On the syntactic distribution and morphological form of resumptive pronouns in Esan

Nicholas Rolle

Supervisor: Keren Rice
Second Reader: Diane Massam

Forum paper submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts
Graduate Department of Linguistics
University of Toronto

Abstract

I argue in this paper that in Esan (ISH) [Edoid, Benue-Congo, Niger-Congo: Nigeria], the co-indexed pronouns in constructions such as the following represent resumptive pronouns.

(a) Post-nominal pronoun construction (PNPC):

Mẹ$_i$	***ọ$_i$***	*rẹ*	*khian*	*giẹgie*	*do*	*igho*	*mu*
1.SG	**3.SG**	although	FUT	quickly	steal	money	carry
bhi	*ibank*						
LOC	bank						

"I was going to quickly steal money from the bank, (but...)"

(b) Relative clause (RC):

eni	*awa$_i$*	[*ni*	***e$_i$***	*kpọlọ*]	[*ni*	***e$_i$***	*mọnsẹ*]	
DEF.PL	dog	REL	**3.PL**	be big	REL	**3.PL**	be beautiful	
[*ni*	***e$_i$***	*gian*]						
REL	**3.PL**	be red						

"the beautiful big red dogs"

In the constructions above, a pronoun is found in a lower clause, following a nominal with which it is co-referential. This pronoun is invariably third person, whose semantic contribution is not apparent.

Starting from such data, this investigation has two main goals: (1) a basic description of personal pronouns and resumptive pronouns (RPs), and (2) an analysis of the syntactic distribution and morphological form of these resumptive pronouns. In the analysis, I argue that resumptive pronouns are true nominal arguments and not a manifestation of a predicational agreement system (i.e. an agreement marker). Evidence for this comes from (1) the pronoun is not obligatory in all finite clauses which would be highly anomalous if it were a part of any verbal conjugation, (2) a contrast between a full/strong form and a reduced/weak form of a pronoun is still available, and (3) in post-nominal pronoun constructions, for some speakers the resumptive pronoun provides an implication of particular attention given to the co-referential nominal, suggesting topicalization. Topicalization is also suggested from the left peripheral position of the co-indexed nominal (Rizzi 1997, Ermisch 2007). I formalize this evidence in a series of diagnostics, using the related Edoid language Ivie, which manifests an agreement system, as a basis for comparison (Emuekpere-Masagbor 1997).

After establishing these pronouns as arguments rather than agreement markers, I argue that they occur when a nominal is extracted from subject position (i.e. spec-IP) to a position in a higher clause (e.g. spec-TopP), such as in a post-nominal pronoun construction (a type of topicalization) or in a relative clause, leaving a trace (Chomsky 1995). This movement creates an A-bar chain between the extracted nominal and its trace (Cinque 1990). When this trace is in subject position, it is realized as a co-indexed resumptive pronoun (i.e. an overt trace; Koopman & Sportiche 1986), resulting from a structural subject requirement. I formalize this requirement as a particularly strong manifestation of the Extended Projection Principle (*à la* Chomsky 1995: 232; Adesola 2005: 102). This structural subject requirement is corroborated by independent

evidence in the language against a phonologically empty subject position including (1) a lack of *pro*-drop (2), the use of expletives and dummy subjects, (3) the presence of an impersonal subject in negative imperatives, and (4) the raising of objects to subject position in certain causative/existential clauses involving *ri bhi* 'to put at/to be at'.

The form of the resumptive pronoun is dependent upon the morphosyntactic featural composition of the topic with which it is referential. It is shown that *only* third person plural nominals are co-referential with *e* 'they'. All other nominal or pronominal topics co-occur with singular *ọ* 'he/she/it', including seemingly plural *mhan* 'we' and *bha* 'you$_{pl}$' (e.g. ***Bha$_i$ ọ$_i$ gbikhiẹn*** "**You(all)$_i$ he$_i$** did dance"). I argue that this distribution falls out from the feature geometry of the pronominal inventory (following Harley & Ritter 2002, among others). Under the [Number] feature node, non-singular pronouns *mhan* 'we' and *bha* 'you$_{pl}$' are specified as [Mass], whereas non-singular pronoun *e* 'they', as well as plural nominals, are specified as [Group]. This division will ensure that *e* 'they' resumes only the position of those nominals extracted from subject position with the feature [Group], i.e. plural nominals. Because *mhan* and *bha* do not have this feature, they are therefore resumed with the most unspecified default form *ọ* 3.SG. The insertion of the form of the resumptive pronoun is formalized under the constraints of distributed morphology (DM) (Halle & Marantz 1993). Such an approach "ensures that the Vocabulary item that matches the most features of the node will be inserted" and that a pronoun may be "underspecified for the morpho-syntactic feature complexes that they realize" (Halle & Marantz 1993: 121-122).

Finally, I discuss why resumptive pronouns in Esan are invariably third person, that is, why there is feature matching with respect to number but not for person, and how this compares to feature matching in resumption viewed cross-linguistically. Crucially, if we understand these resumptive pronouns as spelling out the syntax, then it entails that there are no [Person] features present in the trace position left by the extracted nominal, otherwise they would be pronounced. This suggests that in Esan, extraction/movement of a nominal neutralizes any person specification (i.e. all extracted nominals are treated as third-person).

Abbreviations

Glossing used in Esan data:

.	portmanteau morpheme marker	(e.g. *eni* DEF.PL 'the' ~ 'the$_{PL}$')
-	inter-word morpheme boundary marker	(e.g. *gh-ọ* ASSOC-3.SG)
1	'first person'	
2	'second person'	
3	'third person'	
ASSOC	'associative marker'	(*gh-*)
CAUS	'causitive'	(*ri*)
CONT	'continuous'	(*a* ~ *gha* 'habitually, progressively')
COP	'copula'	(e.g. *khin* 'to be')
CPM	'change of place marker'	((-)*re*)
CSQ	'consequential marker'	(*ghi* ~ *ki* 'and then...')
DEF	'definite'	(e.g. *eni* 'the' ~ 'the$_{PL}$')
DIR	'directive'	(*na* 'to, for')
DIST	'distal'	(e.g. *-ni* 'that, those')
EVT	'eventive'	(*na* 'then')
EXHS	'exhaustive'	(*a* 'completely, fully')
EXP	'experiencer augment'	(*da* 'make s.o. experience s.t.')
F	'full form'	
FUT	'future'	(*khian* 'will')
GEN	'generic (pronominal)'	
INT	'intransitive'	
IRR	'irrealis'	(e.g. (*gh*)*a* 'if')
LOC	'locative preposition'	(*bhi* 'in, on, at, out, from')
LOG	'logophoric'	(*ọbhọ* 'he himself')
MASS	'mass'	
NEG	'negation'	(e.g. *bha* 'not')
PAST	'past tense'	
PL	'plural'	
POSS	'possessive'	
PRES	'present tense'	
PRO	'pronominal'	
PROX	'proximal'	(e.g. *-na* 'this, these')
REDUP	'reduplication'	(e.g. *jaga-jaga* 'disorderly')
REL	'relativizer/complementizer'	(e.g. *ni* 'that')
SG	'singular'	
TRN	'transitive'	

Glossing used in non-Esan data:

AGR	'agreement'	Used in Kaakyi data
AM	'auxiliary marker'	Used in Isoko data
ASP	'aspect'	Used in Ivie data
Comp	'complementizer'	Used in Tashlhit Data
cong	'conjunction'	Used in Kaakyi data
dem	'demonstrative'	Used in Ewe data
FEM	'feminine'	Used in Lena data
foc	'focus'	Used in Ewe data
HAB	'habitual'	Used in Ewe data
irr	'irrealis'	Used in Edo data
M	'masculine gender'	Used in Modern Greek data
N	'neuter gender'	Used in Modern Greek data
NA	'subordination marker'	Used in Vata data
Part	'participle'	Used in Tashlhit Data
PASS	'passive voice'	Used in Modern Greek data
Pl	'plural'	Used in Tashlhit Data

PP	'progressive'	Used in Ivie data
pron	'pronoun'	Used in Ewe data
PST	'past tense'	Used in Ivie, Yẹkhee data
R	'resumptive pronoun'	Used in Vata data
s	'singular'	Used in Yoruba data
S	'strong pronoun form'	Used in Ivie data
SCM	'subject concord marker'	Used in Isoko data
sg	'singular'	Used in Ivie, Yẹkhee data
W	'weak pronoun form'	Used in Ivie data
WH	'WH-question particle'	Used in Vata data

Non-glossing abbreviations:

CP	'complement phrase'	
DM	'distributed morphology'	
E-M	'Emuekpere-Masagbor'	Author of Ivie dissertation
EPP	'Extended Projection Principle'	
IP	'inflectional phrase'	
PNPC	'post-nominal pronoun construction'	
RC	'relative clause'	
RP	'resumptive pronoun'	
T	'tense'	
TopP	'topic phrase'	
VP	'verb phrase'	

Acknowledgments

I would like to give a special thanks first to my supervisor, Keren Rice, who has helped me tremendously along the way as a linguist, and also to Diane Massam, Elizabeth Cowper, Isaac Gould, Ailís Cournane, Maria Kyriakaki, Chiara Frigeni, Derek Denis, the entire Department of Linguistics at the University of Toronto, the audience of the 41st Annual Conference on African Linguistics (ACAL2010), and many more for their excellent ideas and constructive criticism.

I also must mention the incredible support I have received from members of the Esan community (and the extended Nigerian one too). Many thanks to Irehobhude Iyioha, Barrister Omon Iyioha Sr., Omon Iyoiha Jr., & the entire Iyioha family; Prof. Ron Schaefer; Prof. Francis Egbokhare, Yinka Egbokhare & their family; Prof. Constantine Yuka & his family; H.R.H. Zaiki Anthony Ehizojie Abumere II, Mrs. Aituaje Abumere, & their family; H.R.H. Zaiki Agbonmere Ehizongie II & his family; Tony "Cracker" Akhiale; Philip Ogedegbe; Cyril Ayeobore; Joseph Asemewaien; Isedehi Isibor; Babatope Akinyemi; and Osas & Nneka(!). All support from the Universities of Ibadan and Benin, including the individuals within, has been invaluable.

In fact, to all those who have helped me along the way (family and friends too numerous to mention here entirely), I am extremely gracious and I truly thank you! I hope I have shown you my gratitude in full.

All errors within this paper are of course my own.

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION

This investigation has two main goals: (1) a basic description of personal pronouns and resumptive pronouns (RPs) in the Esan language (ISH)[1] [Edoid, Benue-Congo, Niger-Congo: Nigeria], and (2) an analysis and account of these resumptive pronouns. I argue that (1) resumptive pronouns are true nominal arguments and not a manifestation of a predicational agreement system, (2) resumptive pronouns in Esan occur when a nominal is extracted from subject position as a reflex of a constraint against (phonologically) null subjects, and (3) all resumptive pronouns are invariably third person, whose insertion depends upon the features of the nominal with which it is co-indexed.

1.1. Introduction to the data

In example (1.1), I illustrate what I argue as being a resumptive pronoun, occurring in what I call a post-nominal pronoun construction (PNPC), and a relative clause (RC):

(1.1) Resumptive pronouns:

(a) Post-nominal pronoun construction (PNPC):

Mẹ$_i$ ***ọ$_i$*** *rẹ khian giẹgie duigho mu bhibank...*

mẹ$_i$	***ọ$_i$***	*rẹ*	*khian*	*giẹgie*	*do*	*igho*	*mu*
1.SG	**3.SG**	although	FUT	quickly	steal	money	carry

bhi	*ibank*
LOC	bank

"I was going to quickly steal money from the bank, (but...)"[2]

[1] Language codes are from Lewis (Ed.)'s (2009) *Ethnologue*.

[2] The first line indicates the sentential form, after elision processes have taken place (see §2.4.1). The second line depicts the full forms of the words before elision.

(b) Relative clause (RC):

enawa$_i$ ***ne**$_i$ kpọlọ **ne**$_i$ mọnsẹ **ne**$_i$ gian*

eni	*awa*$_i$	[*ni*	***e**$_i$*	*kpọlọ*]	[*ni*	***e**$_i$*	*mọnsẹ*]
DEF.PL	dog	REL	**3.PL**	be big	REL	**3.PL**	be beautiful

[*ni* ***e**$_i$* *gian*]

REL **3.PL** be red

"the beautiful big red dogs"

(More lit.: the dogs that they are big that they are beautiful that they are red)

The post-nominal pronoun construction (PNPC) is used to indicate confirmation/declaration of something, often with a past tense implication. Relative clauses (RCs) are used to modify/specify a nominal *via* a full clause, and a pronoun is found within the relative clause referring back to the nominal in the matrix clause. In both cases, a pronoun is co-referential and co-indexed with the higher nominal, as indicated in bold above.

I classify such pronouns as resumptive pronouns, and show how they exhibit a number of interesting properties. The distribution of resumptive pronouns is highly restricted in both which pronouns may occur (i.e. the morphological form), and which syntactic locations trigger resumption (i.e. the syntactic distribution distribution). The resumptive pronoun is invariably a non-participant third person pronoun, even when this seemingly mismatches the person of the antecedent, such as in example (1.2a); no participant pronoun (i.e. first or second person) has been found acting as a resumptive pronoun. This holds for both PNPCs and RCs:

(1.2)

(a) PNPC:

Mẹ {***ọ***/*****mẹ***} *lọnnebe.*

mẹ	{***ọ***/*****mẹ***}	*lẹn*	*ọni*	*ebe*
1.SG	{**3.SG**/****1.SG**}	know	DEF	book

"I knew that book."

(b) RC[3]:

Mẹ {*n****ọ***/**n***imẹ***} *lọnnebe.*

mẹ	*ni*	{***ọ***/*****imẹ***}	*lẹn*	*ọni*	*ebe*
1.SG	REL	{**3.SG**/****1.SG.F**}	know	DEF	book

"I that knew that book."

In these examples, the co-indexed antecedent *mẹ* 1.SG co-occurs with the pronoun *ọ* 3.SG with which it only matches in number. Any co-occurrence with (*i*)*mẹ* 1.SG.(F), with which it would match for both person and number, is unattested for in the language. Moreover, in example (1.3) below, when the antecedent is first or second person plural, there is a seeming lack of matching for *both* person and number.

[3] The gloss F here stands for "full form", and not feminine. Esan pronouns have both a full and reduced form (see §4.1.1).

(1.3)

(a) First person plural:

Mhan$_i$ ***ọ$_i$*** *rẹ muhẹn gha gbikhien,...*

mhan$_i$	***ọ$_i$***	*rẹ*	*mu hẹn*	*gha*	*gbe*	*ikhien,...*
1.PL	**3.SG**	although	start	CONT	beat	dance

"We started off dancing,..."

(b) Second person plural:

Bha$_i$ ***ọ$_i$*** *gbinletter.*

bha$_i$	***ọ$_i$***	*gbẹn*	*iletter*
2.PL	**3.SG**	write	letter

"You$_{pl}$ write letters."

In terms of which syntactic positions require resumption, resumptive pronouns only occur in subject position, and not in direct or indirect object position, or as the object of a preposition. In these positions, there is a gap rather than a resumptive pronoun, as illustrated in the relative clause below.

(1.4)

(a) *izẹ nimẹ dẹ* **Ø**

izẹ	*ni*	*imẹ*	*dẹ*	**Ø**
rice	REL	1.SG	buy	**Ø**

"rice that I bought"

(b) ***izẹ nimẹ dọ***

izẹ	*ni*	*imẹ*	*dẹ*	***ọ***
rice	REL	1.SG	buy	**3.SG**

for "rice that I bought"

If we also take into account the occurrence of non-referential and/or non-specific pronouns in subject position, such as expletive constructions and negative imperatives (1.5-1.6), we discover that non-participant personal pronouns occur in a number of contexts in which their role and distribution requires explanation.

(1.5) Expletive:

Ọ *jabe enibhokhan ghọnghọn.*

ọ	*jabe*	*eni*	*ibhokhan*	*ghọnghọn*
3.SG	seem	DEF	child.PL	be happy.REDUP

"It seems the children are happy."

