Relativisation in Uro and Arigidi: a Government and Binding Theory Approach.

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ABSTRACT: This paper examines the process of relativisation in Uro and Arigidi; two varieties of Akokoid dialect cluster. Uro is spoken in Ajowa Akoko, while Arigidi is spoken in Arigidi Akoko, both in Akoko Northwest local government area of Ondo state. This work compares the relativisation process in the two dialects with a view to establishing their level of relatedness. In the two speech forms, this research reveals that the subject NP, object NP, and verbs can be relativized. The subject NP relativization is achieved by a movement of the Spec IP to Spec RelP. There is no overt relative marker when the subject NP is moved. On the other hand, the object NP is relativised by moving the NP argument to the Spec RelP. In this case, a relative marker *'i'* on a mid-tone immediately follows the moved NP. For verbs, they are copied and nominalized through a process of reduplication, then moved to the Spec RelP. This is also followed by the relative marker *'i'*. The similarities observed in the relativisation process in these two dialects further confirm the claims by some scholars that the two dialects originated from a common source. The Government and Binding (GB) theory is used in analyzing and presenting the data.

KEYWORDS: Relativisation, Relative Marker, NPs, Movement, Akokoid.

1. INTRODUCTION

This study is a comparative analysis of relativisation in Ùrò and Arigidi dialects. Ùrò and Arigidi are two varieties of Akoko lects. Uro is spoken in Ajowa Akoko, while Arigidi is a speech form spoken in Arigidi Akoko, both in Akoko Northwest local government area of Ondo State. Scholars in the field of language study have grouped these varieties under Akokoid language family e.g. Hoffman (1974), Akinkugbe (1976), and Ohiri-Anichie, (2006). This classification is mainly based on the cognate words and lexicostatistics of the speech forms. Little attention is paid to the syntax of the speech forms. This work, therefore, is an attempt to examine the process of forming relative clauses in the two speech forms and affirm their relatedness or otherwise.

According to Bamisaye (2001:80), relativisation is a syntactic process through which relative clauses are formed. A relative clause (RC) is a clause which is embedded in the S-structure as a modifier of the noun phrase (NP). Such an embedded sentence has within its structure a 'WH' pronominal replacement or its equivalent for the D-structure. Yusuf (1990) explains that relative construction involves the insertion of a relative clause in front of its NP antecedent in a matrix clause; a clause is relative when an NP within it is identical (and is therefore changed to a relative pronoun) with the antecedent of thematic clause. Such relative pronouns are moved from their original position to the composition of the relative clause. This movement leaves a trace which is co-indexed with the moved element.

Mbah (2006:68) defines relativisation as a process of reducing full sentence forms into relative clauses. A relative clause as a kind of subordinate clause is grammatically dependent. Typically, a relative clause modifies a noun or noun phrase and uses some grammatical device to indicate that one of the arguments within the relative clause has the same referent as that noun or noun phrase (NP).

From the definitions above, one can deduce that a sentence may have two clauses which are the matrix clause and embedded clause. Consider the example below:

(1) (a) [The car$_i$ [which John bought] was stolen.]

It is observed that the group of words in (a) above is made up of two clauses as shown in (b & c) below:

(b) The car was stolen (Matrix Clause)

(c) John bought the car (Embedded Clause)

The car which is subject of the sentence in (b) and object of the verb *bought* in (c) becomes a relative pronoun (*which)* and it is moved into initial position of embedded clause, there is an anaphoric relation between the (which) and the subject NP (the car) of the matrix clause. Stockwell (1977:59) divides relative clauses into two restrictive relative clause and appositive (non-restrictive) relative clause. Restrictive relative clause gives information mainly about the constituent that is relativized. It is not always separated by a comma.

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Consider the examples below:
(2) (a) The man who stole my car is around.
    (b) That is the toy which she bought

Appositive relative clause on the other hand, is a parenthetical comment or after thought set off to separate intonation group from the rest of the sentence. Appositive relative clause is marked by comma, hyphen or bracket as shown in the examples below:
(3) (a) My teacher, I have great love and respect for, likes me much.
    (b) Wole Soyinka, who is known as a poet, playwright, essayist, received Nobel Prize in literature.

