

NAIROBI EVANGELICAL GRADUATE
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

THE FORM *ma'* IN DHOLUO

BY

CLEMENT JUMA SANNA

*A Linguistic Project Submitted to the Graduate School in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts
in Translation Studies*

MARCH 2004

NAIROBI EVANGELICAL GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

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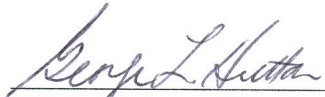
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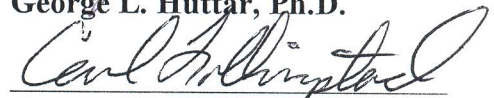
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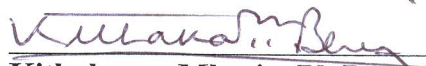
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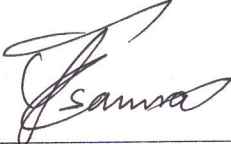
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STUDENT'S DECLARATION

THE FORM *ma'* IN DHOLUO

I declare that this is my original work and has not been submitted to any other College or University for academic credit.

The views presented in this paper are not necessarily those of the Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology or the Examiners.

(Signed) 
Clement Juma Sanna

March, 2004

ABSTRACT

The form *má* is one of the most important forms in Dholuo as evidenced by its various functions in both the pragmatic and morphological domains of the language. This work came out of the realization that it would be useful to describe some of the various functions of this form in a single work. This paper therefore investigates the variety of functions associated with *má* both from a grammatical, and, where applicable, pragmatic perspective. This work is primarily of a descriptive nature. However, where applicable, a relevant syntactic theory is applied in the course of the investigation.

It is obvious that the restricted scope of this work does not arrive at an exhaustive and detailed study of the form *má*. However, the writer hopes that this work will draw the attention of other linguists to this important and interesting element in Dholuo.

DEDICATION

In memory of my beloved mother Rukia (1945-2001), a Kamba whose excellent command of Dholuo eclipsed her Bantu identity.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project is by no means the outcome of my singular efforts; several people have made it all possible. My sincere gratitude first goes to Dr. Huttar, my supervisor in this project and my mentor in linguistics during my two years of study at NEGST. His genuine commitment and concern for his students has revealed to me that humility is the most important virtue of true scholarship. I specifically want to thank him for leading me to a deeper appreciation of my own Dholuo mother tongue as well as for equipping me with the kind of linguistic skills that have made this project possible. Moreover, his professionalism both in and out of class and his lively sense of humour made learning from him an unforgettable experience.

It would not have been possible to present Dholuo speech sounds in IPA were it not for the efforts of Mrs. Mary Huttar. I would also like to thank Dr. Blass for her useful insights in pragmatics. Again to both Dr. Blass and Mrs. Huttar, thanks for your motherly tenderness; it lightened my load without having to reduce my credit hours. My appreciation goes to Dr. Follingstad for his useful comments as my second reader. I will not forget my nocturnal friend and classmate Ezra Matanda whose encouragement spurred me to type this project even during difficult times. I am greatly indebted to SIL for providing the seed funding to enable me to enroll in the translation programme; also my sincere gratitude goes to Dr. and Mrs. Sim and Dr. and Mrs. Huttar, all of who played a key role in securing funds to enable me to finish my studies without much ado. My deep appreciation again goes to Dr. Sim for crafting a rigorous programme that has led to a rather violent awakening of my previously latent abilities in linguistics.

Finally and above all, I thank God my creator and Redeemer who gave me the courage to come to NEGST and who has always been by my side ever since.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

1Sg	First Person Singular
1Pl	First Person Plural
2Sg	Second Person Singular
2Pl	Second Person Plural
3Sg	Third Person Singular
3Pl	Third person Plural
ASP	Aspect marker
CF	Contrastive Focus
CON	Connective
COP	Copula
FOC	Focus Marker
HAB	Habitual Aspect
HRC	Headless Relative Clause
INT	Interrogative
I.O	Indirect Object
LOC	Locative
NP	Noun Phrase
NP _{rel}	Relativized Noun Phrase
PASS	Passive
PAST	Past Tense
Pl	Plural

CHAPTER I

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. A GENERAL BACKGROUND TO THE PEOPLE AND LANGUAGE UNDER INVESTIGATION

The language in question in this project is Dholuo. The major speech community associated with this language is the Luo of Kenya. The Luo are part of that group of Nilotes collectively called the Lwo. According to Okombo (1997), historians believe that the Lwo formed one cradleland of the Nilotes in southern Sudan by the beginning of the past millennium. According to Cohen (1974) the Luo began to settle in the Nyanza region of Kenya between 1500 and 1550 AD. They still occupy much of this region, located in the western part of Kenya. Tucker (1993) informs us that most of these speakers are concentrated around Lake Victoria Gulf (formerly Lake Nyanza) off its North Eastern corner.

Grimes (2000, 139) approximates that as at the year 2000 there were 3,185,000 speakers of Dholuo in the Republic of Kenya. Dholuo belongs to the western Nilotic sub-branch of the Eastern Sudanic family. Of the Nilotic languages of Kenya, only Dholuo belongs to the western Nilotic group. Languages closely related to Dholuo are found in Southern Sudan, Uganda, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. These include Jur Sholo, Anuak, Shilluk and Lwo (Southern Sudan); Acholi, Lango, (Northern Uganda) and Adhola (Western Uganda); Alur (North Eastern Congo, and West Nile Province, Uganda). According to Tucker (*ibid.*), from the viewpoint of intelligibility, Adhola in Budama, just over the Ugandan border, is close enough to Dholuo to be considered a dialect of it. Tucker adds that although Alur is the furthest

away of its Southern neighbours, it is much more intelligible to Dholuo speakers than the much nearer Acholi and Lango. The Sudan members are barely intelligible to Dholuo speakers.

With respect to Dholuo as spoken in the Kenyan context, Stafford (1967) identifies two dialects, each spoken in a different region in the wider Luo Nyanza region. The first variety, which he calls the *Trans Yala* dialect, is spoken in Ugenya, Alego, Yimbo and parts of Gem location (Central Nyanza). The second dialect, the *South Nyanza* dialect is spoken in various locations of South Nyanza district plus those parts excluded in the Trans Yala group. These dialects generally have a high degree of mutual intelligibility. However, their phonological and lexical properties vary to such a degree that it is easy to tell which dialectal zone a speaker comes from just by hearing him or her speak. The South Nyanza dialect is generally regarded as the standard one and as a result it is widely used in publications. Many publications such as school readers and even the Dholuo Bible, have been published in this dialect. The descriptions and analyses in this project are based on the South Nyanza dialect of which the writer is a native speaker.

1.2. ORTHOGRAPHY

Dholuo is conventionally written in the standard Roman alphabet script. Dholuo has a total of twenty-six consonants. Except for the diagraphs used to represent some fricatives, nasals and all the nasal stops, there is a one-one correspondence between the consonants and their orthographic symbols in the Roman script and this makes it easy to interpret the consonantal properties of any word (Okombo, 1993, 17). Thus for example, diagraph *th* represents only one sound, the voiceless interdental fricative /θ/.

Dholuo has nine vowels, the single low front vowel /a/, and eight others, /ɛ/, /e/, /ɪ/, /i/, /ʊ/, /u/, /ɔ/, /ɔ̄/, each with a [+ Advanced Tongue Root] vowel and its [-Advanced Tongue Root] counterpart. The [+ATR] and [-ATR] vowel phonemes are not differentiated in the orthography thus there are only five symbols one for /a/ and one for each of the four pairs. For reasons of convenience we have opted to use the IPA symbols to represent both the consonants and the vowels. Tones will also be marked.

CHAPTER II

2. THE USES OF THE FORM *má*

2.1. FORMATION OF COMPOUND DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS

We shall begin this work by looking at the role of the form *má* in the formation of demonstrative pronouns. Dholuo demonstrative pronouns are formed by the combination of the form *má* with demonstrative adjectives. Thus, our discussion of how this phenomenon is realized will logically have to begin with a clear description of the form of Dholuo demonstrative adjectives.

2.1.1. DEMONSTRATIVE ADJECTIVES

In Dholuo, there is a clear formal distinction between demonstrative adjectives and demonstrative pronouns. According to Okombo (1997, 60), demonstrative adjectives serve the communicative function of simply singling out or specifying a person or object that is talked about. Okombo (60-61) adds that ‘when such an element singles out a given object (or person) by modifying the word (or phrase) that designates the object in question, it is referred to as a demonstrative adjective.’ According to Payne (1997, 103), demonstratives on the whole exhibit the features common to the pronoun system of the language (this includes features such as gender, number, etc.) as well as distance, or orientation with respect to the speaker and the hearer.

Dholuo demonstrative adjectives are not marked for gender since this phenomenon is not manifested in the general pronominal system of the language. However, they are differentiated on the basis of number and proximity of the qualified element in relation to the speaker or hearer. They take the following forms:

Singular

ní 'this'

Plural

gĩ 'these'

When the qualified object is proximate to both the speaker and the hearer the above forms are employed. See the following constructions:

(1) ndĩgà ní tĩn.

bicycle this small

'This bicycle is small.'