(1.6) Negative imperative:

A *yi gbọnnebe!*

a	*yi*	*gbẹn*	*ọni*	*ebe*
GEN.PRO	NEG.COP	write	DEF	letter

"Don't write the letter!" (Also: one doesn't (ever) or shouldn't ever write the letter / we shouldn't write the letter)

Thus, the main focus of this investigation is accounting for the distribution, role, and function of resumptive pronouns specifically, and non-participant pronouns generally, and how this ties into

larger aspects of Esan syntax. I primarily look at resumptive pronouns in PNPCs, and secondarily at those in relative clauses.

This inquiry leads to a number of questions. The first set of questions involves the distribution of the resumptive pronouns; these questions will become clearer as we proceed.

(1.7) Questions pertaining to syntactic distribution:

1. How do we determine whether these are true resumptive pronouns and not a predicational agreement system?
2. In which precise syntactic locations do resumptive pronouns surface in?
3. Why are resumptive pronouns only found in subject position?
4. Where does the difference in meaning between those clauses with a post-nominal pronoun and those without one derive from?
5. Can resumptive pronouns in PNPCs and those in RCs be united?

   I.e., what major differences are there between these?
6. What distinguishes resumptive pronouns from other pronoun usage (such as expletives)?

A second set of questions concerns the form of these pronouns, and include the following.

(1.8) Questions pertaining to pronoun form:

1. Why are resumptive pronouns invariably third person (i.e. lack of Person matching)?
2. Why do seemingly plural pronouns *mhan* 'we' and *bha* 'you$_{pl}$' co-occur with the singular resumptive pronoun *ọ* 3.SG, and not uniformly with *e* 3.PL?

3. What are the processes of number/person sharing at work here between these nominal elements?

I.e. how does nominal extraction affect the realization of person and number?

1.2. Overview of the analysis

The proposal which I put forward is that these pronouns are resumptive pronouns and not agreement markers. Evidence for this comes from the following facts:

(1.9) Diagnostics against agreement:

(1) The resumptive pronoun is not obligatory

Argument: agreement markers, if present, are *obligatorily* found on finite predicates

Example: *Ọmọn* {***Ø***/***ọ***} *khian khian.*

Ọmọn	{***Ø***/***ọ***}		*khian*	*khian.*
child	{**Ø**/**3.SG**}		FUT	walk

*"*The child {is about to/will} walk."

(2) Subject markers are not found in co-ordinated verb phrases

Argument: agreement manifests on each verb in co-ordination

Example: *Agbons dọniyan **Ø** dumhọnle*

Agbons	*de*	*ọni*	*iyan*	***Ø***	*dumhun*	*ọle*
Agbons	buy	DEF	yam	**Ø**	pound	3.SG.F

"Agbons bought the yam (and) **Ø** pounded it."

(3) Contrast in full versus reduced pronoun form is still available

Argument: agreement should not have a full (strong) versus reduced (weak) contrast

Example: *Agbons* {***ọ***/***ọle***} *kpọlọ le.*

Agbons	{***ọ***/***ọle***}	*kpọlọ le*
Agbons	{**3.SG**/**3.SG.F**}	be big surpass

"Agbons is bigger (than someone else)."

(4) Contribution of meaning from RPs (for some speakers)

Argument: presence versus lack of agreement should not correspond to different temporal-aspectual implications

Example: *Omon* ***ọ*** *kpoluwa.*

Omon ***ọ***	*kpolo uwa*
Omon **3.SG**	sweep house

"Omon **did (indeed)** sweep the house."

Having established that these pronouns are best considered resumptive pronouns, I argue that in the PNPC, the resumptive pronoun occurs in subject position and the co-referential nominal occurs in topic position. Evidence for this comes from that topic positions are cross-linguistically found in the left periphery (Rizzi 1997, Ermisch 2007), and that the difference in meaning between those clauses in Esan with a post-nominal pronoun and those without can most accurately be attributed to the topicalized position of the nominal.

I argue that the nominal in the topic position (spec-TopP) has moved from the subject position (spec-IP) where it has left a co-indexed trace. This movement creates an A-bar chain

(Cinque 1990) between the extracted nominal and its trace. The resultant trace is spelled out as a resumptive pronoun in subject environments (Koopman & Sportiche 1986), due to a strong structural subject requirement present in the language preventing phonologically null subjects. I formalize this subject requirement based on a strong version of the Extended Projection Principle (Chomsky 1995: 232; Adesola 2005: 102). Corroborating evidence for this subject requirement is found throughout the language, and includes the following:

(1.10) (1) Lack of PRO-drop:

(e.g ***(Mẹ)** *khian lọwe.* "***(I)** am going to sleep."),

(2a) Use of pronouns as expletives:

(e.g. ***Ọ** jabe...* "**It** seems (that)...")

(2b) Use of non-referential dummy *e* 'they':

(e.g. ***E** bha huẹnmọnnokpia.* "The man is disliked" (Lit.: they don't like the man))

(3) Presence of pronouns *a* 'one, we' and/or *ẹ* 'not he/she' in negative imperatives:

(e.g. ***Ẹ** gbọniletter!* "Don't write the letter")

(4) Movement of object to subject position in *ri bhi* 'to put at/to be at' constructions:

(e.g. [*Enebe ne khua*]$_i$ *ri* $\mathbf{t}_i$ *bhaga.* "There are heavy books on the chair")

These examples show that the absence of a phonologically overt subject is highly disfavored in Esan.

Further, resumptive pronouns in relative clauses are like resumptive pronouns in PNPCs in that they only occur in subject position, and are invariably third person despite the person of the co-indexed nominal. However, there are two crucial places where resumption differs structurally from that of PNPCs: (1) the relativizer *ni* REL 'that' is found between the coindexed nominals in RCs, not found in PNPCs, and (2) the resumptive pronoun in subject position RCs is optional for some speakers. A fuller comparison cannot be conducted at this time due to data pertaining to the relativization of first and second persons being unavailable (see §4.2.2.1).

With respect to the form of the resumptive pronoun, I argue that the form falls out from the featural specifications of the pronominal system. I use mostly data from post-nominal pronoun constructions in this chapter. Recall that *only* third person plural nominals co-occur with *e* 'they'; all other nominal or pronominal topics co-occur with singular *ọ* 'he/she/it', including seemingly plural *mhan* 'we' and *bha* 'you$_{PL}$' (e.g. ***Bha$_i$ ọ$_i$*** *gbikhiẹn* "**You(all)$_i$ he$_i$** did dance"; cf. **Bha* ***e*** *gbikhiẹn*). From this data, I argue that plural pronouns be split up between two featural designations: *mhan* 1.PL and *bha* 2.PL are encoded as [Mass], while *e* 3.PL encoded as [Group]. Because *mhan* and *bha* are designated as [Mass], a feature clash would incur if they were to co-occur with (i.e be resumed by) *e* 3.PL designated as [Group]. Instead a pronoun *ọ* 3.SG is found, which is underspecified for number. This is like other mass nouns in Esan, which pattern with singular rather than with plural nouns.

I configure the pronominal features within a feature geometry employing dominance and underspecification, stemming from ideas in Ritter & Harley (1998) and Harley & Ritter (2002). Further, I adopt a distributed morphology approach *à la* Halle & Marantz (1993) to account for the insertion of resumptive pronouns. Such an approach "ensures that the Vocabulary item that

matches the most features of the node will be inserted" and that a pronoun may be "underspecified for the morpho-syntactic feature complexes that they realize" (Halle & Marantz 1993: 121-122). This will allow for the mismatches of features seen in the data above.

Finally, I discuss why resumptive pronouns in Esan are invariably third person. That is, why there is feature matching with respect to number but not for person, and how this compares to feature matching in resumption viewed cross-linguistically. Crucially, if we understand these resumptive pronouns as spelling out the syntax, then it entails that there are no [Person] features present in the trace position left by the extracted nominal, otherwise they would be pronounced. This suggests that in Esan, extraction/movement of a nominal neutralizes any person specification (i.e. all extracted nominals are treated as third-person).

1.3. Organization

This paper is organized as follows. I first present background in chapter 2 on the Esan language in order to situate the reader. In chapter 3, I provide an introduction to the relevant theoretical background pertaining to personal pronouns in general, showing pronouns to be a manifestation of a reference tracking system which has a strictly grammatical function of assigning speech roles to entities in a discourse.

Chapter 4 provides a basic description of the Esan pronominal system. This includes a description of pronominal usage in multiple syntactic contexts (e.g. subject, object, possessor, *etc*.), in impersonal contexts, and an in depth description of resumptive pronouns, the main objects of inquiry. This description acts as the first of its kind on the Esan language.

Chapter 5 presents the proposal summarized above. I first account for post-nominal pronoun constructions (§5.1), presenting the necessary diagnostics against an agreement

interpretation, motivating the topicalization and movement, resumption, and the structural subject requirement. This is followed by the additional corroborating evidence present in the language for this subject requirement. §5.2 discusses resumption in relative clauses, and §5.3 why resumptive pronouns should not be thought of as expletives.

In chapter 6, I illustrate the feature geometry of the Esan pronominal system, discussing a past controversy in the literature over the feature [Number], and how it relates to the current Esan data. I then illustrate how this feature geometry dictates the form of the resumptive pronoun, ending with a discussion of the lack of [Person] feature, and what this entails.

Chapter 7 completes this study, providing a conclusion and raising two residual issues in need of further investigation: (1) a need to situate resumptive pronouns within the larger Edoid family of which Esan belong, and (2) a need to account for variation in the realization of resumptive pronouns between and within speakers.

2. BACKGROUND ON ESAN

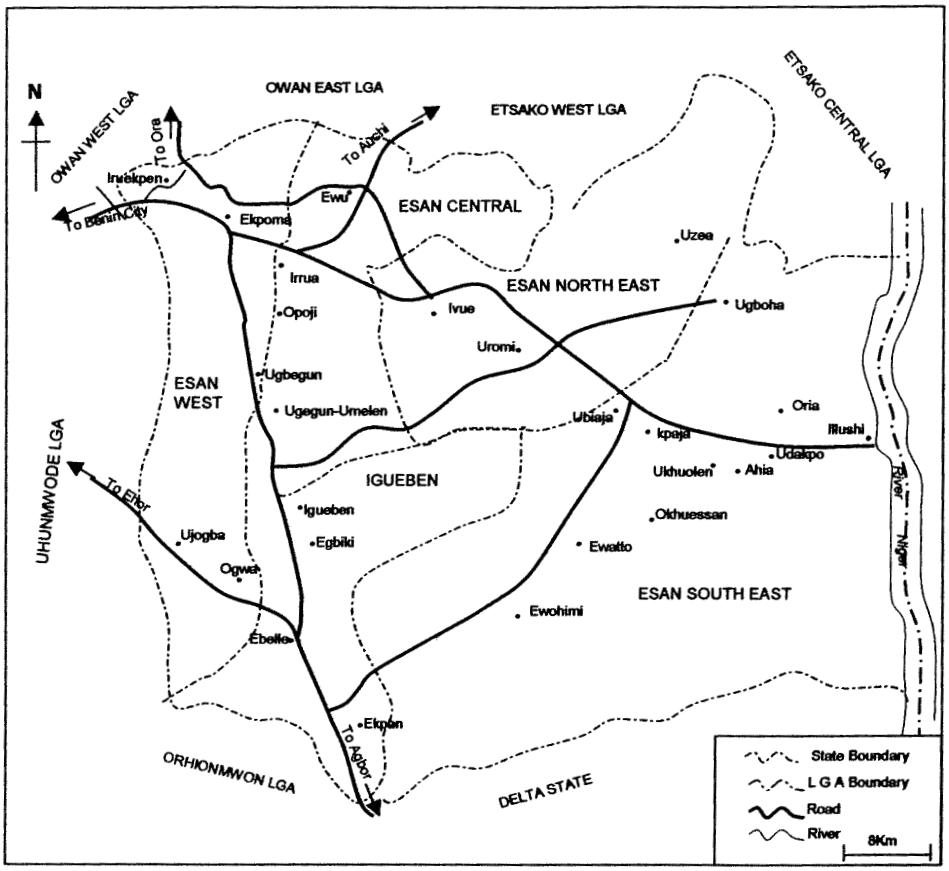
This chapter provides background on the Esan language. This overview includes (1) information on the location and population of Esan, (2) genetic classification and dialect complexities, (3) methods and sources for data compilation (4) an overview of the sound system, and (5) an overview of canonical Esan word order and the syntactic system.

2.1. Location and population

There are roughly 200,000 to 500,000 speakers of Esan (Okojie & Ejele 1987, Lewis 2009), though figures vary depending on the source, and accurate demographic measurements are lacking. Esan populations are concentrated within the South-south geopolitical zone of Nigeria, within five Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Edo State (Webster and Ogbomo 1997: 345). A map is provided in figure 1[4].

[4] I am indebted to Evarista O. Osiruemu and the Department of Linguistics and African Languages, University of Benin, Nigeria for the use of this map outlining Esanland.

FIGURE 1 : ESAN LAND AND ITS ENVIRONS



(Map from E.O. Osiruemu)

2.2. Genetic classification

The Esan language is classified as belonging to the Edoid stock in the Benue-Congo family (West Benue-Congo under Williamson & Blench 2000: 31). Like most Southern Nigerian languages, it is considered to belong to the Niger-Congo phylum. A diagram is provided below, from Lewis (2009).

Figure 2: Genetic classification

Niger-Congo
Atlantic Congo
Volta Congo
Benue-Congo
Edoid
North-Central
Edo-Esan-Ora
Edo
Emai-Iuleha-Ora
Esan
Ibilo

The term 'Esan' represents more of a political unity than a strict linguistic/genetic/ historical one. This is because the 'Esan' people do not constitute a single history, although they can all be considered Edoid. Different Edoid people and clans began to leave the Edo-speaking Benin Kingdom in the 15th Century, fleeing the reign of Oba Ewuare (Okoduwa 2001: 219). This exodus continued for many hundreds of years, settling in different areas in the periphery of the Benin Kingdom area. Thus, the Esan dialects each stem from a common Edo language, and have developed both in parallel and under influence from one another in Esanland. There are between 25-40 dialects of Esan, ranging in terms of mutual intelligibility across Esanland. The primary dialect used in this investigation is the Ogwa dialect, spoken in the southern region of the Esan West Local Government Area (LGA) of Esanland.

2.3. Data compilation

Data for this project was compiled through two main sources: (1) work with 1 Ogwa speaker, and 3 speakers of additional Esan dialects within the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), and (2) work with 5 Ogwa speakers in Nigeria during the 2009 summer[5]. The data gathered within

[5] Speakers of additional dialects were consulted as well, though the Ogwa dialect was used primarily in order to promote a uniformity of description.

the GTA were conducted by students of a 2006/2007 JAL401 Field Methods course and subsequent independent studies at the University of Toronto[6]. Data collection in Nigeria was conducted by the author.

Secondary sources on Esan were also consulted. These include Okojie & Ejele (1987), Elugbe (1989a, 1989b), Ejele (2000a, 2000b, 2002), Odiagbe (2004), Okojie (ms.), and Osiruemu (ms.). Data from these secondary sources are cited as such; all non-cited data is from source (1) or (2) above.

2.4. Overview of the phonology

Table 1 presents the consonant inventory of Ogwa Esan using International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) symbols. The Esan orthographic equivalent is in parentheses where different from the IPA symbol. Figure 3 presents the vowel space and contrastive phonemes.

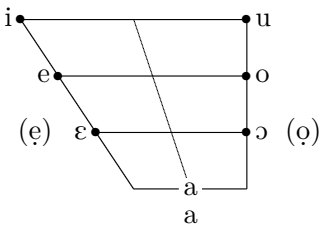
Table 1: Consonants of Esan[7]

	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Alveolar	Post-alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal[B]	Labio-velar
Plosive	p b		t d			k g		k͡p g͡b
Nasal	m		n					
Fricative		f v	s z	ʃ (si)[C]		x (kh)		
Affricate				ʧ (ch)[D] ʤ (j, g)				
Approximant	β (bh)		l		j (i, y)	ɣ (gh)	h	w (u, w)
Rhotic			ɹ (r)					

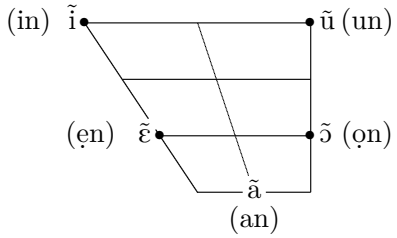
[6] This course spawned the formation of the "The Toronto Esan Grammar Project" at the University of Toronto, with co-researchers Keren Rice and Ireh Iyioha. Other members of this project have included or currently include Miles Kenyon, Kyumin Kim, Annat Koren, Emma Lawson, Andy Lin, Christina Marshall, Alice Meyers, Janette Quintero, Milica Radišić, and Cathleen Waters.

