of data collected from spontaneous spoken discourse in the language. Speakers were also given real life situations to discuss and data were also drawn from these conversations. Also, I sought these native speakers' grammaticality judgement on phrases I constructed in the language as I became more and more knowledgeable in the lexicon and the principles that underlie their organization with noun phrases every day.

1.11.4 Population and Sample Size

The population for this study is the speakers of Ɔkere in Abiriw and Adukrom. Within the Ɔkere community, I randomly approached native speakers (language background, family background and settlement history decided that they were native speakers) of Ɔkere who could speak the language and at least English or Akan to make it easier for the researcher to communicate with them since I could not speak Ɔkere. In all, six people were frequently contacted and used in this study, four (4) males and two females. Their ages were between 16 and 52. Four (4) of the respondents have completed Senior High School, one (1) has completed the University of Cape Coast and one (1) has not had any form of formal education. This was done to capture how the language is used by both the old and new generations.

1.12 Overview of Chapters

This thesis has five chapters. Chapter one is the general introduction to this thesis. This chapter gives a background to this thesis as well as states the objectives of this study.

Chapter two looks at the literature review and the theoretical framework that drives the analysis in the study. As part of the review, the study reviews the literature on NPs in several languages, focusing on the structure and component of

the NP in these languages with attention to the literature on the NPs in Kwa and Guan languages.

Chapter three and chapter four follow the structure of Dryer (2007), which categorized possessive constructions and the relative clauses as complex NP and characterized the NPs that are composed of determiners, numerals, adjectives and the like as simple noun phrase. Hence, in chapter three, I discuss the structure of the simple noun phrase in Okere. Particular attention is given to the bare noun phrase and the noun phrase with modifiers. Here, nouns that can be used without modifiers in Okere are discussed in detail as well as nouns that can occur with modifiers and the kind of modifiers they take. As noted above, chapter four presents the complex noun phrase in Okere. Here, I look at two constructions: the NP embedded with a relative clause and possessive constructions.

The concluding chapter, chapter five, provides a comprehensive summary of all the chapters. The chapter also gives a summary of the findings and some recommendations for future researchers who would like to work on the noun phrase or the Okere language.

1.13 The Summary of Chapter

This chapter introduced the thesis, providing the background to the study as well as the background of the Okere language and its speakers. In addition, the thesis gives insight into the genetic affiliation of the Okere language where the language

family that Okere belongs is shown. The chapter also discusses the problem statement, objectives of the study and the research questions that inform the study. Moving on, the significance of the study and the scope of the study are also discussed. Finally, the chapter also looked at the methodology of the study, dealing with the data collection procedure as well as the breakdown of chapters in the thesis.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the focus is on the literature review as well as the framework within which the analysis is approached. In the literature of NPs, the relative clause embedded in an NP and possessive constructions have been categorized as complex NPs and the NPs with or without the other modifiers is referred to as the simple NP. This division informs the discussion in chapter three and four. Hence, the current chapter is organized as follows. Section 2.2 discusses the noun. The discussion in section 2.3 focusses on the head noun. Section 2.4 looks at noun modification cross-linguistically and how noun modifiers are organized with the head noun in languages. The literature concerning the NPs in Kwa languages is reviewed in section 2.5 for this purpose. The theoretical framework for this study is discussed in section 2.6 and the chapter ends in section 2.8 with a summary of the chapter.

2.2 The Noun

Traditionally, nouns are words that refer to entities such as persons, places, things, or idea. Nouns could also be identified by their form and their distribution (Tallerman 2015). Nouns could either be proper (eg. Lydia, Lawer, Kwame, Osei,

Kumasi, Indiana, etc.) or common (book, woman, room, town, etc.). Nouns can also be either concrete (eg. table, phone, and book) or abstract (eg. love, hate, stress, and anxiety). They are also count (eg. pens, and stones) or mass (eg. Rice, sugar and salt). In most languages of the world, the noun could be marked for number, case, definiteness and it can also show possession (Haspelmath 2001, Finnegan 2008). Nouns have syntactic characteristics which are a combination of two properties that are linked: grammatical roles in the clause and syntactic roles in the noun phrase (Givon 2001). Thus, a noun or NP can be a subject, direct object, or indirect object and within the NP, a noun plays the role as the head.

2.2.1 Number Marking and Noun class

In this section, I show how number marking in Akan. Number marking in Akan is shown in its affixal system (prefixation and suffixation) which is an important feature in the nominal morphology of Akan and other languages. These number markings result in a noun class system.

As regards prefixation, Akan has three ways of showing number: a vowel, a nasal consonant (homorganic nasal) or a zero morpheme (Boadi 2010). Illustrate this in example (1a-f).

	Singular	Plural
(1). a.	à-bofra	Ñ-bofra
	SG-child	pl-child
	‘a child’	‘children’

b.	ò-bá SG-son, daughter 'a son, daughter'	Ñ-bá PL-son, daughter 'sons, daughters'
c.	ò-kótò SG-crab 'crabs'	à-kótò PL-crab 'crabs'
d.	è-hyén SG-vehicle 'a vehicle'	à-hyén PL-vehicle 'vehicles'
e.	dùá SG.tree 'a tree'	Ñ-dùá PL-tree 'trees'
f.	gyatá SG.lion 'a lion'	a-gyatá PL-lion 'lions'

Example (1a-f) indicates number marking in Akan through prefixation. The homorganic nasal plural marking assimilates to the place of the sound it precedes and thus, it is realized as [m, n, ŋ] in different contexts (Boadi 2010). The vowel prefixes in the language are largely determined by the “Advanced-Tongue-Root phonological specification of the vowels of the noun-root or stem” (Boadi 2010:183). This implies that phonological and morphological factors underlie prefixal number marking in Akan.

In addition, Akan uses suffixation to mark number, but an essential function of suffixation is derivation (see Boadi 2010). In example (2), I give some examples of the use of suffixes to show number marking in Akan.

Singular	Plural
(2). a. sante-ni sante-SG ‘A person from Asante territory’	sante-fóɔ sante-PL ‘Persons from Asante territory’
b. fante-ni fante-SG ‘A person from Fante territory’	fante-fóɔ fante-PL ‘Persons from Fante territory’
c. kwawu-ni kwawu-SG ‘A person from Kwahu territory’	kwahu-fóɔ kwahu-PL ‘Persons from Kwahu territory’

In example (2), the singular suffix marker *ni* and the plural suffix marker *fóɔ* are attached to the root nouns to indicate singular and plural.

Similarly, I show in chapter three, I show that Okere also shows number marking on nouns through its affixal system.

2.3 The head of the NP

The NP can be headed by a bare noun or pronoun. The bare NP contains only the lexical head, which could be proper, common, abstract or concrete. According to Truppi (2014), the traditional notion of a bare noun phrase is when there is no determiner attached to the noun phrase.

The bare noun phrase occurs in many languages of the world in many argument positions. Yang (2001) posits that English bare plurals and mass nouns could occur both at external and internal argument positions but singular nouns in

English could not be realized in the way that the plural nouns and the mass nouns are distributed. Following Carlson (1977), Yang (2001) agrees that English bare plurals and mass nouns could be interpreted on three levels: a kind-level predicate, individual-level predicate and stage-level predicate. As illustrated in examples (1a-c) below, a kind-level predicate relates to interpretations that are species-oriented while that of individual-level and stage-level predicates relate generic readings in context and existential readings in context (Yang 2001).

- (3). a. Dogs are widespread. *Kind-level predicate*
 b. I saw snow yesterday. *Stage-level predicate*
 c. Dog are mammals. *Individual-level predicate* (Yang 2001: 14)

A kind-level predicate (as in 3a) is where what is being said about the bare NP is true of the whole species or kind but cannot be attributed to one type of the kind. In example (3a), the bare noun, 'Dogs', is generic. That is, it refers to dogs in general and not a specific kind of dog (eg. bulldog, German shepherd or poodle). The kind level predicate in (3a) is therefore true of the whole dog species, not a specific dog. As regards example (3b), there is an interpretation of 'snow' as being in a stage of temporality. This is what Yang refers to as a stage-level predicate because bare NP, 'snow', as it is in the real world is inherently temporal. Thus,

intelligent’, referring to a particular ‘dog’ or ‘dogs’ in general. This is possible in Chinese and not in English because in Chinese there is no overt determiner that marks definiteness. (Yang 2001, Hseih 2008).

Truppi (2014) studied bare NPs in Kriyol, a creole language spoken mainly in Guinea-Bissau and some parts of Senegal. Truppi (2014) explains that bare NPs are very common in Kriyol and other creole languages. Truppi (2014) observes that bare NPs in Kriyol can occur in all argument positions (subject or object). He further explains that bare NPs in Kriyol used as subjects can be interpreted in only one way. That is either definite or indefinite and not both in (5a) and (5b).

- (5). a. **Renda** na karu kada byas mas.
rent CONT expensive each time more
(i) ‘The rent is becoming more and more expensive.’
- b. **Djenti** sta la i tera so pa lavoru.
people stay LOC and land only for cultivation
(i) ‘People are there and the land is only for the cultivation.’

(Truppi 2014: 127)

The examples above illustrate Kriyol subject bare NPs that have been interpreted as definite (5a) and indefinite (5b). This is quite different when the bare NP is used as an object. Whereas Kriyol bare NP at the subject position can have only one interpretation (either definite or indefinite), Kriyol bare NP in the object position could be interpreted in both ways. This is shown in example (6).

(6). U ta maradu **panu**.

2sg HAB tie-ed towel

a. ‘A towel is tied around you.’

b. ‘The towel is tied around you.’ (Truppi 2014: 131)

Bare NPs in Kwa languages have also been discussed in Aboh (2010).

Aboh (2010) asserts that the bare NPs in Kwa languages can be used in all syntactic environments. In (7a), and (7b) are sentences with bare NPs in Gungbe and Ewegbe. In (7b), the bare NP, *Àsé* ‘cat’ in Gungbe is realized indefinite while in (7a), the Ewegbe bare NP, *ɲdɔ* ‘sun’, is interpreted as definite.

(7). a. *Àsé jè càzù mè!*

cat fall pot in Gungbe

‘A cat fell in a pot’

b. *ɲdɔ vu sesie egbea akpa*

sun open hard today too much Ewegbe

‘The sun was too hot today’ (Aboh 2010: 12)

In (7a), the bare NP in Gungbe, *àsé* ‘cat’, is indefinite. The bare NP *ɲdɔ* ‘sun’ refers to a unique entity in Ewegbe and as such has a definite meaning (Aboh 2010). Again, in some Kwa languages, the bare NP could be interpreted as definite when the interlocutors know the entity being referred to (cf. Aboh 2010).

Jenks (2013) also explores the bare NP in Moro, a Heiban language spoken in Sudan. Determiners and articles are absent in this language. This means that bare NPs are used in all syntactic arguments. Jenks (2013) posits that bare NPs in Moro could be interpreted as definite, indefinite or generic. He further reveals that

singular nouns in Moro could not be generically interpreted but plural nouns could be interpreted as such. In the subject positions of example (8a) and (8b), these are exemplified.

- (8). a. eḏa j-a-ŋər-á
 PL.meat CL-RTC-good-ADJ
 ‘Meat is good.’ (Jenks 2013: 4)
- b. rḏa r-a-ŋər-á
 SG.meat CL-RTC -good- ADJ
 ‘The/Some piece of meat is good.’ (Jenks 2013: 4)

According to Jenks (2013: 5), when the Moro singular bare NP is used, it “forces a referential reading for the subject”. In this regard, the subject noun is definite. But when the plural bare NP is used as a subject it acquires a generic interpretation. Jenks (2013) also shows that in Moro bare singular nouns can be realized as non-specific in non-episodic environments. This could occur as both the subject and object position of a conditional sentence (see Jenks 2013: 5 example 4).

However, the bare NP Buli (a Gur language) is quite different from the bare noun phrases Kwa languages (Aboh 2010) and in Moro (Jenks 2013). In Buli, bare NPs (eg. *bū:k* ‘goat’ in (9a) and *lām* ‘meat’ in (9b)) only express indefiniteness and have only generic reading (Sulemana 2012).

- (9). a. bū:k à-ŋḃbī vá:tà
 goat.INDEF PRES-chew leaves
 ‘A goat chews leaves.’ (Sulemana 2012: 48)

b. *bīa ká à-ŋɔ̃bī lām*
 dog DEF PRES-chew meat.INDEF
 ‘The dog chews meat’ (Sulemana 2012: 49)

Definiteness is expressed overtly by *ká* after the head noun as in *bīa ká* ‘the dog’ in (9b) in Buli. In (9a) and (9b) the bare NPs *bū:k* ‘goat’ and *lām* ‘meat’ are realized as indefinite in Buli. When the NP is attached with a determiner in (9b), the NP then assumes a definite meaning. This is not to say that indefiniteness is covertly marked. In (10), the noun *núr* is overtly marked for indefiniteness with *-ú*.

(10). *núr-ú àlē dzām dè*
 man-INDEF SUBJ.PART came here
 ‘A man came here’

In summary, it is seen that Buli marks both definiteness and indefiniteness with overt determiners and can mark indefiniteness only covertly (cf. Sulemana 2012).

Dagaare is like Buli in the way their bare noun phrases behave. In Dagaare, the bare NP can only mark indefiniteness (Ganaah 2011). In no other context could the bare NP show definiteness. This is because in marking definiteness the NP should be preceded by the definite determiner ‘*a*’.

The bare NP in Oksapmin (Trans–New Guinea language spoken in Papua New Guinea) could also be a demonstrative (Loughnane 2009), as shown in (11).

