ORIGIONAL ARTICLE

Case Morphology in Majang[1]

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Abstract

Majang is a Nilo-Saharan language under East Sudanic Sub-branch in the Surmic group. It is spoken in the boarder of the south western part of Ethiopia. The aim of this research is to describe the case morphology of Majang. It is a descriptive analysis of Majang case marking inflectional morphemes. The study is based on qualitative data gathered from native speakers of Majang.   The data were collected from the native speakers of Majang, based on their day to day communicative acts and from various texts. By participating five male speakers of Majang, he collected, recorded, arranged, described and analyzed data. To check the authenticity of the data, the researcher used other consultants who are native speakers of Majang and have very good command of Amharic and fair command of English. As the result reveals, in Majang there are about seven types of case marking morphemes: nominative, accusative, dative, genitive, locative, instrumental, and ablative. These cases seem shared characteristics in other Surmic languages. The finding implies that Majang has many morphological case markers in relation to other Ethiopian Languages.

Key terms: /Case marking/Inflection/Majang/Morphemes/Surmic-languages/

1. Introduction

1.1.   Background of the Study

Majang is a Nilo-Saharan language under East Sudanic Sub- branch in the Surmic group. It is spoken in the boarder of the south western part of Ethiopia, in Gambella, Oromia and Southern Nation Nationalities and Peoples Regional States. The people are

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called Majangir. The Majangir's settlement stretches from Bench Maji Zone (Gurafarda area near Akobo River) in the south up to Kelem Welega Zone (around Dembi Dolo town) in north west. It is found in the densely forested belt of the south west highland plateau of Ethiopia. More than half of the Majangir live in Gambella region particularly in almost all areas of Majangir zone. There are also a lot of Majangir in Anuak zone in Gambella district, about 50 km from Gambella town, specifically, in places called Sirii, Kobon, Kokori, and Dunkara. In Abobo district, they are settled in Abari and Lumtak villages. There are other great number of Majangir who are living in SNNPRS in Bench-Maji and Sheka zone. Majangir are in contact with the Omotic, Cushitic and Nilo-Saharn language.

Since the Majang live in geographically wide area, with different social constructs, they have contact with various groups of people: from the Omotic group with Bench, Sheko, Dizi in the Bench-Maji Zone, with Kaffa and Shekka in Shekka Zone, and from Cushitic group with Oromo. The Majang are also situated in Oromia National Regional State in Iluabaaboor and K'elem Wollegaa zones and in Gambella National Regional State; here they have contact with the Nilo-Saharan group with Anuak and Nuwer. Furthermore, the Majang have contact with C'abu or Mekeer, who live in the northeast side of the Majang center (i.e. Mat'i), and whose language is on the verge of extinction. These people have more similarity with the Majang than they have with others social groups. This social group is also known by different names, that is Mekeyer, Shabuy, and Shaako. The Majang assume that these people (i.e. C'abu or Mekeer) were the deviant group from their ancestors and they are descendent of the same family, but [they assume that] the Mekeyer are independent.

Although the Majang speaking people have contact with different language speakers, the morphology of Majang specially the case marking has not been influenced by other languages. The Magang has its own various case marking morphemes.

1.2.   Statement of the Problem

There are various morphological units that play important roles in conveying meanings. These are called inflectional morphemes. Inflectional morphemes are grammatical units that imply various meanings of words in a language. Most of the description in a language can show the morphological types and its arrangement. Morphological descriptions in Majang have been done by various scholars in different time.

There are different morphological descriptions in Majang Morphology. In 1948, Cerulli , who was the first person to work on the description of Majang, made an attempt to describe the phonology and morphology of Majang and to identify the word order. The various works of Unseth (1986, p. 98) focused on the morphological description of Majang: reduplication, plural formation, noun categorization, adjectives and other morphological analysis and the sketch grammar of Majang, but not on the case morphology. Bender (1983) made good morphological description but he overlooked the case.   Getachew (2004) described the noun phrase of Majang but not the case morphology. In all of these and other linguistic description, no one gave due attention to case analysis in Majang. Hence, this work might fill the gap in relation to case morphology of Majang.

Regarding case marking in Ethiopian languages there are some works by different linguists. Almost all of them did not mention from the Nilo-Saharan languages. Depending on data gathered from different Ethiopian languages—five languages from the Semitic language group and about thirty five languages from Cushitic and Omotic language groups— Tosco (1994) studied case marking, but he did not consider even a single language as a source of data from the Nilo-Saharan language family in Ethiopia. Ehert (2001), in his comparative works for the Nilo-Saharan languages, identified different case marking morphemes, but the data show that his attention was geared towards languages spoken in the Northern Sudan such as Gule, Kunama, Meban Berta and others. His conclusion states: "a wider marking of case seems to have been fully established only in Northern Sudan area". Ehert (2001, p. 203) and Dimmendaal (2013) also identified marked nominative system in Eastern Sudanese taking different languages as example from Nilo-Saharan languages out of Ethiopia. This research fills the gap which was not given for the case marking morphemes in the Nilo- Saharan language in Ethiopia, particularly in Majang.