[7] The nasalized allophone of <bh> ([β̃]) is written as <mh>.

Figure 3: Vowels of Esan



(a) Oral vowels in Esan.



(b) Nasal vowels in Esan.

Esan has at least two contrastive tones high (H) and low (L). Nouns exhibit inherent tonal specification, though verbs do not. Tone in Esan is not as lexically important as in other West African languages (i.e. Yoruba). Grammatically however, Esan maintains tonal patterns which distinguish declarative from interrogative sentences, affirmative from negative sentences, and past from present (non-past) tenses.

2.5. Overview of the syntax

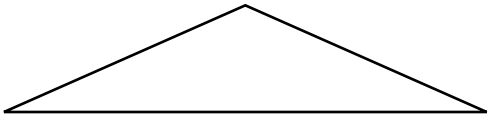
Esan maintains a fairly rigid, configurational SVO word order, although objects may be focused and placed at a left peripheral position. Constituents generally are head-initial, and there is very little morphology in the language. This analytic structure corresponds to a number of independent functional and lexical positions within the Esan syntax, which are syntactically independent from one another. A basic outline of the word order is provided below[8, 9]:

[8] "Verb - obj. - verb - obj." represents a serial verb construction.

[9] The precise cartography of these TAM markers is more complex then this schema presents, though this acts as a starting point for understanding the language. Further work is needed within this middle field of the syntax, though will not be explored at present. Further, the distribution of adverbs is more complex than this schema presents.

(2.1) Clause structure:

nominal - pronoun - V.M. - adverb - continuous - verb - obj. - verb - obj. - adjunct



Verbal Markers (Tense/Aspect/Polarity/Realis):

pre-verbal markers | irrealis | negation | future

Example (2.2) illustrates this structure.

(2.2) *Mẹ ọ rẹ khian gịẹgie duigho mu bhibank...*

mẹ	*ọ*	*rẹ*	*khian*	*gịẹgie*	*do*	*igho*	*mu*	*bhi*	*ibank*
1.SG	3.SG	alreadyFUT		quickly	steal	money	carry	LOC	bank

"I was going to quickly steal money from the bank, (but...)"

In addition to the verb-object clause order, head-initial constituent structure correlates with a cluster of additional phenomena, including: (1) prepositions, (2) pre-determiners, (3) post-relativization and modification, (4) head initial noun-noun compounds, (5) post-verbal particles, among others.

(2.3) Head initial stucture:

(a) Prepositions:

bh*aga* [**aga bhi*]

bhi *aga*

LOC chair

"on/at (the) chair"

(b) Pre-determiners:

ọn*aga* [**aga ọni*]

ọni *aga*

DEF chair

"the chair"

(c) Post-relativization:

ọnokhuo ***n****ọnokpia mu ọnawa na*

ọni	*okhuo*	[***ni***	*ọni*	*okpia*	*mu*	*ọni*	*awa*	*na*]
DEF	woman	**REL**	DEF	man	carry	DEF	dog	DIR

"the woman [that the man gave the dog to]"

(d) Head initial noun-noun compounds:

umhẹn 'salt' + *ebo* 'white man' = ***umhen****bo* 'sugar'

(e) Post-verbal particles:

Mẹ ka nehẹn ***a****.*

mẹ	*ka*	*ọni*	*ehẹn*	***a***
1.SG	dry	DEF	fish	**EXHS**

"I dried the fish up (completely)"

Esan contains very little morphologically complex word units. This impoverishment includes (1) no inflectional agreement or concord, (2) no case or (theta) role marking, and (3) no (synchronically active) noun class system. This morphological impoverishment will be discussed again in §5.1.1, in which I argue against any agreement system present in Esan.

3. BACKGROUND ON PERSONAL PRONOUNS

This chapter presents theoretical background on personal pronouns, including discussion as to their category, function, distribution, and theoretical importance. The chapter seeks to (1) provide an understanding of pronominal systems as reference tracking systems, and (2) present personal pronouns as purely grammatical, composed of *only* features.

3.1. Reference tracking system

Pronouns constitute a distinct category within most languages, exhibiting properties not shared by other lexical or grammatical items. This paper assumes that their distinct categorical status and distinguishing properties are a reflex of their function as speech role denotation objects in a reference tracking system (Bhat 2004, Déchaine & Wiltschko 2002).

The primary function of personal pronouns is the denotation of speech roles within a discourse or dialogue, distinct from the individuals who perform the roles (Bhat 2004: 30). In other words, personal pronouns do not uniquely co-refer to an entity in a discourse (establishing identity), but rather function to label these entities appropriate to their *speech role* in the discourse, establishing roles, actions, relations, etc. The establishment of identity is usually already achieved previous to the use of personal pronouns, resulting in the usual incompatibility (or at least markedness) of person pronouns with definite markers or modification[10]. [Though of course *indefinite* and/or *unspecified* pronominals/deictic objects do exist in natural language; see Haspelmath 2004 for a typology].

[10] This incompatibility is often interpreted by syntacticians as pronouns and determiners occurring in the same structural position, thus restricting any co-occurrence (Déchaine & Wiltschko 2002). See §3.2 below for further discussion.

Because the function of pronouns is primarily reference tracking, they are not contentful (Wiese & Simon 2002), and unlike nouns, "do not denote a [set] concept" (Panagiotidis 2002: 183). In this way, they transcend individual referential distinctions (cf. common animate nouns 'human' or proper names 'Emmanuel', which do *not* transcend such distinctions[11]), and can be best thought of as "shifters" (Bhat 2004: 31), a conceptualization which goes back at least as far as Jespersen (1924). Pronouns allow for a loose identification of the referent so as to allow the free "shifting" of different roles within the discourse of unique entities[12]. This is illustrated below with an English example:

(3.1) John$_i$: I$_i$'m hungry. Do you$_j$ want to eat?

Mary$_j$: I$_j$'m not hungry. You-guys$_{i\&k}$ go.

Paul$_k$: Well I$_k$ think you$_j$'d be a fool not to come.

John$_i$: He$_k$ didn't mean that!... Did you$_k$?

Thus, for instance, the basic English personal pronouns 'I' *shifts* in reference constantly throughout a discourse.

3.2. Personal pronouns as purely grammatical

The idea that personal pronouns act as shifters designating speech roles within a reference tracking system has an importance consequence for this current study: they are literally without meaning outside of discourse, i.e. the linguistic system. Bhat (2004: 40), quoting Benveniste (1971: 218), notes that personal pronouns analogous to 'I' do not maintain a reality outside of

[11] There *are* languages that have been claimed to not contain personal pronouns as distinct from nominals (e.g. Thai, Burmese, Japanese; refer to Bhat 2004: 30 and Panagiotidis 2002 for discussion). Esan does not pattern as one of these languages.

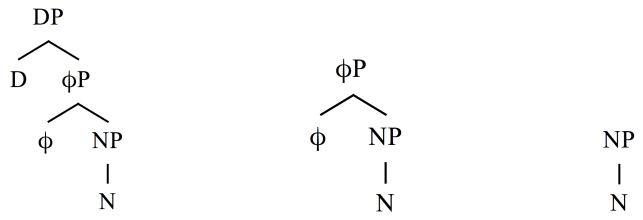
[12] Or in other words, "in order to indicate, consistently, the involvement of speech roles in an event or state, it is therefore necessary for personal pronouns to remain unaffected by changes that take place in their referents." (Bhat 2004:38).

discourse, and rather are highly abstract nominals. If we acknowledge this, then we can hypothesize that personal pronouns are composed of *purely* grammatical features, unlike lexical nominals which are not purely composed as such[13].

If we accept this, the question then becomes *which* features do Esan pronouns contain, and how do we justify this classification? Specifically, (1) which feature(s) do all pronouns share *as a group*, and (2) which feature(s) do pronouns have in order to distinguish each from the other? I begin with the idea that the label "pronoun" actually covers three different linguistic items, following Déchaine & Wiltschko's (2002) typology of pronouns. These three different structures are (1) PRO-DPs, (2) PRO-φPs, and (3) PRO-NPs, illustrated below.

(3.2)

(a) (b) (c)



(Déchaine & Wiltschko 2002: 410)

Crucially, all three types of "pronouns" contain an N head, and thus form a subclass of nominals, and are thus subject to featural specification particular to nominal elements. The former two types further contain a *phi*-phrase (φP) and encode *phi*-features, which are grammatical concepts related to number, person, and gender.

[13] Perhaps psycho-philosophical conceptualizations of "the ego" and "the other" form the non-linguistic underpinnings of personal pronouns, and therefore "I" and "you" *do* have meaning outside of a reference tracking system. I am not confident enough in my knowledge of this idea to pursue it further.

I argue within that Esan pronouns are manifestations of the DP [determiner phrase] type of (3.2a), and occur in D-head position, bearing a [+D] feature. This follows from Déchaine & Wiltschko (2002), Chomsky (1995: 232), and Adesola (2006: 2088), among others; I justify this claim in §5.1.4. Further, with respect to (2), I maintain that the Esan pronouns bear *phi*-features [Number] and [Person], related to the *phi*-head above, best construed within a feature geometry, bearing mutual exclusiveness and dominance (following, for instance, Clements & Hume 1995, Ritter & Harley 1998, Harley & Ritter 2002, Heap 2002, Cowper 2005). The feature geometry of Esan personal pronouns is provided below (see §6.3).

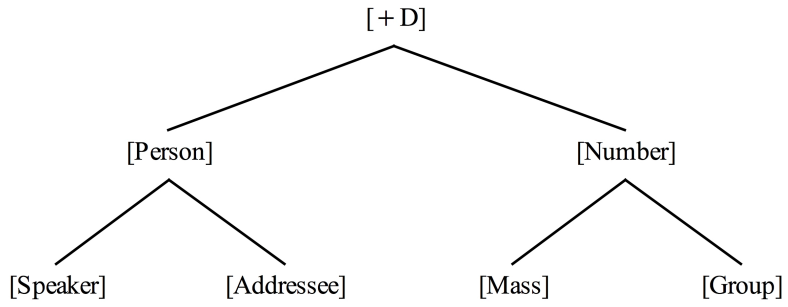


Figure 4: Esan feature geometry

These claims are justified in chapters 5 and 6 within. Before exploring this further, I present in chapter 4 the basic description of the Esan pronominal system, for reference in this paper, and for potential future work.

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE ESAN PRONOMINAL SYSTEM

This chapter presents a description of the Esan pronominal system. This includes an overview of pronominal usage in multiple syntactic contexts (such as subject, object, possessor, *etc.*) and the use of certain pronouns as impersonals. This chapter also includes a full layout of resumptive pronouns, the main objects of inquiry. Although not all components of this description are specifically relevant to accounting for the occurrence and distribution of resumptive pronouns in Esan, I have included them regardless in order to provide a comprehensive and well-rounded description, and further, to allow for their use as reference for future work on Esan.

4.1. Ordinary pronoun use

This section presents pronouns in their most common use: in argument positions referring to some entity relevant to the discourse. Pronouns in Esan are encoded for person (first, second or third) and number (singular or plural). These pronouns may surface as two different forms, a full form and a reduced form. An analogous distinction is common in descriptions and analyses of West African languages, and is discussed by a number of authors under different names: strong or independent versus weak or deficient pronouns in Ivie (Emuekpere-Masagbor 1997), strong versus weak forms in Yoruba (Adesola 2006: 2071), strong versus weak pronouns in Kaakyi (Agbedor & Adonae 2005: 98), among others. Pronouns are not inflected for any other grammatical information, such as case (cf. English 'he/him/his'), or gender (cf. English 'he/she/it'). A table is presented below which exemplifies the pronoun paradigm (repeated from table 2 above).

English	Full form	Gloss	Reduced form	Gloss
‘I/me’	*imẹ*	1.SG.F	*mẹ, i*	1.SG
‘you$_{sg}$’	*uwẹ*	2.SG.F	*wẹ*	2.SG
‘he/she/it/him/her’	*ọle ~ ọe ~ (? e)*	3.SG.F	*ọ*	3.SG
‘he himself/she herself’	*ọbhọ*	LOG	–	–
‘one’	–	–	*a*	GEN.PRO
‘we/us’	*imhan*	1.PL.F	*mhan ~ mhain*	1.PL
‘you$_{pl}$’	*ibha ~ ubha*	2.PL.F	*bha*	2.PL
‘they/them’	*iyain, ele*	3.PL.F	*e*	3.PL
‘not him/her/one/you/them’	–	–	*ẹ*	PRO.NEG

Table 2: Esan personal pronouns

With regard to the forms separated by a comma in Table 2, the first of these forms *mẹ* 1.SG and *iyain* 3.PL.F is the form used most commonly in the Ogwa dialect. Those forms separated by a tilde are variants of the same form in Ogwa.

§4.1.1 lays out how full and reduced forms occur in various syntactic contexts, and §4.1.2 lays out impersonal pronominal reference (involving *e* 3.PL ‘they’, *a* GEN.PRO ‘one’, or *ọria* ‘someone/person’). I do not discuss the logophor *ọbhọ* (which is used only variably by Ogwa speakers), possessive pronouns, reflexives, and reciprocals. The negational pronoun *ẹ* NEG.PRO ‘not it/he/she/they/we’ is discussed in §4.2.1.5.

4.1.1. Full vs. reduced forms

The use of the full versus the reduced form is dependent upon a number of semantic, syntactic, phonological, and discourse-specific contexts. Generally, the full form is used as an

emphatic, as the complements of verbs, with phonologically reduced function words, with the reflexive marker *egb(e)-* '-self', and in possessive relative clauses. The reduced form is used in all other contexts. Below, I discuss full and reduced forms in (1) subject position, (2) object position, (3) following function words, and (4) in (near) isolation. The form does not change depending on the grammatical role.

4.1.1.1. In subject position

The reduced form is the most common form found in subject position. The full form, when used in subject position, is used to convey emphasis on the subject.

(4.1)

(a) Reduced:

Mẹ *dizẹ.*

mẹ *dẹ* *izẹ*

1.SG buy rice

"I bought rice."

(b) Full:

Imẹ *dizẹ.*

imẹ *dẹ* *izẹ*

1.SG.F buy rice

"*I* bought rice." (as opposed to someone else)

(4.2)

(a) Reduced:

*Ọnokpia nọ yẹki nodẹ **ọ** yinzẹ.*

ọni	*okpia*	*ni*	*ọ*	*yo*	*ẹki*	*inodẹ*	***ọ***	*yẹn*
DEF	man	REL	3.SG	go	market	yesterday	**3.SG**	cook

izẹ

rice

"The man who went to the market yesterday is cooking rice."

(b) Full:

*Ọnokpia nọ yẹki nodẹ **ọle** yinzẹ.*

ọni	*okpia*	*ni*	*ọ*	*yo*	*ẹki*	*inodẹ*	***ọle***	*yẹn*
DEF	man	REL	3.SG	go	market	yesterday	**3.SG.F**	cook

izẹ

rice

"The man who went to the market yesterday is *the one who* is cooking rice."

(4.3) Full:

*Agbons **ọle** kpọlọ le.*

Agbons	***ọle***	*kpọlọ*	*le*
Agbons	**3.SG.F**	be big	surpass

"Agbons *he* is bigger (than someone else)."

The full forms are used above to emphasize that a particular person is in mind who has performed the action, and not some other actor in the context.

4.1.1.2. In object position

The form of the pronoun in object position depends on the dialect. In Ogwa, reduced pronoun forms are disallowed from occurring in any object position (with the exception of *ọ* 3.SG 'he/she/it'; see below). This includes the direct or indirect object position (complement of a verb), and the object of a preposition (complement of a preposition).

(4.4)

(a) Full:

*Ivie ded**imẹ**.*

*Ivie dede **imẹ***

Ivie hug **1.SG.F**

"Ivie hugs me."

(b) Reduced:

***Ivie dede **mẹ**.*

*Ivie dede **mẹ***

Ivie hug **1.SG**

for "Ivie hugs me."