- (11). max
 RECG¹
 ‘you know the one’ (Loughnane 2009: 176)

He refers to this type of demonstrative as a free demonstrative. According to Loughnane (2009) “[f]ree demonstratives are phonologically independent words and are used for discourse-deictic, tracking and recognitional purposes”. Free demonstrative essentially functions in discourse. According to Himmerlmann (1996) and Loughnane (2009), free demonstratives are used when the referent is earlier mentioned or not mentioned and or if the addressee is expected to know the referent or not.

Diessel (1999) also calls free demonstratives as adnominal demonstratives. These demonstratives occur freely in all argument positions. Halliday and Hassan (1976) argue that free demonstratives exist because of nominal ellipsis. They explain that this type of ellipsis occurs within an NP where a modifying element like demonstratives, classifiers and numerals take the function of the omitted noun head. This is because when there is no ellipsis the noun is the head of the noun phrase. As such, they state that nominal ellipsis “involves the upgrading of a word functioning as Deictic, Numerative, Epithet or Classifier from the status of Modifier to the status of Head” (Halliday and Hassan 1976: 148). The above

¹ RECG is an abbreviation for Recognitional

positions are all relevant in analyzing the bare NP in Okere in this thesis. I show in chapter three that the bare NP in Okere can be interpreted as definite, indefinite or as having a generic reference. It would be shown when the different senses are realized in the Okere sentence.

2.4 Noun Modification

The noun can be modified by elements such as determiners, numerals, nouns, quantifiers, and relative clauses, cross-linguistically. This section discusses the range of noun modification in related languages as background to the constituent structure analysis of the NP in Okere.

2.4.1 The Head Noun and Determiners

Depending on the syntax of the language, a determiner can occur either before or after its head noun. Determiners occur before the head noun in English but after the head noun in Buli (Sulemana 2012) and other related languages. Again, as would be seen in this sub-section, a determiner can either agree with the head noun in number or gender depending on how a language treats it.

2.4.1.1 Demonstratives

Demonstratives agree with the head noun in Larteh, also a Guan language (Ansah 2014). Ansah (2014) shows that Larteh has two demonstratives, namely proximal and distal demonstratives. This is in line Dixon (2003) who argues that every language would have two demonstratives if not more. As shown in (12a & 12b), Ansah (2014) explains that demonstratives agree with the head nouns in number. The plural marker for the demonstrative in Larteh is the suffix *-nɛ*.

- (12). a. a-tale a-kitibi mɔ
 SG-dress SG-small PROX.DEM.SG
 ‘This small dress’ (Ansah 2014: 18)
- b. n-tale n-kitibi nu mɔ-nɛ
 PL-dress PL-small five DIST.DEM-PL
 ‘Those five small dresses’. (Ansah 2014: 18)

In example (12b), the plural marker for the demonstrative is present because the head noun *ntale* ‘dresses’ is plural. On the other hand, in (12a), the demonstrative is singular because the head noun is singular, *atale* ‘dress’. It is quite a widespread phenomenon that demonstratives agree with the head noun (Bobuafor 2013 and Agbetsoamedo 2014). Demonstratives as noun modifiers in ɔkere are analyzed in chapter three.

- (14). a. hu wu-kat-i ni² palkiy
 1SG see-INDIC the woman
 ‘I saw the woman’ (Dryer 2007: 1)
- b. hu wu-kat-i palkiy
 1SG see-INDIC woman
 ‘I see a woman’ (Dryer 2007: 2)

On the other hand, in Madang (a language spoken in Papua New Guinea), there is a reverse of the situation in Kutenai. Madang has an indefinite article but does not have a definite article (Dryer 2007). In (15a), the head noun, *dana* ‘man’, precedes the indefinite article, *oso*, but in (15d), there is no definite article introduced on the head noun, *dana* ‘man’.

- (15). a. dana oso ija na sign heje on^[SEP]
 man INDEF 1SG GEN knife illicit take.3SG.REMOTE.PAST
 ‘A man stole my knife’
- b. dana ho-i-a
 man come-3SG-PAST.TODAY
 ‘The man came’ (Dryer 2007:2)

Dryer (2007) also explains that there are cases where a language will have both the definite and the indefinite articles but will exhibit different syntax in relation to the head noun. According to Frajzyngier (1993, cited in Dryer 2007), in Mupun, a Chadic language spoken in Nigeria, the indefinite marker, *mee*, precedes the head noun, *ngu* ‘man’, as in (16a); the definite marker in Mapun, *nə*, follows the head noun, as in (16b).

- (16). a. mee ngu nan
 INDEF man adult
 ‘An old man’ (Dryer 2007:2)
- b. nləər dəsə nə
 shirt DEM DEF
 ‘This very shirt’ (Dryer 2007: 2)

Unlike the others, Moro has no articles, definite or indefinite Jenks (2013). In this case, the language makes use of the bare noun phrase in cases when other determiners, like the demonstrative, or other modifiers do not modify the noun head. This is shown in (17a) where both *um:iə* ‘boy’ and *rǝa* ‘meat’ lack articles.

- (17). a. **um:iə** atə k-ért-ǝ **rǝa**, n-áj-s-é
 SG.boy if CL-has-PFV SG.meat_{SEP} CMP-3SG-eat-SUB
 ‘If a boy has a piece of meat, then he eats it.’
 (Jenks 2013: 5)

It is important to note that Moro is the direct opposite of Larteh, a language closer to Ɔkere. Larteh has both the definite and indefinite article (Ansah 2014). Unlike the definite article, the indefinite article in Larteh agrees in number with the head noun (Ansah 2014). This is illustrated in (18b-c)

- (18) b. o-nyine ɔ-tɔntɔ ɔ-ko.
 SG-man SG-tall SG-INDEF
 ‘A tall man’.
- c. e-nyine n-tɔntɔ n-ko.
 PL-man PL-tall PL-INDEF

‘Some tall men’

(Ansah 2014:19)

The observations made so far in this section will be relevant in the analysis of definite and indefinite articles in $\text{\textcircled{O}kere}$. Many languages also exhibit the absence of either the definite or indefinite article, but the definite and indefinite articles are both present in $\text{\textcircled{O}kere}$. I show this in chapter three. In addition, I will also show that the indefinite article in $\text{\textcircled{O}kere}$ do not show number concord with the head noun as it happens in Larteh.

2.4.2 The Head Noun and Numerals

Two kinds of numerals, namely cardinal and ordinals, serve as noun modifiers in several languages. Cardinal numerals show the number of referents that the head of the noun phrase represents and ordinals, on the other hand, indicates the order in which an NP referent is relative to other referents (Dryer 2007). Cardinal and ordinal numbers differ in terms of their syntax and their agreement to the head noun in some languages. In Karo Batak, a language spoken in Indonesia, ordinal numbers are post-nominal and cardinal numbers are pre-modifiers (Woollams 1996). This is presented in (19a) and (19b).

(19) a. telu sembuyak
 three brother
 ‘Three brothers’

(Woollams 1996: 129)

b. jumpa pemena
 meet first

‘First encounter’

(Woollams 1996: 130)

The cardinal numeral *telu* ‘three’ precedes the head noun *sembuyak* ‘brother’ in (19a) and the ordinal numeral, *pemena* ‘first’, precedes the head noun in (19b). The syntax of numerals in Moro NPs, according to Jenks (2013), is such that numerals occur after the head just like Kwa languages (Aboh 2010) and Buli (Sulemana 2012). Numerals in Sɛlɛɛ (an ATM language) NPs are quite different. In Sɛlɛɛ, cardinal numerals counting from one to ten follow the noun but when dealing with numerals from 11 to 19, those in tens precede the head noun and the ones follow the head noun (see Agbetsoanedo 2014).

In relation to the above, I discuss the relationship between numerals (cardinals) and the head noun in ɔkere in chapter three of this thesis. Due to the structure of the ordinal numeral in ɔkere, I discuss the relationship between the ordinal numeral and the noun head in chapter 4 under the complex NP in ɔkere.

2.4.3 The Head Noun and Adjectives

Adjectives also modify the head noun in an NPs in many languages. Adjectives that are within the NP perform attributive functions as opposed to predicative adjectives that occur after copular verbs. The form of some adjectives shows that some adjectives are derived from verbs or are verbs and some too are purely adjectives as it happens in Buli (Sulemana 2012), Ojibwa (Dryer 2007) and Mupun

(Frajzyngier 1993). This is not the case for ɔkɛrɛ. In chapter three, I will show that ɔkɛrɛ has prototypical adjectives.

In terms of sequencing, age is closer to the nouns that they modify in most Kwa languages (Ameka 1991, Pokuaa, Osam and Saah 2007 (Akan), and Ansah 2014 (Larteh)). According to Ofori (2006: 109), colour will precede an adjective sequence composed of length, size and quantity. Ofori (2006) also notes that there is flexibility in the ordering of adjectives, as native speakers will vary this sequence, as noted by Ofori (2006). Pokuaa, Osam and Saah (2007) also add that the order of adjectives in Kwa languages is mostly based on native speakers' judgment and choice

Larteh, unlike Buli, has prototypical adjectives and they occur after the head noun. Ansah (2014) argues that Larteh natural class of adjectives that are not coined from any word class. According to Ansah (2014), Larteh adjectives can be grouped into four categories, dimension, colour, age, and value, and all the adjectives within these groups show agreement with the head noun in terms of number except adjectives that show value, as seen in (20) and (21).

- (20). a. n-yirebi o-kose
 PL-child SG/PL-good
 ‘good children’.
- b. *n-yirebi n-kose
 PL-child PL-good
 ‘good children’.

- (21). a. *ɔ-tse a-timi*
 SG-woman SG-short
 ‘short woman’
 b. *ε-tse n-timi*
 SG-woman SG-short
 ‘short women’ (Ansah 2014: 10)

In example (21a) and (21b), the adjectives are prefixed with a singular marker and a plural marker ‘*a*’ and ‘*n*’ respectively and this does not render the constructions in (21b) ungrammatical but when this is applied in (20), it yields an ungrammatical structure, as in (20b). This observation in Larteh is relevant to the analysis of adjectives and noun head relationship in Okere.

How Buli NPs treat adjectives in relation to the head noun is different compared to what happens in Larteh. In Buli, adjectives take the plural morpheme marker when attached to a plural noun (Sulemana 2012). This implies that the head noun will not be marked for plural, but the adjective takes the plural marker. This is because the head noun and the adjective in Buli cannot both mark plurality (Sulemana 2012). This is exemplified in (22a-b).

- (22). a. *ní:gà*
 cow.PLU
 ‘Cows’
 b. *ná: m̀̀n-tà*
 cow red- PLU
 ‘Red cows’ (Sulemana 2012: 85)

When the head noun in Buli is modified by several adjectives, only the last adjective takes the plural morpheme marker. As he states, “the plural morpheme shifts systematically from the noun to the final adjective in the series of modification” (Sulemana 2012: 86).

According to Bobuafor (2013), adjectives in Tafi do not show any form of number agreement with the head noun. This is the same with Sɛlɛɛ, another GTM language, which shows no number agreement with the head noun (Agbetsoamedo 2014). Concerning the types explored here, chapter three also examines adjective-adjective ordering within the noun phrase in Okere.

2.4.4 The Head Noun and Relative clauses

Relative clauses are clauses that serve as modifiers within an NPs (Givon 2001). Cross-linguistically, the noun could be modified by a relative clause. The NP and its modifier, the relative clause, together form one complex NP. Relative clauses may precede the head noun in languages like German and may come after the head noun in languages like Akan (Saah 2010).

In Buli, the relative clause is introduced by a relative pronoun which changes depending on the case of the relativized head noun (Sulemana 2012). These are illustrated in (23a-c).

- (23). a. núr wāi àlī dè sā: mú lá kúlí
 man REL.PRO SUBJ.CASE eat TZ DEF RCM go.home
 ‘The man who ate the TZ has gone home’

(Sulemana 2012: 92)

- b. Kpónḡ kūi àtì bì: ká dà lă kpì
 guinea fowl REL.PRO OBJ.CASE child def buy RCM die
 ‘The guinea fowl which the child bought died’

- c. Nànjũḡ kái àlī kàn à wōm sìnṣàgà
 housefly REL.PRO SUBJ.CASE NEG PRES.PART listen advice

lă và kpìo à sṣṣ vòrú pō.
 RCM follow corpse PRES.PART descend hole inside

‘The housefly which does not heed advice follows a corpse
 into the grave’

(Sulemana 2012: 93)

In (23a-c), all the relative clauses have different relative pronouns. This is because of the antecedents belonging to different noun classes (Sulemana 2012). In Akan, Saah (2010) shows that the complementizer, *áà*, introduces the relative clause. This complementizer occurs with all kinds of nouns, whether human or non-human (Saah 2010). Consider the sentences in (24).

- (24). a. abofrá nó áà Kofí re-somá no nó n-yé
 child DEF REL K. PROG-send 3SG CD NEG-be_good
 ‘The child whom Kofi is sending is bad/not good’

(Saah 2010: 96)

b. *ataadé áà Amma páme-e Ø no ye fε*
 dress REL A. sew-pst 3SG-INANIM CD be beautiful
 ‘The dress that Amma sewed is beautiful’

(Saah 2010: 98)

In (24), the relative clauses are introduced by *áà*, irrespective of the relativized nouns in (24a), *abofrá* ‘child’, (a human noun) and (24b), *ataadé* ‘dress’, (a non-human noun). The situation in Buli is different from Akan (Saah 2010) and Larteh (Ansah 2014). In chapter four, I show that the relative clause in *Ɔkere* is introduced by a relative particle(s) that has concord agreement with the head noun. And that the relative particles selects either a human noun or a non-human noun.

