

BINDING IN KANURI LANGUAGE

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Abstract

The paper discusses the conditions that regulate the relation between nominal's in structures. The behaviour of Anaphors, pronominals and referential expressions both with respect to their referent relation with other nominal's and on semantic points of view have been observed and interpreted. The study shows that the binding conditions as outlined in Chomsky (1989), Rigter (1985) and Munkaila (1990) are quite accurately observed in Kanuri. The study farther observes the semantic compatibility between a binder and bound element and finds that only the semantically compatible nominals are co-indexed. With respect to agreement between co-indexed element in terms of three nominal features (person, number and gender} as observed in other languages (Haegeman, 3994), the study concludes that the agreement is only in terms of two nominal features (person and number) in the case of Kanuri.

Introduction

The paper is concerned mainly with interpretations of Kanuri pronouns and other types of nouns within the framework of the Government and Binding (GB) theory. Kanuri is a major language of the people of Borno and Yobe Stales in Nigeria. Kanuri is a non-gender language. It exhibits subject-object-verb (SOV) basic word-order with permissible variant of object-subject-verb (OSV) agreement throughout its grammar. In the permissible word-order, a morphological case-marker is always assigned to the NP to distinguish the subject NP from the object NP in the structure. In recent works on Kanuri grammar (cf. Cyffer, 1983 and Fannami, 1996) it has been pointed out that if an object NP appeared to be a personal pronoun, the marking of the object pronoun NP is always obligatory.

Basically, this paper is concerned with the interpretation of the relationship of referential nominals in Kanuri. The module of grammar which regulates this interpretation of the relationship" of nominals is called the Binding theory, (cf. Haegeman, 1994).

Binding Theory

Binding theory is one of the many sub-theories of the Government and Binding (GB) theory. Binding theory deals with how pronouns and other types of nouns are related to their antecedents, (cf. Chomsky, 1989:52). According to Righter (1985), the term Binding refers to the coreference relation between a binder and a bound element in a structure. If a pronoun or any type of noun has a structural relationship to another and is coindexed with it, it is said to be bound to it (cf. Chomsky, 1989:44). Binding theory divides the class of referential nominals into anaphors, pronominals and referential expressions (=R-expressions). (cf. Rigter, 1985:110). There are various binding conditions and principles, hi this paper we adopted the three binding conditions for the anaphors, pronominals and - R-expressions stated in Munkaila (1990:38). We first started the binding conditions and then try to illustrate to see how these conditions operate in Kanuri.

The Binding Conditions

As stated in Chomsky (1989), Rigter (1985:310) and Munkaila (1990:37). The three basic binding conditions for the anaphor, pronominals and referential expressions are:

- 1) A. An anaphor must be bound in its governing category, (anaphors: NP-traces, lexical anaphors, PRO).
B. Pronominal is free in its governing category, (pronominals: pronouns, PRO).
C. An R(=referential) - expression is free. (R=expressions: names , variables).

Munkaila (1990:38) defines the notion *bound* and the *Governing category* as stated in 2 and 3 respectively.

- 2) A is bound if A is an argument coindexed with a C- commanding argument. Free simply means A is not bound.

- 3) A is a governing category for B if and only if A is the minimal category containing B, a governor of B and a subject accessible to B.

In what follows we try to illustrate how each of the three binding conditions operates on the anaphors, pronominals and the Referential expressions in Kanuri.

Anaphors

Anaphors include overt categories such as: each other, himself, and empty category (Ecs) such as NP- trace and PRO. (cf. Chomsky, 1988:20).

The anaphors which are reflexives in Kanuri are the expressions such as *iClanyi* "my self *K lanin* " Yourself, *k lanz* " him/herself, *k land* "ourselves, *k lando* "yourselves and *K^clanza* " themselves. Consider the following examples:

- 4a) Binta [Ferowad | k lanza, warzain] suruna
 Binta girl +pm+the head+poss. Burning saw
 Binla saw the girls burning themselves.
- b) Ferowad , [Binta k lanza, warzain] suruna
 girl + pm +the Binta Head + Poss Burning saw.
- c) [Sandi Kamanza Sara na]
 They each other they loved
 "they loved each other.