It is important to note that only restrictive relative clause is attested in the speech varieties under study. Downing (1978:378) notes that two properties are essential to relative clauses. These properties are both semantic and syntactic in nature. In defining properties of relative constructions, he notes two things:
(i) A relative clause is subordinated.
(ii) A relative clause is connected to surrounding material by a pivot constituent.

The *pivot,* he claims, is a constituent semantically shared by the matrix clause and the relative clause. These defining properties are stronger than just co-reference. If the pivot (usually a noun phrase) appears to be spelled out inside the matrix clause – often the main clause, but it can also be a subordinate clause itself – it can be recognized as an antecedent. This yields [matrix … [N RC] …], where the relative clause contains a gap, which may be filled by a relative pronoun.
In some languages, like Yoruba, relative clauses are introduced by what is called a relative marker. In some other languages, there is no overt relative marker, what we observe is only movement and traces.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW
A number of researches have been carried out on relative clause in many Nigerian languages. Some of these works include; Awobuluyi (1978), Emenanjo (1978), Iwundu (1987), Bamgbose (1990), Ajiboye (2006), Ilori (2010) Akintoye (2015) among others. Iwundu (1987:87) describes relativisation patterns in Igbo; one of the major languages in Nigeria. He explains that the Igbo relative clauses function as modifiers of noun phrases (NP) and fit into two different structural classifications namely subject qualifying and object qualifying within the construction. He observes that the Igbo language shares certain general aspects of relative clauses with some Subject Verb Object languages such as English and Haya.
Emenanjo (1978) identifies two types of relative clause structure in the Igbo language:
a. Those whose NP subject is different from the preceding nominal. This he calls type A Relative clause. It is marked by tone in Igbo.
Consider the following example cited from Onuoha & Ezeh (2019:4)

(4) Akwa ọ zụtara dị mma
   "The clothes he bought are good"
However, in the Type B relative clauses, the tonal relationship between the NPs and the following verb is the same as that between the two nouns in the associative construction for example:

(5) Akwa dị ebe a mara mma
   "The clothes here are good" (cf Onuoha & Ezeh, 2019:4)
Bamgbose (1967; 1975a; 1975b; 1990) and Awobuluyi (1975; 1978) work on relative clause in Yoruba and its dialects. These two scholars independently explain that a relative clause is derived from a simple sentence and it is used to qualify a noun. They accept that a relative clause is introduced by a *tí*-clause which appears immediately after the relativized items as shown below.

(6) Isu tí Ade ́jẹ
   Yam REL Ade eat
   "The yam that Ade ate"
The status of **tí**-clause has generated significant arguments among Yoruba scholars. For instance, Bamgbose (1975:1-16) is of the opinion that not all the clauses introduced by **tí**-clause are relative clauses. Hence, it is not sufficient to use the presence of **tí**-clause as evidence of a structure being a relative clause. He claims that while it is true that a **tí**-clause can introduce a relative clause, it as well introduces nominalization having a factive and a manner meaning.

(7) Lílú tí Olú ń lu ìlù
   The fact that Olu beat the drum
   The manner at which Olu beat the drum
A **tí**-clause introduces a relative clause when it appears after relativized NPs and also nominalization having a factive and a manner meaning when it occurs after nominalized verbs. Awobuluyi (1975:1-11) has a contrary opinion. While Bamgbose argues

that **tí**-clause only introduces a relative clause when it occurs after a true noun and nominalization when it occurs after a nominalized verb. According to Awobuluyi (1975:1-11), **tí**-clause always introduces a relative clause construction when it appears after the relativized items whether the relativized item is a noun or a nominalized verb and it conveys a relative clause meaning. However, Akintoye (2015) opines that **tí**-clause performs dual functions; it functions as both a relative marker and a conditional clause marker. It introduces a relative clause when it occurs after the relativized items and a conditional clause when it appears at the initial position of a conditional sentence. This author agrees with the opinion of Akintoye (2015). The **tí**-clause can be a relative or conditional clause depending on the environment it occurs in structure. These previous studies have shown that relativisation is not strange in the literature of many Nigerian languages. However, none of these scholars have looked at this aspect of the grammar of Arigidi and its varieties. Therefore, this research work will be a contribution to the existing works on the grammar of Akokoid dialect clusters.