2.5 Order of Modifiers in Kwa

Following Hawkins’ (1983) reformulation of Greenberg’s (1966) universal hypothesis of the ordering of elements in the NP, Aboh (2010: 25) agrees that “there are two major patterns across languages: (A), where modifiers precede the noun (i.e. demonstratives-numeral-adjective-noun) and (D), where the modifiers follow”. Kwa languages belong to the latter. Aboh (2010) following Hawkins (1983) maintains that the ideal order of modifiers in Kwa is such that adjectives immediately follows the head and is followed by numerals and demonstratives. This is evident in all Kwa languages. Per Aboh (2010), the sequence of modifiers in Kwa languages is in this order: noun-adjective-numeral-relative clauses-

demonstratives-discourse specificity marker. Boadi (2010) added that Akan has a pre-determiner *saa* ‘as mentioned’, which precedes the head noun and can only occur with a deictic demonstrative, an anaphoric determiner or a relative clause. Possessives could also occur as modifiers that precede the head in most Kwa languages. The observation by Aboh (2010) in Kwa languages is important for the current study. In the concluding chapter, I show how the different noun modifiers are organized with each other and with the head noun.

2.6 The Theoretical Framework

This section focuses on the theoretical framework adopted in this thesis. A descriptive theory, functionalism, is employed in this study. This section discusses the theory and in section 2.7.2, it explains the relevance of this theory.

2.6.1 Functionalist Approach

In defining functionalism, Bates et al (1991: 134) state, “functionalism can be defined as the belief that, the forms of natural languages are created, governed, constrained, acquired and used in the service of communicative functions”. The functional approach to language is a descriptive approach to the study of language. As such, Haspelmath (2008: 92-93) states that functionalism is “describing languages in an ecumenical, widely understood descriptive framework”. Bischoff

(2013) also adds that among other things like cognitive and corpus-based linguistics, functionalism concerns writing descriptive grammars.

Nichols (1984: 1) explains that functionalism “analyzes grammatical structure, as do formal and structural grammar; but it also analyzes the entire communicative situation: the purpose of the speech event, its participants, its discourse context”. All functionalists share this view. Croft (1995) adds that they, functionalists, are of the opinion that language structures are best appreciated when analyzed side by side with the functions that they play. Language use as viewed by functionalists is that language is always used consciously to achieve a goal. Nichols (1984: 101) then says that “an imperative has the function of calling on the hearer, and the speaker uses it deliberately to produce this effect”. This approach is also championed by scholars such as Givón (1984), Hawkins (1994) and Dik (1997).

The functional approach to grammar as a descriptive study falls under the umbrella of descriptive linguistics with its sole agenda set to describe a language with data collected from a natural setting and which works to the broader aim of documenting a language (Himmelmann 1998). Chelliah and Reuse (2011: 7) state that descriptive linguistic fieldwork does an "investigation of the structure of a language through the collection of primary language data gathered through interaction with native speaking consultants". Everett (2001), Foley (2002) and Aihkenvald (2007) share the view that descriptive linguistic research is a research

that the linguist need not belong to the community that speaks the language or speaks the language prior to the start of the research. They indicate that the linguist should be available in the community in question and become a member during the collecting of data so to give an accurate description of the language under enquiry.

Dryer (2006) explains that a descriptive theory is a theory that tells us what language looks like. In other words, they are theories that present to us what a language is. In writing a descriptive grammar, the linguist aims at working on the essential structural features of the said language and presents them in the form of a codified text (Dench and Evans 2006). In descriptive theory, the form and function of the language are analyzed according to the native speakers' judgments. According to Dench and Evans (2006), even though the language is described in its sense, the linguist

must still locate their description within the broad comparative concerns of linguistic typology and the received traditions of description within a language family. But at the same time, they must remain open to new analyses that are either more comprehensive or insightful or less bound by a particular traditional descriptive template. (2006: 1)

The focus of a descriptive theory is to lay bare some tools and accepted concepts that help in giving accurate descriptions to every language in all of the language's involvedness and peculiarity (Dryer 2006). But as Dench and Evans (2006) note, it is important that the description should not be done in emptiness

but rather be done in line with the typology and the nature of other closely related languages. This will aid the linguist to better understand the nature of the language he is studying. Given this, the study makes a broad comparison with other Guan languages such as Larteh (Ansah 2014) that behave like the Okere language and other Kwa languages.

2.6.2 Relevance of Descriptive Approaches

Using the functional approach in this study, the study will describe the Okere language exclusively on its own, though the findings in the language are compared to similar languages. Hence, the analysis done in this thesis represents the native speakers' judgment and worldview.

2.7 Summary of Chapter Two

Chapter two has been concerned with reviewing relevant literature and the theoretical framework. The chapter reviewed some works on the structure of the NP. Issues about the NP and its internal components as well as its distribution have been discussed in this chapter. The review showed that the internal structure of the noun phrase differs from language to language. Within the NP, some languages show agreement between the head noun and other modifiers while some languages do not. The latter part of the chapter discussed the theoretical framework, functionalism, in which the study is couched.

CHAPTER THREE

THE OKERE SIMPLE NOUN PHRASE

3.1 Introduction

The focus of this chapter is to discuss the basic noun phrase in Okere. In this chapter, I discuss word-level modification (i.e. non-phrasal or non-clausal modification) of the noun phrase. The chapter discusses the morpho-syntactic relationship that exists between the words and the head noun in the simple noun phrase in Okere. In doing so, section 3.2 discusses the morphological structure of Okere nouns. Here, the discussion focuses on derived and non-derived nouns and number marking in Okere nouns. Having given a brief description of nouns in Okere, section 3.3 then looks at the head of the noun phrase in Okere. Here, I examine bare NPs in the language both syntactically and semantically. Section 3.4 analyzes the components of the simple NP in Okere. In this section, I examine all modifiers in the simple noun phrase in Okere. Finally, I present the chapter summary in section 3.5.

3.2 The Morphology of Okere Nouns

One of the ways of identifying nouns cross-linguistically is by looking at their morpho-syntax (Tallerman 2015). Nouns in Okere can take affixes: prefixes and suffixes. In Section (3.2.1), I discuss derived and non-derived nouns in the language as well as affixation in these nouns. I also discuss diminutive prefixes in the language in section (3.2.3).

3.2.1 Derived and non-derived nouns

The analysis in this section focuses on derived and non-derived nouns, particularly number marking in the two noun categories in Okere.

3.2.1.1 Derived nouns in Okere

The analysis here focuses on deverbal nouns in Okere. In table (2) are examples of nouns derived from verbs in Okere.

Table 2. Some derived nouns in Okere

Verb	Noun
bíáké ‘to greet’	ébíáké ‘greeting’
òpóné ‘to be tired’	èpóné ‘tiredness’
bíé ‘to bath’	èbíé ‘bathing’
kótsí ‘to give birth’	èkótsí ‘childbearing’

prátsí ‘to throw up’	èprátsí ‘vomit’
dé ‘to sleep’	èdé ‘sleep’
tsí ‘to hate’	ètsí ‘hatred’

Verbs take the prefix ϵ -/e- to be nominalized (i.e deverbilized) in \mathcal{O} kere. There are no singular or plural derived nouns in \mathcal{O} kere.

3.2.1.2 Non-Derived Nouns

Most non-derived nouns in the language have singular and plural forms. In this sub-section, I discuss singular and plural affixes on non-derived nouns. Table (3) presents plural and singular affixes in \mathcal{O} kere.

Table 3. Singular and Plural affixes in \mathcal{O} kere.

Singular	Plural
a-	ϵ -
i-	n-
ϵ -	m-
\mathcal{O} -	
o-	
e-	

From table (3), it is seen that some vowels and consonants can serve as prefixal nominal markers. In table (4), I present examples of nouns in ɔkere showing the singular and plural prefixes on the nouns. Some vowels can mark plural. Nevertheless, the nasal consonant is predominant as a plural marker. This nasal consonant is represented by the homorganic nasal consonant, /N/. This is because the nasal prefix /N/ assimilates to the place of articulation of the immediate nearby sound to which it is attached (as found in Table (3)).

Table 4. Singular and Plural nouns in ɔkere.

Singular form	Plural form
a-ba ‘hand’	èba ‘hands’
à-fœ ‘stranger’	èfœ ‘strangers’
i-biè ‘louse’	èbie ‘lice’
ɔ-so ‘ear’	nso ‘ears’
è-furi ‘farm’	mfuri ‘farms’
è-gu ‘thief’	ngu ‘thieves’
è-bie ‘chair’	mbie ‘chairs’
è-nye ‘man’	nnye ‘men’
à-na ‘leg’	nna ‘legs’

Some nouns do not follow the usual singular-plural distinction. Proper nouns and uncountable nouns, for example, *ɛfu* ‘air’, *ɔmo*, ‘rice’, and *etsu* ‘soup’, do not have the singular-plural distinction. Also, data show that liquid nouns characteristically begin with a nasal consonant and do not exhibit the singular/plural distinction.

Examples of liquid nouns in the language are *nkerε* ‘blood’, *ntsu* ‘water’ and *mfare* ‘salt’.

Table 5. Number in Kinship nouns in ɔkere

Noun Stem	Singular form	Plural form
a)	àse ‘father’	εseene ‘fathers’
b)	àke ‘wife’	àkεene ‘wife’
c)	èkùrí ‘husband’	èkùrùèné ‘husband’
d)	èné ‘mother’	enièné ‘mothers’
e)	àse ‘father’	εséèné ‘fathers’
f)	ànúm ‘elder’	ànúmúdè ‘elders’

In table (5) are kinship nouns in ɔkere. Plurality in kinship nouns is denoted by *-ene*, a suffix. *-de* also denotes plurality in some relational nouns, eg. *anum* ‘elder’ becomes *anumude* ‘elders’ in the plural.

3.3 The Head noun in ɔkere Noun Phrases

This section discusses the syntactic and semantic properties of a head noun in ɔkere NPs. Prototypically, these are nouns and pronouns.

The NP in ɔkɛrɛ can be composed of only the noun without modifiers i.e bare NP. The bare NP in ɔkɛrɛ can be interpreted as being definite or being indefinite and it can as well appear in all argument positions.

3.3.1. The Syntax of Bare NPs in ɔkɛrɛ

The bare NP can occur at the subject and object positions in a simple declarative sentence in ɔkɛrɛ. This is to say that the bare NPs in ɔkɛrɛ can be either an external argument or an internal argument. *brodo* 'bread' and *ɛni* 'meat' play the role of internal arguments or objects in (1b) and (2b) respectively. This is because the bare NPs in these sentences occur within the verb phrase.

- (1) a. ɔ-kraman nɛ̀-bɛ̀. tó
 SG-dog PERF-come here
 ‘A dog has come here’
- b. ɛ̀-yɛ̀ nɛ̀-wɛ̀ brodo
 SG-mouse PERF-chew bread
 ‘A mouse has chewed the bread’
- (2) a. ɛ̀-yú bù to
 SG-thief owner PRE.be here
 ‘The landlord is here’

- b. àdo nè-yèí éni
 trap PERF-catch meat
 ‘The trap has caught meat’

There are numerous cases where the bare NP in ɔkere occurs as external arguments or subjects. In example (1a) and (2a), the bare NPs precede the verb phrase and as such occur in subject positions. In (1b), the two bare NPs, *èyèè* ‘mouse’ and *brodo* ‘bread’ occurs in subject and object positions, respectively. This explains that bare NPs in ɔkere can occur in either subject or object positions or both.

Aside from the bare NPs in ɔkere occurring as either subjects or objects, the bare NPs in ɔkere can also be focused (Animah 2015). In examples (3a & b), the bare NPs *àyirébi* ‘child’ and *ànúm* ‘adult’ respectively have been focused. This is because they precede the focus marker *ne*. This structure is used in discourse to put prominence on the focused NP.

- (3) a. àyiré-bi ne me-súmè mo.
 SG.child-DIM FOC 1SG-send.PST 3SG
 ‘It is the child that I sent’
- b. ànúm ne me-hu mo
 SG.adult FOC 1SG-see.PST 3SG
 ‘It is the elder that I saw’

3.3.2 Personal Pronouns

In ɔkere, the head of a noun phrase can also be a pronoun, a word that replaces a noun or an NP. Carnie (2013: 148-149) explains that pronouns are kinds of “NPs that can optionally get their meaning from another NP in the sentence, but may also optionally get it from somewhere else (including context or previous sentences in the discourse)”.

Pronouns in ɔkere can function on their own as subjects and objects. They can also be focused. Table (6) presents the list of pronouns in ɔkere.

Table 6. A table showing personal pronouns in ɔkere

Person and Number		Subject pronoun	Object pronoun
1SG		mè	mè
2SG		wò	wò
3SG		à	mò
1PL		èné	èné
2PL		èné	èné
3PL		èmó	èmó
Singular/ Inanimate	Plural	é/ é	mò/ èmó

Just like Ewe (Ameka 2002), Ɔkere also makes a distinction between animate and inanimate pronouns in the subject position. The third person plural pronoun is the same as the plural object pronoun for inanimate nouns. The third person singular object pronoun has the same form as the singular inanimate object pronoun. The situation in Ɔkere described here is similar to what happens in Akan (see Saah 1994).

Examples (4) to (10) show pronouns in Ɔkere in subject and object positions. In all these examples, the pronouns construct an NP.