D. Adj.

(2) ndĩgnĩ gĩ tĩndò.

Pl-bicycle these Pl-small

'These bicycles are small'.

When the qualified object is closer to the hearer than to the speaker, the following forms are used:

Singular

nó 'that'

Plural

gó 'those'

Consider the following examples:

(3) pǎkǎ nǒ dwǎrǒ tǔgò.

cat that want play

‘That cat wants to play.’

(4) pékni gǒ dwǎrǒ tǔgò.

Pl-cat those want play

‘Those cats want to play.’

When the qualified object is distant from both the speaker and hearer, the following forms are used:

Singular

îǝǎ ‘that’

Plural

kǎ ‘those’

Consider the examples below:

(5) nǎkò îǝǎ púrò.

girl that digging

‘That girl is digging’

(6) nírì kǎ púrò.

Pl-girls those digging

‘Those girls are digging.’

All the above constructions show that demonstrative adjectives are preceded by the nouns they qualify.

2.1.2. DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS

Demonstrative pronouns are linguistic elements that serve the communicative function of specifying or singling out a person or object that is talked about. They may fulfill this function by either modifying the entity being talked about without replacing it, or they may stand alone as substitutes for the entity. In the formation of the demonstrative pronouns, the form *má* combines with the demonstrative adjectives leading to compound linguistic elements consisting of *má* and one of the demonstrative adjectives. This can be summarized in the following simple equation:

má + Demonstrative adjective \longrightarrow Demonstrative pronoun.

The resultant elements occur in the following forms:

Singular		Plural	
<i>mání</i>	‘this’	<i>mágí</i>	‘these’
<i>mánó</i>	‘that’	<i>mágó</i>	‘those’
<i>má ṭʂá</i>	‘that’	<i>máká</i>	‘those’

In the above demonstrative pronouns, *mání* ‘this (one)’ is a marked variant of *má* ‘this (one)’. In everyday language, the latter is more frequently used than the former. Okombo (ibid. 62) observes that this does not lead to any ambiguity because all the other forms are always used in the full; they do not have shortened forms at all. The above demonstrative pronouns are employed in the construction of sentences such as the ones below:

(7a) mání/má jíθí dákár.
 this child-of doctor
 ‘This is the doctor’s child.’

(7b) mágí jíθí dákár.
 these children-of doctor
 ‘These are the doctor’s children.’

(8a) mánó kòmb wéndò
 that chair-of visitor
 ‘That is the visitor’s chair.’

(8b) mágó kòmb wélò.
 those chairs-of visitors
 ‘Those are visitors’ chairs.’

(9a) mǎ t̂ʃǎ mtókà mótí
 that car old
 ‘That is an old car.’

(9b) máká mtókni mótí.
 those cars old
 ‘Those are old cars.’

The differences between the above demonstrative pronouns correspond to the differences between their adjectival counterparts as discussed above, that is in terms of proximity in relation to the speaker and hearer as well as number. From the above descriptions, one observes that Dholuo demonstratives, both adjectival and pronominal, exhibit three degrees of distance (Payne 1997, 105). These are manifested by the language's sensitivity in making distinctions between items close to the hearer, items close to the speaker, and items distant to both the speaker and hearer. The factor of number as well as the proximity of the qualified object to speaker and hearer will ultimately determine the choice of the demonstrative.

Elson and Pickett's (1983, 38) categorization of *free form* demonstratives is instructive in describing the function of demonstrative pronouns. According to Elson and Pickett (38) free form demonstratives may stand alone as noun substitutes or they may modify nouns without substituting them. It can be stated that Dholuo demonstrative pronouns exhibit this phenomenon. We may thus state that unlike their adjectival counterparts which simply point out at a specific object but cannot replace it, the demonstrative pronouns are capable of completely replacing the object they are singling out in a given construction. Consider the construction below:

(10a) á- dwárò mánó.

1Sg want that (one)

'I want that one.'

The above example constitutes an appropriate response to a question such as:

(10b) í- dwárò ndíḡà mánè?

2Sg want bicycle which

'Which bicycle do you want?'

Pragmatically, in (10a), *mánɔ* ‘that one’ completely replaces the object being asked about, that is *ndĩgà* ‘bicycle’. The alternative function of demonstrative pronouns is to simply modify nouns without replacing them. Consider examples below:

(11a) *mánɔ búg- à*
 that book- 1Sg
 ‘That is my book.’

(11b) *mánɔ mára*
 that mine
 ‘That one is mine.’

In the above constructions in (11a), the noun being qualified is not replaced by *mánɔ* ‘that’ rather it is simply pointed out. The surface structure of construction (11a) is typical of a predicate nominal in Dholuo in which the demonstrative *mánɔ* ‘that’ is juxtaposed with the NP *búgà* ‘my book’ with no intervening copula leading to the reading, *this (is) my book*. Unlike in (11a) in construction (11b), the qualified NP *búgà* ‘my book’ is completely replaced by the demonstrative pronoun *mánɔ* ‘that (one)’ (assuming the utterance was produced immediately after (11a)).

From our discussion we may conclude that Dholuo demonstrative pronouns have a dual function: first, they can simply modify a noun by way of singling or pointing it out without replacing; and second, they can act as noun substitutes in which case they are capable of completely replacing a noun in a phrasal position. This phenomenon also occurs in English. Consider the following pair of constructions:

(12a) Those are mine.

(12b) Those cows are mine.

Here we have the occurrence of the demonstrative ‘those’ used as a pronoun in (12a) and as an adjective in (12b) respectively.

Our discussion in this chapter has revealed three qualities of Dholuo demonstrative pronouns. First, Dholuo demonstrative pronouns are compound linguistic elements that are formed by the combination of the form *má* and demonstrative adjectives. Secondly, they exhibit three deictic nuances, and finally, they can function as noun substitutes in which case they are capable of standing in the place of nouns or simply as noun modifiers without substitution. We shall summarize the structure and deictic nuance of Dholuo demonstrative pronouns and adjectives as follows:

Demonstrative Adjective	Demonstrative Pronoun	Deictic Nuance
ní	mání ‘this’	Object proximate to both speaker and hearer
nó gó	mánó ‘that’ mágó ‘those’	Object proximate to hearer but not speaker
îŷá ká	má îŷá ‘that’ máká ‘those’	Object distant from both speaker and hearer

Table 1. Demonstrative adjectives and pronouns and their deictic nuances.

CHAPTER III

3. *má* IN RELATIVE CLAUSE CONSTRUCTIONS

The focus of this chapter will be the surface structure of the relative clause in Dholuo and how the form *má* functions within it. We shall begin with a general overview of the syntax of the relative clause then shift our focus to the relativization strategies in Dholuo.

3.1. A GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF RELATIVE CLAUSE CONSTRUCTIONS

According to Okombo (1997, 52), the relative clause is a construction in which the head noun is further restricted by a subordinate clause introduced by a relativizer. Concerning the nature and function of a relative clause, Okombo (26) quotes Stockwell (1977, 59) as follows:

When the reference of a noun cannot be clarified satisfactorily by a determiner, languages use a device known as the relative clause, which is a sentence embedded into a noun phrase and marked in some way as subordinate to the particular noun for which clarity of reference is sought.

Apart from being subordinate clauses, relative clauses are said to be adjectival in nature because they function as nominal modifiers in the clause. Payne (1997, 325-326) breaks down the relative clause into four parts: first, there is the **head** which is the NP modified by the relative clause; the **restricting clause**, which is the relative clause itself; the **relativized noun phrase** (NP_{rel}), which is the NP within the relative clause that is co-referential with the head noun; and finally the **relativizer**, which is the form that introduces the restricting relative clause. Apart from the above pertinent parts of a relative clause, Payne also identifies the basic typological parameters by

which relative clauses are grouped. We will appeal to these typological parameters as well as the pertinent components of the relative clause construction in order to understand the surface structure of Dholuo relative clauses. We will then be able to examine the role of the form *má* within this surface structure.

Payne (326) identifies three main typological parameters by which relative clauses can be grouped: (1) the position of the relative clause with respect to the head noun, (2) the mode of expression of the relativized NP, and (3) which grammatical relations can be relativized. These parameters will be examined in turn. First, relative clauses can vary on the basis of the position of the clause in relation to the head. Payne (1997, 326) isolates four positions which can be occupied by the relative clause. Relative clauses can be prenominal, occurring before the head noun; postnominal, occurring after the head noun; internally headed, in which the head occurs within noun modifiers; or they may be headless, in which case there is an absence of a head NP. Since relative clauses are essentially noun modifiers, it is expected that they would occur in the same position as other modifiers such as numerals and adjectives.

The second way in which the relative clauses can vary is how the NP_{rel} is expressed. This parameter is sometimes called the ‘case recoverability problem.’ The problem arises from the fact that in order to correctly process the underlying proposition of the relative clause, one must be able to identify the role of the referent of the head noun within the relative clause. The difficulty is a function of the formal absence of the NP_{rel} (which functions within the relative clause) which is co-referential with the head NP which for its part functions in the main clause. Finally, relative clauses can vary on the basis of which grammatical elements can be relativized using which relativization strategy. Different languages use different

relativization strategies depending on the grammatical element being relativized. Even within a given language, some grammatical elements will be relativized differently from others.