3. RESEARCH METHOD AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The data used for this work is sourced through direct interviews with the native speakers of the dialects. Interviews were conducted in the two speech communities (Uro and Arigidi Akoko) where the speech forms are spoken using elders whose ages range between 50-70. Five elders from each of these speech communities were interviewed. The old native speakers have been selected since they speak a purer language than the young generations. The data were recorded in a tape, classified and analysed. The theoretical model adopted for our analysis is the Government and Binding Theory also known as Principles and Parameters Theory (P & P). This theory was developed by Noam Chomsky in 1981. The theory assumes that a large portion of the grammar of any particular language is common to all languages, and is therefore part of Universal Grammar. The GB view is that Universal Grammar can be broken down into two main components: levels of representation and a system of constraints. See Chomsky (1981) and Haegeman, L. (1994), Radford (1988, 1997), Black (1999) etc. One interesting aspect of the GB theory is the fact that it is modular in nature and each module can work independently of the other but they operate in a cooperative manner and jointly apply to give a well-formed output in grammar. We employ the x-bar, movement and trace aspects of the modules of the theory.

4. RELATIVISATION IN ARIGIDI

In Arigidi, subject or object NP can be relativised. The subject NP relativisation is achieved by moving the element to be modified into the Spec RelP. There is no overt relative marker when the subject NP is relativised. On the other hand, when the object NP is relativized, a relative marker *'i'* is followed by the moved object NP. Consider the data below:

4.1 Subject and Object Relativisation

(8) a

Adé	a	joˊ	isẹˊ	ipo
Ade	TM	eat	yam	plenty

'Ade ate plenty yam'

b.

Ade	ø	jo	isẹˊ	ipo
Ade	REL	eat	yam	plenty

'Ade who ate plenty of yam'

c

isẹˊ	ipo	i	Ade	jo tᵢ
Yam	plenty	Rel	Ade	eat

'The plenty (of) yam which Ade ate'

(9) a

bàba̍ˊ	a	da	ibata
Father	TM	buy	shoe

'Father bought a shoe'

b

bàba̍ˊ	ø	da	ibata
Father	Rel	buy	shoe

'The father who bought the shoes'

c

ibata	i	baba	da
Shoe	Rel	father	buy

'The shoes that the father bought'

(10) a

Ojo	a	po	iyi	ojuwa
Ojo	TM	kill	rat	two

'Ojo Killed two rats'

b

Ojo	ø	po	iyi	ojuwa
Ojo	Rel	kill	rat	two

'Ojo who killed two rats'

c

Iyi	Ojuwa	i	Ojo	po
Rat	two	Rel	Ojo	kill

'The two rats that Ojo killed'

(11) a

Ola	a	hun	oˊgo
Ola	TM	carry	oil

'Ola carried oil'

b.   **Ola**   **ø**   **hun**   **oǵo**
Ola   Rel   carry   oil
'Ola who carried oil'

c   **Ogo**   **i**   **Ola**   **hun**
Oil   Rel   Ola   carry
'The oil which Ola carried'

(12)a   **Kunle**   **a**   **deˊ**   **okùbà**
Kunle   TM   steal   money
'Kunle   Stole   money'

b   **Kunle**   **ø**   **deˊ**   **okùbà**
Kunle   Rel   steal   money
'Kunle who stole the money'

c.   **okùbà**   **i**   **Kunle**   **deˊ**
Money   Rel   Kunle   steal
'The money which Kunle stole'

(13) a   **Segun**   **a**   **da**   **moto**
Segun   TM   buy   motor
'Segun bought a motor'

b   **Segun**   **ø**   **da**   **moto**
Segun   Rel   buy   motor
'It was Segun who bought a car'

c.   **Moto**   **i**   **Segun**   **da**
motor   Rel   Segun   buy
'Motor which Segun bought'

From the data above we observe that when the subject NP is relativized as seen in (8b-13b), there is no overt relative marker. However, when the object NP is relativized as seen in (8c-13c), the relative marker '***i***' on a mid-tone is inserted and the nouns are linearly (immediately) followed by the relative marker. Furthermore, unlike Yoruba, the moved subject NP does not drop any phonetic element at its extraction site. Another important thing to notice in the data is the fact that the tense marker '**a**' in the basic sentence (8a-13a) is not realized in the derived sentences. Note that the tense marker (TM) in (8a-13a) is a preverbal element that usually occurs in a basic clause in the language. It is not overt in a complex sentence (see Oshodi, 2016).