Majang is one of the Nilo-Saharan languages that suffix different case marking morphemes for various nouns and pronouns for showing specific case in the language. This work explored case marking inflectional morphemes in Majang. It has made a description of different morphemes that mark various types of cases in Majang, Furthermore, it gives analysis how each case marking morpheme acted in the phrase structure of Majang in relation to the nouns in the language. By doing so, it has addressed the following research questions:

1. Which cases are morphologically marked in Majang?

2. What are the morphemes that mark different cases in Majang?

3. What other means of showing case do exist in Majang apart from morphological case marking?

1.3. **The Objectives of the Study**

The general objective of this study is to identify various morphological case marking units in Majang. Under this general objective, the following are specific objectives:
1) to identify the morphological units used for case marking in the phrase structure of Majang,

2) to show features of case marking morphemes in Majang, and

3) to show different types of case marker morphemes in Majang.

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2.   Literature Review on Cases

2.1. What is Case?

Case is a grammatical entity/ category which is determined by the syntactic and semantic function of noun or pronoun in a given phrase structure. Blake (2004) defines case as "… a system of marking dependent nouns for the type of relationship they bear to their heads" (p.1). Kroeger (2005, pp.102- 3) explained case in the following way:

> Every language must have some way of indicating the grammatical relations of clausal elements, and distinguishing one relation from another. … Affixes … which are added to a noun or NP to indicate the grammatical relations of that NP are referred to as case markers. More generally, any system in which the grammatical relation of NP itself is referred to as a case system.

Trask (2007) also put the definition of case as follows:

> The grammatical category …varies for grammatical or semantic reasons. Case is indicated morphologically usually in the form of affixing to nouns; where such case marking exists, the language relies less on word order to signify relations between the participants in the verbal process. Affixes indicating case are called inflections (p. 35).

Similarly Haspelmath (2006) states: "The term case can refer to an inflectional category-system … or to the individual inflectional categories or values of that system … case behave like other inflectional category-system such as tense, aspect, mood, aspect, gender…"(p.1).

In a similar way, Koenig (2008) adopted the previous definition of Blake (2004) and defined case system as follows:

> A case system is an inflectional system of marking nouns or noun phrases for the type of relationship they bear to their heads. Inflectional systems are expressed by affixes, tone, accent shift or root reduction; ad-positional systems are included only in so far as they encoded core participants such as S, A, and O. These stand for three things that is, S for the intransitive subject, A for the transitive subject and O for the transitive object. In other words, each of them (S, A, and O) respectively represents the subject, the direct object and the indirect object of a sentence (p.5).

From the above definitions and explanation, one can understand that case is a grammatical relation of the noun or noun phrase and other constituents within a sentence that might be indicated by inflectional morphemes (in segments) and suprasegmental features such as tone. It is represented by various morphological markers in different languages. The usage of case markers varies from language to language.

2.2 Types of Cases

Various types of cases are found in nouns. These cases are marked by different types of morphemes based on the rules and principles of the languages as the morpheme attached with the noun for clearly shows the function of that noun in the given specific place, in the sentence structure. These case marking morphemes are attached to the nouns as a morphemic particle in overt form or in covert form by zero morphemes. All these covert and overt case marking morphemes show the function of the noun in the given sentence structure.

In the structure of a sentence a noun can act as a subject, object or can have other different specific function in a given phrase structure. Marking different cases for nouns by using various morphemic elements is a common feature of a language especially in most African languages.

Grammatical case marking is a common phenomenon in many languages especially in most African languages. Some languages attach morphological markers for little number of cases of nouns. Others attach many morphological marking morphemes for various cases of nouns. In this regard, Balakeas, who is cited in Konge (2008, p. 10) says: "case as a source … points out the absence of African languages, Africa as an example for the emergence of case markers". Case marking morpheme is a common feature of world language. "Almost every language of the world has developed some grammatical system for marking the relation between events… and the participants that play a role [who play roles] in those events" (Van Trijp, 2012, p. 170). From these, it is clear that case is a common phenomenon that is found in any language of the world. Though case system is common in any language, its study is considered a complex activity in the description of languages for long time. In this regard Van Trijp (2012) adds: "case has long been considered as being too complex to be either learned or to be functional for communication" (p 198).

The general classifications of case depend on the two aspects that is, the syntactic and semantic way of observing it. Based on their notion, linguists view cases differently in different time. As is presented in Haspelmath (2006, P. 3), case types are viewed as follows: grammatical cases and semantic cases or core case and peripheral cases (Blake, 1994), rational cases, adverbial cases (Bergsland,(1997), grammatical cases, concrete cases (Jesperson, 1924), abstract cases, concrete cases (Lyons, 1968), structural and inherent cases (in Chomskyan syntax). In all these classification, the distinction is made based on their way of looking these case marking inflectional morphemes in relation to different languages and time. The basic purpose behind the general categorization of each of them seems to be similar.