(4.5)

(a) Full:

*Mẹ y**inyain***.

mẹ *yẹn* ***iyain***

1.SG cook **3.PL.F**

“I cooked them.”

(b) Reduced:

Mẹ y**en.

mẹ *yẹn* ***e***

1.SG cook **3.PL**

for “I cooked them.”

In other dialects, the use of the reduced form is permitted, and often times favored.

In Ogwa, the use of the full forms in object position does not carry the same emphatic connotation which they carry when in subject position. Because the reduced forms are not permitted in these positions, any emphasis contrast is neutralized.

An exception to this distribution is the reduced form of the third personal singular pronoun *ọ* ‘he/she/it’. In object position, both the full form *ọle* and the reduced form *ọ* are permitted.

(4.6)

(a) Reduced:

*Ọ khian mi**ọn** elena.*

ọ	*khian*	*miẹn*	***ọ***	*elena*
3.SG	FUT	see	**3.SG**	today

"He will see him/her/it today."

(b) Full:

*Ọ khian mi**ọnle** elena*.

ọ	*khian*	*miẹn*	***ọle***	*elena*
3.SG	FUT	see	**3.SG.F**	today

"He will see him/her/it today."

(4.7) Reduced:

*E ki la bh**ọ**,...*

e	*ki*	*la*	*bhi*	***ọ***
3.PL	CSQ	enter	LOC	**3.SG**

"Once they got on (it),..."

The full form is not used for emphasis here, unlike in subject position.

4.1.1.3. Following function words

Following many function words, the full form of the pronoun is used, such as after the reduced form of the question words (*be* 'what', *je* 'where'), relativizers/complementizers (*ni* 'that, who, which'), and conjunctions (*bi* 'and').

(4.8) With reduced question words:

(a) Full:

*B**uwẹ** lu bhena ẹdẹdẹna?*

be	***uwẹ***	*lu*	*bhi*	*ena*	*ẹdẹdẹ*	*na?*
what	**2.SG.F**	do	LOC	here	every day	PROX

"What are you doing here these days?"

(b) Reduced:

***Bewẹ** lu bhena ẹdẹdẹna?*

Be	***wẹ***	*lu*	*bhi*	*ena*	*ẹdẹdẹ*	*na*?
what	**2.SG**	do	LOC	here	every day	PROX

for "What are you doing here these days?"

(4.9) With reduced question words:

(a) Full:

***Juwẹ** na vade?*

Je	***uwẹ***	*na*	*vade?*
where	**2.SG.F**	EVT	come.CONT

"Where are you coming from?"

(b) Reduced:

***Jewẹ** na vade?*

je	***wẹ***	*na*	*vade*
where	**2.SG**	EVT	come.CONT

for "Where are you coming from?"

(4.10) With a complementizer:

(a) Full:

*Mẹ zẹ n**uwẹ** da wẹ.*

mẹ	*zẹ*	*ni*	***uwẹ***	*da*	*wẹ*
1.SG	make	REL	**2.SG.F**	EXP	sleep

"I made you fall asleep."

(b) Reduced:

Mẹ zẹ niwẹ** da wẹ.*

mẹ	*zẹ*	*ni*	***wẹ***	*da*	*wẹ*
1.SG	make	REL	**2.SG**	EXP	sleep

for "I made you fall asleep."

(4.11) With conjunction:

(a) Full:

*Agbons bi**uwẹ** kpa.*

Agbons	*bi*	***uwẹ***	*kpa*
Agbons	and	**2.SG.F**	leave

"Agbons and you left."

(b) Reduced:

Agbons bi **wẹ kpa.*

Agbons	*bi*	***wẹ***	*kpa*
Agbons	and	**2.SG**	leave

for "Agbons and you left."

(c) Full:

*Agbons bi **iyain** kpa.*

Agbons	*bi*	***iyain***	*kpa*
Agbons	and	**3.PL.F**	leave

"They and Agbons left."

(d) Reduced:

*****Agbons bi**e** kpa.*

Agbons	*bi*	***e***	*kpa*
Agbons	and	**3.PL**	leave

for "They and Agbons left."

[Note that these ungrammatical forms may be grammatical in other Esan dialects.]

Both the reduced form *ọ* 3.SG and the full form *ọle* 3.SG.F are permitted after grammatical items. Their exceptional quality in object position is also noted in §4.1.1.2.

(4.12)

(a) *B**ọle** yẹn?*

be	***ọle***	*yẹn*
what	**3.SG.F**	cook

"What is she cooking?"

(b) *B**ọ** yẹn?*

be	***ọ***	*yẹn*
what	**3.SG**	cook

"What is she cooking?"

With reference to pronouns in conjunction occurring with *bi* 'and', if the pronoun follows *bi*, then it will surface in its full form, shown in (4.11a) for example. If the pronoun precedes *bi* 'and' however, generally it may be either full or reduced. If the pronoun precedes *bi*, and the conjoined nominal is in subject position, a full form of the pronoun indicates emphasis (see §4.1.1.1).

(4.13)

(a) ***Mẹ*** *bi Agbons kpa.*

mẹ	*bi*	*Agbons*	*kpa*
1.SG	and	Agbons	leave

"Me and Agbons left."

(b) ***Imẹ*** *bi Agbons kpa.*

imẹ	*bi*	*Agbons*	*kpa*
1.SG.F	and	Agbons	leave

"*Me* and Agbons left."[14]

4.1.1.4. In (near) isolation

When a pronoun is used in response to a question (e.g. *Ọbhọ ni khin*? "Who is that?"), it is often found in isolation, or near isolation. In such contexts, both the full and reduced forms are

[14] However, the reduced form of the third person singular *ọ* 3.SG is slightly odd in conjunctions in *any* position. The full form *ọle* 3.SG.F is preferred:

(i) ***Ọle*** *bi Agbons kpa.*

ọle	*bi*	*Agbons*	*kpa*
3.SG.F	and	Agbons	leave

"He and Agbons left."

(ii) *?***Ọ** *bi Agbons kpa.*

ọ	*bi*	*Agbons*	*kpa*
3.SG	and	Agbons	leave

for "He and Agbons left."

permissible, though the full forms are more common. They are most often followed by the intransitive copula verb *nọ* ‘to be, to exist’.

(4.14)

(a) *Ọbhọ ni khin?* ***Imẹ*** *nọ.*

ọbhọ	*ni*	*khin*	***imẹ***	*nọ*
who	that	COP.TRN	**1.SG.F**	COP.INT

“Who is that? Me.”

(b) *Ọbhọ ni khin?* ***Mẹ*** *nọ*.

ọbhọ	*ni*	*khin*	***mẹ***	*nọ*
who	that	COP.TRN	**1.SG**	COP.INT

“Who is that? Me.”

4.1.2. Impersonal pronominal reference

Impersonal pronominal reference is used to refer to some unspecified/non-specific entity. It never refers to a third party which has already been uniquely identified in the discourse. In English, the pronouns ‘one’, ‘someone’, and ‘you’ are used in impersonal reference (e.g. “One should mind one's own business”, “Someone should leave”, “You can't always get what you want”). In Esan, impersonal reference is accomplished with the pronouns *a* GEN.PRO ‘one’ or *e* 3.PL ‘they’[15]. Impersonal pronouns are distinct from expletives, the latter of which are non-specific, but also non-referential

[15] *Ọria* “someone”, derived from *ọria* “person”, can also be used in impersonal reference, though this is not discussed at present.

(i) *Ọria lọniyan.*

ọria	*le*	*ọni*	*iyan*
person	eat	DEF	yam

“Someone ate the yam.”

4.1.2.1. The general pronoun a 'one'

The pronoun *a* GEN.PRO 'one, we' is used primarily to indicate an unspecified/non-specific referent in a discourse; like the other unspecified pronominal units, it does not refer back to some third party in the discourse. *A* is also found in contexts in which there is a group subject ("we (all)"), in imperative statements of negation ("don't you"), as well as in statements involving non-specific participants ("someone, they"). Because of its wide usage of meaning, *a* is interpreted as the default general pronoun, used to de-emphasize the role of the subject, and emphasize the predicate. Further, *a* has no full versus reduced form distinction.

(4.15)

(a) ***A*** *lọniyan.*

a *le* *ọni* *iyan*

GEN.PRO eat DEF yam

"We've eaten the yam", "One eats the yam", "The yam has been eaten"

(b) *Agbons* ***a*** *timẹ.*

Agbons ***a*** *ti* *imẹ*

Agbons **GEN.PRO** call 1.SG.F

"I am called Agbons." (Lit.: Agbons (is what) one calls me)

(c) *Ayọn n****a*** *da ọ riọria bhẹnbhẹn.*

ayọn *ni* ***a*** *da* *ọ* *ri* *ọria* *bhẹnbhẹn*

wine REL **GEN.PRO** drink 3.SG CAUS person crazy.REDUP

"Drinking wine makes a person crazy." (Lit.: wine that one/people/the world drinks, it makes a person crazy)

(d) ***A*** *sabọ mịẹn ẹbhe lebe*. (Uromi Dialect)

a	*sabọ*	*mịẹn*	*ẹbhe*	*le*	*ebe*
GEN.PRO	be able	find	goat	eat	leaf

"A goat probably ate some leaves." (More lit.: one can/might find that a goat ate some leaves)

The general pronoun *a* is often used to indicate a general statement which does not refer to a particular event. In (4.15c), there is no specific instance of "drinking wine" which is being referred to. In (4.15a), however, the sentence out of context is ambiguous between a "we" interpretation, and a more passive "one" interpretation. The different interpretations of the sentence result from a different tonal/intonational pattern, as well as contextual clues.

A is also used in imperative statements of negation. Though translated roughly as imperative constructions, the following examples could also be interpreted as "one doesn't/ shouldn't" or "we don't/shouldn't". In this construction, it is often found following the associative marker *gh-*[16], forming a phonological word with its surrounding environment. Here, *a* receives a high tone and is emphasized.

(4.16)

(a) *Gh**á**i gbọnnebe!*

*gh-**a***	*yi*	*gbẹn*	*ọni*	*ebe*
ASSOC-**GEN.PRO**	NEG.COP	write	DEF	book

"Don't write the book!", "One doesn't write the book!", "We don't/shouldn't write the book!"

[16] This associative marker *gh-* is found in post-nominal pronoun constructions as well. It seems to play no role in the interpretation of the sentence, and is completely optional.

(b) *Gh**á**yi tulẹ!*

*gh-**a***	*yi*	*tulẹ*
ASSOC-**GEN.PRO**	NEG.COP	run

"Stop running!", "Don't run!", "One shouldn't run!", "We aren't to run!"

(c) *Gh**á**i ghá ghọnghọn!*

*gh-**a***	*yi*	*ghá*	*ghọnghọn*
ASSOC-**GEN.PRO**	NEG.COP	CONT	be happy.REDUP

"Don't be happy!"

The use of the general pronoun *a* is restricted to the subject position; it may not occur in the object position of a verb or preposition. Instead, the non-specific form *ọria* 'someone' is used.

(4.17)

(a) **Akhere ded**a**.*

Akhere	*dede*	***a***
Akhere	embrace	**GEN.PRO**

for "Akhere hugs one."

(b) ok*Akhere ded**ọria**.*

Akhere	*dede*	***ọria***
Akhere	embrace	**person**

"Akhere hugs (some)one."

As shown above, the general pronoun *a* GEN.PRO can be used to indicate a group interpretation, translated as 'we'. When *a* is used to indicate a first person plural, it may only refer to a larger group of people included with the speaker. *Mhan* 1.PL 'we' on the other hand

can refer to the speaker plus some larger group *or* can refer to the speaker plus one specific other person.

(4.18)

(a) ***Mhan*** *ko yain uwana.*

mhan	*ko*	*yain*	*uwa*	*na*
1.PL	together	own	house	PROX

"We [you and I] own this house together."

(b) ****A*** *ko yain uwana.*

a	*ko*	*yain*	*uwa*	*na*
GEN.PRO	together	own	house	PROX

*for "*We [you and I] own this house together."

4.1.2.2. Unspecified use of e 'they'

To indicate an unspecified agent in a sentence, one uses the reduced form of the third person plural pronominal, *e* 3.PL 'they'. This is comparable to the use of 'they' in the English sentence "they call me John", where 'they' does not refer to a specific agent in the discourse situation. When using *e* as an unspecified agent, the object can be moved to the left periphery to further indicate that the emphasis is on the information in the predicate (i.e. the verb and object, the event), rather than the subject.

(4.19)

(a) *Mats **e** ma mẹ bhischool ẹlẹna.*

mats	***e***	*ma*	*mẹ*	*bhi*	*ischool*	*ẹlẹna*
maths	**3.PL**	teach	1.SG	LOC	school	today

"I was taught mathematics in school today." (Lit.: math they taught me in school today)

(b) ***E** bha huẹnmọnnokpia.*

e	*bha*	*huẹnmẹn*	*ọni*	*okpia*
3.PL	NEG	like	DEF	man

"The man is disliked."

(c) ***E** khian sienẹmila.*

e	*khian*	*si*	*eni*	*ẹmila*
3.PL	FUT	pull	DEF.PL	cattle

"The cattle will be pulled."

(d) ***E** guọghọnukpu a.*

e	*guọghọ*	*ọni*	*ukpu*	*a*
3.PL	break	DEF	cup	EXHS

"Someone broke the cup.", "The cup is broken."

There is no passive voice in Esan which is able to promote the object to subject position, and demote the subject to oblique position (cf. English "he wrote it" vs. "it was written (by him)").

4.1.2.3. Unspecified agents e vs. a

Though both *e* 3.PL 'they' and *a* GEN.PRO 'one' are used to indicate a non-specific referent, there are certain discernible differences. *A* 'one' is used (1) when referring to more general 'people' or 'the world', (2) when the speaker is putting himself into a larger group of people, (3) when the speaker wants to associate themself with the action, or (4) that an action has been done, but the particular person is unknown. Crucially, *e* 'they' differs in that it is used (1) when the speaker does not want to associate themself with the action (a "distancing" effect), and also (2) in more declarative-type constructions, emphasizing the action over the actor. Minimal pairs illustrating the different in speaker attitude/association are provided below.

(4.20)

(a) Speaker distancing themself:

***E** bha huẹnmọnnokpia.*

e	*bha*	*huẹnmẹn*	*ọni*	*okpia*
3.PL	NEG	like	DEF	man

"The man is disliked.", "They don't like the man."

(i.e. in general, this man is not liked by many people)

(b) Speaker associating themself:

***A** bha huẹnmọnnokpia.*

a	*bha*	*huẹnmẹn*	*ọni*	*okpia*
GEN.PRO	NEG	like	DEF	man

"The man is disliked.", "We don't like the man."

(i.e. from our group perspective, we don't like this man)

(4.21)

(a) Speaker distancing themself:

*Agbons **e** timẹ.*

Agbons	***e***	*ti*	*imẹ*
Agbons	**3.PL**	call	1.SG.F

"I am called Agbons."

(More lit.: Agbons (is what) they call me)

(b) Speaker associating themself:

*Agbons **a** timẹ.*

Agbons	***a***	*ti*	*imẹ*
Agbons	**GEN.PRO**	call	1.SG.F

"I am called Agbons."

(More lit.: Agbons (is what) one calls me)

In (4.20a), the sentence is more neutral, and does not imply that the speaker also dislikes the man. In (4.20b), however, the sentence indicates that the speaker is speaking from a larger group, and implies that the speaker likely dislikes the man, as well. Further, in (4.21a), the speaker distances himself from the statement, connotating that this is not a standard name, but more of a nickname, and possibly derogatory; in (4.21b), the interpretation is more neutral, and does not have this distancing effect.

For some speakers, not all sentences create this distancing contrast. In (4.22), no discernible meaning in difference can be attained.

(4.22)

(a) ***E*** *khuọnodẹ fo.*

e *khuẹ ọni odẹ fo*

3.PL lock DEF door finish

"Someone locked the door."

(b) ***A*** *khuọnodẹ fo.*

a *khuẹ ọni odẹ fo*

GEN.PRO lock DEF door finish

"Someone locked the door."