4.2 Verb Relativisation in Arigidi

It is observed that the verbs can also be relativised in the language, such verbs are reduplicated and a copy is left in-situ. Verb phrase movement takes place when a verb moves to the position of a noun as the subject of the sentence. In Yoruba language, verb relativisation involves nominalization of the verb via a morphological process called reduplication and a copy of the verb is required at the extraction site. Such reduplication is needed to nominalize the verbs before movement as only nominal element is allowed to occupy the Spec RelP. Consider the following examples from Yoruba:

a.   **Ade ra iwe**
Ade buy book
'Ade bought a book'

b.   **Rira ti Ade ra iwe**
Nom-buy Rel NP buy book
'The buying Ade bought the book'!

In Arigidi, the verb of the basic sentence is also reduplicated and nominalized. Consider the following examples:

(14)a   **Adeˊ**   **a**   **joˊ**   **ìsẹˊ**
Ade   TM   eat   yam
'Ade ate yam'

b.   **Jijo**   **I Ade jo ìsẹˊ**
Nom-eat Rel Ade eat yam
'The eating Ade eat the yam'

(15)a   **bàbaˊ**   **a**   **da**   **ibata**
Father   TM   buy   shoe
'Father   bought a shoe'

b.   **Dida I bàbaˊda ibata**
Nom-buy Rel father buy shoe
'The buying the father bought the shoe'

(16)a   **Ojo**   **a**   **po**   **iyi**   **ojuwa**
Ojo   TM   kill   rat   two
'Ojo Killed two rats'

b.   **Pipo i Ojo po iyi ojuwa**

Nom-kill Rel kill rat two
The killing Ojo killed the two rats

(17)a **Ola   a   hun   oǵo**
Ola   TM   carry   oil
'Ola carried oil'

b. **Hihun   i Ola hun oǵo**
Nom-carry Rel Ola carry oil
'The carrying Ola carried the oil'

(18)a **Kunle   a   de′   okùbà**
Kunle   TM   steal   money
'Kunle Stole   money'

b**. Dide   i Kunle de′ okùbà**
Nom-steal Rel Kunle steal   money
'The stealing that Kunle Stole the money'

From the data in (14a-18a) above, we have the basic sentences from which examples (14b-18b) are derived. We observe that the verb is nominalized through reduplication and a copy of it remains in-situ. The nominalized verb is then followed by a relative marker 'i' which bears a mid tone. The nominalization of the verb is not strange as only the element with nominal feature can be relativized.

4.3 Relativisation in Uro

In Uro, similar to the happening in Arigidi, subject or object NP can be relativised. The subject NP relativisation is achieved by moving the element to be modified into the Spec RelP. There is no overt relative marker when the subject NP is relativised. On the other hand, when the object NP is relativized, the relative marker *'i'* with a mid tone is followed by the moved object NP. Consider the data below:

(19)a **Ade   a   dà   ẹsèjọ̀**
Ade   TM   buy   pepper
'Ade bought pepper'

b. **Ade   ø   dà   ẹsèjọ̀**
Ade   Rel   buy   pepper
'Ade who bought pepper'

c. **ẹsèjọ̀ i Ade dà**
Pepper Rel Ade buy
'The pepper that Ade bought'

(20)a **Arań   a   ju   ìsi**
Goat   TM   eat   yam
'Goat ate the yam'

b. **Arań   ø   ju   ìsi**
Goat   Rel   eat   yam
'The Goat who ate the yam'

c. **Ìsi   i   Arań   ju**
Yam Rel goat   eat
The yam which the goat ate

(21)a. **Ojo   a   gòó   ọ̀gọ̀gọ**
Ojo TM see   tortoise
'Ojo saw tortoise'

b. **Ojo   ø   gòó   ọ̀gọ̀gọ**
Ojo   Rel   see   tortoise
'Ojo who saw the tortoise'

c. **ọ̀gọ̀gọ   i   Ojo   gòó**
Tortoise Rel   Ojo   see
'The tortoise which Ojo saw'

(22)a. **Ola   a   dà   ivéve**
Ola   TM   buy   food
'Ola bought food'

b. **Ola   ø   dà   ivéve**
Ola   Rel   buy   food
'Ola who bought the food'

c. **Ivéve   i   Ola   dà**
Food   Rel   Ola   buy
'The food that Ola bought'