Regarding the function of the inflectional morpheme, in relation to noun in a given structure, each purpose is termed in various ways. The following are the most commonly mentioned case types in many languages of the world, as their definition is given by David Crystal, in the book called dictionary of linguistics.

A. Ablative: in languages which express grammatical relationships by means of inflections, a term referring to the form taken by a noun phrase (often a single

noun or pronoun) typically used in the expression of a range of a locative or instrumental meanings.

B. Accusative: in languages which express grammatical relationships by means of inflections, this term refers to the form taken by a noun phrase (often a single noun or pronoun) when it is the object of a verb.

C. Commutative: in languages which express grammatical relationships by means of inflections, this term refers to the form taken by a noun phrase (often a single noun or pronoun) when it is expressing the meaning 'along with' or 'accompanied by.

D. Dative: one of the forms taken by a noun phrase (often a single noun or pronoun) in languages which express grammatical relationships by means of inflections. The dative case typically expresses an indirect object relationship.

E. Ergative : a term used in grammatical description of some languages … where a term is needed to handle constructions where there is a formal parallel between the object of the transitive verb and the intransitive one.

F. Genitive: one of the forms taken by a noun phrase (often a single noun or pronoun) in languages which express grammatical relationships by means of inflections. The genitive case (the genitive) typically expresses a possessive relationship … but there is a great deal of variations between languages in the way this case is used.

G. Illative: a term used in grammatical description to refer a type of inflection which express the meaning of 'motion in to' 'or direction towards' a place. The illative case (the illative) is found in Finnish, for example, along with Allative, Elative and several other cases expressing 'local' temporal and spatial meaning.

H. Instrumental: in languages which express grammatical relationships by means of inflections, this term refers to the form taken by a noun phrase (often a single noun or pronoun) when it expresses such a notion as 'by means of', the term has a special status in case grammar, where it refers to the semantic case of inanimate causally involved entity in a verbs action … and is constructed with Agentive, Dative etc.

I. Nominative: in languages which express grammatical relationships by means of inflections, this term refers to the form taken by a noun phrase (often a single noun or pronoun) when it is the subject of a verb. The nominative case (nominative) is usually the first form to be listened in grammatical paradigm or in a dictionary, and is often unmarked form.

J. Oblique : in languages which express grammatical relationships by means of inflections, this term refers to the form taken by a noun phrase (often a single noun or pronoun) when it refers collectively to all the case forms of a word except the unmarked case or nominative.

All the above mentioned and other types of case construction are the real situation in most languages of the world. Some languages own most type of cases, up to seven or above, and others have very limited number of case marking morphemes.

Based on these various concepts presented in linguistic literature, in this study the researcher can have a look up on the case types and the application of cases in Majang,

which is one of the Surmic languages, spoken in South West part of Ethiopia. Almost all of the above mentioned case varieties exhibited in Majang case morphology.

3. Research Methods

This research work is a descriptive analysis of Majang case marking inflectional morphemes. As a framework, it employs the basic (descriptive) linguistic theory (BLT), which was first proposed by Dixon (1997) and later developed by Dryer (2001) and Dixon (2007; 2010). Using the elicitation methods and tape recorder, the researcher collected data from five male native speakers of Majang in Dunsay and C'emi villages, in Majang zone. The five male native speakers of Majang were selected randomly, based on their Majang and Amharic language fluency[4]. The five informants also participated in the data description. Moreover, data was collected from the native speakers of Majang in the day to day communication and from various texts. The linguistic elicitation methods were used for identifying the case marking morphemes. To check the authenticity of the data, the researcher used other consultants who are native speakers of Majang and have very good command of Amharic and fair command of English.

4. Results

4.1. **The Nominative and Accusative Cases without Morphological Marker**

In some of the sentences in Majang, there is no overt nominative and accusative case marker. That is the subject and the object can be denoted without any morphological marking.
        The following examples illustrate this:
(1)
    A.   okotú - k´   dowaaren -k ŋk   meja .
        Kill-NPAST   hunter   -DEF   buffalo
    'The hunter killed a buffalo'.

    B.   okotú-k´   meja -k ŋk   dowaaren -k ŋk.
        kill-NPAST   buffalo-DEF   hunter -DEF
        'The buffalo was killed by the hunter.'

    C. k -k´   ŋaaj -k ŋk   g r - wa.
        go-NPAST   woman -DEF   river -to
        'The woman went to river.'

    D.   ali -k´   meerá   mooji -k ŋk
        buy-NPAST   Meera   salt-DEF
        'Mera bought the salt'

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[4] Female participants were excluded from the interview because of their shyness to actively participate.