3.2. RELATIVIZATION STRATEGIES IN DHOLUO

In this section we are going to examine the syntax of the Dholuo relative clause on the basis of the parameters and pertinent parts discussed above. We will look at both the **restrictive** and the **non-restrictive** relative clauses. We will begin with the restrictive ones.

3.2.1. SYNTAX OF THE RESTRICTIVE RELATIVE CLAUSE

In presenting a definition of the Restrictive Relative Clause (RRC), I will appeal to Givón (2001, 176) who defines RRC on the basis of their semantic and pragmatic conditions. Givón defines the semantic condition as follows: ‘a relative clause codes a state or event one of whose participants is *co-referent* with the head noun modified by the clause.’ The scope of the semantic condition does not exceed the bounds of the clause within which the relative clause is embedded, thus the relative clause can be said to be semantically restricted in this sense. The pragmatic condition Givón defines as follows: ‘the speaker does not assert the proposition in the REL-clause (Relative clause), but rather *presupposes* it to be *known* or *familiar* to the hearer, thus *accessible* in the hearer’s episodic memory of the current text.’ Givón’s definition of the pragmatic condition as stated applies only to RRC modifying definite head nouns, he gives a different pragmatic condition in cases whereby an indefinite head noun is modified. We will ignore the latter case since for our purposes we will be dealing only with definite head nouns. Thus, the state or event encoded in the RRC

is pragmatically presupposed as shared information between the speaker and hearer and does not exceed the bounds within which the relative clause is embedded.

In Dholuo the RRC may be postnominal or headless. Payne (326) asserts that postnominal relative clauses are the most common type. He adds that languages that are dominantly VO in main clause constituent order always have postnominal relative clauses. Payne's assertion is attested by Dholuo which has a SVO main clause typology and thus allows for postnominal relative clauses. Below is a typical restrictive relative clause in Dholuo showing the postnominal position of the relative clause (in brackets):

- (13) [nɑ́θí [mɑ́ ʔʃɑ́l gí bábá- né] ó- ðí é s̀ìk̀ùl].
 child REL resemble with father- 3Sg 3Sg- go LOC school
 'The child who looks like his father has gone to school.'

In (13) above the head NP is *nɑ́θí* 'child' and a subordinate restricting relative clause (enclosed in brackets) is introduced by the form *mɑ́*. The surface structure of the construction postposes the relative clause after the head NP. The morpheme *mɑ́* functions as the relativizer, indicating the presence of the implicit NP_{rel} in the restricted relative clause as well as subordinating it (the relative clause) to the main clause which constitutes the entire sentence (including the embedded RRC) enclosed within the outermost brackets. The surface structure of the above construction does not overtly express the NP_{rel} in the restricting relative clause which is co-referential with the head noun, which makes the NP_{rel} an implicit constituent of the relative clause. This phenomenon makes it difficult to recover the grammatical relation of this missing NP within the bracketed clause; a problem that is technically referred to as the 'case recoverability problem'. The construction in (13) can be considered to be a

reduction of the following abstract construction, with the implicit NP_{rel} shown explicitly in its normal clausal position within the restricted relative clause:

(14) nǎθĩ [mǎ nǎθĩ ʔǎl gĩ bǎbǎ- né] ó- ðĩ é sǐkùl.

NP_{rel}

So far we have seen that the Dholuo RRC occupies the postnominal position and that it is introduced by the morpheme *mǎ* which functions as a relativizer and as a subordinator morpheme, in which case it marks the boundary of the relative clause. In the following section, we will examine how Dholuo solves the ‘case recoverability problem’ with special reference to postnominal RRC_s.

3.3. DHOLUO SOLUTIONS TO THE CASE RECOVERABILITY PROBLEM

3.3.1. *mǎ* AND THE GAP STRATEGY

3.3.1.1. Subject Relativization

Dholuo employs two strategies to solve the case recoverability problem. In both strategies, the relativizer *mǎ* is retained in its pre-RC position. First, we have the **gap strategy** (Payne, 1997, 330). In this strategy, the NP_{rel}, which is left out in the surface structure of the RC, is represented by a gap in the position it is supposed to occupy. We will appeal to the previous construction to illustrate this phenomenon:

(15) nǎθĩ [mǎ ø ʔǎl gĩ bǎbǎ-né] ò- ðĩ é sǐkùl.

child REL Gap resemble with father-3Sg 3Sg-go LOC school

‘The child who looks like his father has gone to school’.

Syntactically, the missing NP_{rel} should occupy the gap marked by *ø* since this is a preverbal position that is under normal circumstances occupied by a subject. The over all strategy employed combines the role of the relativizer *mǎ* and the gap. In

Dholuo, this strategy can only be used for subject and direct object relativization.

Consider the following example of subject relativization:

- (16) *gúòk* [*má* \emptyset *né-* *ó-* *káj-* *á*] *ðèð*.
 dog REL GAP PAST 3Sg- bite- 1Sg die
 ‘The dog that bit me has died.’

In (16) above the role of the head NP *gúòk* ‘dog’ is the subject of the main clause verb *ðèð* ‘has died.’ It is also the subject of the relative clause verb *néókájá* ‘bit me’ in the bracketed relative. Note that it is the NP_{rel} implicitly occupying the position represented by \emptyset ‘gap’ in the RRC.

3.3.1.2. Direct Object Relativization

Now, consider the following direct object relativization:

- (17) *gúòk* [*má* *né-* *ó-* *gójò* \emptyset] *ðèð*.
 dog REL PAST- 3Sg- beat GAP die
 ‘The dog that she beat has died.’

In the above construction, the role of the head NP *gúòk* ‘dog’ is the subject of the intransitive verb *ðèð* ‘has died’ which is the main clause verb. However, in the relative clause *gúòk* is the direct object of the relative clause verb *néógójò* ‘she beat.’ It is implicitly occupying the position represented by the \emptyset ‘gap’. The case of the direct object relativization gives evidence that the grammatical roles of the head NP and the NP_{rel} may not necessarily be the same. The reason for this phenomenon is

that, though the head NP is co-referential to the NP_{rel}, the two constituents function in different clauses; the head NP in the main clause and the NP_{rel} in the relative clause.

Comparing (17) to the immediately preceding construction (16), we notice that there has been a shift in the position of the NP_{rel} as exhibited by the shift in the gaps. In (16), showing subject relativization, the gap takes a pre-verbal position since Dholuo, having an SVO constituent order typology would normally require a subject in the pre-verbal position. Conversely, in (17), the gap occupies a post-verbal position since the direct object of the verb would normally occupy this position in a prototypical clause. In the above constructions, the relativizer *mɔ* is retained and it functions alongside the gap to achieve relativization for the subject and the direct object.

The pragmatic issue that arises is how does the hearer know the position of the gap and recover the identity of the NP_{rel} if the gap is an abstract symbol that does not have any phonetic realization? To address the issue one will have to appeal to the pragmatic circumstances that generate the use of RRC_s. To begin with, the syntax of the RRC partakes in the grammar of referential coherence as attested in the referential continuity between the head NP and the NP_{rel}. Thus, the RRC will furnish either anaphoric or cataphoric clues for NP_{rel} identification (Givón 2001, 175). In using a RRC in which the NP_{rel} is implicitly represented by a gap, the speaker assumes that the state of affairs encoded in the RRC is familiar to the hearer, and therefore easily accessible in his memory. On the basis of such pragmatic presuppositions, it becomes unnecessary for the speaker to repeat the NP in the RRC. Let us take the example of subject relativization in construction (16) in which the gap occupies a preverbal position. Since Dholuo has a fairly rigid SVO constituent order typology, the hearer will easily fill in the missing subject of the RRC on the basis of the fact that Dholuo

would normally require a subject grammatical role in the position occupied by the gap. The same case applies to (17).

According to Givón (2001, 184), the gap strategy is useful in recovering the NP_{rel} in languages with a fairly rigid word order. The use of highly grammaticalized morpho-syntactic strategy is not an absolute necessity in such cases. From a different angle, Payne (1997, 331) points out that the strategy works well in languages for which grammatical relations are expressed via the core nominals in a clause. Dholuo has a fairly fixed SVO word order typology (except in marked constructions loaded with pragmatic nuances) and grammatical relations are defined by the core nominals in the clause. These two features make it easy to recover the grammatical role of the NP_{rel} in the RRC even without overt morphological provisions since a missing argument in such constructions is fairly obvious. Having discussed the relativization strategy for the direct object and subject, it will be useful to see whether these strategies conform to Keenan and Comrie's (1977) hierarchy of relativization.

Keenan and Comrie's relativization hierarchy as presented by Payne (334) is organized as follows:

Subject > direct object > indirect object > oblique > possessor

Their hypothesis that arguments occurring to the left of the relativization hierarchy will be relativized with less explicit strategies such as relativizer plus gap is confirmed in Dholuo where the subject and direct object arguments, occurring to the left of the hierarchy, are relativized by the relativizer plus gap strategy.