4.1.3. Summary

This section has shown the canonical use of pronouns in argument position. Pronouns have both a full and a reduced form. Generally, the full form is used as an emphatic, as the complements of a verb, with phonologically reduced grammatical markers, with reflexive marker *egb(e)-* '-self', and in possessive relative clauses. The reduced form is used in all other contexts. Further, in Esan, impersonal reference is accomplished with the pronouns *a* GEN.PRO 'one' or *e* 3.PL 'they'. Crucially, *e* 3.PL differs in that it is used (1) when the speaker does not want to associate themself with the action (a "distancing" effect), and also (2) in more declarative-type constructions, emphasizing the action over the actor, whereas *a* 'one, we' is often used when the speaker wants to associate themself with the action and/or a larger group of people.

4.2. Object of inquiry - Resumptive pronouns

Having presented a basic overview of the use of pronouns, I now concentrate on the main object of inquiry for this study: resumptive pronouns. Resumptive pronouns are pronouns which

occur in an argument position, and are co-indexed/co-referential with a nominal which is also present higher in the same construction. In Esan, resumptive pronouns occur in two places: (1) post-nominal pronoun constructions (PNPCs) and (2) in relative clauses (RCs).

(4.23)

(a) Post-nominal pronoun construction (PNPC):

Mẹ ***ọ*** *lọnnebe.*

mẹ ***ọ*** *lẹn* *ọni* *ebe*

1.SG **3.SG** know DEF book

"I knew that book."

(Lit.: I_i **he$_i$** knew the book)

(b) Relative clause (RC):

ọnokpia$_i$ [*n****ọ$_i$*** *dọnebe*]

ọni *okpia$_i$* [*ni* ***ọ$_i$*** *dẹ* *ọni* *ebe*]

DEF man REL **3.SG** buy DEF book

"the man that bought the book"

(Lit.: the man$_i$ [that **he$_i$** bought the book])

4.2.1. Post-nominal pronoun constructions (PNPCs)

The placement of a third person pronoun *ọ* 3.SG or *e* 3.PL immediately following the first nominal of a clause is known as a post-nominal pronoun construction. For all speakers, this pronoun is not obligatory; for some speakers, its presence creates a subtle difference in meaning (see §4.2.1.1 below). The post-nominal pronoun may follow both singular and plural nominals,

in first, second, and third person number. Table 3 displays the distribution of post-nominal pronouns.

Gloss	Translation	Subject	Post-Nominal Pronoun	Gloss	Translation	Subject	Post-Nominal Pronoun
1.SG	'I'	*mẹ*	*ọ*	1.PL	'we'	*mhan*	*ọ*
2.SG	'you'	*wẹ*	*ọ*	2.PL	'you'	*bha*	*ọ*
3.SG		NP_{sg}	*ọ*	3.PL		NP_{pl}	*e*
3.SG	'he'	*ọ*		3.PL	'they'	*e*	

Table 3: Post-nominal pronoun form distribution

The third person pronoun *ọ* 3.SG follows all singular and plural first and second persons (4.24a-b, d-e), and also follows all singular noun phrases (4.24c); *e* 3.PL follows all plural noun phrases (4.24f).

(4.24)

(a) First person singular:

Mẹ ***ọ*** *lọnnebe.*

mẹ ***ọ*** *lẹn* *ọni* *ebe*

1.SG **3.SG** know DEF book

"I knew that book."

(b) Second person singular:

Wẹ ***ọ*** *gualotọlẹ?*

wẹ ***ọ*** *gualọ* *otọlẹ?*

2.SG **3.SG** seek bottom

"Are you_{sg} investigating (this)?"

(c) Third person singular:

*Omon **ọ** kpoluwa*

Omon	***ọ***	*kpolo*	*uwa*
Omon	**3**.**SG**	sweep	house

"Omon swept the house."

(d) First person plural:

*Mhan **ọ** rẹ muhẹn gha gbikhiẹn,...*

mhan	***ọ***	*rẹ*	*mu hẹn*	*gha*	*gbe*	*ikhiẹn*
1.PL	**3.SG**	although	start	CONT	beat	dance

"We started off dancing,..."

(e) Second person plural:

*Bha **ọ** gbinletter.*

bha	***ọ***	*gbẹn*	*iletter*
2.PL	**3.SG**	write	letter

"You$_{pl}$ write letters."

(f) Third person plural:

*Enafiamẹnna **e** gha ghọnghọn.*

eni	*afiamẹn*	*na*	***e***	*gha*
DEF.PL	bird	PROX	**3.PL**	CONT

ghọnghọn

be happy.REDUP

"These birds were happy."

If the third person pronoun *ọ* or *e* is already the main nominal of the utterance, no post-nominal pronoun may follow.

(4.25)

(a) *Ọ ghọnghọn.*

ọ *ghọnghọn*

3.SG be happy.REDUP

"He is happy."

(b) **Ọ **ọ** ghọnghọn.*

ọ ***ọ*** *ghọnghọn.*

3.SG **3.SG** be happy.REDUP

for "He is happy."

(c) *E ghọnghọn.*

e *ghọnghọn*

3.PL be happy.REDUP

"They are happy."

(d) **E **e** ghọnghọn.*

e ***e*** *ghọnghọn*

3.PL **3.PL** be happy.REDUP

"They are happy."

In casual speech, often the sequence *mẹ ọ* 'I he', as in (4.24a), is pronounced as *mọ*; similarly, *wẹ ọ* 'you$_{sg}$ he' may be pronounced as *wọ*. In very careful speech, the segment *gh-* /ɣ-/ may be placed between the nominal and the post-nominal pronoun. This is glossed as an associative

marker ASSOC, and may be related to the complementizer *ghenia* 'that'. It is found irregularly in informal speech, and appears to play no necessary functional role. This associative marker does not occur in all dialects.

(4.26)

(a) *Mẹ gh**ọ** yẹki nimẹ rọ khiẹnsin.*

mẹ	*gh-**ọ***	*yo*	*ẹki*	*ni*	*imẹ*	*rọ*
1.SG	ASSOC-**3.SG**	go	market	REL	1.SG.F	go and

khiẹn	*ẹsin*
sell	pepper

"I went to the market (in order) to go and sell pepper."

(b) *Bha gh**ọ̀** gbinletter.*

bha	*gh-**ọ***	*gbẹn*	*iletter*
2.PL	ASSOC-**3.SG**	write	letter

"You$_{pl}$ write letters."

In (4.26) for example, the post-nominal pronoun is in its reduced form (*ọ* 3.SG and *e* 3.PL). In certain cases of emphasis, the full form *ọle* 3.SG.F has been found; data with the full form *iyain* 3.PL.F in these contexts is insufficient. The reduced form in post-nominal position, however, occurs more commonly.

(4.27) *Ọnokpea nọ ribhibodeni nọ huẹnmọnnọmamẹn **ọle** dọnebe.*

ọni	*okpea*	*ni*	*ọ*	*ri*	*bhi*	*ibodeni*	*ni*	*ọ*
DEF	man	REL	3.SG	CAUS	LOC	over there	REL	3.SG
huẹnmẹn		*ọni*	*ọmamẹn*		***ọle***	*dẹ*	*ọni*	*ebe*
like		DEF	girl		**3.SG.F**	buy	DEF	book

"The man over there who likes the girl bought the book."

(4.28) *Agbons **ọle** kpọlọ le.*

Agbons	***ọle***	*kpọlọ*	*le*
Agbons	**3.SG.F**	be big	surpass

"*Agbons* is bigger (than someone else)."

(More lit.: Agbons *he* is bigger (than someone else).)

4.2.1.1. Function of post-nominal pronouns

For many speakers, in addition to simply marking a subject, the post-nominal pronoun *ọ* or *e* also has a temporal-aspectual effect, implying that the speaker is confirming or reporting something, with a declarative function, and that the main nominal is already established. The post-nominal pronouns most often occur in the past tense, accompanied by an appropriate tonal pattern: high tone (e.g. *ọ́*) on the element immediately following the first nominal to indicate past tense, low tone (e.g. *ọ̀*) on the element immediately following the first nominal to indicate non-past tense. When the clause occurs without a post-subject pronoun, the aspectual implication is that the event has happened more recently, and is more relevant to the reference point. Often, such clauses are translated with the perfect aspect marker "to have (done)".

(4.29)

(a) *Omon gbikhiẹn.*

Omon gbe ikhiẹn

Omon beat dance

“Omon danced.”, “Omon has danced.”

(b) *Omon **ọ** gbikhiẹn.*

*Omon **ọ** gbe ikhiẹn*

Omon **3.SG** beat dance

“Omon did dance.”, “Omon does dance.”

(4.30)

(a) *Omon kpoluwa*

Omon kpolo uwa

Omon sweep house

“Omon has swept the house.”

(b) *Omon **ọ** kpoluwa*

*Omon **ọ** kpolo uwa*

Omon **3.SG** sweep house

“Omon swept the house.”, “Omon did sweep the house.”

(4.31)

(a) *Omon gięgie kpoluwa.*

Omon gięgie kpolo uwa

Omon quickly sweep house

"Omon swept the house quickly (recently)."

(b) *Omon **ọ** gięgie kpoluwa.*

*Omon **ọ** gięgie kpolo uwa*

Omon **3.SG** quickly sweep house

"Omon swept the house (a long time ago)."

(4.32)

(a) *Ọnokpia khian*

ọni okpia khian

DEF man walk

"The man is leaving/going/walking."

(b) *Ọnokpia **ọ** khian*

*ọni okpia **ọ** khian*

DEF man **3.SG** walk

"The man did walk.", "The man can walk.", "The man will go."

Examples (4.29-4.32) illustrate that the absence of a post-nominal pronoun indicates a perfect aspect, where an event has occurred more recently, and remains relevant. The presence of a post-nominal pronoun indicates a confirmation of some event, often in the past tense [i.e. 'did' or 'can', as in example (4.32b)].

The PNPC is not used by all Ogwa speakers. Some speakers do not perceive a reliable meaning difference *with* or *without* the post-nominal pronoun, while others attribute to the PNPC increased formality, antiquity, and/or explicitness.

4.2.1.2. Post-nominal pronouns with stative verbs

Stative/descriptive verbs do not relate entities in a certain event or action, but rather describe a state of a specific entity. The presence of a post-nominal pronoun indicates a stabilized state of an entity, whereas the absence of it creates an inchoative reading, indicating that the subject is becoming or has recently come to be in a specific state.

(4.33)

(a) Absence of PNP:

Ọnawa kpọlọ.

ọni awa kpọlọ

DEF dog be big

"The dog is getting/becoming big."

(b) Presence of PNP:

*Ọnawa **ọ** kpọlọ.*

*ọni awa **ọ** kpọlọ*

DEF dog **3.SG** be big

"The dog is big."

This difference in meaning relates to the temporal-aspectual effect which the PNPC has: the presence of the PNP implies confirmation or reporting of an established entity, here implying

stability of the state of the nominal, whereas the absence of the PNP indicates a perfect aspect, here implying an inchoative reading.

4.2.1.3. Post-nominal pronouns in future tense

The post-nominal pronominal construction may co-occur with the future marker *khian*, indicating that an event will take place after the present moment. The presence of a post-nominal pronoun indicates that the event will take place some time in the further removed future. The absence of this pronoun indicates that the event is going to take place very shortly, and much more immediate to the present moment.

(4.34)

(a) Without PNPC:

Ọmọn khian khian.

ọmọn khian khian

child FUT walk

"The child is about to walk."

(b) PNPC:

*Ọmọn **ọ** khian ghẹn khian.*

*ọmọn **ọ** khian ghẹn khian.*

child **3.SG** FUT soon walk

"The baby will soon (start to) walk."

4.2.1.4. Post-nominal pronouns and negation

The post-nominal pronoun construction does not co-occur with the negational marker *bha* NEG .

(4.35)

(a) *Akhere **bha** gha tulẹ.*

Akhere	***bha***	*gha*	*tulẹ*
Akhere	**NEG**	CONT	run

"Akhere was not running."

(b) **Akhere **ọ** bha gha tulẹ.*

Akhere	***ọ***	*bha*	*gha*	*tulẹ*
Akhere	**3.SG**	NEG	CONT	run

for "Akhere was not running."

(c) **Akhere bha **ọ** gha tulẹ.*

Akhere	*bha*	***ọ***	*gha*	*tulẹ*
Akhere	NEG	**3.SG**	CONT	run

for "Akhere was not running."

The negational pronoun *ẹ* NEG.PRO 'not it/he/she/they/we' instead occurs in post-nominal position. Its presence negates the following predicate, and its semantics are significantly different from that of the unmarked negational marker *bha* NEG. *Ẹ* implies a present tense negation, not confined to a single instance, but of a longer-lasting nature; *bha* implies a single instance of negation of a predicate (i.e. a temporary state), often with the implications of completion and/or past tense. This distinction is a tendency rather than absolute rule.

(4.36)

(a) *Ọnokpia **ẹ** mun mẹ lu.*

ọni	*okpia*	***ẹ***	*mun*	*mẹ*	*lu*
DEF	man	**NEG.PRO**	deceive	1.SG	deceive

"The man does not deceive me."

(b) *Ọnokpia **bha** mun mẹ lu.*

ọni	*okpia*	***bha***	*mun*	*mẹ*	*lu*
DEF	man	**NEG**	deceive	1.SG	deceive

"The man did not deceive me."

(4.37)

(a) ***Ẹ** gbitọn.*

Ẹ	*gbe*	*itọn*
NEG.PRO	make	dirt

"It is not able to become dirty."

(b) *Ọ **bha** gbitọn.*

Ọ	***bha***	*gbe*	*itọn*
3.SG	**NEG**	make	dirt

"It is not dirty."

(4.38)

(a) *Enukpọnna **ẹ** fua.*

Eni *ukpọn* *na* ***ẹ*** *fua*

DEF cloth PROX **NEG.PRO** be white

"This cloth will never become white (even if you wash it forever)."

(b) *Ọ **bha** fua.*

ọ ***bha*** *fua*

3.SG **NEG** be white

"It didn't get white (from attempts to make it so, but it is still possible)."

(4.39)

(a) *Ọnọmọ **ẹ** tan.*

ọni *ọmọ* ***ẹ*** *tan*

DEF child **NEG.PRO** be long

"The baby is not growing.", "The baby is stunted."

(b) *Ọnọmọ **bha** tan.*

ọni *ọmọ* ***bha*** *tan*

DEF child **NEG** be long

"The baby is not tall."

In (4.39) for example, the use of *ẹ* indicates that the baby is not ever going to be growing (i.e. stunted), whereas *bha* indicates that this is not a permanent state, but temporary.

Ẹ does not co-occur with any other pronominal.

(4.40)

(a) ***Ẹ*** *gbitọn.*

Ẹ	*gbe*	*itọn*
NEG.PRO	make	dirt

"It is not able to become dirty."

(b) **Ọle* ***ẹ*** *gbitọn.*

Ọle	***ẹ***	*gbe*	*itọn*
3.SG.F	**NEG.PRO**	make	dirt

"It is not able to become dirty."

Finally, *ẹ* NEG.PRO may be used as an optional subject in second person imperative constructions.

(4.41) ***Ẹ*** *gbọnniletter*

ẹ	*gbẹn*	*ọni*	*iletter*
NEG.PRO	write	DEF	letter

"Don't write the letter!"

More often, however, negation of an imperative statement is indicated via tone/intonation, and/or with the the construction *Gh-á yi* ASSOC-GEN.PRO NEG.COP "Don't...!" (see §4.1.2.1).

(4.42) *Gh****á****yi tulẹ!*

*gh-****a***	*yi*	*tulẹ*
ASSOC-**GEN.PRO**	NEG.COP	run

"Don't run!", "Stop running!", "One shouldn't run!", "We aren't to run!"

4.2.1.5. Post-nominal pronouns in embedded clauses

Post-nominal pronouns are marginally found in embedded clauses, but this is not widely attested.

(4.43) *Mhan wẹ wẹ* ***ọ*** *vade.*

mhan	*wẹ*	*wẹ*	***ọ***	*vade*
1.PL	think	2.SG	**3.SG**	come.CONT

"We thought you were coming."