E. alí -kˊ   kemt-k ŋk legijént.
  buy-NPAST   goat-DEF Legyant.
  'Legiyent bought the goat.'

F. alí-kˊ   kemt   legijént.
  buy-NPAS goat   Legyant.
  ' Legiyent bought a goat.'

G. alí-kˊ   kemt-sin   k   uŋ - ŋk   legijént.
  buy-NPAST   goat-DEM   black -GEN   Legyant.
    ' Legiyent bought a black goat.'

H. ali-ḱ   kémt –k ŋk   k   uŋ- ŋk legijént.
  buy-NPAST   goat -DEF   black-GEN Legyant
  ' Legiyent bought the black goat.'

I. ga -áa- kˊ   woris   n –a.
give-1S-NPAS   money her -ABL
'I gave her money.'
J. i   aa-kˊ   woó   ikon?
 work-NPAST   who what
 'Who did what?'
K. ok t-kˊ   woó   ikon?
  kill-NPAST who what
 'Who killed what?'

     As shown in (1 A-K), there is no morphological marking in the sentences to show nominative or accusative cases. The subject noun is expressed by a high tone. In all of the above examples, there is no overt (segmental) case marker. In these cases, the order of lexical elements changed; the subject noun mostly comes right next to the verb and the object comes after it in most of the cases. The interrogative pronoun that represents the subject come next to the verb and the other one that represents the object follows it as in the last two examples, **J** and **K**. Bender (1983a) also observed such expression of nominative case in Majang in the description of Majang morphology. The following data show that the nominative and accusative case markers of Majang are marked by different morphemes.

4.1.1 *The nominative case*

     In some of texts extracted from narratives (story telling), nominative case is overtly represented by **-ˊ.** The following examples illustrate this:
(2)
  n t   p -ˊ   okot iira.
  SQ PA.   lion-NOM   kill   monkey
  ' …and then the lion killed the monkey.'

ne an   p -´   goruŋ.
SQ RPAST   lion -NOM sick.
' next the lion was sick.'

n   án   p -´   ma irŋ.
SQ PAS.   lion -NOM thin.
' next the lion became thin.'

n   á   solbaari –j´   kii   -taamea -ra.
SQ Par. Solbaari -NOM   NEG eye(PL) own
'Solbaari did not own eyes.'

m l -kí -k j   jees -´   e sa-a -koj   pedi –jak.
Come -DIR -RFUT   Jesus -NOM   once in   -RFUT   last -PL
'Jesus will come on the last day.'

táawá   náak -´.
Farm   my -NOM
' my farm'

t nnáak -´.
Childe my -NOM
'my child'

gode-náak -´.
House my -NOM
'my house'

In data (2), in the structures the morpheme **-´** is attached to the nouns: the noun functions as a subject and the pronoun acts as a possessor. All the above examples are extracted from various texts in Majang. The first four clauses are extracted from different stories. The others (the last three) are from day to day speech of the Majang. Such types of construction are also revealed in other Surmic and Nilo-Saharan languages at large. In this regard, Handschuh (2014, p. 67) states the following: "the most widespread pattern of marking nominal predications in Nilo-Saharan is to mark the subject of construction with nominative case, while the predicate nominal remains in the zero-coded accusative form". Handschuh (2014) presented similar case marking for Murele and Tennet from the Surmic language group, and from the other Nilo-Saharan languages Maa, Nadi and Turkanna.

4.1.2. The accusative case

There is also an overt marker – **(V)ŋ** for accusative case marking in Majang in rare situation. It is used as accusative marker as in the following data (3).

(3)

n a m l -ki   p -´   gope-g r   -w r-ŋkn   - a - eeler   maaw -uŋ.⁵
SQPA come -DIR Lion -NOM Road River - GEN   SQPA ask   water -ACC
'Next to that the lion came and then asked water.'

ruum -aá -k   i aag naak-iŋ.
finish -1SS -PAS   work   my -ACC
'I had finished my work'

ruum -aá -k   i aag naak -iŋ.
finish   -1SS -NPAST   work   my   - ACC
'I had finished my work'

d n -aá   s n -iŋ.
see -1SS   she   - ACC
'I saw her.'

d n -ií   s n - ŋ.
see -1PLS   she -ACC
'We saw her.'

As (3) shows, **(V) ŋ** is attached to the noun and pronouns to mark the accusative case in Majang. The inflectional morpheme in the language implies the noun or the pronoun that suffixes this morpheme **(V) ŋ**, which is the direct object of the sentence. So **(V) ŋ** is the accusative case marker in Majang.

4.2. The Dative Case

Majang nouns inflect for dative case. That is, there is a morpheme attached to express the indirect object relationship with the subject. This dative case in Majang is marked by the morpheme **–a.** The following sentences show this phenomenon in Majang.