3.3.2. *má* AND PRONOUN RETENTION

In situations where the 'relativizer + gap strategy' is inadequate in helping in the recovery of the grammatical role of the implicit NP_{rel}, Dholuo employs the

‘relativizer + Pronoun retention’ strategy. We have just confirmed from our analysis of the relativization of subject and direct object arguments that in Dholuo arguments further to the left of Keenan and Comrie’s relativization hierarchy will be relativized by the less explicit relativizer plus gap strategy. Antithetically, the more explicit relativization strategies, such as relative pronoun, pronoun retention and internal head, will be used to relativize arguments farther to the right of the hierarchy. We are now going to examine how these explicit strategies are employed in Dholuo and whether they conform to Keenan and Comrie’s hypotheses. We will begin by looking at indirect object relativization.

3.3.2.1. Indirect Object Relativization

The indirect object is relativized by the relativizer plus gap strategy. Since this argument occurs right in the middle of the hierarchy (see p.19), one would expect it to be relativized either by an implicit strategy such as relativizer plus gap or a more explicit strategy such as relativizer plus pronoun retention. It so happens that in Dholuo, the implicit relativizer plus gap strategy is preferred. Consider the construction below:

(18) *ǎ́ kǎ* [*mǎ* *né* *ɲǎθí* *ǎ́* *ò-* *míjǎ* *ø* *pésǎ*] *júǎk*.

woman REL PAST child that 3Sg- give Gap money cry

‘The woman to whom that child gave money is crying.’

In (18) above, *mǎ* functions alongside a gap to achieve the relative clause. The gap occupies the position immediately after the relative clause verb *òmíjǎ* ‘he gave’ since the indirect object would normally occupy this position under normal circumstances.

The construction above could be considered a reduction of the following abstract structure, explicitly showing the NP_{rel} in its normal clausal position:

(19) ǎ́ k̀ mǎ né [nǎ́θǐ ǐ́ǎ ò-mǐj̀ ò ǎ́ k̀ pés̀] jú̀k̀.

Head NP

NP_{rel} (I.O)

The brackets isolate the construction as it would normally occur when it is not embedded in a relative clause structure.

3.3.2.2. Possessor Relativization

The possessor is relativized by *mǎ* functioning alongside a retained pronoun attached to the possessed NP (occurring in the relative clause) in a genitive construction. This explicit strategy accommodates Keenan and Comrie's hypothesis that grammatical roles occurring farther to the right will most likely be relativized using the more explicit strategies (the possessor grammatical role occurs on the extreme right in the hierarchy). Consider the construction below:

(20) gú̀k̀ [mǎ íw-è bór] ǐ́ǎ gè̀r.

dog REL tail-3Sg long that fierce

'That dog whose tail is long is fierce.'

In (20) above, -è is a bound third person singular pronoun. Here it is retained as a suffixed constituent bound to *íw* 'tail of' which is in the genitive state. The entire genitive construction would literally be read as 'his tail.' The literal translation would therefore be:

'That dog whose its tail is long is fierce.'

The literal translation highlights the salience of the retained pronoun. According to Payne (1997, 331), the retained pronoun NP_{rel} explicitly references the grammatical relation of the NP_{rel} by its position, its form or both. In other words, the retained pronoun provides an anaphoric clue to the grammatical role of the NP_{rel} by virtue of its form and position in the RC. In (20) above the form of the retained pronoun is in agreement with the head noun (possessor) and moreover, it is suffixed to the possessed element occurring in the RC. Now let us look at oblique relativization.

3.3.2.3. Oblique Relativization

In relativizing the oblique grammatical role in Dholuo, two strategies are employed: (1) the relativizer plus gap strategy and (2) the relativizer plus pronoun retention strategy. Strategy (1) is less explicit and thus does not conform to the hypothesis that arguments further to the left will be relativized by the more explicit strategies, given that the oblique argument occurs further to the left of the hierarchy. Strategy (2) is more explicit and thus conforms to the hypothesis that arguments further to the left will be relativized by more explicit strategies. Below is an example of oblique relativization employing the relativizer plus gap strategy to relativize the object of a preposition:

(21) mánɔ́ gáɾĩ [má bíɾɔ́ gð ø].

that train REL come with GAP

‘That is the train that I have come with.’

In (21) above, the gap occupies the space after the preposition *gð* ‘with’ in the position in which the object qualified by the preposition would normally occur in a normal clause. Note that *gð* changes its form depending on whether the object it

qualifies comes before or after it. In (21) above (specifically in the bracketed relative clause), the object of the preposition *gírí* ‘train’ (NP_{rel} in our terms) comes after it, implicitly occupying the position marked by \emptyset ‘gap.’ When the object it qualifies comes before it, then it assumes the form *gí* as in (22) below:

(22) *né à- bíró gí gírí.*

PAST 1Sg- come with train

‘I came by train.’

(23) below is an example of oblique relativization employing the relativizer plus pronoun retention strategy:

(23) *ḡáθí [má né à- kwálò pésà kwóm- è] twô.*

child REL PAST 1Sg- steal money from- 3Sg sick

‘The child from whom I stole money is sick.’

In the above construction, *-è* ‘3Sg’ is the object marker suffixed to the preposition *kwóm* ‘from’, and is co-referential and therefore in agreement with the head NP *ḡáθí* ‘child.’ Just like in the possessor relativization, the form of the retained pronoun is in agreement with the head NP and it occurs in the expected position (suffixed to the preposition *kwóm*) thus providing a reliable anaphoric clue for the recovery of the grammatical role of the NP_{rel}.

The propositional content of constructions in which the oblique is relativized may be ambiguous and may only be correctly interpreted in context. Consider (24) below:

- (24) ḏá kò mǎ né ɲáθí t̂ʃá ò- kwǎlò- né pésà júák.
 woman REL PAST child that 3Sg –steal- 3Sg money cry
 ‘The woman for/from whom that child stole money is crying.’

In (24) above, the morpheme *-né* (which we have glossed as 3Sg) suffixed to the verb fulfills the semantic role of either sufferer or beneficiary. *-né* may also encode various semantic nuances such as loser and receiver. The precise semantic role in each case will depend on the verbal predicate in question as well as the context. Our example carries a two-fold propositional content: First, *-né* may encode the semantic role of patient by virtue of the fact that an undesirable action has been carried out on the relativized NP *ḏá kò* ‘woman.’ Secondly, it may encode the semantic role of beneficiary on the basis that the boy stole for the woman. Thus on the one hand, the sentence could mean that the child stole FOR the woman, making her the beneficiary and on the other hand it could mean that the boy stole FROM the woman, making her the patient. The relevant meaning in this case will be defined by context.

3.4. HEADLESS RELATIVE CLAUSES

According to Payne (328) headless relative clauses are those clauses which themselves refer to the noun they modify. This implies that an explicit head noun is not needed. HRC_s are attested in Dholuo and they are used whenever specific reference to the head is clear. The use of HRC_s in Dholuo is therefore constrained in relativizing specific referents. Consider the example below:

(25) [má bírò ní] én òkál.

REL come this COP okal

‘This one who is coming is Okal.’

In (25) above, the brackets enclose the relative clause, which, in its entirety refers to the specific proper noun *òkál*. Notice that *má* here occupies a sentence initial position unlike in the postnominal type in which it always occurs sentence internally.

Consider the construction below of the relativization of a specific object:

(26) kél [má né ú- kwálò].

bring REL PAST 2Pl- steal

‘Bring what/ the one you stole.’

In the construction above, the bracketed relative clause refers to a specific object *má* here functions as a relativizer, introducing the relative clause which refers to a specific object. Notice that unlike in (25) above, *má* here occurs clause internally.

Consider (27) below, showing relativization of a specific possessor:

(27) nís- á [má íw-è bór].

show- 1Sg REL tail-3Sg long

‘Show me the one whose tail is long.’

Here *má* occurs clause internally and functions alongside a retained pronoun *-è* ‘3Sg’ attached to the possessed element in a genitive construction. The important thing to note in HRC in Dholuo is that they can only be used in circumstances in which reference to the head is clear thus leading to constructions in which the relative

clauses in themselves refer to the nouns they modify. Before we move to non-restrictive relative clauses, we shall examine the role of *má* in attributive constructions.

3.5. *má* IN ATTRIBUTIVE CLAUSES

We have decided to include this section in this chapter because attributive clauses in Dholuo are essentially structurally minimal relative clauses. This can be illustrated by the following construction:

(28) *ǎ́ kò má- bèr.*

woman REL-beautiful

‘A beautiful woman.’

In our example above, *mábèr* ‘beautiful’ is an adjective which we consider to have been derived from the underlying relative clause ‘who is beautiful.’ Adjectives used attributively in Dholuo occur in the form of one-word relative clauses with *má* functioning as relativizer. We shall state that *má* does not vary its form according to the grammatical relation being relativized. However, it may undergo vowel deletion when it occurs before a vowel initial word. Consider (29) below:

(29) *ǎ́ kò m- ́- néndò.*

girl REL- 3Sg- see

‘The girl he has seen.’