(23)a **Úṣí   a   hu   áká**
Father   TM   kill   monkey

		'The father killed monkey'		
b.	**Úṣí**	**ø**	**kill**	**monkey**
	Father	Rel	kill	monkey
		'The father killed a monkey'		
c.	**Áká**	**I**	**Úṣí**	**hu**
	Monkey	Rel	father	kill
		'The monkey which the father killed'		

(24)a. **Bola** **a** **hún** **ogbówan**
Bola TM carry child
'Bola carried a child'

b. **Bola** **ø** **hún** **ogbówan**
Bola Relcarry ogboẃan
'Bola who carried child'

c. **Ogbówan** **i** **Bola** **hún**
Child Rel Bola carry
'The child whom the man carried'

From the Uro data above, it is observed that when the subject NP is relativized as seen in (19b-24b), there is no overt relative marker. However, when the object NP is relativized as seen in (19c-24c), the relative marker '*i*' is inserted. Furthermore, unlike Yoruba, the moved subject NP does not drop any phonetic element at its extraction site. Other observation in the Uro data is the fact that the tense marker 'a' in the basic sentence (19a-24a) is not realized in the derived sentences in (19b-24b).

4.4 Verb Relativisation in Uro

As in the case of Arigidi, it is also observed that the verbs can also be relativised in Uro, such verb is reduplicated and a copy is left at the in-situ. Verb phrase movement takes place when a verb moves to the position of a noun as the subject of the sentence. In Uro, as in the case of Arigidi, the verb of the basic sentence is also nominalized through reduplication process. Consider the following examples:

(26)a **Ade** **a** **dà** **ẹsẹ̀jọ̀**
Ade TM buy pepper
'Ade bought pepper'

b. **Dida** **i** **Ade** **dà** **ẹsẹ̀jọ̀**
Nom-buy Rel Ade buy pepper
'The buying that Ade bought the pepper'?

(27)a **Arań** **a** **ju** **ìsi**
Goat TM eat yam
'Goat ate the yam'

b. **Jiju** **i** **Arań** **ju** **ìsi**
Eat-Nom Rel Goat eat yam
'The eating that the Goat ate the yam'?

(28)a. **Ojo** **a** **gòó** **ọ̀gọ̀gọ**
Ojo TM see tortoise
'Ojo saw tortoise'

b. **Gigó** **i** **Ojo** **gòó** **ọ̀gọ̀gọ**
See-Nom Rel Ojo see tortoise
'The seeing Ojo saw the tortoise'

a. **Ola** **a** **dà** **ivéve**
Ola TM buy food
'Ola bought food'

b. **Didà** **i** **Ola** **dà** **ivéve**
Nom-Buy Ola buy food
'Buying that Ola bought the food'

(29)a **Úṣí** **a** **hu** **áká**
Father TM kill monkey
'The father killed monkey'

b. **Hihu** **i** **Úṣí** **kill** **monkey**
Killing Rel Father kill monkey
'The killing the father killed a monkey'

(30)a. **Bola** **a** **hún** **ogbówan**
Bola TM carry child
'Bola carried a child'

b. **Hihun** **i** **Bola** **hún** **ogbówan**
Nom-carry Rel Bola carry ogboẃan

'the carrying   that Bola carried the child'

From examples in (26a-30a) above, we have the basic sentences from which examples (26b-30b) are derived. We observe that the verb is nominalized and a copy of it remains in-situ. The nominalized verb is then followed by a relative marker 'i' which bears a mid tone.

5. DISCUSSION

In the presentation above, we observe that the processes of relativisation in Uro and Arigidi are similar. Subject, Object NPs and verbs can be relativized in both speech forms. None of the two lects has an overt relative marker when the subject NP is being relativized. The relativisation of the object NP in both lects, involves overt relative marker 'i'. Unlike Yoruba which drops a resumptive pronoun when the subject NP is being moved, no element is dropped at the extraction site of the moved NP either subject or object NP in Uro and Arigidi. The tense marker (TM) which usually occurs in basic clause is not overt in a relative clause. The observations above attest to the relationship that exists between the two language varieties. Based on the evidence of affinities between them, one may claim that the speech forms originated from a common source.