(4)

  umúr –k´   dambir -tápa -a
answer - NPAST Dambiro   chief -DAT
' Dambiro answered to a chief.'

5

This sentence extracted from one of the story of Majang.

ga   -kˊ dakik   pán   meera-a
give NPAS. Daki   bracelet   Mera -DAT
' Daki gave a bracelet to Meera.'

ga   -kˊ   i ít –k ŋk   taar t m k –a   g nak
give-NPAS   person-DEF   meat children-DAT   his (PL)
'The man gave meat to his children.'

 ali –kˊ   jemalo   taar t m k –á- g nak.
Sell -NPAST Yamalo   meat children -DAT   his(PL)
'Yamalo bought meat to his children.'

jaaŋ -kˊ   daki m nd r   dambir -𝑤a.
Show N PAS. Daki village   Dambiro -DAT
'Daki showed the village to Dambiro.

 ál ii   -kˊ   daki   kémt -k ŋk dambir -wa.
sell   -NPAST Daki goat   -DEF   Dambiro -DAT
'Daki sold the goat to Dambiro.'

…n tˊ   gagee taarman n k   eerˊ -wa.
SQNAR   give   skin   his   ape -DAT
'And then gave its (his) skin to an ape.'

tonu –kˊ -ta daki a   sin   dúgaŋ - ŋk.
Tell -NPAST -1SO Daki thing -DEM Secrete -GEN
'Daki told me the secret.'

As shown in (4), in all of the structures the dative marker **–a** is attached to different nouns to show the relationship with the indirect object. In the first two structures **tapa a** 'to a chief'and **meeraa '**to Meera', the dative marker is attached to the indirect object nouns. In the next two structures, the dative marker is attached to the phrase **t mo ka g nak** 'to his children'. In this case, the possessive pronoun comes with the noun; the dative marker here is also attached to both the possessive pronoun and the head noun.   In the other structures, the nouns **dambir wa '**to Dambiro' and **eer wa** 'to an ape', the suffixed morpheme for the dative marker is **–wa**. Here the phoneme **/w/** is inserted to break the impermissible sequence of vowels. In the last structure, the indirect object is expressed by the object pronoun **-ta** and is suffixed to the verb and thus there is no clear noun to carry the dative marker **-a.**

The dative marker morpheme **–a** is also attached to nouns that express destination.

(5)
   káarlˊ wan   a má a   duns -ja.
   Go(PL) Lowan CNJ brother   Dunsey -to
   'Lowan went to Dunchay with his brother.'

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   kon    k´ŋ        n -k´ -ka-déran        meeti  -ja.
   If     rain        SQ FUT    NEG- leg (PL)  Meeti  - to
   'If it rains, I will not go to Meet'i.'


   … n  k   tonu  kémt   íŋku -ja,      k  akoote        i  w´ r  -ja.⁶
   SQ PAR.side    goat  sheep - DAT SQ   travel(PL) recreate elsewhere -to
   'And then the goat said to the sheep, let us travel and recreate elsewhere.'


   ŋaar –k´          gode –ja.
   Go   -NPAST       home to
   'went home'


   ŋaar-ár    meeti  - ja.
   go PL    -Meeti  -to
   'They are going to Meet'i.'
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In (5), in the first four consecutive structures, the morpheme **–a** is attached to show the destination or the direction where to go or a place of arrival. The phoneme **/j/** is inserted between the vowel sequences in each case to avoid sequences of vowels. In some case of the structure, example the **–a** in   iŋku **–ja** shows the indirect object that act as a dative case marker, whereas, the **–a** in **w r -ja** shows the destination. Unseth (1989c) assigned both as oblique case.

4.3. The Dative in Personal Pronouns

As it is working in other nouns (place, person name…), the dative case marker –a is also attached with the personal pronouns in Majang. The dative case with in the noun phrase expressed the benefiting notion. This may be the case of portmanteau morpheme. The following examples can illustrate this application of the dative in Majang personal pronouns.

(6)

éet –a	'for me '	etéŋk –a 'for us'
1s DAT.		**1PL DAT**

iin –a	' for you '	**iinak –a** 'for you' PL
2S. **DAT**		2PL **DAT**

s n –a	.for him/her	s g –a 'for them '
3S DAT.3PL DAT.		

In the above data (6), the morpheme **–a** is attached to the personal pronouns to express the dative case which is similar to that of other common nouns in Majang. Compare these data with the data presented in (5) above.

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6 This sentence is extracted from a story in Majang.

4.4. The Genitive Cases

The genitive case in Majang is expressed in various ways. There are different forms that show the ownership of something. These forms are represented by the morphemes: -**oŋk, -a,** and**–ik** . Majang also expresses the possession by using possessive pronouns. There are also some words that refer to possessions or ownership. The following examples illustrate the genitive markers that are available in the language (Majang).