- (4) **mè-sàkèné** **mò**
 1SG.SBJ-meet.PST 3SG.OBJ
 ‘I met him’
- (5) **à-hù** **àkyìbí à**
 3SG.SBJ-see.PST girl DEF
 ‘She saw the girl’
- (6) **wo-we** **mò-àno**
 2SG.SBJ-chew.PST 3SG.OBJ-mouth
 ‘You kissed him’
- (7) **mè-kèké** **èmó**
 1SG.SBJ-tell.PST 3PL.OBJ
 ‘I told them’
- (8) **èné-sèré**
 1PL.SBJ-fear.PRES
 ‘We are afraid’

(9) **èmó-kèké** **èné**
3PL.SBJ-tell.PST 2PL.OBJ
'They told us'

(10) **é-hù** **mò**
3SG-see.PST 3SG.OBJ
'It saw it'

3.4 Components of the NP in ɔkere

Here, I focus on the elements that are found within the ɔkere noun phrase. I will concentrate on both pre-modifiers and post-modifiers. The section discusses these elements in relation to the head noun and other modifiers.

3.4.1 *Head Noun-Determiners*

This section discusses determiners in ɔkere. It focuses on articles, definite and indefinite, and demonstrative determiners. Also, the section discusses the syntax and semantics of determiners in ɔkere.

3.4.1.1 *Definite article*

ɔkere has a definite article that occurs post-nominally in a noun phrase. This is not restricted to ɔkere because the definite article occurs post-nominally in

Kwa and other Ghanaian languages as well. The definite article is *à*. This is shown in (11a-d).

- (11) a. *mè-sò* *àkòrá à*
 1SG.SBJ-buy.PST pepper DEF
 ‘I bought the pepper’
- b. *à-nyá* *à* *bè* *to*
 SG-man DEF come.PST here
 ‘The man came here’
- c. *mè-hù* *n-kyí-bí à*
 1SG.SBJ-see.PST PL-girl-DIM DEF
 ‘I saw the small girl’
- d. *à-wóré* *à* *dè* *mè-lé*
 SG-book DEF be.PRS 1SG.OBJ-POSS
 ‘The book is mine’

As the examples show, the definite article has the same form whether it modifies a singular head noun or a plural head noun. In examples (11a & c), the head nouns are singular and plural respectively, but the definite article, *à*, retains its form.

According to Hawkins (2015: 17), when a speaker makes use of the definite article, it serves as an “instruction to the hearer to 'locate' the referent of the definite NP within one of several sets of objects which are pragmatically defined based on different types of shared speaker-hearer knowledge and the situation of utterance”. When the definite article is used in Okere, it depicts a

3.4.1.3 Demonstratives

This part discusses demonstrative determiners in ɔkere. These are demonstratives that modify or co-occur with a noun in an NP. Demonstratives in ɔkere are post-nominal.

Diessel (1999) observed that demonstratives in languages can have either deictic features or qualitative features or both. Qualitative features give information that puts the noun referent in a certain class. According to Diessel (1999), qualitative features may show whether the referent is an animate/inanimate, male/ female, or whether the referent is a human or a thing. Qualitative features are absent in ɔkere. Deictic features, on the other hand, can be expressed in ɔkere demonstratives. Deictic features are vital in the sense that their “interpretation makes crucial reference to some aspect of the speech situation” (Diessel 1999: 35). In the analysis and interpretations of utterances or discourses involving deictic demonstratives, the communicative context cannot be ignored. This is because their meanings depend largely on the context and that they indicate the relationship between the referent and the speaker.

Deictic feature of demonstratives results in a distinction between proximal and distal demonstratives. These two are present in ɔkere as well as other Kwa languages. I show this in the next two sections.

3.4.1.3.1 Proximal demonstratives

Okere has free morphemes that mark both the singular and plural demonstratives. The proximal demonstrative, *mó*, and the distal demonstratives, *nèà*, agree in number with the head noun. Examples (14a-d) are grammatical structure in Okere. The NPs in examples (14a-c) have singular noun heads and as such, the NPs co-occur with singular distal demonstratives. When the head noun is marked for plural, the proximal demonstrative should also be marked for plural (as found in 14d). Example (14e) is ungrammatical because the head noun *nnyémí* ‘men’ is marked for plural but the proximal demonstrative is marked for singular.

- | | | | |
|------|----|---------------|--------------|
| (14) | a. | è-nye-mi | mó |
| | | SG-male-DIM | PROX.DEM.SG |
| | | ‘This boy’ | |
| | b. | è-wi | mó |
| | | SG-thief | PROX.DEM.SG |
| | | ‘This thief’ | |
| | c. | à-wóré | mó |
| | | SG-book | PROX.DEM.SG |
| | | ‘This book’ | |
| | d. | n-wóré | mó-né |
| | | PL-book | PROX.DEM-PL |
| | | ‘These books’ | |
| | e. | *n-nyé-mí | mó |
| | | PL-male-DIM | PROX.DEM.SG |
| | | (‘This boys’) | |

3.4.1.3.2 *Distal demonstratives*

Just like the proximal demonstrative, the distal demonstratives, *nèà*, agree with the head noun in terms of number. These are shown in example (15a-c). In examples (15a) and (15b) below, the head nouns *àwóré* ‘book’ and *ènyémí* ‘boy’ respectively are followed by the singular distal demonstrative, *nèà*.

- (15) a. à-wóré **nèà**
 SG-book DIST.DEM.SG
 ‘That book’
- b. è-nyé-mí **nèà**
 SG-male-DIM DIST.DEM.SG
 ‘That boy’
- c. n-nyé-mí **nèà-nɛ**
 PL-male-DIM DIST.DEM-PL
 ‘Those boys’
- d. *n-wóré **nèà**
 PL-book DIST.DEM.SG
 (‘That books’)

Example (15c) and (15d) prove that distal demonstratives agree in number. This is because when the head noun is plural *nyémí* ‘boys’, the distal demonstrative is in the plural form *nèànɛ* but if otherwise, it yields an ungrammatical structure, as shown in (15d).

3.4.1.4 *The use of the pre-determiner àlá*

Okere uses *àlá* and combines it with the definite article, *à* to show that the noun referent is far from the deictic center. This is used when the noun referent is seen from afar or is unseen, but both the interlocutors have previous or shared knowledge of the referent. This is illustrated in (16a-b). *Àlá* cannot occur alone with the head noun. The use of *àlá* requires that the head noun should be post-modified with the definite article. In this manner, example (16c) is an illicit construction in Okere.

- (16) a. **àlá** è-nyé-mí **à**
 DET SG-male-DIM DEF
 ‘That boy’
- b. **àlá** à-wóré **à**
 DET SG-book DEF
 ‘That outbook’
- c. ***àlá** à-wóré
 DET SG-book
- d. ***àlá** a-wóré **àkó**
 DET SG-book INDF
- e. *à-wóré **à** **nèà**
 SG-book DEF DIST.DEM.SG
- f. *à-wóré **àkó** **mó**
 SG-book INDF PROX.DEM.SG

It should be pointed out that the pre-determiner, *àlá*, only co-occurs with the definite marker, not the indefinite marker as seen in (16d).

To conclude, this study has shown that determiners in *Okere* are mutually exclusive. That is, the definite article, indefinite article and the demonstrative determiners in *Okere* cannot co-occur. This is illustrated example (16e) and (16f).

3.4.2 Head noun-Numerals

This section is in three parts. The first part discusses the formation of numeral systems in *Okere*. This is followed by the second and the third parts, which discuss cardinal and ordinal numerals respectively as modifiers of the head noun in *Okere*. Numerals in *Okere* occur after the head. They occur between adjectives and determiners, as we shall see in the subsequent sections.

3.4.2.1 Numerals in Okere

Heine (1997), in studying numeral systems of languages, explains that numeral systems are encoded in two main ways. The first has to do with the ways in which mathematical operations help to create numbers while the second one relates to the forms that can be restructured from the viewpoint of language (Heine 1997). *Okere* numeral system operates within the former. The base system of *Okere* numeral is decimal (base 10). This is because numerals, aside from 1-9, depend on the numeral 10, 100, 1000 in the language. Numerals from 1 to 9 are independent

numerals. That is, they are not formed from other numerals. Adding numerals from 1 to 9 to the numeral 10 creates numerals from 11 to 19. The rest of the numeral up to 99 has the presence of the numeral 10. In Table (6), the numeral 20 is a multiplication of the numeral *idu*, ‘10’. This procedure is consistent in the numerals 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90.

Table 7. A table showing some numerals in Okere.

Numeral	Gloss
ikó	one
nyó	two
sá	three
nè	four
ní	five
sié	six
sónó	seven
twí	eight
kpónò	nine
ídù	ten
iduakò	eleven
idunya	twelve
idusa	thirteen
idune	fourteen
iduni	fifteen
idusie	sixteen
idusuno	seventeen
idutwi	eighteen
idukpónò	nineteen
oduonya	twenty
oduonya ako	twenty one
eduesa	thirty
eduesa ako	thirty one

eduene	forty
eduene ako	forty one
edueni	fifty
edueni ako	fifty one
ɔɔɔɛ	one hundred
ɔɔɔɛ ako	hundred and one

3.4.2.2 Cardinal numerals

Cardinal numerals denote a numerical quantity. As stated above, cardinals in ɔkere occur as post-head. I show this in (17a-d). Cardinal numerals in these examples follow the head noun as presented in (17c).

- (17) a. n-wóré **nyó**
 PL-book two
 ‘Two books’
- b. à-yiré-bi **kó**
 SG.child-DIM one
 ‘One child’
- c. n-kɛni **kpónò**
 PL-fowl nine
 ‘Nine fowls’
- d. ànúm-de **sónó**
 adult-PL seven
 ‘Seven adults’

As is evident in most Kwa languages, cardinal numerals have number concord with the head noun in the NP (cf. Dovlo 2008; Aboh 2010; Bobuafor 2013; Agbetsoamedo 2014; Ansah 2014).

When a plural head noun is modified by a numeral and a demonstrative, the head noun and the demonstrative all carry plural markers. That is, when the numeral is not *ikó* ‘one’. This is illustrated in (18b). In (18a), the numeral modifying the head is *ikó* ‘one’ and as such, the head noun and demonstrative are all in their singular forms. Articles do not agree in number with the head noun in Okere (see section 3.4.1.1 and 3.4.1.2). In that regard, in (18c) the numeral *sá* ‘three’ selects a plural head noun and a definite article, *à*.

- (18) a. à-wóré **kó** mó
 SG-book one PROX.DEM
 ‘This one book’
- b. n-wóré **nyó** mó-né
 pl-book two PROX.DEM-PL
 ‘These two books’
- c. n-wóré **sá** à
 pl-book three DEF
 ‘The three books’
- d. n-wóré **twí**
 pl-book eight
 ‘Eight books’

3.4.3 Head noun-Quantifiers

In this subsection, I discuss the relation between the head noun and quantifiers in the ɔkere NP. Quantifiers indicate an unfixed item being talked about (Table 7 presents a list of some quantifiers in ɔkere).

Table 8. Some quantifiers in ɔkere NP

Quantifier	Gloss
péé	all
mpíréeí	few
ákóá	every
bébíréeé	plenty/many, much

According to Radford (2004: 244), “a quantifier is a special type of determiner used to denote quantity”. Quantifiers appear as post-head elements in the ɔkere NP (as found in 19a-d).

- (19) a. n-kyì-bí bẹ́bíréeé
 PL-girl-DIM plenty
 ‘Plenty of girls’
- b. n-wórè mpíréeí
 PL-book few
 ‘A few books’
- c. èmó péé
 3PL all

- ‘All of them’
- d. *sika* *bébírée*
 money many
 ‘A lot of money’
- e. * *a-kyì-bí* *bébírée*
 SG-girl-DIM plenty
 (‘Plenty girls’)
- f. **a-wórè* *mpíréeí*
 SG-book few
 (‘A few books’)

Quantifiers in ɔkere modify a plural head noun or an uncountable noun. As illustrated in (19a-e), It is ungrammatical to quantify a single head noun in ɔkere. When the head noun is not marked for plural in an NP containing a quantifier, it results in ungrammaticality (as found in (19e) and (19f)). In (19a), the head noun is modified by a plural head noun *nkyìbí* ‘girls’ and as such, is modified by the quantifier, *bébírée* ‘plenty’. This also applies to (19c), where the quantifier *pée* ‘all’ is preceded by a third person plural pronoun *èmó*. The head noun in (19d), *sika* ‘money, is an uncountable noun and as such, co-occurs with an ɔkere quantifier, *bébírée* ‘plenty’. Example (19e) and (19f) are ungrammatical NPs in ɔkere because the quantifiers co-occur with singular head nouns.

Quantifiers and numerals are mutually exclusive in the ɔkere NP. This is because the two show quantity but quantifiers are indefinite while numerals are definite. Consider the following examples.

- (20) a. *n-kyì-bí **bébíréé** **sá**
 PL-girl-DIM plenty three
 ('Plenty girls')
- b. *n-kyì-bí **sá** **bébíréé**
 PL-girl-DIM three plenty
 ('Plenty girls')
- c. *à-wórè ètè nètu sù **sá** **péé mó**
 SG-book REL follow.PRES top three allPROX.DEM.SG
 ('This third book')

In examples (20a-d) above, quantifiers and numerals co-occur in the NPs and this creates ungrammatical structures. The order in which the numerals co-occur do not matter because as shown in (20a & b), the quantifier *bébíréé* 'plenty' precedes the numeral *sá* 'three' in (20a) and the numeral *sá* 'three' also precedes the quantifier *bébíréé* 'plenty'.

3.4.4 Head noun-Adjectives

Adjectives appear as post-head elements in Okere NP. Adjectives immediately follow the head noun in the Okere NP. This structure is common to Kwa languages (cf. Aboh 2010). All other modifiers follow the adjective(s). The structure in (21) depicts an NP in Okere where the adjective immediately follows the head noun and the other elements follow the adjective.