In the structure in (4a) above *k lanza* "themselves" is an anaphor. The nearest subject accessible to the anaphor / *lanza* "themselves" is *Ferowad* "The girls", *k lanza* "themselves" is coindexed with its c-commanding antecedent *ferowade* "the girls" within its governing category. And thus the anaphor *Kelanza* "themselves" is said to be bound within its governing category; in accordance with condition A of the binding theory which states that an anaphor must be bound within its governing category.

In 4b) the anaphor *Wlanza* "themselves" is coindexed with a non- C-commanding antecedent outside its governing category. This violates condition (A) of the binding theory and rules out structure (4b) as ungrammatical.

In (4c) *Kamanza* "each other" is an anaphor. The governing of the anaphor *kamanza* "each other" is the verb *sarag na* " loved" and the nearest subject accessible to the anaphor *kamanza* "each other" is *Sandi* "they" *Kamanza* "each other" is coindexed with its C-commanding antecedent *Sandi* "they" within its governing category. The grammaticality of (4c) shows that the anaphor *Kamanza* "each other" is covered by condition A of the binding theory.

As noted that anaphor includes NP-trace, Kanuri does not have NP-trace. Instead, it has "PRO", developed from the study of Equi NP deletion. Consider the following example.

5. Audu Wad goz na [bali kuloro lejin]
 Audu Promise he took tomorrow farm to he is going
 "Audu promised to go to farm tomorrow"

In example (5) above, the extended projection principles require the bracketed clause to have a subject . GB treats such structure as having an empty subject position, (cf. Chomsky, N. 1989:40) . The empty subject category in such structure in language like Arabic, Italian and Chinese, is called PRO. On this basis, the researchers observed that Kanuri is not an exception to this kind of analysis, therefore the deep- structure for the Kanuri sentence given (5) above is then presented in (6) below.

- 6- Audu Wad goz na [PRO ball kuloro lejin]
 Audu Promise he took tomorrow farm to he is going
 "Audu promised to go to farm tomorrow"

In (6) above, the PRO refers to the subject of the main sentence. That means the PRO is coindexed with Audu, because it is subject Audu who is going and not anyone else. In this sense PRO behaves like an anaphor coindexed to its non- C-commanding antecedent as present in (7)

below:

- | | | | | | | |
|----|-------|------------------|---------------------|------------|---------|-------------|
| 7. | Audu | Wad ^f | goz ^e na | [PRO, ball | kuloro | lejin] |
| | Audu | Promise | he took | tomorrow | farm to | he is going |
| | "Audu | promised | to go to farm | tomorrow" | | |

In (7) above, it is clear that the PRO is not bound to anything within its governing category. It refers to someone called Audu not explicitly-mentioned in its governing category. In this sense the PRO is free in its governing category in accordance with condition B of the binding theory which states that pronominal is free in its governing category. It behaves like a pronominal. This shows that the PRO sometimes behaves like a pronominal under condition B, and sometimes like an anaphor under condition A of the Binding theory. For this reason Chomsky, (1989:161) refers to PRO as pronominal anaphor.

Pronominals

Pronominals are: pronouns and PRO. Condition (B) of the binding theory states that a pronoun must not be bound in its governing category. That means they must not be co indexed with a C-commanding antecedent in a structure. In other words a pronominal need not be preferential with a nominal in the same structure. This can be illustrated in (8) below.

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|-----|------------|---------|------|------------------|
| 8a. | Audu | Shi | +ga | Cez ^e |
| | Audu | he/she | +Dom | kill |
| | "Audu kill | him/her | | |
-
- | | | | | |
|----|--|---------------|--------------|----------|
| b. | Nandi | Kungenandoaga | [PRO makkaro | Sadowo] |
| | You (pi) | Money your if | Mecca to | take me. |
| | "If you have (enough) money take me to Mecca". | | | |

In (8) it is observed that pronominal *shiga* "him" is not bound in its category, hence *shiga* refers to someone not indicated in the structure at all. In (8b) it is also observed that the PRO is not bound. It is like a pronominal in that it lacks an antecedent. For these reasons, it is argued that the pronominal *shiga* "him" in (8a) and the PRO in (8b) are free in accordance with condition (B) of the binding theory.