(7) The genitive markers
taa án   mak l -k ŋk
beer   maize   -GEN
'beer of maize'

mak l   taa   an - ŋk
maize   beer   -GEN
' beer for maize'

mak l   sapataan - ŋk
maize porridge   - GEN
'porridge for maize'

Sapataan   mak l -k ŋk
porridge   maize - GEN
'porridge of maize'

 m l -ki reeg   tapa   -oŋk
come -DIR   wife 's brother chief   - GEN
'The chief's wife's brother is coming.'

wasij gumun - ŋk.
story owl   GEN
'Owl's story.'

mentan   gode tapa -k ŋk -uŋ.
nice   house   chief -DEF - GEN
'The chief's house is nice'

obi ŋedanaŋ   -joŋk -u.
big teeth elephant GEN -COP.
' An elephant's teeth is big.'

m l -ki ma a   arti – ja   tapa   - ŋk.
Come -DIR Brother wife GEN   chief   -GEN
'Chief's wife's brother is coming.'

m s   daki - ja.
Mother   Daki -GEN
'Daki's mother'

t n k   al   -jik.
Child yesterday GEN
'Yesterday's childe'

titim -k   m -s   -jik.
War -NPAST   year -DEM -GEN
'Last year's war.'

wásij   gaak   a   wáŋgo –jik.
story   crow CNJ fox   -GEN
'Fox's and crow's story.'

Ege   baabuj   n k -´   ga oj.
be   husband   her - NOM   hero
' Her husband is a hero.'

     The most frequently occurring genitive case marker in Majang is **–oŋk,** as in the majority of the structures in (7) have clearly shown. This genitive marker adds the focus marker **-k** to express the emphasis which is given to that noun, or if particular attention has been given for that noun. Other forms can also show the genitive relationship. In the structure, **mentan –gode -tapa -k ŋ-k –uŋ,** 'The chief's house is nice', the morpheme -**k** is inserted for focus marking and the morpheme –**uŋ** as an accusative marker. The other explanation could be that the genitive case marker is the morpheme –**k ŋkuŋ**. This could be the result of the combination of the two morphemes i.e. the definite marker –**k ŋk** and the genitive marker - **ŋk** . In another structures,   **arti -ja** 'wife's' and **daki -ja** 'Daki's' the genitive case is expressed by the morpheme –**a**; it seems that this morpheme shows the kinship genitive relations. In another structures, m s **daki – ja**, 'Daki's mother' and **t   nk   al   -jik** 'yesterday's child', the morpheme –**ik** express the genitive relationship within the structure. It is acting as a temporal genitive marker.

     In the last structure, **ege baabuj n k -´   ga   oj** 'Her housebound is a hero', the genitive relation is expressed by the possessive pronoun **n   k**'his' and ´ which is attached in the structure to show the nominative case. Similarly**,** in the last structure, the possession is shown by the possessive pronoun **naak** 'my' and the **-iŋ** is suffixed to show the objective case marking.

4.5. Instrumental Case

Majang nouns inflect for instrumental case to represent the means by which someone did an action. The instrumental case gives the answer to the question asked by the interrogative pronoun   **ikoj** 'with what'. This instrumental case in the Majang is represented by the morpheme **-i**, as it is shown in the following examples.

(8)
jaw´ -k´   s ŋk   k´ t kabi -i.
cut -NPAST   he   tree   axe -INS
'He cut the tree with an axe.'

 okotú –k´   daki áŋ   be-ji.
kill   - NPAST Daki elephant spir -INS
'Daki killed an elephant with a spear.'

 okotú –k´   daki   áŋ   kawo -ji.
kill   - NPAST Daki   elephant   gun -INS
'Daki killed an elephant with a gun.'

Muke   daki   mak l   be -ji -n   wáaj - iiŋ.
plant   Daki. maize   hoe -INS SQ   dig -APL
'Daki planted a maize digging with a hoe.'

taj´   baab   túga   gumboj -i
open   father   door   stick   - INS.
'My father opens a door with a stick.'

ke   --k´   s ŋk bambéj –ák kebet –i.
boill   NPAS. She sweet.potao -PL pot   INS.
'She boiled sweet potato with a pot.'

In the above data (8), in all of the structures the nouns: **kabii** 'with an axe', **beji** 'with a spear', **kawoji** 'with a gun'**, gumboji** 'with stick', and **kebeti '**with a pot', suffixed the morpheme - i. The morpheme **–i** that is suffixed with these nouns can show the instrumental case. It can give the answer that is raised by the interrogative pronoun   **ikoj** 'with what'.