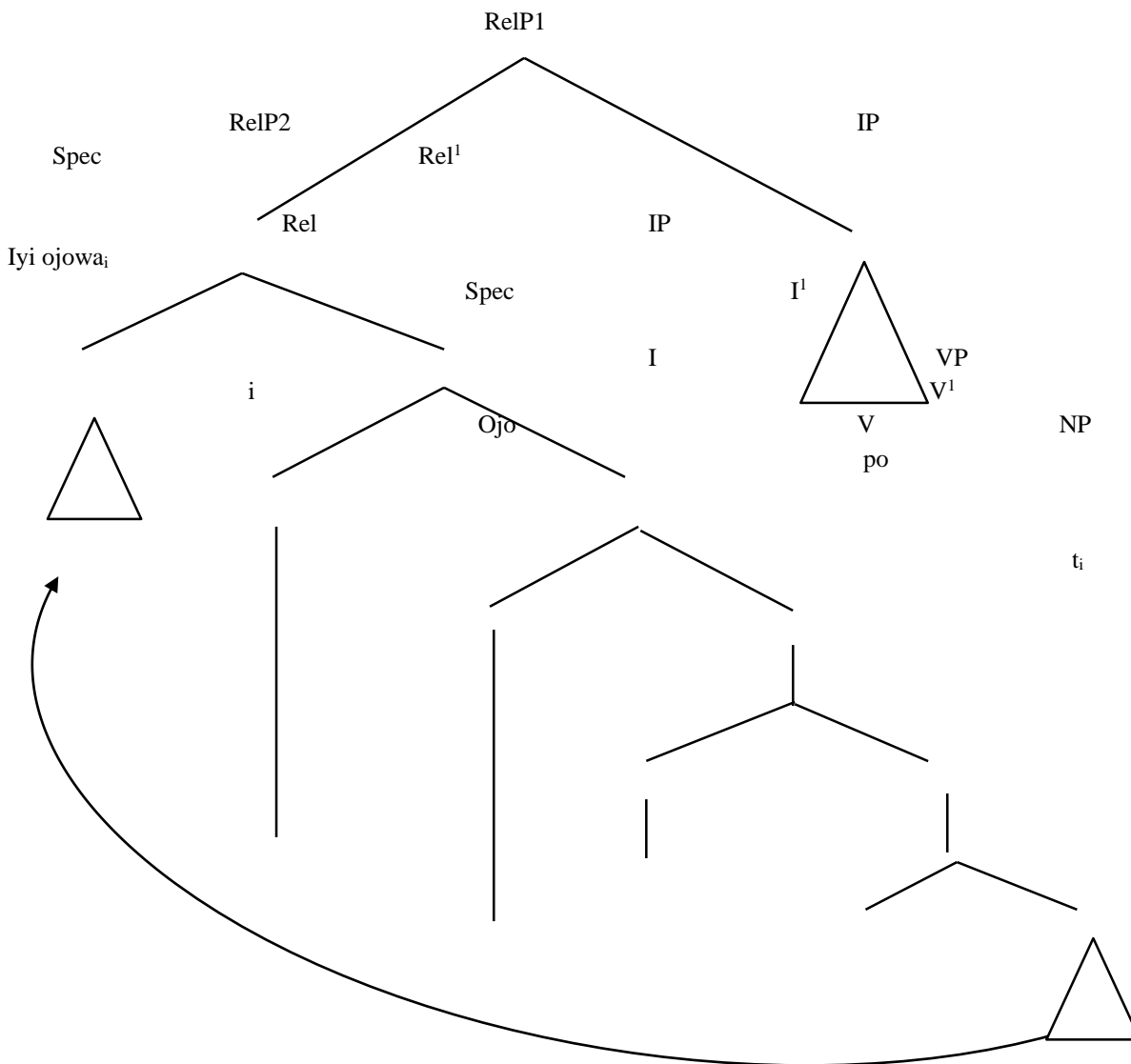### 5.1 Derivation of Relativisation in Uro and Arigidi.