- (21) n-nye-mi n-timitimi nyó mó-né
 PL-boy-DIM PL-short two PROX.DEM-PL
 ‘These two short boys’

Two forms of adjectives found in Okere are described in below. These are the derived adjectives and non-derived adjectives. The former originates from verbs and noun in Okere and the latter are prototypical adjectives.

1. *Non-Derived adjectives*

As stated above, non-derived adjectives cannot be traced to any word class. They form their word class. They do not originate from verbs, noun or any other word class. These types of adjectives in Okere are mostly monomorphemic adjectives (as found in (22)).

	Adjective	Gloss
(22)	kpùkpé	‘bad’
	kósé́	‘good’
	àhùé	‘new’
	àdédé	‘old’
	kókó	‘red’
	tùntú	‘black’
	ténté	‘tall’

tímì	‘short’
kpónkpó	‘big’
éyúlé	‘strong’

Aside from the majority being monomorphemic, adjectives with reduplicated forms exist. I show this in (23) below.

(23)	bàsábàsá	‘haphazard’
	gídígídí	‘riotous’

2. *Derived Adjectives*

Some adjectives in ɔkere are derived from other word classes. I show this in (24). These kinds of adjectives are derived by reduplicating a noun.

	Adjective	Gloss
(24)	mfârémfâré	‘salty’
	ntsúntsú	‘watery’

3.4.4.1 *Position of Adjectives and number marking*

All the adjectives in ɔkere can be used attributively and predicatively. When they perform attributive functions, they occur as post head elements in the noun phrase (as found in (25a-e)).

(25)	a.	é-nyé-mí	pótíí	à	de	mè	adamfo
		SG-male-DIM	big	DEF	be.PRES	1SG.POSS	friend

‘The big boy is my friend’

- b. à-kyí-bí tímí à de me adamfo
 SG-female-DIM short DEF be.PRES 1SG.POSS friend

‘The short girl is my friend’

- c. Kofi ne me étsú ntsú-ntsú
 Kofi give.PST 1SG.OBJ soup water-water

‘Kofi gave me watery soup’

- c. é-nyé kósè à bù tó.
 SG-man good DEF be.PRE here

‘The good man is here’

- d. sésé kpáténg àkó nè-bè
 human.SG tall INDF PROG-come.PRES

‘A tall person is coming’

In (25a-e) both derived adjectives and non-derived adjectives, serve as post head modifying element in the NP. When the adjective is used attributively, the NP within which the adjective is used can occur at the subject or the object position. In (25c) the adjective is found in an NP at the object position. The remaining examples in (25) have the adjectives occurring in an NP functioning as the subject.

When adjectives in Okere are used predicatively, they occur after the copula verb, *de*. I show this in (26a-d).

- (26) a. é-nyé-mí à de kpónkpó

- SG-male-DIM DEF be.PRES big
 ‘The boy is big’
- b. à-kyí-bí à de tímí
 SG-female-DIM DEF be.PRES short
 ‘The girl is short’
- c. étsú à de ntsú-ntsú
 soup DEF be.PRES water-water
 ‘The soup is sloppy’
- d. téí á de mfáremfáre
 food DEF be.PRES salt-salt
 ‘The food is salty’

In addition, adjectives in Okere can inflect for number just like other Kwa and Ghanaian languages. The nouns and the adjectives take the same plural markers in the language. The plural markers on the adjectives are all prefixes attached to the adjectives. I illustrate this in (27a-d).

- (27) a. n-nyé-mí n-timintimi
 PL-boy-DIM PL-short
 ‘Short boys’
- b. n-yí n-ténté
 PL-tree PL-tall
 ‘Tall trees’

Some adjectives in ɔkere do not inflect for number. I show this in (28a & 28b). The NP in (28b) is ungrammatical because the adjective *kpùkpě́* ‘bad’ is inflected for number.

- (28) a. n-nyé-mí kpùkpě́
 PL-male-DIM SG.bad
 ‘Bad boys’
- b. *n-nyé-mí n-kpùkpě́
 PL-male-DIM PL.bad
 (‘Bad boys’)

3.4.4.2 *Predicative adjectives*

According to Dixon (2004), adjectives can serve as the predicate, cross-linguistically. This happens within an intransitive clause. Backhouse (2004: 53) also affirms that one of the syntactic properties of adjectives is that an adjective can be the “[h]ead of intransitive predicate, like (intransitive) verbs”. These adjectives behave like verbs and as such, they “function predicatively without a copula” (Backhouse 2004: 53). In ɔkere, predicative adjectives are also present (as illustrated in (29a-b)).

- (29) a. é-nyé-mí à kpá
 SG-male-DIM DEF be.tall
 ‘The boy is tall’

- b. é-nyé-mí à dé
 SG-male-DIM DEF be.big
 ‘The boy is big’
- c. é-nyé-mí à *bén*-kpá
 SG-male-DIM DEF not-be.tall
 ‘The boy is not tall’
- d. é-nyé-mí à *bén*-dé
 SG-male-DIM DEF not-be.big
 ‘The boy is not big’

Just like verbs, these predicative adjectives can be negated, as in (29c) and (29d). In these instances, the predicative adjectives are prefixed with the negative marker, *bén*.

3.4.4.3 Adjectives as head of the NP

As it occurs in Akan (Amfo et al 2007), the adjective can head an NP in ɔkere. This occurs when the head noun is implied or omitted in a discourse. Without context, the adjective as the head of the NP does not convey meaning. Examples (30b) and (31b) are instances of the adjective heading the NP in ɔkere. This is so because the contexts are provided in (30a) and (31a).

- (30) a. kuruwa àhùé à bù tó
 cup new DEF be.PRE here
 ‘The new cup is here’

- b. àhùé à bù tó
 new DEF be.PRES here
 ‘The new one is here’
- c. *àhùé bù tó
 new be.PRES here
- (31) a. éwí kpónkpó à dé mélé
 house big DEF be.PRES 1SG.POSS
 ‘The big house is mine’
- b. kpónkpó à dé mélé
 big DEF be.PRES 1SG.POSS
 ‘The big one is mine’
- c. *kpónkpó dé mélé
 big be.PRES 1SG.POSS

In (30b), the adjective *àhùé* ‘new’ heads the NP. The adjective co-occurs with a definite article, *à*. Structurally, the adjective is playing the role of a noun since it co-occurs with a determiner. The same process is illustrated in (31b) where the adjective *kpónkpó* is the head of the NP and it co-occurs with a determiner. When the adjective is the head of the NP, it must be post-modified by a determiner. The absence of a determiner renders it ungrammatical (as found in (30c) and (31c)).

3.4.4.4 Nouns as Adjective

Nouns in ɔkɛrɛ can be used as adjectives. These nouns qualify other nouns in a NP. Osam (1999) refers to these nouns as nominal adjectives². Nominal adjectives are post-head elements in ɔkɛrɛ, that is, they occur after the head noun (as found in (32a-c)).

- (32) a. à-kyí èwú
 SG-woman thief
 ‘A woman who steals’
- b. a-yíré-bí ónúfó
 SG-woman-DIM liar
 ‘A girl who tells lies’
- c. à-kyí édzíhò
 SG-woman eater
 ‘A woman who like to eat’

Some nouns also form compounds with the head noun that they modify. These kinds of nouns, syntactically, precede the head noun (as found in 33a-b) unlike nominal adjectives that occur after the head noun.

- (33) a. fùrá à-bóbí
 home SG-animal
 ‘Domestic animal’
- b. íhí-té éní

² See Osam (1999) for a detailed discussion on nominal adjectives.

bush-inside meat
 ‘Bush meat’

3.4.4.6 *Sequence of Adjectives*

Two or more adjectives can co-occur with the head noun in ɔkere. The adjectives appear sequentially in an NP. The ordering of adjectives in the language depends on the native speakers’ judgement. Like in some languages, Adjectives in ɔkere also have different semantic class like AGE, COLOUR, DIMENSION, and VALUE. The semantic class has no bearing on the adjective that appears first after the head noun. However, in a sequence of adjectives having an adjective from the semantic class of AGE, AGE appears first. Without the presence of the Age class, colour seems to be preferred by many speakers of the language. This is illustrated in (34a-d). In all these, speakers of the language preferred various adjective sequence.

- (34) a. é-nyé àdédé tùntú ténté kpónkpó à
 SG-man old black tall big DEF
 ‘The old black tall big man’
- b. é-nyé tùntú àdédé ténté kpónkpó à
 SG-man black old tall big DEF
 ‘The black old tall big man’
- c. é-nyé tùntú ténté kpónkpó à
 SG-man black tall big DEF
 ‘The black tall big man’

In addition, adjectives from the same semantic class can occur in a sequence. This is shown in (35a-b) and (36a-b) below.

- (35) a. *é-yí* ***ténté*** ***kpónkpó*** *mó*
 SG-tree tall big PROX.DEM.SG
 ‘That tall big tree’
- b. *é-yí* ***kpónkpó*** ***ténté*** *mó*
 SG-tree big tall PROX.DEM.SG
 ‘That big tall tree’
- (36) a. *à-wóré* *àdédé* *àhùé* *à*
 SG-book old new DEF
 ‘The new old book’
- b. *à-wóré* *àhùé* *àdédé* *à*
 SG-book new old DEF
 ‘The new old book’

In (36a), adjectives from the same semantic class of dimension *ténté* ‘tall’ and *kpónkpó* ‘big’ occur in an adjective sequence. The ordering of adjectives from the same semantic class is dependent on the speakers’ choice. This is because when speakers were presented with the NPs in (36a & b), they found both structures grammatical. In (36a & b), the speaker is describing an ‘old book’ which he borrowed from the library. The speaker has previously borrowed some old book, so in acquiring a new ‘old book’, the adjective sequence in (36a) and (36b) are

acceptable. Having looked at some few adjectives in ɔkɛrɛ, it can be concluded that the four central semantic types of adjectives; DIMENSION, AGE, VALUE and COLOUR, are found in ɔkɛrɛ.

3.5 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter has examined the simple NP in ɔkɛrɛ. The chapter briefly looked at the morphology of nouns in ɔkɛrɛ. The chapter then delved into the internal structure of the simple NP in ɔkɛrɛ. The chapter showed that the adjective is the closest to the head noun in the NP. This is followed by quantifiers or numerals, which do not co-occur except in some situations discussed in the chapter. Determiners are the final elements in the simple ɔkɛrɛ NP. The morpho-syntactic properties as well as the functions of these elements are elaborated in this chapter. Having discussed the internal structure of the simple NP, the chapter concludes that, all elements in the NP are optional except the head noun and follow the head noun except the pre-determiner, *alla*, which precedes the head noun. The chapter finally concludes by giving the schema for the order of modifiers in ɔkɛrɛ simple NP as NP→(Pre-Det) N-head (Adj) (Qt/Num) (Det).

CHAPTER FOUR

THE COMPLEX NOUN PHRASE IN OKERE

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the complex noun phrase in Okere. Section 4.2 focuses on the formation of relative clauses in Okere. This means that the structure and distribution of the relative clause in Okere are also discussed following, Saah (2010). In section 4.3, I look at the structure of the relativized NP where I discuss how the relative clause is ordered relative to the head noun and other noun modifiers in Okere. Section 4.4 takes a look at some issues in relative clauses. Possessive constructions in Okere are also discussed in section 4.5 of this chapter. In section 4.6, I give a summary of the chapter.

4.2 Formation of Relative Clause in Okere

This section focuses on the internal structure of the relative clause in Okere. The section also discusses relative particles in Okere, the resumptive pronoun as well as ordinal numerals.

4.2.1 *The structure of the relative clause in Okere*

A noun may be modified by a relative clause (RC). The noun plus the relative clause forms a complex NP. The relative clause follows the head noun which heads the complex NP. Andrews (2007: 206) defines the relative clause as a “subordinate clause which delimits the reference of an NP by specifying the role of the referent of that NP in the situation described by the RC”. Saah (2010: 91) also states that “[r]elative clauses are embedded/subordinate clauses that typically serve as noun modifiers within an NP structure”. Without the head noun in the complex NP, the relative clause in Okere cannot stand alone (as shown in 1c). Below is the structure of the relative clause in Okere.

- (1) a. à-kyì-bí [à-sě́ mó n-wú à]
 SG-girl-DIM SG-REL 3SG PST-die DEF
 ‘The girl who died’
- b. n-kyì-bí [è-sě́ mó n-wú à]
 PL-girl-DIM PL-REL 3PL PST-die DEF
 ‘The girls who died’
- c. *[à-sě́ mó n-wú à]
 SG-REL 3SG PST-die DEF
 (‘who died’)
- d. *à-kyi-bi [mó n-wú à]
 SG-girl-DIM 3SG PST-die DEF
 (‘The girl who died’)

Example (1) provides the syntactic structure of the relative clause in ɔkɛrɛ. Just like many Kwa languages, a noun heads the relative clause in ɔkɛrɛ. This noun is the antecedent of the relative clause. This head is obligatory because its omission creates an ungrammatical structure, as found in (1c).