4.6. Locative Case

The Majang nouns inflect to indicate the general location of something, what is called the locative case marker. Locative case marking in Majang is dominantly

expressed by the morpheme **-e**. It is also expressed by attaching the post position particle to the noun. The following examples can show this application in Majang:

(9) **Locative case markers**

Ar -ŋaaj -k ŋk   gode - je .
be woman -DEF house -LOC
'The woman is in the house.'

artaar -k ŋk   tar -e.
be   meat DEF frying -LOC
'The meat is in the frying place'

lakˊ   taar   saadí pale –je.
   have   meat   there pan -LOC
'The meat is on the pan'

beeber tˊ n –k ŋk   keet der –e.
sit   child -DEF   tree leg -LOC
'The child sits under the tree.'

t t rpeet –k ŋk   gor   kˊnt - .
stand girl - DEF   river besides -LOC
'The girl stands beside the river'

arŋaaj   --k ŋk   gode -tak .
be woman DEF house in.
'The woman is in the house.'

Ar -i ít   –k ŋk   goodeej -tak
be person   -DEF   house -in
'The man is in the house.'

lej   tˊ n -k ŋk goroo -tak.
swim childe DEF river -in
'The child swims in the river'
t t r   peet –k ŋk kéet - ók.
stand girl -DEF tree   near.
'The girl stands near the tree'

As shown in the above structures in data (9), in the first five structures, the locative case, the notion that expresses the idea of the location of the thing, is represented by the morpheme **–e.**   In the remaining structures, the notion of location is showed by attaching the postposition particles **k nt ' besides', tak 'inside' and   ok'near'.** In the sentence   **t t r -peet –k ŋk gor   k nt - ,** 'the girl stands beside the river', the

postposition particle **k nt** ' besides' and the locative marker **-** are used simultaneously. In the case of sentence four, the locative marker is **- .** This might have been due to the influence of vowel harmony.

In Majang, the personal pronouns inflect for different cases as in the other nouns do, as presented in the previous sections, as in examples 2 up to 9. The following data can illustrate the different case inflections in Majang pronouns. These include the dative, the locative, instrumental, and the possessive cases.

Similarly, locative case markers in pronouns are suffixed to the personal pronouns in Majang**.** As it has been shown in other nouns in the previous section, the locative case marker **–e** is also attached to the personal pronouns in the language. The following examples can illustrate these forms in Majang that is the locative case marker with the pronouns of Majang.

(10)
éet – e ' form me '   **eténk – e** 'form us'
1s LOC**.**   1PL   LOC

iin – e ' form you '   **iinak – e** 'form you' PL
2S. LOC   2PLDAT

s n –e . 'form him/her   **s g –e** 'form them '
3S   LOC.   3PL LOC.

In (10), there is a morpheme **–e,** attached to the personal pronouns. All of these pronouns are the morphological representation of the object. The morpheme **–e** is attached to express the locative case. The locative case marker **–e** is also attached with the personal pronouns in Majang to express as an instrumental case. The following examples can illustrate the instrumental case construction with Majang pronouns:

(11)
éet – e   **eténk – e**
1s INS.   1PL   LOC
' by me '   ' by us'
iin – e iinak – e
2S. INS.2PL INS**.**
' by you '   ' by you' PL
s n –e .   **s g –e**
3S   INS.3   PL INS.
'by him/her   'by them '

In (11), there is a morpheme **–e,** which is attached to all of the personal pronouns in Majang. These pronouns are the representation of the object. The morpheme **–e** with a high tone has been suffixed to express the instrumental case in the language. The following structures may show their difference in various usages.

(12)
jow   iriéeté
long distance me
'be far from me.'

  amaéeté
eat   me
'eat by me.'

ari ekénéeté
be jealous me
'be jealous of me.'

tijiéeté
hear me
'hear from me.'

  áliéet -é
buy me
'buy by me.**'**

  áliéet-á
buy me
'buy for me.**'**

  áliéet-é
buy me
'buy from me.**'**

In (12), there is high tone with the object pronoun '**eet'** and the morpheme –e for showing instrumental case.

4.7. Allative Case

In Majang, there is also a construction that shows directional movement having the particle soon 'towards' before the personal pronouns and suffixing the morpheme **–ik** on the pronouns, and this is said to be an allative case.

The following examples can show such application in Majang pronoun.

(13).**soon   eet   -ik**.
  towards   me   ALLA.
'Towards me.'

soon -iin   -ik.
towards   you ALLA.
'Towards you.'

soon   s   n -ik.
towards   him/her. ALLA.
'Towards him/her.'

soon eteŋk   -ik.
towards   us   ALLA.
'Towards us.'

soon   iin   -ak   -ik.
towards   you PL. ALLA.
'Towards you(PL).'

soon   s   g   -ik.
towards   them   ALLA.
'towards them.'

As in (13), each of the structures shows the movement towards a certain direction. All the pronouns proceeded by the particle **soon** 'towards' and the directional marker morpheme **–ik** is attached for each.