Within the x-bar framework, the following derivations are made of the relativisation processes in the two dialects:

i. **Subject NP**: Spec IP is moved to Spec RelP. It is immediately followed by a null relative marker. Its extraction site is left empty. Consider the tree diagram below.
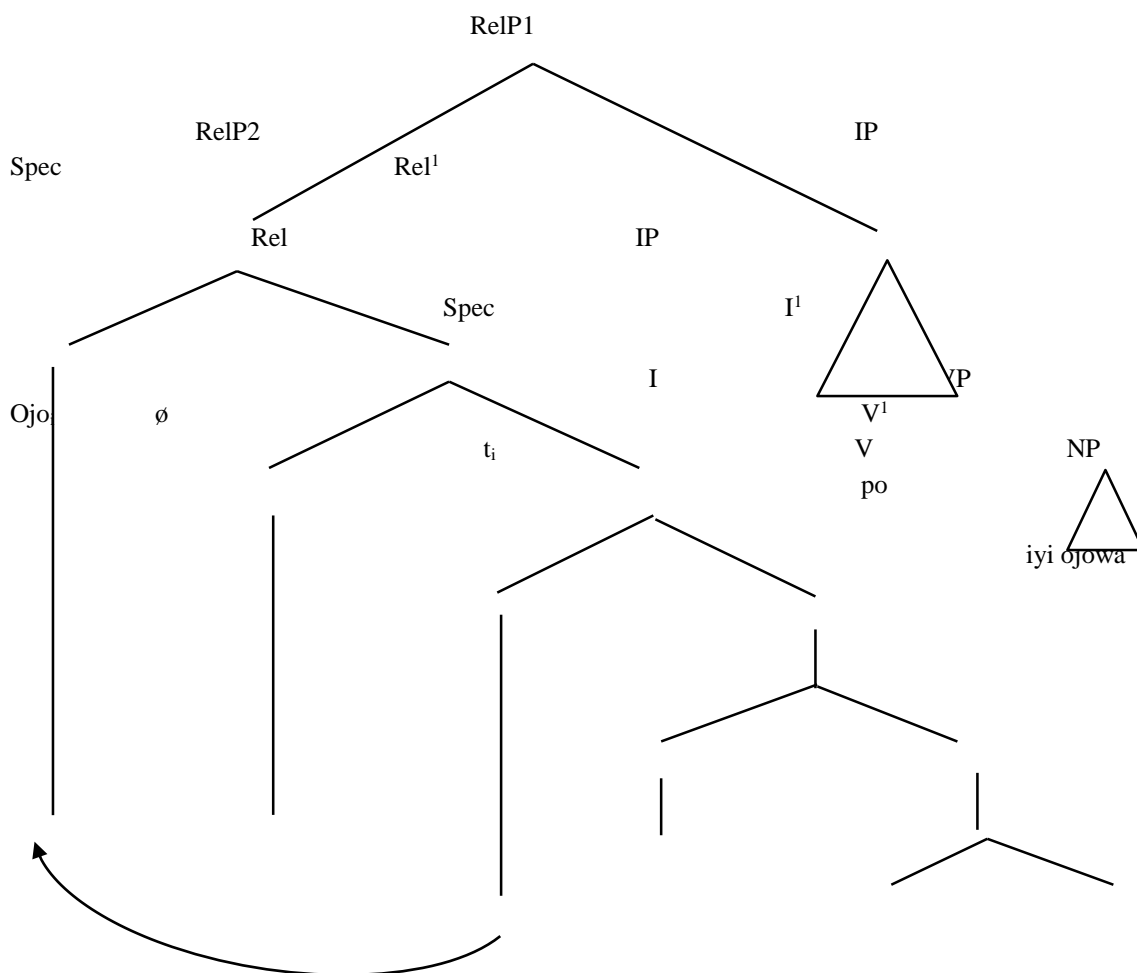

Ojo   po   iyi   ojuwa

'Ojo who killed two rats' (see 10b)

ii. **Object NP:** the object NP is moved to the Spec RelP. It is linearly followed by a relative   marker (Rel). Extraction site is left empty. Consider the tree diagram below.

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RelP1

RelP2   IP

Spec   Rel¹

Rel   IP   I¹

Iyi ojowa_i   Spec   I   VP V¹

i   V   NP

Ojo   po

t_i

Iyi   Ojuwa i   Ojo   po
   'The two rats that Ojo killed' (see 10c)