In the example above *má* loses its vowel and ends up as a clitic to the vowel initial word *ónénò*. In some cases, vowel deletion does not take place even when the following word has a vowel initial word. Consider the example below:

(30) *nákò má óngè lák- è.*

girl REL without teeth- 3Sg

‘The girl with no teeth.’

In (30) above, we can see that *má* retains its vowel though it occurs the vowel initial word *óngè*.³ We cannot therefore say:

(31) **nákò m-òngè lákè.*

3.6. *má* IN NON-RESTRICTIVE RELATIVE CLAUSES

So far we have been discussing relativization strategies in restrictive relative clauses. We shall now shift our focus to non-restricting relative clauses. To begin with, let us look at the difference between the restrictive relative clause and the non-restrictive relative clause. Consider the pair of constructions below:

(32) *ðakó [má gójò- gá níθíndò] ók bèr.*

woman REL beat- HAB children NEG good

‘A woman who beats children is not good.’

³ We cannot at this juncture establish conclusively the precise environments to be associated either with vowel deletion or vowel retention.

(33) àókò, [má gójó- gá níθíndò], á: kìn.

aoko REL beat- HAB children leave tomorrow

‘Aoko, who beats children, is leaving tomorrow.’

In both constructions, the bracketed constituents form the relative clause. However, in (32), the relative clause is restrictive; ‘it states the necessary condition for being the referent of the head NP’, if I may use Okombo’s (1997, 26) phraseology. In (33) the relative clause is non-restrictive and simply provides additional information about the head NP. In Dholuo, there is usually a conspicuous pause before and after the restrictive clause (this is marked by commas in the non-restrictive relative clause construction above).

Givón (2001, 176) explains that the restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses share the same semantic co-reference condition. This means that in both cases, the head NP is co-referential with a participant in the state encoded in the relative clause. However, they differ on the pragmatic condition, meaning that while the state encoded in the RRC is presupposed, the state encoded in the non-restrictive relative clause is asserted as new information. This pragmatic distinction has led Givón (*ibid.*) to conclude that non-restrictive relative clauses have the communicative aim of what he calls *parenthetical assertions*, bringing into salience information that the speaker may deem less important to what he describes as the ‘main thematic thrust of the discourse’ (176). In Dholuo, there are no formal differences in relativization strategies employed in the restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses. It would therefore be unprofitable to discuss these strategies all over again under non-restrictive relative clauses.

The relativization strategies discussed above may be summarized in the following table:

Grammatical Role	Strategy
Subject	má + Gap
Direct Object	má + Gap
Indirect Object	má + Pronoun Retention
Possessor	má + Pronoun Retention
Oblique	má + Pronoun Retention
	má + Gap

Table 2. Relativization strategies in Dholuo.

CHAPTER IV

4. *má* IN CLEFT CONSTRUCTIONS

Our discussion in this section will be related to the one in the immediately preceding chapter since we will essentially be looking at the attendant relative clauses found in cleft and pseudo-cleft constructions. However, our discussion will also focus on specific morpho-syntactic processes that occur within these relative clauses. We shall begin by looking at a basic pragmatic function of cleft constructions.

4.1. THE PRAGMATIC FUNCTION OF CLEFT CONSTRUCTIONS

According to Dik (1980, 41) *focus* represents what is relatively the most important or salient information in the given setting. Halliday (1967, 204) expands this definition as follows:

The kind of emphasis, that whereby a speaker marks out a part (which may be the whole) of a message block as that which he wishes to be interpreted as informative. What is focal is 'new' information; not in the sense that it cannot have been previously mentioned, although it is often the case that it has not been, but in the sense that the speaker presents it as not being recoverable from the preceding discourse.

Cleft constructions in Dholuo are employed to achieve contrastive focus (CF). Payne (1997, 269) describes CF as designating the following states of affairs:

- (i) A particular event E (taken loosely to mean any state of affairs) occurred;
- (ii) there is a group of entities that might have had a role, R in E;
- (iii) the addressee 'incorrectly' (in the eyes of the speaker) believes that one of the entities did in fact have a role R.

The CF clause then asserts:

- (iv) the ‘correct’ identity of the entity involved, according to the perception of the speaker;
- (v) the proposition that the entity the addressee thought had a role R in fact did not.

Now, consider the following typical CF clause in Dholuo:

(34) dádá é ṅámín- wá.

dada FOC sister – IPI

‘It is Dada who is my sister.’

Applying Payne’s schema to the above construction, we have the following situation:

- (i) There is a group of people, perhaps *Dada* and *Atieno*, one of whom might have been the sister to the speaker.
- (ii) The speaker has reason to believe that the addressee incorrectly thinks that *Atieno* is his sister.

By uttering the sentence, the speaker asserts that:

- (iii) *Dada* is the one who is his sister, and
- (iv) *Atieno* is not his sister.

Thus, *Dada* is the focused clefted element represented as the ‘new’ information by the speaker in order to correct a pragmatic misunderstanding on the part of the hearer.

The above description of the pragmatic state of affairs communicated by CF constructions represents what happens prototypically. Dik et al. (1981, 58) give other pragmatic circumstances that may lead to the use of CF constructions; these are not crucial to our present purposes. Payne (1997, 270) mentions that not every instance of CF will have all of the above characteristics. Payne (270) mentions that languages

will typically employ prosodic prominence and some kind of cleft constructions to mark CF. Dholuo, as we shall show, uses the latter, though one could also argue that prosodic prominence falls on the focused constituent. In the following section, we shall examine the syntactic dimensions of cleft constructions as they are realized in Dholuo.

4.2. SYNTACTIC DIMENSIONS OF CLEFT CONSTRUCTIONS

In this section we shall analyze the surface structure of cleft sentences in order to recover the role *má* plays in their formation. We shall distinguish Cleft constructions proper and Pseudo-cleft constructions.

4.2.1. CLEFT CONSTRUCTIONS PROPER

Trask (1993, 46) defines a cleft sentence as a marked structure in which a focused constituent is extracted from its logical position and often set off with some additional material including an extra verb. In the terminology of Declerck (1988, 209), cleft constructions proper are also called *It-Clefts*. Consider (35) below:

(35) *báábá kájò bándò* (neutral).

father harvest maize

‘Father is harvesting maize.’

(36) *bándò é má báábá kájò*.

maize FOC REL father harvest

‘It is maize that my father is harvesting.’

(36) is a prototypical cleft construction in Dholuo. The focused element *bándò* ‘maize’ assumes a sentence initial position in keeping with Dik’s (343) principle of *pragmatic highlighting* in which constituents with special pragmatic functionality are preferably placed in ‘special positions’ (including at least the sentence initial position). Notice its sentence final position in the neutral construction. The neutral construction also has only one verb *kájò* ‘harvest’ while the cleft construction has the extra verb *é* which is both a copula and the CF marker. The fact that the CF marker *é* also functions as a rather emphatic copula seems to give credence to Givón’s (234) claim that cleft marking morphemes most commonly arise from erstwhile copular verbs. For the purposes of analyzing the underlying surface structure of the cleft construction we will appeal to Payne (278) whose definition is much more detailed and therefore more useful for our purposes than Trask’s.

Payne (278) defines a cleft construction as a type of predicate nominal consisting of a noun phrase (NP) and a relative clause whose NP_{rel} is coreferential with the NP_i . The NP_i is commonly referred to as the clefted constituent and is normally found to the left of the rest of the clause, though it may appear in other positions. On the basis of his definition Payne (ibid.) summarizes the surface structure of a typical cleft construction with the following schema:

$$NP_i (COP) [\dots NP_i \dots]_{S_{rel}}$$

The S_{rel} is the relative clause in which the NP_i is repeated. Givón (2001, 234) explains the presence of an embedded relative clause in the surface structure of the cleft construction by stating that ‘cleft constructions combine a fronted focused element with a presupposed clause, a clause that shares the pragmatic property of

presuppositionality or backgroundedness of restrictive REL-clauses.’ This basically means that the fronted focused element (NP_i in our terms) is pragmatically presupposed to be accessible to the hearer and thus it becomes pragmatically practical to embed it in a noun modifier which will make it unnecessary to overtly repeat it. It is predictable that the best option is to use a restrictive relative clause. Now let us examine our previous example in (36) repeated as (37) in more detail:

(37) *bándò é má bábá kájò.*

maize FOC REL father harvest

‘It is maize that my father is harvesting.’

The above construction can be abstractly represented by Payne’s schema as follows:

(38) [*bándò é* [*má bábá kájò ø*]_{S_{rel}}]

NP_i FOC/COP REL NP_i

Using bracketing conventions, the innermost brackets enclose the most deeply embedded clause which happens to be the subordinated restrictive relative clause (S_{rel}) introduced by the relativizer *má*. The independent clause is all that is enclosed in the outermost brackets. Carnie (2002, 148) warns that it is a common error for syntacticians to forget that embedded clauses are contained within main clauses. Thus, strictly speaking, what constitutes the independent clause is all that is enclosed in the outermost brackets thereby including the embedded clause.