4.8. Ablative Case

Majang nouns inflect for ablative case. The ablative case expresses a movement away from a certain location.   The ablative case in Majang is represented by the morpheme **-** . There are some examples that show the ablative case in Majang.
(14)
m l   –kí -kʼ   s´ŋk meeti -j
come -DIR -NPAS   she Meti -ABL
'She came from Met'i.'

mas   -kʼ   s´ŋk wori   tekaan –eer -   g n -   -k.
borrow -NPAST   she money   relative -PL -ABL   His(PL) -ABL -FOC
'He borrowed money from his relatives.'

ku –kʼ   daki   t   uk –s   (uk -)
bring -NPAST Daki   honey   forest -DEM forest -ABL
'Daki brought honey from forest.'

kusú   baab´ taawo -y n´ k -
come   father farm   -ABL his -ABL
'My father comes from his farm.'

In the above data, (14), the nouns **meeti-j** 'from met'i', **tekaa neer - g n - k** 'from my relatives', **uk –s (uk -)** 'from the forest' and **taawo -y n k -** 'from his farm' have the ablative marker morpheme **- ,** in each of the cases. It is also attached to the possessive pronouns as in structures **kusú baab taawo -y n k - .** 'My father comes from his farm' and **mas -k -s ŋk-worite kaan -eer - g n - k**' He borrowed money from his relatives'. The last morpheme **-k** in the second structure is suffixed for focus marking. All of these can give the answer for the question raised by the interrogative pronoun **éét** '**from where**'. The ablative case in Majang is represented by the morpheme **- ,** and it is similar to that of the locative case marking.

5. Discussion

As the data in the discussion session reveals, there are different types of case marker morphemes in Majang**.** Nouns in Majang inflect (attach case marker) for different case types. There are about eight morphological case markers in the language, namely: nominative, accusative, dative, genitive, locative, instrumental, allative and ablative in Majang. The numbers of case marking morphemes in Majang are many in relation to other Ethiopian languages. The case marking morphemes in Majang seem to have a shared characteristic in Surmic languages and other Nilo-Saharan languages. Different linguistic researches identified the various case markers in Surmic language group and tried to reconstruct the proto-Surmic case markers. Most of these proto Surmic forms are similar to those of Majang case marker forms. Most of Nilo-Saharan languages have similar nominative case marking morphemes for Murele and Tennet from the Surmic language group, and from the other Nilo-Saharan languages Maa, Nadi and Turkanna (Handschuh, 2014, p. 67).

There is some sort of ambiguity between the use of ad position (preposition or postposition) and case marking morphemes in some structures. This situation is debatable since early time, as Zwisky (1992), who is cited in Haspelmath (2006, p. 2), states: "anything you can do with case you can also deal with ad-positions and vice versa". He (Haspelmath, 2006) also states: "there is no widely accepted overt term for cases and ad-positions, but the terms flag and realtor have sometimes been used as terms which are neutral with respect to the case/ ad-position distinction". In practice, considerable overlap between ad-positions and case inflection can be found. In the same token, there should be detailed analysis for their distinctive features between case markers and ad-positions of Majang. The status of tone in relation to case marking in Majang is also not clearly shown in this work.

6. Conclusion

The Majang Nouns inflect for different case types, that is, nouns in Majang attach various case marking morphemes. There are about eight morphological case markers in the language. These include: the nominative case represented by the morpheme **-´**, the accusative case represented by the **zeromorpheme** , **- (V)ŋ,** the dative case represented by the morpheme **-a**, the genitivecase mainly represented by the morphemes **-oŋk,** and **-**

a, the locative case represented by the morpheme **-e.,** the instrumental case represented by the morpheme**-I ,**the allative case represented by the morpheme**-ik**, and the ablative case represented by the morpheme **- .** In Majang, there are many distinct case marking morphemes comparing to other Ethiopian languages. The case marking morphemes in Majang seem to have similar features with the Surmic languages in particular and other Nilo-Saharan languages at large. There is a considerable overlap between ad-positions and case inflection in Majang. Hence, there should be detailed analysis for their distinctive features between case markers and ad-positions of Majang. In the same token, the status of tone in relation to case marking is not clearly shown in this work. This situation again needs further investigation in the future.

List of Abbreviations

Gloss	Name	Gloss	Name
ACC	=Accusative case	'	= High tone
ABL.	=Ablative case	1SS	= first person singular
ALL.	=Allative case	2PL	= second person plural
CNJ	=Conjonction	3PL	= third person plural
DAT	= Dative case		
DEF	= Definite		
DEM	= Demonstrative		
FDRE	= Federal Democratic Republics of Ethiopia		
GEN	= Genitive case		
INS	= Instrumental case		
LOC	= Locative case		
NPAST	= Near Past		
NFUT	= Near future		
PAST	= Past tense		
PURF	= Perfective		
PL	= Plural		
RPAST	= Remote past		
SNNPR	= Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Region		
SQNAR	= Sequential narrative		

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