Following the head noun is the relative particle (see section 4.2.1 below for a discussion on the relative particle) that introduces the relative clause. The relative particle is obligatory; failure to include it results in an ungrammatical construction, as illustrated in (1d). Aside from the initial relative particle, the relative clause in ɔkɛrɛ ends with the particle *à*. I gloss this element as DEF. This is because it has the same form as the definite article, *à*, in ɔkɛrɛ. Consider the examples in (2)

- (2) a. àwóré [è-tě̃ Kofi nè-hú à] boɛfiw.
 SG-book SG-REL Kofi PROG-see DEF be.beautiful.PRES
 ‘The book that Kofi will see is beautiful’
- b. *àwóré [è-tě̃ Kofi nè-hú àkó] boɛfiw.
 SG-book SG-REL Kofi PROG-see INDEF be.beautiful.PRES
 (‘The book that Kofi will see is beautiful’)
- c. *àwóré [è-tě̃ Kofi nè-hú mó] boɛfiw.
 SG-book SG-REL Kofi PROG-see DEM be.beautiful.PRES
 (‘The book that Kofi will see is beautiful’)
- d. *àwóré [è-tě̃ Kofi nè-hú néá] boɛfiw.
 SG-book SG-REL Kofi PROG-see DEF be.beautiful.PRES
 ‘The book that Kofi will see is beautiful’

4.2.2 *The Relative Particles in Okere*

Cross-linguistically, relative pronouns, relative markers or relative complementizers, are used to introduce relative clauses. Okere uses relative particles that begin and end the relative clause. The relative particles in Okere do not appear anywhere else in the language. This is also the situation in Ewe (Dzameshie 1995) and Akan (Saah 2010). One feature of the initial relative particles in Okere is that they inflect for number and their choice is determined by the nature of the head noun that the relative clause modifies. When the head of the relative clause is plural and a human noun, the relative clause will be introduced by the relative particle, *è-sɛ̃*, and it will be introduced by the relative particle, *à-sɛ̃* and when the head noun is singular and a human noun, as shown in (4a & 4b). In (4c), the NP is ungrammatical because a singular human relative particle introduces the relative clause.

- (4) a. *è-nyé [à-sɛ̃ mó n-wú à]*
 SG-man SG-REL 3SG PST-die DEF
 ‘The man who died’
- b. *n-nyé [è-sɛ̃ Atiemo né n-hú mó à]*
 PL-man PL-REL Atiemo FM PST-see 3SG DEF
 ‘The men that Atiemo saw’
- c. **n-nyé [à-sɛ̃ Atiemo né n-hú mó à]*
 PL-man SG-REL Atiemo FM PST-see 3SG DEF
 (‘The man that Atiemo saw’)

In (5a) & (5b) below, the relative clauses are introduced by *ètè*. This relative particle only introduces a relative clause that has a non-human head noun. This relative particle also inflects for number. The singular form of this relative particle is the same as the form of its plural. The reason is that [*è-*] is used to mark singular and plural in a different context.

- (5) a. *è-yí* [*è-tè* *è-nyé* *né* *n-hú* *à*]
 SG-tree SG-REL SG-man FM PST-see DEF
 ‘The tree that the man saw’
- b. *n-yí* [*ètè* *è-nyé* *né* *n-hú* *à*]
 PL-tree PL-REL SG-man FM PST-see DEF
 ‘The trees that the man saw’

I argue that the relative particle, *àsɛ̀*, selects a human noun and the relative particle, *ètè*, also selects a non-human noun because using either of them inappropriately results in ungrammatical structures, as found in (6a) and (6b). In (6a), the relative particle only introduces a relative clause that has a human noun as the head but the head of the relative clause, *nyí* ‘trees’, is a non-human noun. In that sense, example (6a) is ungrammatical. This is also seen in (6b), where a human head noun is modified by a relative clause which is introduced by a non-human relative particle.

- (6) a. **n-yí* [*è-sɛ̀* *è-nyé* *né* *n-hú* *à*]
 PL-tree PL-REL SG-man FM PST-see DEF
 (‘The trees that the man saw’)

- b. *n-nyé [è-tè Atiemo né hú-ú mó à]
 PL-man PL-REL Atiemo FM see-PST 3SG DEF
 ('The men that Atiemo saw')

It should be noted that the relative complementizer in Akan as shown in Saah (2010) does not behave like the relative particle in ɔkere. This is because the relative complementizer in Akan does not inflect for number and humanness (Saah 2010). Ewe is quite similar to ɔkere in inflecting for number. According to Dzameshie (1995), the relative particle in Ewe inflects for number but does not change whether the head noun is human or noun human. Consider the following examples in Ewe by Dzameshie (1995).

- (7) a. Awu si Ama nya la
 Shirt which Ama wash CFM
 "The shirt which Ama washed"
 (Dzameshie 1995: 31, ex. 8)
- b. Ame siwo wo dɔ la xɔ fetu
 Persons who (PL) do work CFM received rewards
 "The people who worked received rewards"
 (Dzameshie 1995: 31, ex. 10)

In example (7b) the relative particle is marked with the plural marker, *wo*, because the head noun *Ame* 'persons' is a plural noun. Compare it to (7a) where the plural

marker, *wo*, is not attached to the relative particle because the head noun *Awu* ‘shirt’ is a singular noun.

From the discussion in this section so far, I give the summary of the relative particle in *Okere* in Table (8).

Table 9. The Relative Particle in *Okere*

	Singular	Plural
Human	àsě̀	èsě̀
Non-human	ètè	ètè

4.2.3 Relative Clause and Resumptive Pronoun

Resumptive pronouns have been defined from various theoretical approaches. McKee and McDaniel (2001: 114) state “a resumptive pronoun is a pronominal variable that appears in the position from which movement is proposed to occur”. Saah (2010:98) explains of the resumptive pronoun as a pronoun which is used “to indicate the relativization site within the relative clause”. The resumptive pronoun is an essential element in the syntax of relative clauses as many languages make use of the resumptive pronoun in the formation of their relative clauses. Examples of some Kwa languages that make use of the resumptive pronoun are Akan (Saah 2010) and Ga (Korsah 2017). *Okere* employs the resumptive strategy in filling gaps for the relativized head. Just as it has been described for Akan (Saah 2010), when nouns in *Okere* are relativized, their original positions must be occupied by a

pronoun. This said pronoun could be overt or covert under certain animacy conditions³. As Saah (2010: 99) states, “[t]he object (resumptive) pronoun is obligatorily overt if its referent is animate but covert (i.e., null) if its referent is inanimate”. Consider the following examples from Akan discussed by Saah (2010).

- (8) a. [NP ɔbáá [CP áà [IP me-nim **no**] nó]] fi Takoradi
 woman REL 1SG-know 3SG DEF come.from T.
 “The woman whom I know comes from Takoradi”

(Saah 2010: 98 ex. (12b))

- b. [Ataadé [áà [IP Amma páme-e \emptyset] no] NP] ye fe
 dress REL A. sew-PST 3SG-INANIM DEF be beautiful
 “The dress that Amma sewed is beautiful”

(Saah 2010: 98 ex. (13a))

In example (8b), a null object resumptive pronoun is realized because an inanimate object, *ataadé* ‘dress’, occupied the object position. This is not the case in (8a) where an overt object resumptive pronoun, *no* ‘3 person singular’, occupies the relativized position in the clause. The situation in Akan above could also be said for ɔkere, as found in (9 below).

³ Saah (2017) and Korsah (2017) provide conditions that allow for the possibility and the impossibility of the use of the null object resumptive pronoun in Kwa languages. This thesis, however, provides data that only allows for the use of this strategy in ɔkere.

- (9) a. è-ní [è-tě è-nyé à né n-só Ø à]
 SG-meat SG-REL SG-man DEF FM PST-buy 3SG DEF
 ‘The meat that the man bought’
- b. *è-ní [è-tě è-nyé à né n-só **mó** à]
 SG-meat SG-REL SG-man DEF FM PST-buy **3SG** DEF
 (‘The meat that the man bought’)
- c. Ama [a-sè Kofi né hù mó à]
 Ama SG-REL Kofi FM see.PST 3SG DEF
 ‘Ama who Kofi saw’
- d. *Ama [a-sè Kofi né hù ****4** à]
 Ama SG-REL Kofi FM see.PST 3SG DEF
 (‘Ama who Kofi saw’)

Example (9b) is an ungrammatical NP because the canonical position of the relativized head noun is filled with a resumptive pronoun. This position should be null because the relativized head is an inanimate object. The structure in (9d) is ungrammatical. This is because in (9d), Ama (a proper noun) is an animate object and as such requires its canonical position to be filled with an overt object resumptive pronoun.

In (9), I show that resumptive pronouns, if present, should be in the original position that the relativized noun occupied. The examples in (10a) & (10b) are

⁴ Following Saah (2010: 98), I use ** - where there is supposed to be an overt resumptive pronoun.

instances of a relativized (animate) subject. The relativized position in (10a) is filled with an overt resumptive pronoun, *mó*. When the subject is the relativized head, a resumptive pronoun must appear in the relativized position and this applies to inanimate nouns as well. Consider the examples that follow.

- (10) a. è-nyé à [à-sè **mó**-n-só èní à]
 SG-man DEF SG-REL 3SG-PST-buy meat DEF
 ‘The man that bought the meat’
- b. *è-nyé à [à-sè **-n-só èní à]
 SG-man DEF SG-REL PST-buy meat DEF
 (‘The man that bought the meat’)
- c. è-ní [è-tè é-bù àfá à]
 meat SG-REL 3SG-be.PRE sweet DEF
 ‘A meat that is tasty’
- d. *è-ní [è-tè **-bù àfá à]
 meat SG-REL be.PRE sweet DEF
 (‘A meat that is tasty’)

Examples (10b) & (10d) above are ungrammatical constructions in Okere because the relativized position which is supposed to be occupied by a resumptive pronoun is null. Example (10a) and (10c), unlike (10b) & (10d), are grammatical constructions in Okere. This is because, in (10a) & (10c), the relativized positions are occupied by the resumptive pronouns *mó* ‘third-person singular subject

pronoun' and *é* 'inanimate subject pronoun' respectively. Again, unlike objects, animacy distinction does not play a role in resumptive pronouns occupying relativized subject positions. The relativized head in (10a), *ènyé* 'man', is animate and in (10c), *èní* 'meat', but the relativized position of each is occupied with a resumptive pronoun. What this means is that resumptive pronouns are obligatory at the subject positions of the embedded relative clause in the NP just like Akan (Saah 2010).

To conclude on the formation of relative clauses in *Okere*, I provide a summary of the morpho-syntactic properties of *Okere* relative clauses below.

- i. A head NP
- ii. An initial relative particle
- iii. A final relative particle, *à*
- iv. An essential resumptive pronoun

4.2.4 Ordinal numeral formation in Okere

Ordinals show the rank that an object occupies in relation to other objects in a sequence. Unlike cardinal numerals, ordinal numerals are expressed with a relative clause that functions as a modifier of the head noun in *Okere*. In other words, ordinal numerals have the same structure as relative clauses in *Okere*. This also occurs in other closely related languages like Larteh (Ansah 2014). The structure of the relative clause involving ordinal numerals is the same as the structure of the relative clause in *Okere* discussed in this section. Consider the examples below.

- (11) a. è-bié [è-tè né tú sù **nyó** à]
 SG-chair SG-REL FM follow.PRES top two DEF
 ‘The second chair’
- b. à-wórè [è-tè né tú sù **sá** à]
 SG-book SG-REL FM follow.PRES top three DEF
 ‘The third book’
- e. à-yíré-bí [à-sè né tú sù **nè** à]
 SG-child-DIM SG-REL FM follow.PRES top four DEF
 ‘The fourth child’
- d. è-nyé-mí [à-sè né tú su **ní** à]
 SG-male-DIM SG-REL FM follow.PRES top five DEF
 ‘The fifth boy’
- e. èyí [è-tè né tú su **sié** à]
 SG-tree SG-REL FM follow.PRES top six DEF
 ‘The sixth tree’

In expressing ordinal numerals, the form of the cardinal numeral is used (as found in (11a-e)). This is not the case when the ordinal numeral is expressing the numeral one. As shown in (12a &b), the ordinal numeral, *nkpé* ‘front’ is used in expressing the numeral one but *nkpé* ‘front’ is not a cardinal numeral. When the cardinal numeral *kó* ‘one’, is used in (12c), it results in an ungrammatical structure.

- (12) a. à-wórè [è-tè né jé **nkpé** à]
 SG-book SG-REL FM follow.PRES front DEF
 ‘The first book’

- b. è-nyé-mí [à-sè né jé **nkpé** à]
 SG-male-DIM SG-REL FM follow.PRES front DEF
 ‘The first boy’
- c. *è-nyé-mí [à-sè né jé **kó** à]
 SG-male-DIM SG-REL FM follow.PRES one DEF
 (‘The first boy’)

Another characteristic of ordinal numerals in ɔkere is that they cannot co-occur with cardinal numerals. I show this in (32a & b) below.

- (13) a. *à-wórè sá [è-tè né tu sù sá à]
 SG-book three SG-REL FM follow.PRES top three DEF
 (‘The three third book’)
- b. *èyí sié [è-tè né tu su sié à]
 tree six SG-REL FM follow.PRES top six DEF
 (‘The six sixth tree’)
- c. n-nyé-mí sié [è-sè né jé **nkpé** à]
 PL-male-DIM six PL-REL FM follow.PRES front DEF
 ‘The first six boys’
- d. n-yí nyó [è-tè né jé **nkpé** à]
 PL-tree two PL-REL FM follow.PRES front DEF
 ‘The first two trees’
- e. *n-wórè [è-tè né jé **nkpé** à] sá
 PL-book PL-REL follow.PRES front DEF three
 ‘The first three books’

In (13a & b), there is evidence of ungrammaticality in both structures because each structure is made up of a cardinal and an ordinal numeral. Ordinals and cardinal numerals can only co-occur when the ordinal numeral is not expressed by a cardinal numeral. In that sense, *nkpé* ‘front’ which means ‘first’, as an ordinal numeral, is the only ordinal numeral that can co-occur with a cardinal numeral in the *Okere* NP, as found in (13c & d). It is also realized that when the cardinal and the ordinal numerals occur in the NP, the cardinal numeral precedes the ordinal numeral. Therefore, a phrase like (13e) above is ungrammatical. The head noun immediately precedes the cardinal numeral and relative clause that contains ordinal numeral modifies the head noun and the cardinal numeral

4.3 Structure of the Relativized NP

The previous sections have discussed the relative clause in *Okere* by looking at the structure of relative clause as well as ordinal numerals. This discusses the relationship of the relativized head and other modifiers. I look at how determiners, numerals, quantifiers, and adjective relate with the relativized head.