4.2.2. Relative clauses (RCs)

A relative clause (RC) is an adjunct clause which directly modifies a nominal. In Esan, the relative clause directly follows the modified nominal, and the structure of a relative clause mirrors that of a non-relative clause (i.e. SVO, *etc*.; see ex. (2.1) in §2.5). Resumptive pronouns occur in relative clause constructions, occurring in a position of the relative clause which is directly linked with the modified noun. Like in PNPCs, resumptive pronouns in relative clauses are invariably third person, despite the person of the antecedent. Esan exhibits resumptive pronouns in the subject position of the relative clause *only*. In the object position, no resumptive pronoun is found, and instead there is a gap. The reader should note that resumptive pronouns in relative clauses is less well understood than resumptive pronouns in post-nominal pronoun constructions.

4.2.2.1. Resumptive pronouns in RC subject position

Resumptive pronouns are found in the subject position of a relative clause (4.44a). Such constructions may variably occur without a resumptive pronoun as well, though this is less common (4.44b).

(4.44)

(a) With resumptive pronoun:

Ọnokpia$_i$ [*n**ọ**$_i$ dọnebe*]

ọni *okpia*$_i$ [*ni* ***ọ**$_i$* *dẹ* *ọni* *ebe*]

DEF man REL **3.SG** buy DEF book

"The man [that bought the book]"

(Lit.: the man$_i$ that he$_i$ bought the book)

(b) Without resumptive pronoun:

ọnokpia [*ni dọnebe*]

ọni *okpia* [*ni* *dẹ* *ọni* *ebe*]

DEF man REL buy DEF book

"The man [that bought the book]"

In (4.44a), the resumptive pronoun *ọ* is directly linked with the modified noun *ọni okpia* 'the man', occurring in the subject position of the relative clause (cf. English *"the man [that **he** bought the book]").

This resumptive pronoun agrees in number with the modified noun it is co-indexed with. In (4.45a), the resumptive pronoun is the third personal singular pronoun *ọ* which refers to the singular entity *ọni awa* 'the dog', whereas in (4.45b), the resumptive pronoun is the third person plural pronoun *e*, which refers to the plural entities *eni awa* 'the dogs'.

(4.45)

(a) *Ọnawa n**ọ** kpọlọ n**ọ** mọnse n**ọ** gian dere.*

ọni	*awa*	*ni*	***ọ***	*kpọlọ*	*ni*	***ọ***	*mọnse*
DEF	dog	REL	**3.SG**	be big	REL	**3.SG**	be beautiful

ni	***ọ***	*gian*	*de*	*re*
REL	**3.SG**	be red	fall	CPM

"The beautiful big red <u>dog</u> fell."

(b) *Enawa n**e** kpọlọ n**e** mọnse n**e** gian dere.*

eni	*awa*	*ni*	***e***	*kpọlọ*	*ni*	***e***	*mọnse*
DEF.PL	dog	REL	**3.PL**	be big	REL	**3.PL**	be beautiful

ni	***e***	*gian*	*de*	*re*
REL	**3.PL**	be red	fall	CPM

"The beautiful big red <u>dogs</u> fell."

Variation of form is found with some speakers with ordinary modificational relative clauses, though is less common. In (4.46) below, the modified noun refers to a plural entity, though the resumptive pronoun remains *ọ* 3.SG.

(4.46) *Mẹ yinyan n**ọ** bun.*

mẹ	*yẹn*	*iyan*	*ni*	***ọ***	*bun*
1.SG	cook	yam	REL	**3.SG**	many

"I cooked many yams."

Further variation is documented for the second person non-singular pronoun *bha* between the resumptive pronoun *ọ* 3.SG and *e* 3.PL.

(4.47) *Bha n**e** lọnebai*.

bha	*ni*	***e***	*le*	*ọni*	*ebai*
2.PL	REL	**3.PL**	eat	DEF	food

"You all who ate the food."

Currently, relative clauses involving first and second persons are not very well attested within the corpus, making it difficult to make definitive statements involving these persons (cf. the robustness of PNPCs with *all* persons). This variation is touched upon again in §7.2.

4.2.2.2. No resumptive pronouns in RC object position

Unlike in subject position, in object position of a relative clause, a resumptive pronoun is not permitted. Relativization of an object is accomplished via gapping (Kuteva & Comrie 2005: 212), meaning that there is no overt referential element (i.e. resumptive element) permitted in the object position. Only a covert (i.e. unpronounced) referent is permitted; this is true in both direct object position (4.48b) and in indirect position (4.49b).

(4.48)

(a) *izẹ nimẹ dẹ*

izẹ	*ni*	*imẹ*	*dẹ*
rice	REL	1.SG	buy

"rice that I bought"

(b) **izẹ nimẹ d**ọ***

izẹ	*ni*	*imẹ*	*dẹ*	***ọ***
rice	REL	1.SG	buy	**3.SG**

for "rice that I bought"

(4.49)

(a) *ọnokhuo nọnokpia mu ọnawa na*

ọni	*okhuo*	*ni*	*ọni*	*okpia*	*mu*	*ọni*	*awa*	*na*
DEF	woman	REL	DEF	man	give	DEF	dog	DIR

"the woman that the man gave the dog to"

(b) **ọnokhuo nọnokpia mu ọnawa n**ọ***

ọni	*okhuo*	*ni*	*ọni*	*okpia*	*mu*	*ọni*	*awa*	*na*	***ọ***
DEF	woman	REL	DEF	man	give	DEF	dog	DIR	**3.SG**

for "the woman that the man gave the dog to"

4.2.2.3. Resumptive pronouns in possessive relative clauses

Resumptive pronouns also occur in full or reduced possessive relative clause constructions. In possession constructions, the (pro)nominal slot of the relative clause is filled by a pronoun co-indexed with the possessed noun, and the predicate consists of the associative verb *ghọ* "to be owned by, to belong to" and a possessor as object.

(4.50)

(a) *uwa$_i$ n**ọ$_i$** ghimẹ$_j$ nọ$_i$ kpọlọ*

uwa$_i$	[*ni*	***ọ$_i$***	*ghọ*	*imẹ$_j$*]	[*ni*	*ọ$_i$*	*kpọlọ*]
house	REL	**3.SG**	belong to	1.SG.F	REL	3.SG	be big

"my big house" (More lit.: house$_i$ [that it$_i$ belongs to me] [that it$_i$ is big])

(b) *uwa$_i$ n**ọ$_i$** ghiyain$_j$ nọ$_i$ kpọlọ*

uwa$_i$	*ni*	***ọ$_i$***	*ghọ*	*iyain$_j$*	*ni*	*ọ$_i$*	*kpọlọ*
house	REL	**3.SG**	belong to	3.PL.F	REL	3.SG	be big

"their big house"

Unlike in other relative clauses, resumptive pronouns in possessive relative clauses normally do not agree for number. In such possessive RCs, the resumptive pronoun in RC subject position is *ọ* 3.SG 'he/she/it'.

(4.51)

(a) *Ọ daghologbo$_i$ n**ọ$_i$** ghọle.*

ọ	*daghe*	*ologbo$_i$*	*ni*	***ọ$_i$***	*ghọ*	*ọle*
3.SG	see	cat	REL	**3.SG**	belong to	3.SG.F

"He sees his cat(s)."

(More lit.: he sees the cat/cats$_i$ that it$_i$ belongs to him)

(b) **(?)Ọ daghologbo$_i$ n**e$_i$** ghọle.*

ọ	*daghe*	*ologbo$_i$*	*ni*	***e$_i$***	*ghọ*	*ọle*
3.SG	see	cat	REL	**3.PL**	belong to	3.SG.F

for "He sees his cats."

(More lit.: *he sees the cats$_i$ that they$_i$ belong to him)

Though the pronoun *e* 3.PL 'they' is not preferred in such possessive constructions, they are found marginally for some speakers.

(4.52) *enawa n{**ọ**/**e**} enikhuo*

eni	*awa*	*ni*	{**ọ**/**e**}	*eni*	*ikhuo*
DEF.PL	dog	REL	{**3.SG**/**3.PL**}	DEF	woman.PL

"the women's dogs"

4.2.2.4. Lack of post-nominal pronouns in relative clauses

Any temporal-aspectual distinction between those clauses occurring with a post-nominal pronoun and those occurring without one is neutralized in relative clauses. Due to the syntax of relative clauses, there is no slot in which a post-nominal pronoun may be inserted to generate a semantic distinction (see chapter 5).

(4.53)

(a) *Ọnọbhokhan n**ọ** kpọlọ luọle.*

ọni	*ọbhokhan*	*ni*	***ọ***	*kpọlọ*	*lu*	*ọle*
DEF	child	REL	**3.SG**	be big	do	3.SG.F

"The child that is big did it.", "The child that is growing did it."

(b) ***Ọnọbhokhan n**ọ* **ọ** *kpọlọ luọle.*

ọni	*ọbhokhan*	*ni*	***ọ***	***ọ***	*kpọlọ*	*lu*	*ọle*
DEF	child	REL	**3.SG**	**3.SG**	be big	do	3.SG.F

for "The child that is big did it."

The negational pronoun *ẹ* can be used in relative clauses as well (307). It may refer to a plural or singular antecedent.

(4.54) *ebe nẹ khua*

ebe *ni* ***ẹ*** *khua*

book REL **NEG.PRO** be heavy

"light book(s)" (Lit.: book(s) that are not heavy)

See §4.2.1.4 for more on this negational pronoun *ẹ*.

4.2.3. Summary

This subsection has described the distribution of resumptive pronouns in Esan, occurring in two places: (1) post-nominal pronoun constructions (PNPCs) and (2) relative clauses (RCs). Within the PNPC, the third person pronoun *ọ* 3.SG follows all singular and plural first and second persons, and also follows all singular noun phrases; third person plural *e* 3.PL follows all plural noun phrases. The presence of the post-nominal pronoun *ọ* or *e* implies confirmation or the reporting of something, often signaling that the main nominal is already established. Without the post-nominal pronoun, the aspectual implication is that the event has happened or will happen more recently, often translated with the perfect aspect marker "to have (done)". Further, the negation marker *bha* NEG does no co-occur with a post-nominal pronoun. Instead, the negational pronoun *ẹ* is found.

Within RCs, resumptive pronouns occur in the subject position of the relative clause *only*; in the object position, no resumptive pronoun is found, and instead there is a gap. Further, there exists minor variation between the resumptive pronouns *ọ* 3.SG and *e* 3.PL with certain nominals by certain speakers. Finally, with possessive relative clauses, the pronoun *ọ* is preferred predominantly, despite the number of the relativized nominal.

5. AN ANALYSIS OF RESUMPTIVE PRONOUNS

There are a number of questions within this description of personal pronouns and resumptive pronouns which require explanation. Some of the most pressing are presented in (5.1) below:

(5.1) Questions to address:

1. In which syntactic locations are the nominals of the post-nominal pronoun construction?

2. Where does the difference in meaning between those clauses with a post-nominal pronoun and those without one derive from?[17]

3. Why do resumptive pronouns occur in subject but not object position?

4. Why are resumptive pronouns restricted to third person forms (i.e. lack of person matching)?

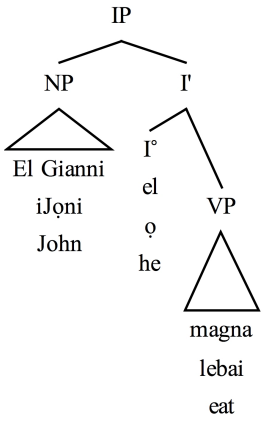
5. Why do seemingly plural pronouns *mhan* 'we' and *bha* 'you$_{pl}$' co-occur with the singular resumptive pronoun *o* 3.SG, and not with *e* 3.PL?

In this chapter, I first look at arguments that resumptive pronouns are true cases of pronouns, occurring in argument position, rather than being a predicational agreement system. In other words, I address whether these "resumptive pronouns" occur in a canonical nominal position, or in an AGR head/T head/I head, *etc*. (i.e. a *functional head*). Debate pertaining to this distinction has spawned a great deal of descriptive and theoretical work across various languages, particularly the Romance family (Rizzi 1986, Roberge 1990, de Cat 2007, Cournane 2008, *etc.*; see also the literature on configurationality/non-configurationality). I depict the

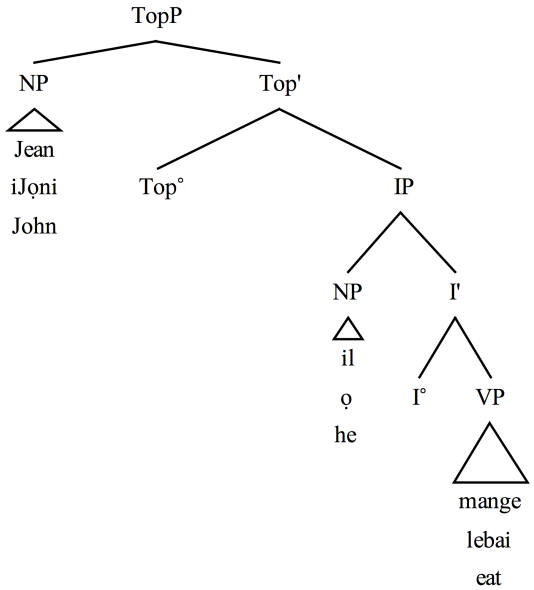
[17] Recall from §4.2.1 that there is not a meaning difference for all speakers.

underlying difference between these two types in the trees below. These trees are based on Rizzi (1986), using Trentino (a Lombard dialect related to Italian) to illustrate subject marker-as-*Infl head* (i.e. as agreement), and French to illustrate subject marker-as-*Infl specifier* (i.e. as an argument)[18]. Esan and English words are provided below the Romance ones as a rough translation.

(5.2) "Pronoun" as agreement: Trentino



(5.3) "Pronoun" as argument: French



[18] These representations by no means represent the only two structural possibilities. See Roberge 1990.

At a superficial level, these two representations are seemingly difficult to distinguish. However, certain diagnostics may be used which help to illuminate the underlying structure. Such diagnostics can be used to classify Esan as the French type in (5.3) above, with the pronoun located in the structural subject position of the specifier of IP and the antecedent (pro)nominal in the specifier position of TopP. The following pieces of evidence are diagnostics against an agreement account, laid out in full in §5.1.1:

(5.4) Diagnostics against agreement:

(1) The resumptive pronoun is not obligatory (§5.1.1.1)

Argument: agreement markers, if present, are *obligatorily* found on finite predicates

(2) Subject markers are not found in co-ordinated verb phrases (§5.1.1.2)

Argument: agreement manifests on each verb in co-ordination

(3) Contrast in full versus reduced pronoun form is available (§5.1.1.3)

Argument: agreement should not have a full (strong) versus reduced (weak) contrast

(4) Contribution of meaning from RPs (for some speakers) (§5.1.1.4)

Argument: presence versus lack of agreement should not correspond to different temporal-aspectual implications

If we accept the arguments that resumptive pronouns are in *argument* positions, we must ask what the implications are? Particularly, why do they surface in those positions, rather than there being a gap?

I claim that the presence of resumptive pronouns can be attributed to a pervasive constraint in the language against phonologically unrealized structural subjects. That is, all clauses in the language must contain an overt subject in canonical subject position. I argue that when a nominal in subject position is extracted to some other position in a higher clause, it leaves a trace (Chomsky 1995), which is realized as a co-indexed resumptive pronoun (i.e. an overt trace; Koopman & Sportiche 1986). In PNPCs, the nominal moves to a higher topic position, whereas in RCs, the nominal moves to the higher relativized position, representing Cinque's (1990) "fourth type of A-bar dependency [holding]...between a *resumptive pronoun and a sentence-initial phrase*" (Cinque 1990: xiv; italics his). I formalize this structural subject requirement *via* the Extended Projection Principle (EPP) (*à la* Chomsky 1995: 232). I note that this is a particularly strong manifestation of this principle in which only phonologically overt elements may satisfy it (i.e. not covert traces).

This structural subject requirement is corroborated by a great deal of independent evidence from the language illustrating this robust constraint. This evidence, and all underlying assumptions, are presented in §5.1.4–§5.1.5; they include the following:

(5.5) Corroborating evidence against empty subject:

(1) Lack of *pro*-drop (§5.1.5.1)

Argument: languages without structural subject requirements allow a phonologically null element (i.e. *pro*) in subject position (e.g. Italian, Polish)

(2) Use of expletives and dummy subjects (§5.1.5.2)

Argument: languages without structural subject requirements do not require expletive or dummy subjects

(3) Impersonal subject present in negative imperatives (§5.1.5.3)

Argument: presence of a subject in imperatives is motivated by subject constraint

(4) Raising of objects to subject position in existential *ri bhi* 'to put at/to be at' clauses (§5.1.5.4)

Argument: movement is motivated by subject constraint

This section first presents the full structure of post-nominal pronoun constructions, arguing for their structure as a manifestation of topicalization. I then present how relative clauses can be accounted for within this analysis, touching upon the key differences in structure between them and PNPCs. I finish this chapter with a discussion laying out why resumptive pronouns are not expletives, and the implications of this.