The focused element (NP_i) is *bándò* ‘maize’ occurring to the extreme left of the clause. The CF marker/copular *é* occurs just before the relative clause. The *ø* ‘gap’ is

the implicit representation of the NP_i *bánda* repeated in the relative clause. Thus *má* in cleft constructions acts both as a relativizer and a subordinator morpheme introducing the embedded relative clause.

The construction we have just dealt with is an example of noun clefting. In Dholuo, verb clefting is possible and this is what will be dealt with in the following section.

4.2.1.1. Verb Clefting

Dholuo allows for verb clefting, a relatively rare phenomenon in many languages. Givón (245) explains that the limitation on verb clefting is predictable on morpho-syntactic grounds. He argues that clefting (or pseudo-clefting) can only apply to free lexical constituents, and more so to those that fit into a copular predicate slot. This includes nouns, adjectives or locative phrases. Givón (245) identifies the following two primary structural features of verb clefting when it does occur:

- (i) The cleft-focused verb assumes a non-finite *nominalised* form.
- (ii) In the presupposed portion of the construction, the verb is repeated in its finite form in its neutral position.

Let us look at a typical example in Dholuo:

(39) né - ó- gój- è dhíjnd (neutral).

PAST- 3Sg- beat- 3Sg thoroughly

‘He beat her thoroughly.’

The clefted counterpart of (39) above will be as in (40) below:

(40) ɔɔj- è é [má né- ó- ɔɔj- è] dhĩɲà.

beat- 3Sg FOC/COP REL PAST- 3Sg- beat- 3Sg thoroughly

‘It is beating her that he did thoroughly.’

In the above construction, the clefted focused verb is *ɔɔjè* ‘beat her’ occurring to the extreme left of the construction. The clefted verb reveals a rather impoverished verbal morphology; it is marked only for direct object with no subject and tense marker and thus can be considered nominalised. The same verb is repeated in the bracketed presupposed portion (S_{rel} in our terms) of the clause as *néóɔɔjè* ‘he beat her.’ This time it is fully finite, marked for tense, subject and direct object.

4.2.2. PSEUDO-CLEFT CONSTRUCTIONS

Pseudo-cleft constructions differ from cleft constructions in that they usually involve the insertion of some lexical forms in certain positions. They are also referred to as *Wh-Clefts* (Declerck 209). For purposes of clarity we will construct a pseudo-cleft construction from the neutral clause (35) we used in our discussion of cleft constructions proper:

(41) bábá kájò bándò (neutral).

father harvest maize

‘Father is harvesting maize.’

The pseudo-cleft counterpart of the above construction will typically take the following form:

(42) *gí* [*má* *bábá* *kájò*] *én* *bándò*.

thing REL father harvest COP maize

‘What father is harvesting is maize.’

In this construction, the clefted element *bándò* ‘maize’ takes a sentence final position unlike in the cleft construction proper where it takes a sentence initial position. The bracketed portion constitutes the relative clause (S_{rel}). Just like in the cleft construction proper, *má* acts as a relativizer and subordinator morpheme to introduce the relative clause. The extra verb in the construction is *én* which acts as the copular. From the surface structure of the construction above one notices the insertion of the lexical term *gí* ‘thing’. We will argue that the insertion of the term *gí* ‘thing’ to act as the subject of the clause is a morphological stratagem aimed at avoiding the use of a headless relative clause. Payne (1997, 280) observes that in most languages, pseudo-clefts exhibit the following pattern:

NP COP headless Relative Clause.

This typology is not exactly congruent with the surface structure of Dholuo pseudo-clefts since the copula occurs just before the clefted element which typically occurs sentence finally. If *gí* was to be removed and a headless relative clause used, it would result in a rather ill formed sentence:

(43) ?*má* *bábá* *kájò* *én* *bándò*.

4.2.2.1. Pseudo-Clefted Verb

Verbs may also be clefted in pseudo-cleft constructions. Consider the following example:

(44) *gí* [*má né - gí- tímò*] *én gój- è*.

thing REL PAST- 3Pl- do COP beat-3Sg

‘What they did is beat him.’

In the (44) above, the clefted verb *gójè* ‘beat him’ occurs sentence finally. It has non-finite morphology, marked only for direct object. The verb *négítímò* ‘they did’ occurring in the bracketed relative clause must be finite such that its tense and subject status is transferred, pragmatically speaking, to the morphologically impoverished verb *gójè*.

We shall summarize this section by simply stating that since the surface structure of clefts and pseudo-clefts partakes in the grammar of referential continuity in which a head noun or verb is modified in a relative clause, it follows that *má* as a subordinator morpheme and relativizer will introduce the relative clause embedded in the cleft or pseudo-cleft construction.

CHAPTER V

5. *má* IN INTERROGATIVES

In this chapter, we shall look at the various typologies of interrogative constructions in Dholuo and what role *má* plays in these constructions. We shall begin this section by taking a look at the possible types of interrogative constructions found in Dholuo.

5.1. *TYPES OF INTERROGATIVE CONSTRUCTIONS IN DHOLUO*

Dik (1980, 225), as quoted by Okombo (1997, 142), identifies the following distribution of interrogative constructions across languages:

- (i) straight interrogatives;
- (ii) questioned focus constructions;
- (iii) straight and focus interrogatives in free variation;
- (iv) straight and focus interrogatives in (partial) complementary distribution.

Dholuo has type (i), (ii), and (iv). Our focus in this chapter will be on (ii) questioned focus constructions, and (iv) straight and focus interrogatives in (partial) complementary distribution. We shall now examine the structure of type (ii) interrogatives.

5.1.1. QUESTIONED FOCUS CONSTRUCTIONS

Questioned focus interrogatives consist of interrogatives containing an information seeking question word (from now on we shall use *Q-word* to designate ‘question word’) which seeks the identity of value X occupying a preverbal position in the syntactic structure of the expected response. In as far as focus is concerned, the identity of the value X becomes the ‘new’ or ‘salient’ information in the response and thus logically becomes the focused element. We shall appeal to an example given by Declerck (1988, 11) to illustrate this point. The question: *Who committed the murder?* asks for a specification of a value for the variable ‘the X who committed the murder.’ If the question is answered by a sentence like: *JOHN committed the murder* or *It is JOHN who committed the murder*, (second option mine), the element designating the value X is the new information (thus focused) while the remainder, *committed the murder* is old or shared information.

Let us now examine the surface structure of a typical Dholuo questioned focus construction. Consider (45) below (note that we have deliberately left *má* unglossed until we determine its function in the construction):

(45) $\eta\acute{a}$ $m\acute{a}$ \emptyset $dw\acute{a}r\grave{o}$ $n\acute{a}e\check{i}$.

INT want child

‘Who wants the child.’

In (45) above, the Q-word $\eta\acute{a}$ marks out the clause as a question while occupying its unmarked position. The gap (\emptyset) designates the abstract position of the informational gap to be filled by the expected response in a declarative sentence. Okombo (1997, 141) states that ‘focus constructions are regarded as consequences of the assignment

of PF (pragmatic focus) Focus to a given term of an underlying predication.’
 Appealing to Dik’s (1980) arrangement of questioned focused constructions as presented by Okombo (141) we have the following schema:

$$(\text{term}_j)_{\text{FOC}} (\text{term}_i)_{\emptyset} \text{Top}$$

where term_i contains a description of an entity the existence of which is presupposed, but the identity of which is at issue; term_j is either a questioned term asking for identification of the entity described in term_i or a non-questioned term providing the requested identification; the distribution of Topic and focus is fixed as indicated in the schema (Okombo 141). For purposes of clarity we shall apply this schema to our construction above as follows:

$$(46) [\eta\acute{\alpha} (\text{term}_j)_{\text{FOC}}] \quad m\acute{\alpha} \quad [\emptyset (\text{term}_i)_{\emptyset}] \quad [dw\acute{a}r\delta \quad \eta\acute{\alpha}\theta\acute{\iota}] \text{Top}$$

In our construction, $\eta\acute{\alpha}$ is the question word seeking the identity of an entity X while \emptyset contains the description of an entity X the existence of which is presupposed, but the identity of which is at issue and therefore in focus; the entity X is presupposed to be wanting the $\eta\acute{\alpha}\theta\acute{\iota}$ ‘child’ which together with the verb $dw\acute{a}r\delta$ ‘want’ constitute the topic (Top). From the schematic representation above, we conclude that the element $m\acute{\alpha}$ is functioning as a focus marker and indicates that the entity that will fill the informational gap will be in CF to other entities that may constitute alternative responses to the question. We shall from this point on take $m\acute{\alpha}$ to be a CF marker. It is important to note that the questioned focused construction is the only type of interrogative that can be used when seeking the identity of an entity which will occupy a preverbal position in a declarative sentence. The questioned focus construction we have just analyzed will elicit a response such as:

(47) *bábá é má dwárò ńáǐ* (cleft construction).

father FOC REL want child

‘Its is father who wants the child.’