4.3.1 Relativized Heads

All nouns in *Okere* can be antecedents of a relative clause. Even proper nouns, which refer to specific people, can serve as relativized heads. It is not surprising to know that proper names can be antecedent because proper nouns act like generic

nouns and as such will need an additional identification (cf. Saah 2010). Proper names such as Peasah, Kwadwo and Atiemo are names that could be given to anybody so it is only acceptable that they can be relativized. Examples (14a) & (14b) are examples of relative clauses with proper nouns serving as antecedents.

- (14) a. Osae [à-sě Lydia hú mó à] dè tímí
 Osae SG-REL Lydia see.PST 3SG DEF be.PRES short
 ‘Osae who Lydia saw is short’
- b. Yaa [à-sě Ama hú mó à] kpá
 Yaa SG-REL Ama see.PST 3SG DEF be.tall.PRES
 ‘Yaa who Ama saw is tall’

4.3.2 Relativized Clause and Determiners

In this sub-section, I analyze the relativize head’s relationship with determiners. I also discuss the clause-final determiner in the relative clause. The antecedent/head of the relative clause could appear with a determiner or bare. When the relativized head co-occurs with a determiner, the determiner immediately follows the relativized head. The examples in (15a-d) show relative clauses in Okere where the relativized head occurs with a determiner. In (15a), is an NP modified by a relative clause where the head noun is modified by a definite article.

- (15) a. kyá à [è-tě Atiemo né-hu à]
 SG.building DEF SG-REL Atiemo PROG-see DEF
 ‘The building that Atiemo sees’

- b. à-wóré àkó [è-tě Kofi nè-bè-hu à]
 SG-book INDF SG-REL Kofi PROG-FUT-see DEF
 ‘A book that Kofi is about to see’
- c. à-wóré mó [è-tě Kofi nè-bè-hu à]
 SG-book PROX.DEM.SG SG-REL Kofi PROG-FUT-see DEF
 ‘This book that Kofi is about to see’
- d. à-wóré néá [è-tě Kofi nè-bè-hú à]
 SG-book DIST.DEM.SG SG-REL Kofi PROG-FUT-see DEF
 ‘That book that Kofi is about to see’

In (15b-d), the relativized head or the antecedent of the relative clauses occurs with an indefinite article, proximal demonstrative, and distal demonstrative respectively.

As Saah (2010) pointed out in Akan, the relativized head does not have a generic interpretation when the verb in the relative clause is not in the future tense. When the verb is in the future tense, it is assumed that the interlocutors are logically unaware of the relativized head except in exceptional situations (Saah 2010). Consider examples (16a) & (16b) below:

- (16) a. àwóré [è-tě Kofi bè-hú à] boeɛfiw.
 SG-book SG-REL Kofi FUT-see DEF be.beautiful.PRES
 ‘The book that Kofi will see is beautiful’
- b. àwóré à [è-tě Kofi bè-hú à] boeɛfiw.
 SG-book DEF SG-REL Kofi FUT-see DEF be.beautiful. PRES
 ‘The book that Kofi will see is beautiful’

- c. àwóré [è-tě́ Kofi hú à] boeɛfiw.
 SG-book SG-REL Kofi see.PST DEF be.beautiful.PRES
 ‘The book that Kofi saw is beautiful’

The antecedent, *àwóré* ‘book’, in (16a) is interpreted as generic by the speaker but the antecedent in (16c) is interpreted as definite despite both antecedents occurring without a determiner. This is as a result of the form of the verb in the relative clause. The antecedent in (16c) is without a determiner but it is not interpreted as generic because the verb in the relative clause is in the past tense. This means that when the relative clause has a future verb form, the antecedent is construed as generic if it is bare. In this sense, (16b) & (16c) will be read as definite and (16a) will be read as generic.

4.3.3 Relativized Clause and Numerals

In this sub-section, I present the relationship between the relative clause and the head noun when a cardinal and an ordinal numeral modify the head noun. It is established that the relative clause can co-occur with numeral modifiers in the NPs. Thus, the complex NP will be composed of the relative head that will have both the numeral and the relative clause as post-modifiers. The numeral and all other modifiers precede the relative clause. Consider the examples that follow:

- (17) a. n-wóré à **sá** [è-tè Kofi bè-hú à]
 PL-book DEF three PL-REL Kofi FUT-see DEF
 boeɛfiw.
 be.beautiful.PRES.
 ‘The three books that Kofi will see are beautiful’
- b. n-nyé à **nyó** [è-sè mó-n-só èní à]
 PL-man DEF two PL-REL 3SG-PST-buy meat DEF
 ‘The two men that bought the meat’

In example (17a & b) above, the complex NPs are composed of a relativized head and they are post-modified by a determiner and a numeral as well as an embedded relative clause. The relativized NP together with the determiner and the numeral originated from their respective canonical positions. In other words, the resumptive pronoun, *mó*, represents *nyé à nyó* ‘the two men’ in (17b).

Still on numerals, the relative clause can be embedded in an NP that an ordinal numeral modifies. This complex NP could also be described as stacked relative clause. This is because the ordinal numerals are expressed with a relative clause (see section 4.2.2) and when the relative clause is embedded in such an NP we have two relative clauses modifying the head noun. Consider example (18a) & (18b).

- (18) a. è-bié [ètè né tu sù nyó à]
 SG- chair REL FM follow.PRES top two DEF

[è-tě Kofi hú à] boeɛfiw
 SG-REL Kofi see.PST DEF be.beautiful.PRES

‘The second chair that Kofi saw is beautiful.’

b. à-yíré-bí [à-sè né tu sù nè à]
 SG-child-DIM SG-REL FM follow.PRES top four DEF

[à-sě Kofi hú mó à] boeɛfiw.
 SG-REL Kofi see.PST 3SG DEF be.beautiful.PRES

‘The fourth child that Kofi saw is beautiful.’

Examples (18) are structures where two relative clauses are embedded in a complex NP. This is an example of a stacked NP. In (18b) the ordinal numeral, which is also expressed in a relative clause, is part of the relativized head NP. In this sense, resumptive pronoun, *mó*, in (18b) refers to *àyírébí àsè nè tu sù nè à* ‘the fourth child’. In the case of (18a), the relativized head NP is an inanimate object so the resumptive pronoun is phonetically empty.

4.3.4 Relativized Clause and Adjectives

The relative clause can also follow the adjective(s) in a complex NP. Just like how two or more adjectives can modify the head noun in a simple NP, the relative

clause can be followed by more than two adjectives in a complex NP. Consider the examples that follow.

- (19) a. è-nyé kpáténg pótíí à [à-sě̀ mó-n-só èní
 SG-man tall big DEF SG-REL 3SG-PST-buy meat
 à]
 DEF
 ‘The tall big man who bought the meat’
- b. n-nyé-mí n-timintimi à [è-sě̀ mó-n-só èní à]
 PL-boy-DIM PL-short DEF PL-REL 3SG-PST-buy meat DEF
 ‘The short boys who bought the meat’

In example (19), the adjective(s) precede the relative clause in the complex NP. In (19a), a sequence of adjectives precedes the relative clause. This shows that the relativized head could be modified by several adjectives plus a relative clause.

4.3.5 Relativized Clause and Quantifiers

Quantifiers are also no exception, when it comes to co-occurrence with the relative clause in a complex NP. Just like other modifiers, quantifiers precede the relative clause in a complex NP (as found in (20a & b)). Consider the examples below.

- (20) a. n-nyé-mí **mpíríí** àkó [è-sě̀ mó-n-só èní à]

PL-man-DIM plenty INDF PL-REL 3SG-PST-buy meat DEF
 ‘Some plenty boys who bought the meat’

- b. n-nyé-mí pée àkó [è-sě mó-n-só n-wórè à à]
 PL-man-DIM all INDF PL-REL 3SG-PST-buy PL-book DEF DEF
 ‘All of the boys who bought the books’

So far, in this sub-section, I have discussed the modification of the relative clause in the complex NP. The examples discussed in this section show that adjective, quantifiers, numerals and determiners (articles and demonstratives), can modify the head noun that the relative clause also modifies. As noted above, the relative clause will always be the final element in the complex NP. In other words, all the modifiers precede the relative clause in the Okere complex NP. Therefore, in modifying the complex NP, the order of the modification will read as complex NP → N (Adj) (Qt/Num) (Det) (RC).

4.4 Other Issues in Relative Clauses

In this section, I discuss some issues relating to the relative clause in Okere. In doing so, I look at extraposed relative clauses, stacking of relative clauses and the accessibility hierarchy.

4.4.1 Extraposed Relative Clauses

In Okere, the relative clause can also be extraposed. Extraposed relative clause involves a structure in which the head noun and the relative clause are separated

(Saah 2010). As mentioned earlier, the structure of the complex NP is such that the relative clause immediately follows the head noun. In *Ɔkere*, just like Akan (Saah 2010), the relativized head and the relative clause could be separated by the verb phrase. This is shown in example (21b) below.

- (21) a. *à-bóbí* *à* [*è-tě* *mó* *hù* *dé* *à*]
 SG-animal DEF SG-REL 3SG.POSS head be.big.PRES DEF
 bé *tó*
 come.PST here
 ‘The animal which has a big head came here’
- b. *à-bóbí* *àkó* *bé* *tó* [*è-tě* *mó* *hù*
 SG-animal INDF come.PST here SG-REL 3SG.POSS head
 dé
 be.big.PRES
 ‘An animal which has a big head came here’

Example (21b) is an extraposed relative clause whereas (21a) is a prototypical complex NP. The head noun of the two phrases is *àbóbí* ‘animal’ and the relative clauses are introduced by ‘*è-tě*’ ‘a non-human singular relative clause marker’. In (21b), the verb phrase *bé tó* ‘come here’ interrupts the head noun – relative clause sequence. This structure is very common to native speakers of the language and the strategy is common to many languages in the same language family such as Akan (Saah 2010).

To add to the above, I note that the ‘clause’ final determiner, *à*, which is obligatory in a prototypical relativized NP does not occur in extraposed relativized NPs. This is to say that the final determiner is a determiner for the entire complex NP and not only the relative clause (cf. Saah 2010). As such, when the relative clause is extraposed, the final determiner is absent. I show this in (22). The presence of the final relative particle as in (22) makes the structure ungrammatical.

- (22) **à*-bóbí àkó bɛ tó [è-tě mó hù
 SG-animal INDF come.PST here SG-REL 3SG.POSS head
 dé à]
 be.big.PRES DEF
 (‘The animal which has a big head came here’)

Besides, it is important to note that the relativized head can only occur with an indefinite determiner, *àkó* in an extraposed relative NP. This explains why the structures in (23a & 23b) are ungrammatical. The structures would be grammatical with the definite article, *à*, and the demonstrative *mó* omitted.

- (23) a. **à*-bóbí **à** bɛ tó [è-tě mó hù
 SG-animal DEF come.PST here SG-REL 3SG.POSS head
 dé]
 be.big.PRES
 (‘The animal which has a big head came here’)

- b. *à-bóbí móbé tó [è-tě mó hù
 SG-animal DEF come.PST here SG-REL 3SG.POSS head
 dé]
 be.big.PRES
 ('That animal which has a big head came here')

4.4.2 Stacking of relative clauses

Two or more relative clauses can co-occur as modifiers of a single head noun in Okere, as shown in (24a).

- (24) a. è-nyé à [è-sě è-tré mó Ohene à] [è-sě Kofi
 SG-man DEF SG-REL 1PL-call.PST 3SG Ohene DEF SG-REL Kofi
 hù mó à]
 see.PST 3SG DEF
 'The man who is called Ohene who Kofi saw'
- b. *è-nyé à [è-sě è-tré mó Ohene à] [?? Kofi
 SG-man DEF SG-REL 1PL-call.PST 3SG Ohene DEF Kofi
 hù mó à]
 see.PST 3SG DEF
 ('The man who is called Ohene who Kofi saw')

Each of the relative clauses in the series is introduced by the relative particle and ends with the final relative particle, *à*. Example (24) is ungrammatical because the second relative clause is not introduced by a relative particle *è-sĕ*.

4.4.3 The NP Accessibility Hierarchy for Relative Clause Formation

This section is to show what syntactic positions in *Okere* can be relativized. This concept is widely known in the literature as the NP Accessibility Hierarchy (NPAH) following (Keenan & Comrie (1977)). According to Fox (1987), the hierarchy is “an implicational scale for the relativizability of different grammatical roles. Keenan & Comrie (1977) proposes that languages will adhere to the following hierarchy:

SUBJECT > DIRECT OBJECT > INDIRECT OBJECT > OBLIQUE >
GENITIVES > OCOMPS

Comrie (1989: 156) gives a simpler one in “subject > direct object > non-direct object > possessor”. The idea behind the NPAH is that “if a language can form relative clauses on a given position on the hierarchy, then it can also form relative clauses on all positions higher (to the left) on the hierarchy” (Comrie 1989: 156).

In *Okere* all argument positions in the language can be relativized. In the following, I show that all the following positions can be relativized in (26).