5.1. An account of the post-nominal pronoun constructions (PNPC)

I first discuss the presence of resumptive pronouns in post-nominal pronoun constructions (PNPCs). Recall that the post-nominal pronoun construction involves the use of a pronoun immediately following the first nominal in a clause (5.6); the descriptive facts of this construction were laid out in §4.2.1.

(5.6) *Mhan* ***ọ*** *rẹ muhẹn gha gbikhiẹn,...*

mhan$_i$	***ọ***$_i$	*rẹ*	*mu hẹn*	*gha*	*gbe*	*ikhiẹn,...*
1.PL	**3.SG**	although	start	CONT	beat	dance

"We started off dancing,..."

Analogous structures to the one found in Esan are pervasive among West African languages, as shown in example (5.7). The first four examples are of particular interest (5.7a-d), as these languages belong to the Edoid family, and therefore represent potential cognates of Esan, rather than purely analogues.

(5.7)

(a) Edo (BIN) [Edoid, Niger-Congo: Nigeria]:

Òsàrọ́	*(È ré)*	***ọ́***	*bọ́*	*òwá*
Osaro	it be	**PRO**	build	house

"Osaro, he's building a house" (Ọmọruyi 1989)

(b) Ivie (ATG) [Edoid, Niger-Congo: Nigeria]:

Ogele	***ọ***	*-gwukhasẹ*	*mhẹ*	[*khi*	*ukpokia*	*ọli*	***ọ***
Ogele	**3sg**	PST tell	me	[that	friend	her	**3sg**
khi	[*ọgbọ*	***ọ***	*gbe*	*ọli*]]			
say	[someone	**3sg**	beat	him]]			

"Ogele told me [that her friend told her [that someone beat him]]" (E-M 1997: 89)

(c) Yẹkhee (Etsako) (ETS) [Edoid, Niger-Congo: Nigeria]:

Okhai ****(ọ́)*** *dẹ* *ebe* *ya* *mhẹ.*

Okhai **3sg**-pst buy book for me

"Okhai bought book for me" (E-M 1997: 124)

(d) Isoko (ISO) [Edoid, Niger-Congo: Nigeria]:

éló ***ò*** *tí* *kèlè* *íghó*

name **SCM** AM count money

"Elo will count money" (Donwa 1982: 171, cited in Elugbe 1989b: 302)

(e) Hausa (HAU) [Chadic, Afro-Asiatic: Nigeria]:

Áudù ****(yā́)*** *zó*

audu **he** came

"Audu came" (Bamgbose 1980)

(f) Yoruba (YOR) [Yoruboid, Niger-Congo: Nigeria]:

[*Adé* *àti* *Olú*]$_i$ *ni* ***ó$_i$*** *ra* *ìwé*

Ade and Olu be **3s** buy book

"It was Ade and Olu who bought books." (Adesola 2005: 103)

(g) Kaakyi (KYE) [Tano, Kwa, Niger-Congo: Ghana]:

[*mí* *mà* *Kofi*] ***àlé*** *gyé* *ánémpò*

1sg cong. Kofi **AGR** be friends

"Kofi and I are friends" (Agbedor & Adonae 2005: 99)

(h) Ewe (EWE) [Gbe, Kwa, Niger-Congo: Ghana]:

Mìàwó	*ya*	***(mìè)-ʃle***	*atikutsetse*
2p.pron	top	**2p**-buy	fruit

"You bought some fruit." (Badan & Buell 2010: 2)

These markers are variably termed depending on the language and analysis. These include (1) **(subject) concord markers** (Amayo 1975, Bamgbose 1980, Elugbe 1989b: 302, Isoko; Donwa 1982: 171)[19], (2) **PRO-copy** (Ọmọruyi 1989: 282), (3) **subject agreement markers** (Ivie; Emuekpere-Masagbor 1997, Kaakyi; Agbedor & Adonae 2005: 99), (4) **subject clitics** (Degema; Kari 2005), and (5) **resumptive pronouns** and/or **expletives** (this study, Ọmọruyi 1989: 296, Akan; Marfo 2005: 48, Yoruba; Adesola 2005).

The different categorizations, analyses, and glossing of these structures indicate that although superficially similar, their underlying structure may vary significantly. I discuss two such possibilities with respect to the Esan data: (1) these markers represent **agreement markers**, or (2) they represent **arguments.** This difference was illustrated in the trees in examples (5.2) and (5.3) above.

I argue that such pronouns are full arguments in an argument location. In order to adequately support this position, I adopt a series of diagnostics which indicate that Esan exhibits properties which would be unexpected if it were an agreement system. This analysis relies heavily on a comparison with the related Edoid language Ivie, as analyzed in Emuekpere-Masagbor (1997). I then motivate an analysis in which the post-nominal pronoun construction is a type of topicalization, with the nominal moving from the subject position to a left peripheral

[19] They are also called "subject concord markers" under the idea that they "link the noun phrase subject to the verb phrase" (Elugbe 1989b: 302).

position. This results in the presence of a pronoun *resuming* the vacated subject position due to a pervasive structural subject requirement of Esan.

5.1.1. Diagnostics against agreement

I present a series of diagnostics in order to justify classifying these "pronouns" in Esan as true arguments, rather than agreement markers. Here, "agreement" refers to the formal syntactic relation which a subject and the predicate enter into within a finite clause.[20] In many languages, this relation triggers the presence of "agreement markers" which function to "match" the predicate with its subject with respect to *phi*-features [Number], [Person], [Gender], *etc*. Because both agreement markers and pronouns involve the matching of linguistic objects, and ultimately the matching of the *features* behind these objects, the two can be difficult to distinguish.

Below I provide arguments that such agreement markers are not present in Esan. I use the Ivie language as a control, acting as an object of comparison. Ivie is closely related to Esan, being of the North-central sub-group of the Northern Edo family (Emuekpere-Masagbor [E-M] 1997: 30, citing Hoffman 1974), which diverges one branch up from Esan. E-M (1997) argues that these subject markers are agreement markers in Ivie, serving to link the subject and the predicate, providing information pertaining to agreement (i.e. *phi*-features) (E-M 1997: 6, citing Auger 1994). If subject markers in Ivie represent an agreement system, whereas in Esan they are arguments, we except that there should be a cluster of properties which each language exhibits which *coincide* with their different underlying structures, in spite of superficial similarity and common origin. This is indeed what we find.

I present four diagnostics in particular against an agreement account for the Esan data.

---

[20] The direct object is also involved in agreement in some languages, e.g. Georgian. See Bejar 2003.

(5.8) Diagnostics against agreement:

(1) The resumptive pronoun is not obligatory (§5.1.1.1)

Argument: agreement markers, if present, are *obligatorily* found on finite predicates

(2) Subject markers are not found in co-ordinated verb phrases (§5.1.1.2)

Argument: agreement manifests on each verb in co-ordination

(3) Contrast in full versus reduced pronoun form is still available (§5.1.1.3)

Argument: agreement should not have a full (strong) versus reduced (weak) contrast

(4) Contribution of meaning from RPs (for some speakers) (§5.1.1.4)

Argument: presence versus lack of agreement should not correspond to different temporal-aspectual implications

5.1.1.1. Non-obligatoriness

Agreement markers in agreement systems are generally obligatory. That is, if an agreement marker exists which occurs when a relation between a subject and predicate is established, it will manifest on every finite clause. Thus there is a well-documented correlation between agreement markers and obligatoriness. This is shown below using data from Ivie and German, whose agreement markers have been established as non-obligatory.

(5.9)

(a) Ivie:

Ogele {***ọ***/*Ø} *-gwukhasẹ* *mhẹ* [*khi* *ukpokia* *ọli* {***ọ***/*Ø}

Ogele **3sg/*Ø** PST tell me [that friend her **3sg/*Ø**

khi [*ọgbọ* {***ọ***/*Ø} *gbe* *ọli*]]

say [someone **3sg/*Ø** beat him]]

"Ogele told me [that her friend told her [that someone beat him]]" (E-M 1997: 89)

(b) German:

Du {*kann**st***/**kann*} *mich* *sehen*.

2.SG can.**2.SG**/*can 1.SG.ACC see

"You can see me."

In both of these languages, the agreement makers in bold are obligatory.

This obligatoriness results from the mechanics of agreement. **If** (1) agreement reduces to the matching [i.e. feature matching] between an argument (the provider) and an overt element (the receiver) under specific syntactic conditions (probe/goal relations under Chomsky 2000: 122, discussed in Fuß 2005: 26), **and** (2) these specific syntactic conditions are met, **then** (3) matching will occur. If this logic holds, then **if** (1) there exists some agreement marker which *spells out* this matching relation (e.g. German *-st* 2.SG or Ivie *ọ* 3sg), **and** (2) insertion of morphological objects into the syntax is *deterministic* (i.e. morphology operates post-syntactically, e.g. a distributed morphology approach *via* Halle & Marantz 1993), **then** (3) these

agreement markers must be present if the syntactic conditions are met. In short, if a finite verb inflects for gender, number, person, *etc*. in a context X_i, it will inflect as such in *all* contexts X_i.

In Esan, the resumptive pronouns are found only in two contexts: in the post-nominal pronoun construction and in relative clauses. Because these represent only two of the many types of finite clauses in Esan, this indicates that these pronouns are *not obligatory* with every clause, and not part of the verbal complex. This is illustrated below:

(5.10)

(a) Esan clause without RP:

Ọmọn khian khian.

Ọmọn **Ø** *khian khian*

child **Ø** FUT walk

"The child is about to walk."

(b) Esan clause with RP:

Ọmọn ***ọ*** *khian ghẹn khian.*

Ọmọn ***ọ*** *khian ghẹn khian*.

child **3.SG** FUT soon walk

"The baby will soon (start to) walk."

Both of these above are fully grammatical sentences. In fact, in certain contexts such as negation, *no* post-nominal pronoun is allowed.

(5.11) *Akhere* (***ọ***) ***bha*** *gha tulẹ.*

Akhere	(***ọ***)	***bha***	*gha*	*tulẹ*
Akhere	(***3.SG**)	**NEG**	CONT	run

"Akhere was not running."

A correlation between non-optionality and agreement has also been put forward previously. E-M (1997: 96, 125) notes that the optionality of subject markers in Edo and Yoruba suggests that they are not agreement markers, but rather overt pronouns/subject concord markers. Further, Kari (2005) argues that subject markers in the related Delta Edoid language Degema are in fact "subject clitics", i.e. syntactically independent elements outside of the verbal phrase which only *phonologically* attach to this phrase at some point later in the derivation. He justifies this claim based on the optionality of these subject markers, this "...suggest[ing] that the so-called subject prefix is not an integral part of the verb morphology" (Kari 2005: 19).

Badan & Buell (2010: 3) also note the optionality of subject markers in Ewe in certain cases, and argue that this leads to an analysis of "the subject clitics [as] pronouns rather than agreement markers". They consequently argue that these elements are subject clitics in the Spec of TP (i.e. [TP clitic [T' Ø ...]]), similar to the analysis put forward here[21].

5.1.1.2. Co-ordinated VPs

Another property of agreement systems is the presence of an agreement marker on both verbs in a co-ordinated verb phrase (VP). As established in §5.1.1.1, **if** (1) the particular syntactic conditions are met which would trigger the presence of an agreement marker (such as that relation between a subject and a predicate), **then** (2) the agreement marker will occur

[21] Also, they assume that in Ewe, there must be a structural subject (Badan & Buell 2010: 7), as this analysis does in §5.1.4.

obligatorily *whenever* such conditions are met. Since each finite verb in a co-ordinate VP enters the same type of relation when sharing a subject, i.e. each co-ordinated verb must be "inflected", multiple occurrences of the agreement marker are expected. For example, in English, third person singular agreement *-s* is found on both verbs when conjoined.

(5.12)

(a) John$_{3.SG}$ somehow swim[-s]$_{3.SG}$ and smoke**[-s]$_{3.SG}$** at the same time.

(b) *John$_{3.SG}$ somehow swim[-s]$_{3.SG}$ and smoke**[Ø]** at the same time.

In systems whose subject markers are argued to exemplify agreement such as Ivie and the Trentino dialect of Lombard, such markers are *obligatory*.

(5.13) Agreement Systems:

(a) Ivie:

*ọ a to uwolo ***(ọ)** a gbe ishimhi*

ọ	*a*	*to*	*uwolo*	****(ọ)***	*a*	*gbe*	*ishimhi*
3sg	PP	sing	song	**3sg**	PP	dance	dance

"He is singing and dancing" (Ivie; M-U 1997: 108)

(b) Trentino:

La	*canta*	*e*	****(la)***	*bella.*
she	sing	and	**she**	dance

"She sings and dances." (Brandi & Cordin 1989; Roberge 1990: 169)

In systems where the subject markers are arguments, such as Esan and French, no pronoun is found with a co-ordinate verb. E-M (1997: 110) notes that the observed differences between these two types of systems follows "from the fact that French subject clitics are DPs (spell-outs

of arguments adjoined to an agreement head), while the pronominal elements in Ivie and the Italian dialects of Trentino and Fiorentino are the spell-out of an agreement head...which does not allow a zero pro-form under coordination."

(5.14) French:

Il *chante et* **Ø** *dance*.

he sing and **Ø** dance

"He sings and dances."

In Esan, as in French and unlike in Ivie, a pronoun need not occur with each verb.

(5.15) Esan:

Ọ dọniyan dumhọnle.

ọ *de* *ọni* *iyan* **Ø** *dumhun* *ọle*

3.SG buy DEF yam **Ø** pound 3.SG.F

"Agbons bought the yam (and) **Ø** pounded it."

In example (5.15), there is no requirement that the marker be present with the second verb, therefore supporting the classification of these pronouns as arguments.

5.1.1.3. Replaceability

A further argument which supports post-nominal pronouns as arguments rather than agreement has to do with the variation between the strong and weak forms in resumption (e.g. full *ọle* 3.SG.F vs. reduced *ọ* 3.SG). I refer to this characteristic as "replaceability". **If** (1) agreement markers spell out a feature sharing relation between a subject and a predicate, **and** (2) this relation shares only formal grammatical *phi*-features (e.g. number, person, *etc*.), **then** (3) we

do not expect any additional semantic information to be shared. Thus, we should not expect any variability and *replaceability* of agreement markers.

This logic predicts that agreement systems will not incorporate non-grammatical information, such as the distinction between full and reduced forms in Esan (and other West African languages). Recall from §4.1.1 the distribution of full and reduced forms of personal pronouns. For the purposes here, recall that when in subject position, the full form is used for emphasis, whereas the reduced form is used in more neutral contexts.

(5.16)

(a) Reduced:

Mẹ *dizẹ.*

mẹ *dẹ* *izẹ*

1.SG buy rice

"I bought rice."

(b) Full:

Imẹ *dizẹ.*

imẹ *dẹ* *izẹ*

1.SG.F buy rice

"*I* bought rice." (as opposed to someone else)

Under the logic above, if post-nominal pronouns were manifestations of an agreement system, we would expect this contrast to neutralize in such contexts. Because, however, full forms indicating emphasis are still permitted in post-nominal pronoun contexts, this suggests that this is

not an agreement system. Examples (5.17) illustrate replaceability in the PNPC. [Example (5.17c) actually shows co-referential pronouns in relative clause and PNPC context].

(5.17) Full form replaceability:

(a) *Agbons$_i$* ***ọle$_i$*** *kpọlọ le.*

Agbons$_i$	***ọle$_i$***	*kpọlọ*	*le*
Agbons	**3.SG.F**	be big	surpass

"*Agbons* is bigger (than someone else)."

(More lit.: Agbons$_i$ he$_i$ is bigger (than someone else).)