Referential Expressions

Referential expressions, or R-expressions, constitute names and variables. Condition (c) of the binding theory states that R-expressions must be free. That means they must not be coindexed with a C-commanding antecedent in a structure. They do not need an antecedent. In other words they do not tolerate binding from another element in a structure. (cf. Haegeman, 1994:226) and Rigter, 1985:114). This is illustrated in (9) below:

- | | | | | |
|----|--------------------------|--------|------|-----------|
| 9) | Kadi | Shi | +ga | Kapse |
| | Snake | he/she | +Dom | Attacked, |
| | "snake attacked him/her" | | | |
-
- | | | | | |
|-----|------------------------------|-----|-------|------|
| 10) | Aduye | She | lejin | Wono |
| | Audu+Sm | he | going | Says |
| | "Audu says that he is going" | | | |

In example (9), *Kadi* "snake"¹ is the Referential expression. It selects its referent from the universe of discourse. And therefore the referential expresses *kadi* "snake" is free in accordance with condition C of the Binding- theory which states that Referential expression is free everywhere. In example (10) the sentence is ambiguous. It is ambiguous in the sense that the Referential expression *Xwrfuye* "Audu+SM" may be interpreted as having the pronoun *shi* "he/she" as its referent. On the other hand, both the referential expression *Aduye* Audu +SM and the pronoun *shi* "he/she" could be understood as having distinct referent from the universe of discourse.

Semantic Compatibility

The researchers observed that only the semantically compatible nominate are co indexed in Kanun. This is illustrated in examples (1 la and b) below;

1 la)	Kamye	K lanz	Lorujono
person+SM		himself	destroy
"a person may destroy himself ¹			
b)	*amye	K lanz	Lorujono
person+SM		himself	destroy
"a person may destroy himself ¹			

In example (1 la) and (1 Ib) above, one can deduce that the reflexive and its antecedent must agree with respect to the nominal features of person and number in Kanuri . The requirement that a reflexive and its antecedent must agree with respect to their nominal features follows from the fact that the reflexive depends for its interpretation on the antecedent, i.e. the reflexive and its antecedent share (heir referent, (cf. Haegeman, 1994:207). Lack of agreement would affect the semantic compatibility which in turn would make co - indexation impossible. That is why it is odd to find a reflexive with the feature [+ third person singular] coindexed with an antecedent which itself has the feature [+plural] as show in (1 Ib).

Though principle (c) of the binding theory states that referential expressions are free everywhere. This does not prevent Referential expressions to be coreferential with semantically compatible nominate that do not C -command them. Referential expressions like b 1 g "maron". Ng riwu "bastard" etc. can be co-indexed with a compatible preceding nominate (cf. Rigter, 1985:122) This is illustrated in (12a) and (12b) below: 12a)

Auduye	Wuro	zau	g najiwonya	b 1 g	Knadi
Audu	me to	pain	placed	maron	patient
Gonema	wuro	gulz ^e nye			
Take	me to he didn't say.				
"Audu hurts me (the) maron didn't even say he was sorry".					

b.	Audu	Bawanz ye	bowononya	ng riwu letero	wowona
Audu		father his+Sm	called	bastard	go to refuse
"Audu was called by his father the bastard refuses to go"					

In (12a) the Referential expressions b 1 g "maron" is co -indexed to the preceding nominal Audu even though it does not C-command. Similarly in (12b) the Referential expression Ng riwu "bastard" is compatibly co-indexed to the preceding nominal Audu which it does not C-command. The types of referential expressions which does not preclude the possibility to be coreferential (i.e to be co-indexed) with semantically compatible nominal that do not C-command is referred to as the epithet (cf. Rigter, 1985:122).

Conclusion

From the foregoing the researchers discussed binding in Kanuri. The study illustrates that an anaphor and pronominals in Kanuri are bound only in their governing categories, while Referential expression is always free everywhere except in the case of epithet referential expression, where the epithet referential expression is found to be co-indexed with a semantically compatible nominal (hat don't C-command. The study further observed that for an element to bind another element in a structure, they must be co-indexed (i.e. they must have coreferents) and only the semantically compatible elements can be co-indexed. Though binding theory requires a reflexive and its antecedent to agree with respect to the nominal features of person, gender and number, it has been observed that they agree only in the nominal features of person and number in Kanuri. This is because Kanun is a non- gender language. There is no gender distinction in Kanuri.

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