(25) **Subject:**

a. i. è-nyé à n-só è-kyí à né Ama
 SG-è-nyé à PST-buy SG-knife DEF give.PST Ama
 ‘The man bought a knife for Aman’

ii. è-nyé à [à-sè mo-n-só è-kyí à né Ama à]
 SG-man DEF SG-REL 3SG-PST-buy SG-knife DEF give.PST Ama DEF
 ‘The man who bought the knife for Ama’

Object (direct)

b. è-kyí à [è-tè è-nyé à né n-só né Ama à]
 SG-knife DEF SG-REL SG-man DEF FM PST-buy give.PST Ama DEF

dé

be.big.PRES

‘The knife that the man bought for Ama is big’

Object (Indirect)

c. Ama [à-sè Kofi né n-só èkyí à nè mó à]
 Ama SG-REL Kofi FM PST-buy knife DEF give.PST 3SG DEF
 ‘Ama who Kofi bought the knife for’

Possessor

d. gbéí [à è-tè n-nyé à né n-kù mó ana à]
 SG.dog DEF SG-REL PL-man DEF FM PST-cut 3SG.POSS feet DEF
 ‘The dog that the man cut its feet is here’

Non-Direct Object (Locative)

e. ò-fó à [è-tè Kofi bè-wé à] dé

SG-place DEF SG-REL Kofi FUT-go DEF be.big.PRES
 ‘The place that Kofi will go is big’

Temporal Adjunct

f. béré à [è-tě n-nyé à né m-bá à]
 time DEF SG-REL PL-man DEF FM PST-come DEF
 ‘The time that the men came’

The examples in (25a-f) show that ɔkere can relativize all syntactic positions that NPs can occupy. The relativized NP in (25a) *ènyé à* ‘the man’ is the subject of the sentence in (25a). In (25b-f), I show that the direct object, indirect object, possessor, non-direct object and the temporal adjunct positions can be relativized. This confirms the view that if a language can relativize a lower position on the NPAH scale, it can also relativize all the other positions higher than that position on the scale. Thus, because ɔkere can relativize the possessor in a possessive construction, as found in (25d), it implies that ɔkere can relativize all argument positions on the left edge of the scale.

4.5 Possessive Constructions in ɔkere

Possessive constructions are considered complex NP (Dryer 2007, Tallerman 2015). Possessive constructions in ɔkere have the structure of a Possessor, followed by the Possessum. This means that the possessor acts as a pre-modifier to the head noun (possessum). Possessive constructions could occur when head noun occurs with a possessor with the noun phrase or where “possession is predicated at the clausal level” (Dryer 2007: 178). A typical example of predicate possession in English is *the book is for Samuel*. With particular attention on the noun phrase, predicate clause level possession is not discussed in this thesis. Therefore, possessive construction as used in this thesis will be restricted to possession within the noun phrase. The section is subdivided into 4.5.1 & 4.5.2. Section 4.5.1 discusses possessive construction with noun possessors while section 4.5.2 focuses on possessive pronouns.

4.5.1 Possessive Construction with noun possessors

The possessive constructions discussed here have nouns as possessors. Consider the examples that follow:

- (26) a. Yaw mó ní
 Yaw 3SG.POSS mother
 ‘Yaw’s mother’

- b. *Yaw ?? ní
 Yaw 3SG.POSS mother
 ‘Yaw mother’
- c. John mó gyámé
 John 3SG.POSS sibling
 ‘John’s brothers’
- d. è-nyé à mó ní
 è-nyé DEF 3SG.POSS mother
 ‘The man’s wife’
- e. *è-nyé à ?? ní
 SG-man DEF 3SG.POSS mother
 ‘The man’s mother’

The examples in (26) are possessive constructions in *Okere*. Each possessum, head noun, *ní* ‘mother’, and *gyámé* ‘sibling’, in these examples denotes a person’s relative and its possessor (modifier) is a proper noun (‘Yaw’ in (26a) and ‘John’ in (26c)) and a common noun (‘man’ in (26d)). When this happens, the possessive marker⁵, *mó*, occurs between the possessor and the possessum (as found in (26a, 26c & 26d)). It is imperative that the possessive marker occurs between these types of possessive constructions because the absence of it renders these constructions ungrammatical, shown in (26b) & (26e).

⁵ I gloss the possessive marker, *mó*, as 3SG.POSS because it has the same form as the 3rd person singular pronoun in *Okere*.

In examples (27), I show that the possessive marker does not occur when the possessum is a body part noun. Example (27b) is an ungrammatical structure because the possessive marker is absent.

- (27) a. è-nyé à àbá
 SG-man DEF hand
 ‘The man’s hand’
- b. *è-nyé à mó àbá
 SG-man DEF 3SG.POSS hand
 ‘The man’s hand’
- c. Kofi hù
 Kofi head
 ‘Kofi’s head’
- d. *Kofi mó hù
 Kofi 3SG.POSS head
 (‘Kofi’s head’)

In (27a), àbá ‘hand’ is body part noun so there would be no possessive marker between the possessor ènyé ‘man’ and hù ‘head’. It becomes ungrammatical, as in (27b), when the possessive marker is present. This also applies to the construction in (27c) and (27d) where the latter is ungrammatical and the former is grammatical.

The conclusion here is that in an inalienable possessive construction, the possessive marker, mó, occurs when the possessor is not a pronoun and the possessum is not a body part noun.

Another feature of possessive constructions involving nouns is that when the possessum is alienable (i.e. not a body part noun or a noun referring to one's relative), the possessor and the possessum are placed side by side without the possessive marker. Consider the examples in (28).

- (28)
- a. John téí
 John food
 ‘John’s food’
 - b. Kofi àfúrí
 Kofi farm
 ‘Kofi’s farm’
 - c. Yaw è-wí
 Yaw SG-house
 ‘Yaw’s house’
 - d. gbéí bóó
 SG.dog bone
 ‘A dog’s bone’
 - e. è-nyé á kyá
 SG-man DEF building
 ‘The man’s building’
 - f. *John mó téí
 John 3SG.POSS food
 (‘John’s food’)

The possessive constructions presented in (28) are examples of alienable possessive constructions. This is because the possessums, *téí* ‘food’, *àfúrí* ‘farm’, *èwí* ‘house’, *bóó* ‘bone’, and *kyá* ‘building’, are all nouns other than a person’s relative or a body part. In this sense, the language does not permit the presence of the possessive marker, *mó*. The structure in (28f) is ungrammatical because the possessive marker, *mó*, comes between the ‘John’ and *téí* ‘food’.

4.5.2 Possessive Pronouns

Possessive pronouns take the same form as personal pronouns in Okere. Here also, the possessive pronouns precede the possessum and there is no possessive marker between the possessive pronoun and the possessum. In other words, whether the possessum is inalienable or alienable, the possessive marker will still be absent. The examples in (29), (30) and (31) below are examples of possessive constructions involving possessive pronouns in Okere.

- (29) a. *mé* *hù*
 1SG.POSS head
 ‘My head’
- b. *wó* *hù*
 2SG.POSS head
 ‘Your head’
- c. *mó* *hù*

- 3SG.POSS head
'His/her/its head'
- d. èní hù
1PL.POSS head
'Our head'
- (30) a. mé ní
1SG.POSS mother
'My mother'
- b. wó ní
2SG.POSS mother
'Your mother'
- c. mó ní
3SG.POSS mother
'His/her mother'
- (31) a. mé kyá
1sg.poss building
'My building'
- b. mé téí
1sg.poss food
'my food'

The examples in (29) through to (31) are instances of pronominal possession in Okere. The examples in (29) and (31) are inalienable possessive construction. What makes these constructions different from possessive constructions involving nouns is that, here, the possessive marker does not show up. It is expected to

happen this way since the possessive marker has the same form as a possessive pronoun.

4.6 Chapter Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed complex NPs in ɔkɛrɛ. In doing so, the chapter focused on the relative clause and possessive constructions in ɔkɛrɛ. Concerning the relative clause, the chapter discussed the component of the relative clause as an embedded clause in the noun phrase thereby making it a complex NP. The chapter showed that the relative clause in ɔkɛrɛ is introduced by a relative particle and ends with *à*. The relative particle agrees in number and animacy with the head noun. The chapter also discussed resumptive pronouns in ɔkɛrɛ, I show that the resumptive pronoun is overt when an animate noun is relativized and covert when an object inanimate noun is relativized.

Section 4.5 focused on possessive construction. The section focused on noun possessors and possessive pronouns. The analysis showed that ɔkɛrɛ has a possessive construction with a possessor-possessum structure as well as a distinction between alienable and inalienable possessive constructions.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This thesis has described the noun phrase in Okere. The objective was to describe the constituent structure of the simple and complex noun phrase in Okere. The focus of this chapter, therefore, is to give a summary and conclusion to this thesis. Section 5.2 gives a summary of all the previous chapters. This thesis' contribution to knowledge is presented in section 5.3. In section 5.4 are some recommendations for future research.

5.2 Summary of the Chapters

The general introduction of this thesis was done in chapter one. In this chapter, the background that informed the study was introduced. This is followed by a background of the Okere language and its people. In doing this, the chapter gave the history of the Okere people. The chapter explained that Okere is a Guan language and it belongs to the Kwa language family. The chapter also presented a brief structure of the Okere language where the vowel and consonant system was discussed. In this chapter, I add that Okere is also an SVO language in an unmarked clause structure. Having done these, the chapter presented the problem

statement, the objective of the study, research questions, the significance of the study and the scope of the study. The data collection procedure and the methodology was also addressed in this chapter.

In chapter two, the thesis focused on issues relating to the current subject matter in the literature. Here, the chapter discussed the noun, the pronoun and other elements found within the NP. In doing this, the chapter reviewed the bare noun phrase as it occurs cross-linguistically in NPs. The chapter also looked at the relationship that exists between the head noun and determiners, numerals, quantifiers, and adjectives. The chapter also discussed the form and structure of the relative clause and possessive constructions in other languages. The theoretical framework, functionalism, which underpinned the study, was also presented in this chapter.

Chapter three of this thesis focused on describing the internal components of the simple NP in $\text{\textcircled{O}kere}$. Describing the simple NP, the chapter gave the morphological structure of $\text{\textcircled{O}kere}$ nouns by paying attention to the nominal affixes in the language. Here, the chapter discussed noun affixation in $\text{\textcircled{O}kere}$. The chapter looked at derived and non-derived nouns in $\text{\textcircled{O}kere}$. The chapter showed that some derived nouns in $\text{\textcircled{O}kere}$ do not mark number. This is not a feature of only derived nouns but some non-derived nouns as well.

Moving on, the chapter also discussed the bare NP in $\text{\textcircled{O}kere}$. As it occurs in other languages, the study concluded that the bare NP could be interpreted as definite

when the speaker and the hearer have background knowledge of the referent or when the referent refers to a specific entity and indefinite if otherwise. It was also shown that the bare NP can occur at all argument positions. Chapter three also discussed personal pronouns as heads of the NP in ɔkere . Again, the chapter showed that the head noun in ɔkere could co-occur with optional dependents or modifiers. These dependents include determiners, numerals: both ordinals and cardinals, quantifiers and adjectives. As it occurs in other Kwa languages, the modifiers have a strict sequential order. The order in which the modifiers could appear in the simple NP in ɔkere is given as $\text{NP} \rightarrow (\text{Det}) \text{N} (\text{Adj}) (\text{Qt/Num}) (\text{Det})$. The relative clause follows this structure when the NP has an embedded relative clause (as found in chapter four).

In Chapter four, I discussed the complex NP in ɔkere . Here, I focused on two NP structures: the relative clause and possessive constructions. The account given on the relative clause showed that the relative clause in ɔkere is introduced by a compulsory relative pronoun which agrees in number and humanness with the head noun. Thus, a human head noun will select a particular relative pronoun and a non-human head noun will also select a different relative pronoun. In the same vein, a singular noun will select a singular relative pronoun and vice versa. The chapter also showed that the relative clause in ɔkere terminates with a relative particle that has the form and function like the definite determiner in the language. It was also shown that the gap left by the relativized head is occupied by a

resumptive pronoun unless the relativized head is an inanimate object. The chapter also added that the relative clause could be extraposed, stacked and that all argument positions in ɔkere can be relativized. Section 4.4 discussed ordinal numerals in ɔkere. Ordinal numerals have the form of the relative clause in ɔkere. Thus, ordinal numerals begin with a relative particle and end with a relative particle just as relative clauses in ɔkere.

The final section of chapter four, section 4.5, focused on possessive constructions in ɔkere. The section discussed alienable and inalienable possessive constructions in ɔkere. A distinction then was drawn between noun possessors and pronominal possessors. It was concluded that noun possessor may or may not allow a pronominal word to occur between the possessor and the possessum but pronominal possession will always prevent the pronominal word from appearing between the possessor and the possessum.

5.3 Contributions to Knowledge

This thesis has contributed to the documentation of ɔkere language. The study has provided knowledge on an aspect of ɔkere syntax by looking at the structure of the noun phrase in ɔkere. This work adds to the available literature on Kwa and Ghanaian languages. The thesis, therefore, will serve as a reference point for future works in ɔkere or on its related languages.

5.4 Future Research

Future research could go into details by looking at the internal structure of compound nouns and derived nouns in ɔkɛrɛ. Again, the study paid less attention to the semantics of the NP and of its internal components. Future research could focus on the semantics and even the pragmatics of noun modification in ɔkɛrɛ, particularly, on the extent to which basic meanings of constituent-units are affected or are enhanced. Future research could also investigate the formal relationship between the noun phrase in ɔkɛrɛ as presented here and the formation of ordinal numerals in ɔkɛrɛ.

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