An elliptical form such as *bábá* ‘father’ may also be appropriate. Our question however will not normally elicit the response:

(48) *bábá dwárò ńáǐ* (neutral).

father want child

‘Father wants the child.’

According to Dik (282) the communicative point of focus assignment may be the presentation of new information or the requesting of such new information. Questions typically request for information and this has led Dik (282) to conclude that the response elicited by a question in order to fill this informational gap will be in *completive focus*. Thus *bábá* in the response (47) can be construed to be in completive focus since it fills in the informational gap requested by the entity that asked the question.

Questioned focus constructions therefore typically elicit focus marked responses realized in the form of cleft constructions (if an elliptical form is not used). This is hardly surprising since our analysis has revealed that questioned focus constructions are focused marked right from the onset. In the following section, we shall examine the surface forms of the straight and focus interrogatives in (partial) complementary distribution.

5.1.2. STRAIGHT AND QUESTIONED FOCUS INTERROGATIVES IN (PARTIAL) COMPLEMENTARY DISTRIBUTION

Straight and questioned focus interrogatives consist of alternative forms of interrogatives depending on whether the identity of the entity being inquired about occupies a preverbal or postverbal position in the resultant declarative sentence response. The former case leads to questioned focus construction while the latter leads to a straight interrogatives. Consider the following pair of interrogatives:

(49) páká ò- púkò áńó.

cat 3Sg- pour INT

‘What has the cat poured?’

(50) áńó má páká ò- púkò.

INT FOC cat 3Sg- pour

‘What is it that the cat has poured?’

Construction (49) is a straight interrogative while (50) is a questioned focus interrogative. The two constructions have slightly different surface structures but they all seek to solve the same problem; that is to recover the identity of what the cat poured. We can thus say that both constructions presuppose the following state of affairs:

The cat poured something.

However, they use different interrogative clauses to solve this problem. Construction (49) will elicit the following response:

(51) páká ò- púkò kádò.

cat 3Sg- pour soup

‘The cat has poured soup.’

Since the interrogative asking the question is straight (thus neutral), the response elicited will be neutral with the *kádò* ‘soup’ which fills the informational gap being asked for, occupying the postverbal position. The Q-word *áḡó* occupies a postverbal position. Construction (50) seeks to fill the informational gap in question with a questioned focus construction. Thus, as we had seen earlier, the response will typically be realized in the form of a cleft construction with the identity of what the cat poured assuming a preverbal position:

(52) kádò é má páká ò- púkò.

soup FOC REL cat 3Sg- pour

‘It is soup that the cat has poured.’

Note that the elliptical form *kádò* will be appropriate in both cases. The difference comes when full sentences are used to answer the question.

In summary then, we can state that when the Q-word occupies a preverbal position and seeks the identity of an entity which will occupy a preverbal position in the resultant declarative sentence response, it follows that only a questioned focus construction will be employed. It is worth noting that when the Q-word occupies a sentence initial position *in situ* with the questioned entity, then the resulting interrogative will be a focused one and it will thus be marked with the focus marker *má*. However, when the identity of the entity will occupy a postverbal position, two

options are available. First, a straight interrogative will be employed in which case *má* is dropped and the Q-word occupies an *in situ* sentence final position. Secondly, a focused interrogative may be used in which case the Q-word occupies a preverbal sentence-initial position *in situ* with the questioned entity which will itself occupy a preverbal position in the resultant declarative sentence response. We have said that straight and questioned focus interrogatives are in *partial* complementary distribution. This is because they can be used to ask the same question (i.e. with identical propositional contents) but they will elicit different responses, one being pragmatically neutral (elicited by straight interrogatives) while the other being pragmatically marked as a focus construction (elicited by questioned focus constructions).

CHAPTER VI

6. *má* AS A CONNECTIVE

In this final chapter we shall examine the manner in which *má* functions as a connective and the morphological influences that this function brings with it. Our first subsection will deal with the role of *má* in interclausal chaining with special focus on consecutive actions while our second subsection will look at *má* in result clauses.

6.1. CONSECUTIVE ACTIONS

Interclausal chaining refers to the conjoining of two or more clauses designating given states of affairs. There are various ways in which clauses can be linked and these vary from language to language. Dholuo has a small set of connectives endowed with various semantic nuances used to link clauses. The choice of the connective will depend on its semantic nuance (e.g. adversative, concession, comparison, etc.). *má* is the most important connective in functions related to conjoining clauses which designate consecutive actions or states of affairs. Its importance in such functions comes into salience when one analyses the grammar of Dholuo discourse. Consider the example below (unless otherwise stated, all examples in this subsection and the next will be taken from the narrative text in the appendix):

(53) *dlíjǎ n- ð- lókóré ðpwójǎ m- ð- wúók é ágúlú.*

dry meat PAST- 3Sg- change hare CON- 3Sg- leave LOC pot

‘The dry meat changed into a Hare and came out of the pot.’

In (53) above, the first action involves the dry meat changing into a Hare and the next, which follows immediately, involves the Hare running out of the pot. The two states of affairs follow each other in logical sequence and this is marked with the connective *má* which in this case loses its vowel and is attached as a clitic to the verb. We observe again that the verb to which *má* is attached as a clitic is not marked for tense, retaining only the subject marker and thus is non-finite. Conversely, the initial verb *nòlòkòrè* ‘he changed’ is finite, fully marked for subject and tense. This is in keeping with Givón (1995, 34-35) who observes that the syntactic marking in conjoined clauses reveals a systematically reduced grammatical marking. He adds that this lower markedness is seen in the form of an unexpressed subject or reduced tense-aspect-modality. Our verb in (53) *òwúók* ‘he left’ is marked for subject but not for tense. Givón (2001, 366-367) further observes that VO languages (of which Dholuo is an example) exhibit maximal finite morpho-syntactic marking of the chain-initial clause. On the strength of Givón’s observation, we can account for the full finite marking of the verb *nò lòkòrè* occurring in the chain initial clause. Apart from conjoining clauses, *má* is also useful in introducing result clauses as we shall see in the following section.

6.2. RESULT CLAUSES

The form *má* can be used to indicate the result of a given action. Consider the example below:

(54) mbúî ká n-ó-sé-lòr náká pǐŋ
 spider when PAST-3Sg-ASP-descend till down
 n-ó-bánò ngàs.

PAST-3Sg-fold ladder

‘When spider had descended till he reached the down, he folded the ladder.’

(55) má ò- párdò mǒndò ò- lók- rè álǐjà
 CON 3Sg- think that 3Sg- change-3Sg dry meat

‘Hence he thought he should change himself into dry meat.’

In (55) above *má* shows that Hare was thinking about changing into dry meat because of a given circumstance given in (54). Hare was in heaven and could not come down to earth because spider had taken the ladder which they had used to climb up to heaven. *má* here links the circumstance to what Hare is thinking in what can be construed as a result clause. Consider also the construction below (not from appended narrative text):

(56) ò- gój- é m- òèð.

PASS- beat- 3Sg CON- die

‘She was beaten until she died.’

In (56) above, *má* is attached to the verb *òèð* ‘die’ as a clitic and thus loses its vowel. It conjoins two clauses; the first one designates a given action and the second one the result of that action. In construction such as these the connective *má* can be glossed as ‘until’.

Our brief description has revealed that *má* is an important connective in clause chaining and in conjoining clauses in action-result clause sequences.

CHAPTER VII

7. CONCLUSION

The analyses in this work have led to the isolation of four functions of the form *má* in Dholuo. In chapter two we examined the formation of compound demonstrative pronouns from the combination of *má* and demonstrative adjectives. Chapter three dealt with the function of *má* as a relativizer in both restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses. We saw how its function as a relativizer is complemented by strategies such as gap (for subject, direct object, and oblique relativization); and pronoun retention (for possessor, oblique, and indirect object). We also saw that *má* is important in the formation of adjectives used attributively in which case it combines with single words in what we can refer to as, technically speaking, minimal relative clauses.

The discussion in chapter four was similar in content to the one in chapter three since it was basically describing the attendant relative clauses in clefts and pseudo-clefts. The analysis therefore focused on *má* as relativizer introducing the relative clause in clefts and pseudo-clefts. However, in chapter four we described phenomena such as verb clefting and its influences on the elements contained in the attendant relative clause. In chapter five, we saw that *má* functions as a focus marker in questioned focus constructions in which the Q-word occupies a preverbal position and seeks the identity of an entity that will occupy a preverbal position in the expected declarative answer sentence. Finally in chapter six, we had a rather brief

discussion on the function of *má* as an important connective in conjoining clauses describing consecutive actions and what we can construe as ‘action/circumstance-result’ clauses.