iii. **The Verb**: The verb is copied, nominalized and moved to Spec Relp. It is linearly followed   by a relative marker (Rel). The copy of the verb remains in-situ. Consider the derivation   below.
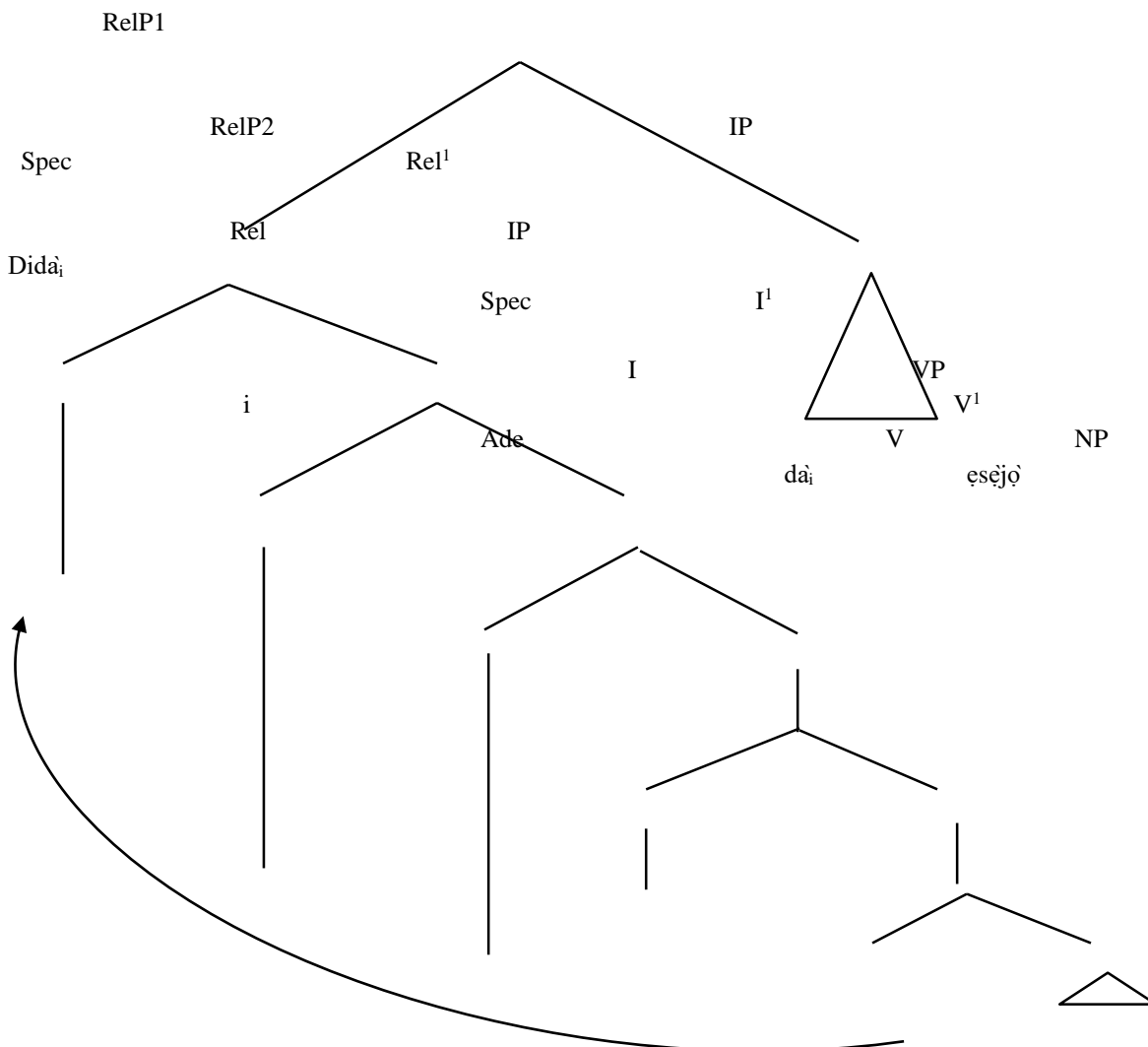
Dida   i   Ade   dà   ẹsẹ̀jọ̀
    'The buying that Ade bought the pepper'? (see 26b)

6. CONCLUSION
This work examined relativisation of subject, object NP and Verbs with relevant data drawn from the two speech forms under study. The paper observed that no overt relative marker when the subject NP is being relativized but when the Object NP is relativized, the relative marker *'i'* is introduced. When verbal element is relativized, the verb is copied and nominalized through reduplication. The tense marker (TM), a preverbal element which occurs in a basic sentence is not overt in the relativized clause. The reason for this requires further research. This study attests to the relationship that exists between Uro and Arigidi lects of Akokoid dialect clusters.

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