We shall state that, as with all research, the outcomes contained in this work can definitely be improved on by others who have an interest in the form *má* or whose interest in this important element in Dholuo has presently been awakened after reading this work. The writer on his part suggests that the following areas warrant further research: First, it would be useful to trace the diachronic development of the Dholuo question word *máné* ‘which’ to see whether it is the case that it constitutes the origin of *má* as a relativizer. The relationship between relativizer/relative pronouns and certain question words (cf. *which* in English which functions as a relative pronoun cum question word) provides a strong basis for the hypothesis that the relativizer *má* developed from *máné*. Such an analysis will be relevant to linguists interested in grammaticalization issues. Secondly, the brevity of our last chapter on *má* as a connective does not mean that its functions in this regard are limited to only two. The writer suspects that the functions of *má* as a connective could be much more extensive than what has been described in this work.

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APPENDIX

Narrative text: The story of how Elephant became flatfooted.

1. \hat{t} ʃon gi lala nɛ nitierɛ mbui gi apwojo to nɛ gin
long with lost PAST be spider and hare and PAST 3Pl

osiepe ma ŋgita gi dɛl.

friends REL ring and body

‘A long time ago, there was spider and hare and they were very good friends.’

2. \hat{t} ʃien mɔɔ mbui nɛ ɔkwajɔ apwojo mɔndɔ o-tɛr-ɛ wuoθ
day certain spider PAST ask hare that 3Sg-take-3Sg journey
e polo ka ɔtʃe.

LOC heaven at in-laws

‘One day, spider asked hare to take him on journey to heaven to see his in-laws.’

3. to niketʃ nɛ oŋge kaka nɛ-gi-ɲalo \hat{t} ʃopo e polo ka
but because PAST without how PAST-3Pl-able reach LOC heaven when

nε-gi-se-rwako sude-gi ma-lonjo mbui nε-o-losο ηgas
 PAST-3Pl-ASP-wear suits-3Pl REL-fine spider PAST-3Sg-make ladder
 ma-îfopo naka e polo ma nε-gi-iðo.
 REL -reach till LOC heaven REL PAST-3Pl-climb

‘But because they was no way for them to reach heaven, when they had worn their fine suits, spider made ladder which could reach heaven and they climbed it.’

4. ka nε-gi-îfopo e polo apwojo nε-o-niso mbui ni
 when PAST-3Pl-reach LOC heaven hare PAST-3Sg-tell spider that

k-o-kel îfremο mοndο o-pedz ni îfremοgo gin mag dzo
 when-PASS-bring food should 3Sg-ask that food-that 3Pl for people
 mage.

which

‘When they reached heaven, hare told spider that when food is brought, he should ask whose food that is.’

5. koro ka nε-o-kel îfremο mbui n-o-pedzo ni magο
 so when PAST-PASS-bring food spider PAST-3Sg-ask that those
 îfemb dzo mage.
 food-for people which

‘So when food was brought spider asked for whom was that food brought.’

6. nε-o-nis-gi ni îʃiemo gin maɔ welo.

PAST-PASS-tell-3Pl that food be for visitors.

‘They were told that the food was for the visitors.’

7. apwojo nε-o-niso mbui ni maɔ meka in ritarita îʃiemb

hare PAST-3Pl-tell spider that those mine 1Sg wait-wait food

oʃʃe biro.

in-laws come

‘Hare told spider “That is mine, you just wait until food for the in-laws comes.”’

8. mbui n-o-rito to oŋɛ îʃiemo ma nε-o-keɪ kendo.

spider PAST-3Sg-wait but no food REL PAST-PASS-bring again

‘Spider waited but no food was brought again.’

9. baŋɛ i-e n-o-waŋ m-o-wuok m-o-wejo

afterwards stomach-3Sg PAST-3Sg-burn CON-3Sg-go CON-3Sg-leave

apwojo ka nindo.

hare when sleep

‘Afterwards, he got annoyed and went out and left hare sleeping.’

10. mbui ka n-o-sɛ-lor naka piŋ nɔbano ŋgas.

spider when PAST-3Sg-ASP-descend till down PAST-3Sg-fold ladder

‘When spider had descended till he reached the down, he folded the ladder.’

11. apwojo ka n-ɔ-ɛ̃ɛwɔ e nindo ɔ-judo ka mbui ɔŋɛ
 hare when PAST-3Sg-wake LOC sleep 3Sg-find when spider no
 naka gi ŋgas duto.

even and ladder all

‘When hare woke up from his sleep, he discovered that both spider and the ladder were not there.’

12. apwojo nɛ-ɔ-ŋɛɛɛ kaka le ma nɛ-rɛk sidɔŋ.
 hare PAST-3Sg-mock-3Sg how animal REL PAST-clever very

‘Hare mocked him saying what a clever animal he was.’

13. ma ɔ-paro ni mondo ɔ-lɔk-re alija eka
 CON 3Sg-think that should 3Sg-change-3Sg dry meat so that
 ɔ-lwar pij.

3Sg-fall down

‘So he thought that he should change himself into dry meat so that he could throw himself down.’

14. ɛ̃ɛiɛj ɔnɔɔo mi jo moɔɔ n-ɔ-wuok ɔ-ɔ̃i e ɛ̃ɛiɔ
 day very woman certain PAST-3Sg-leave 3Sg-go LOC market
 to k-ɔ-dwogo ɔ-kwɔɔo alija no e jo.
 and when-3Sg-return 3Sg-pick dry meat that LOC way

‘On that very day, a certain woman had left to go to the market and when she was returning she picked the dry meat on way.’

15. k-o-îʃopo pɑ̃ʃo ɔ-keto e aɣulu m-ɔ-keto e
 when-3Sg-reach home 3Sg-put LOC pot CON-3Sg-put LOC
 kendo mɔndo o-îʃiɛgi.
 fire so that 3Sg-cook

‘When she reached home, she put it in a pot and then placed the pot on the fire so that it could be cooked.’

16. alija ka-n-ɔwidʒo ka pi ma e aɣulu bedo
 dry meat when-PAST-3Sg-feel when water REL LOC pot be
 maliɛt alija n-ɔ-lɔk-re apwojo m-o-wuok gi
 hot dry meat PAST-3Sg-change-3Sg hare CON-3Sg-leave with
 ŋweîʃ.
 run

‘When the dry meat began feeling that the water in the pot had started becoming hot, it changed itself into a hare and left running.’

17. ka nɛ-o-îʃopo e ðot n-ɔ-judo wuoîʃɛ naθi
 when PAST-3Sg-reach LOC door PAST-3Sg-find shoes child

mɔ-rɪŋɔ ɡɔ.

CON-3Sg-ran with

‘When he reached the door, he found a child’s shoes and ran away with them.’

18. apwojo nɛ-o-dok e θim mɔ-judo liɛɪʃ.

hare PAST-3Sg-return LOC forest CON-3Sg-find elephant

‘Hare went back to the forest and found elephant.’

19. liɛɪʃ ka n-o-nene k-o-rwəkɔ wuoɪʃɛ

elephant when PAST-3Sg-see when-3Sg-wear shoes

nɛ-o-pedʒɛ ni apwojo wuoɪʃɛ i-golo kure.

PAST-3Sg-ask-3Sg that hare shoes 2Sg-get where

‘When elephant saw him wearing shoes, he asked him, ‘Hare, where did you get the shoes?’

20. apwojo n-o-dwoke ni wuoɪʃɛ aθeðɔ.

hare PAST-3Sg-answer that shoes 1Sg-make

‘Hare replied, ‘I have made the shoes myself.’

21. liɛɪʃ n-o-sajo apwojo mondo ɔ-θeð-ne

elephant PAST-3Sg-plead hare should 3Sg-make-3Sg

o-bendɛ.

3Sg-also

‘Elephant pleaded with hare that he should make shoes for him also.’

22. apwojo n-o-kon-ε ni mɔndo omod jɪen motwo
 hare PAST-3Sg-tell-3Sg that should gather wood dry
 o-mok go maɪʃ.

3Sg-light with fire

‘Hare told him to gather dry firewood and use it to light a fire.’

23. tɔ ka jɪɛngɔ o-sɛ-liɛl ma ɪrɔ o-rumo tɔ
 and when wood 3Sg-ASP-light CON smoke 3Sg-finish then

mɔndo o-ɪʃuŋ e madʒnɔ.

should 3Sg-stand LOC fire

‘And when the wood has caught fire until the smoke has disappeared, then he should stand on that fire.’

24. tɪɛnd liɛɪʃ nɔɪʃakɔ wɔŋ m-ɔ-ɪʃakɔ lwɔŋgo apwojo.
 feet elephant PAST-start burn CON-3Sg-start call hare

‘Elephant’s feet started burning and he began calling hare.’

25. apwojo n-o-dwok-ε ni i n liŋaliŋa wuoɪʃɛ
 hare PAST-3Sg-answer-3Sg that 1Sg quiet shoes
 θeðɔre.

make

'Hare replied, 'you just keep quiet, the shoes are getting made.'

26. apwojo koro ne-o-toje mana gi wer ni wuoîʃε
 hare now PAST-3Sg-break just with song that shoes
 θeðore.

make

'Hare broke into song and sang 'shoes are getting made, shoes are getting made.'

27. kamano e kaka liεîʃ ne-o-bedo raðiadza naka
 that FOC how elephant PAST-3Sg-be flat-footed until
 kawuono.

today

'That is how elephant became flatfooted until today.'

VITA

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