(b) *okhian$_i$ nọmẹ* ***ọle$_i$*** *tua luwẹ.*

okhian$_i$	*ni*	*ọmẹ*	***ọle$_i$***	*tua*	*li*
walking	REL	1.SG.POSS	**3.SG.F**	go fast	surpass

uwẹ
2.PL.F

"*I* walk faster than you."

(More lit.: my walking$_i$ it$_i$'s faster than yours)

(c) *Ọnokpea$_i$ nọ$_i$ ribhibodeni nọ$_i$ huẹnmọnnọmamẹn* ***ọle$_i$*** *dọnebe.*

ọni	*okpea$_i$*	*ni*	*ọ$_i$*	*ri*	*bhi*	*ibodeni*	*ni*	*ọ$_i$*
DEF	man	REL	3.SG	CAUS	LOC	over there	REL	3.SG

huẹnmẹn	*ọni*	*ọmamẹn*	***ọle$_i$***	*dẹ*	*ọni*	*ebe*
like	DEF	girl	**3.SG.F**	buy	DEF	book

"The man over there who likes the girl bought the book."

If we view these pronouns as arguments, then we in fact *expect* for this contrast between full and reduced pronouns to remain.

Further, recall that cognate subject markers in Ivie have been argued to be agreement markers by E-M 1997. In this language, we do *not* find any alternation/replaceability of these markers, i.e. there is no full vs. reduced contrast with these markers. In (5.18) below, the strong form of the third person singular pronoun *lẹ* 3sg.S, comparable to Esan *ọle* 3.SG.F, is not permitted in subject marker position.

(5.18) ***Oti** ***lẹ*** *a* *bẹ* *amo.*

Oti **3sg.S** PP come today

for "Oti is coming today." (Ivie; E-M 1997: 102)

5.1.1.4. Semantic contribution

For many speakers, the presence of the post-nominal pronoun correlates with an implication that the speaker is confirming or reporting something, having a declarative function. In comparison, when the clause occurs without a post-subject pronoun, the aspectual implication is that the event has happened more recently, and is more relevant to the reference point. Often, such clauses are translated with the perfect aspect marker "to have (done)". As discussed in §4.2.1.1–§4.2.1.2, not all speakers can find a reliable meaning difference, however.

(5.19)

(a) *Ọnokpia khian*

ọni *okpia* *khian*

DEF man walk

"The man is leaving/going/walking."

(b) *Ọnokpia* ***ọ*** *khian*

ọni okpia ***ọ*** *khian*

DEF man **3.SG** walk

“The man did walk.”, “The man can walk.”, “The man will go.”

(5.20)

(a) *Omon gbikhiẹn.*

Omon gbe ikhiẹn

Omon beat dance

“Omon danced.”, “Omon has danced.”

(b) *Omon* ***ọ*** *gbikhiẹn.*

Omon ***ọ*** *gbe ikhiẹn*

Omon **3.SG** beat dance

“Omon did (indeed) dance.”, “Omon does (indeed) dance.”

This semantic contribution of *ọ* must be explained as a reflex either of the pronoun as an argument, or the “pronoun” as an agreement marker. We do not expect the latter of these, because of the nature of agreement. If agreement is defined as a structural relation between a head and its specifier (Emuekpere-Masagbor 1997: 164), in this case between a subject and the predicate, then agreement *by itself* should not provide any semantic contribution as to the temporal or aspectual interpretation of a clause, nor should it bring any focus to the nominal subject. In an agreement system like that found in Ivie, the presence of a pronoun does not indicate any aspectual or temporal meaning, nor does it create a focus on the subject. Because the agreement marker does not provide any additional semantic contribution, alternative

constructions/lexical items must be used for the same purposes. For example, in Ivie the aspectual marker *shé* is used to indicate a perfect aspect (cf. Esan examples 5.19-5.20 above).

(5.21) Ivie*:*

Oti ọ ***shé*** *lé afẹ*

Oti	*ọ*	***shé***	*lé*	*afẹ*
Oti	3sg	**ASP**	eat	fish

"Oti has eaten fish"

It must be noted that the marker *ọ* in Esan, such as of examples (5.19-5.20), might still be able to be analyzed an agreement marker if it is viewed as a portmanteau morpheme. Thus, it may function both to indicate agreement *and* to convey a non-perfect aspectual meaning. For instance, the English agreement marker *-s* indicates both third person and singular number (*phi*-features of agreement), as well as present tense/habitual aspect. However, given the other evidence against agreement in Esan, as well as the fact that such a portmanteau is not found in the agreement system of Ivie, this portmanteau interpretation remains speculative.

Viewing the PNPC as involving a pronoun, with its presence signally topicalization allows us to capture the temoral-aspectual implications (for some speakers) which have been shown in this section (see §5.1.2 for more on this topicalization analysis).

5.1.1.5. Esan and Ivie compared

Throughout this section, I have presented evidence from Ivie which warrants the classification of its subject markers as agreement markers. This evidence often contrasts with Esan, thus providing an excellent case to use as a comparison, and justifying the classification of

Esan PNPs as arguments. Below, I provide a chart summarizing these facts, illustrating the difference between Esan and Ivie with respect to these phenomena.

Subject markers: Phenomenon in question	Esan - Arguments	Ivie - Agreement Markers
Presence in all (finite) clauses	NO	YES
Presence with second V of co-ordinated VP	NO	YES
Full/Strong form permitted	YES	NO
Aspectual contribution	YES	NO

Table 4: Symmetry between Esan and Ivie

Having established that the post-nominal pronouns are arguments in Esan, I now ask what the implications of this are, i.e. what syntactic structures are involved in PNPCs and how does this structure tie into larger aspects of Esan syntax?

5.1.2. Motivating topicalization

I argue within this section and continuing into §5.1.3–§5.1.4 that the PNPC involves a type of topicalization. The initial nominal **moves** from subject position (the specifier position of the inflectional phrase — spec-IP), to a topic position in the left periphery (the specifier of the topic phrase — spec-TopP). This is what I refer to as **topicalization**: a nominal becoming a topic. The term "topic" constitutes what the proposition is about, often referring to some previously mentioned or established entity in the discourse. In other words, topic highlights old information, unlike "focus", which highlights *new* information (Marfo 2005, de Cat 2007, Ermisch 2007)[22]. Evidence for topicalization come from the following:

[22] There are multiple types of topics, including "aboutness topics", "contrastive topics", and "familiarity topics" (see Ermisch 2007: 49-53 for an overview). I do not discuss which type(s) of topic(s) Esan exhibits.

(5.22) Evidence for topicalization:

1. Aspectual contribution is attributable to topic interpretation (§5.1.2.1)

2. Pre-subject positions are often topic/focus positions (§5.1.2.2)

5.1.2.1. Aspectual contribution

With respect to the aspectual contribution sometimes accompanying the post-nominal pronoun construction, recall from §5.1.1.4 that the presence of a post-nominal pronoun implies confirmation or declaration, often with past tense implications. **If** (1) topic refers to that thing which the proposition is *about*, **then** (2) this implies that the topic has been established *prior* to the proposition. If this logic holds, then (1) this accounts for the implication of past tense, and (2) the implication of confirmation/declaration falls out from the fact that this is a statement about a specific entity (the topic in question), rather than a general statement.

This use of the PNPC is also supported by Ejele (2002), working mainly on the Ekpoma dialect of Esan, who notes that its use indicates *habituality* (with specific accompanying tonal/ intonational patterns), which would be likely to be an answer to the question of the type "What does X do?". In such statements, the subject is likely already established as a topic, therefore permitting topicalization.

(5.23)

(a) *odedé* ***ộ*** *sẹ* *ená*

odede **she** reach here

"Odede reaches here" (Esan; Ejele 2002: 76)

(b) *ìbhokhàn* ***ê*** *ye-emi-ré*

children **they** remember-thing-remember

"children remember things" (Esan; Ejele 2002: 76)

5.1.2.2. Left-peripheral positions

This construction further exhibits properties of topicalization in that (1) topicalization often triggers marked constituent order, and (2) cross linguistically positions in the left periphery of the clause are topic/focus positions. Ermisch (2007: 53) notes that "topicalization refers to a construction in which the unmarked word order is changed by placing a certain constituent in sentence-initial position". The alteration of word order produces a salient distinction between the more neutral canonical word order of a linguistic system, and is often the best means for conveying information changes and/or emphasis.

The left periphery of a language (often) hosts the encoding of information structure in terms of focus and topic positions (Rizzi 1997), seen cross linguistically. Below, I illustrate the common left peripheral positions of topicalized and focused elements.

(5.24) English:

(a) *The man is seeing someone*.

(b) (*As for*) ***the man****, he is seeing someone*. (Topic)

(c) ***Apples*** *I like*. (Focus)

(5.25) Italian (Badan & Buell 2010: 3):

(a) *Gianni canta questa canzone*.

Gianni sing this song

"Gianni sings this song."

(b) [***Questa canzone***]$_i$ *Gianni la$_i$* *canta*.

this **song** Gianni clitic sing

"**This song**, Gianni sings (it)." (Topic)

(c) [***Questa canzone***]$_i$ *Gianni canta*.

this **song** Gianni sing

"**This song** Gianni sings." (Focus)

(5.26) Ewe (Ermisch 2007: 103):

(a) *m-* *ná-* *dɔ* *ɖeví-* *má-* *wó*

1sg give work child dem PL

"I gave work to those children." (constructed)[23]

(b) ***ɖeví-*** ***má-*** ***wó-*** ***é*** *m-* *ná-* *dɔ-* *(í)*

child **dem** **PL** **foc** 1sg give work 3sg

"I gave work to THOSE CHILDREN.", "It were those children to whom I gave work." (Focus)

(Lit.: **those children** I gave work to (him/her/it))

In these languages, a nominal element of a clause is "promoted" to a left peripheral position. Esan is similar in that topicalized elements are also found in left-peripheral positions[24]. Thus,

[23] I have constructed this sentence, inferred from Ermisch 2007.

[24] Esan focus constructions also involve the promotion of a nominal to a left peripheral position.

(i) *Mẹ lọgẹdẹ.*
mẹ *le* *ọgẹdẹ*
1.SG eat banana
"I ate bananas."

(ii) *Ọgẹdẹ mẹ le*
ọgẹdẹ *mẹ* *le*
banana 1.SG eat
"*Bananas* I ate." (Focus)

viewing the PNPC as topicalization fits in nicely with pre-established notions of topicalized positions and word order.

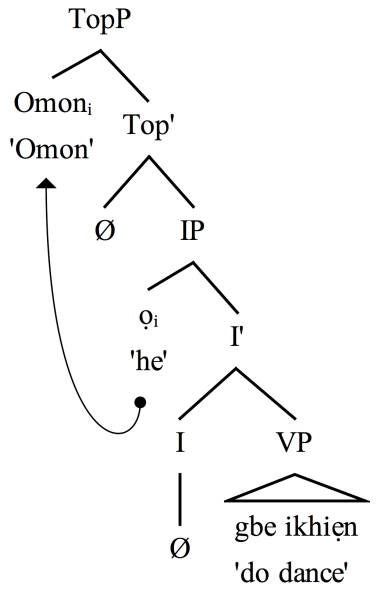
5.1.3. Motivating movement and resumption

As stated above, I assume that the topicalization structure involves the movement of the nominal in the subject position (spec-IP) to a left peripheral position (spec-TopP). Here movement refers to a linguistic object entering into a specific position in the generation of a sentence (*merge*; Chomsky 1995), and then entering into another position (*move α*; Chomsky 1995). I follow Chomsky (1995) in viewing movement as follows:

> "... movement of an element α always leave a trace, and in the simplest cases, forms a *chain* (α, *t*), where α, the *head* of the chain, is the moved element and *t* is its trace. The chain is an X-chain if its head has the property X"
>
> (Chomsky 1995: 43; italics his)

These trace relations allow for the proper interpretation of the sentence, otherwise it would result in an ungrammatical sentence. The post-nominal pronoun construction forms an A-bar chain, where a nominal moves from an A-position (i.e. an argument position where it receives case and theta-role interpretation within this derivation) to a peripheral A-bar position (i.e. a non-argument position where case and theta-role are *not* assigned). Specifically, the nominal moves to the specifier position of the topic phrase, and as a consequence leaves a trace in its former (subject) position; this trace is then *resumed* by a resumptive pronoun. This is thus an example of Cinque's (1990) "fourth type of A-bar dependency [holding]...between a *resumptive pronoun and a sentence-initial phrase*" (Cinque 1990: xiv; italics his). Movement and subsequent resumption is shown in the tree below.

(5.27) Illustration of movement and resumption:



This scenario thus suggests that resumptive pronouns are overtly pronounced traces, a claim which is also argued for in Koopman & Sportiche (1986: 362), working on Vata (DIC) [Dida, Kru, Niger-Congo: Côte d'Ivoire], in their proposed "trace spell-out". They argue that a trace in subject position cannot satisfy the Empty Category Principle (ECP), which requires empty categories, e.g. phonologically unrealized traces, "to be governed either by a lexical head or by a position containing an antecedent" (Koopman & Sportiche 1986: 357). Thus in Vata, we see that wh-movement from a subject position results in pronoun resumption.

(5.28) Vata:

àlÓ ǹ gùgù nā ***Ò*** *nÙ mÍ lá*

àlÓ	*ǹ*	*gùgù*	*nā*	{***Ò***/*[*e*]}	*nÙ*	*mÍ*	*lá*
who	you	thought	NA	{**he-R**/*Ø}	did	it	WH

"Who do you think did it?" (Koopman & Sportiche 1986: 360)

Also like in Vata, in Esan resumptive pronouns are only found in subject position, and not in other argument positions. I turn to this matter in the section §5.1.4.

5.1.3.1. Against base-generation

It should be asked why a movement analysis here is chosen over one of base-generation. That is, what motivates an analysis of **movement** of the nominal from subject position to topic position, which results in pronoun resumption, rather than the nominal being **base-generated** in the topic position directly, and the pronoun in the subject position directly? In French, for example, de Cat (2007) illustrates a similar construction, the Clitic Left Dislocation (CLLD), and argues that the topics are base-generated in their peripheral positions, acting as adjuncts rather than as arguments of the main clause. Hence no movement is involved, and therefore no resumption[25].

In the French example in (5.29), the nominals *le savon* 'the soap' and *Ponge* are argued to be base-generated as a topic, rather than move from a lower clause.

(5.29) French:

Le savon$_i$, Ponge$_j$, il$_j$ en$_i$ a fait un poème mousseux.

the soap Ponge he of-it has made a poem foamy.

"Ponge wrote a foamy poem about soap." (de Cat 2007: 489)

Thus the question is whether there is evidence that Esan truly displays resumption, and not base-generation.

At present, it is not possible to definitively decide which of these two theories accounts better for the data. Possible diagnostics include weak-cross over effects, reconstruction effects,

[25] This classification of French here is by no means uncontroversial (see discussion within de Cat 2007, citing Hirschbühler 1975, Cinque 1977, Larsson 1979, Benincà 2001, and others).

sensitivity to (strong) islands, and tests related to discourse factors (de Cat 2007: 491), all of which require data which is not currently available/reliable. I adopt a movement account, assuming that topicalization in Esan is derivational in that the first nominal first moves into subject position, meets any selectional or syntactic requirements (such as theta-role and case), and then moves to the topic position. I choose this option because of evidence that when two nominals are co-referential but merged in distinct locations (i.e. no movement and resumption), there is full feature matching with respect to number and person. For example, with verbs selecting a complementizer phrase such as *gualọ* 'to want', both the matrix and embedded subjects are in A-positions (i.e. argument positions), each selected by a finite verbal complex within different clauses. When these subjects are co-referential, they share both number and person features. In (5.30) below, *mẹ* 1.SG is the antecedent, and the lower clause subject is *imẹ* 1.SG.F, which matches for both number and person.

(5.30) *Mẹ gualọ {nimẹ/*nọ} lọ guan niania.*

mẹ	*gualọ*	{*ni*	*imẹ/*	**ni*	*ọ}*	*lẹ*	*ọ*
1.SG	want	{REL	1.SG.F/	REL	3.SG}	be with	3.SG
guan	*niania*						
speak	now.REDUP						

"I need to talk to her right away."

(More lit.: I want that {I/*he} speak with her right now)

The pronoun *ọ* 3.SG, normally found in resumption and matching for only person, is not attested in such contexts. This therefore suggests that the resumptive pronoun constructions presented thus far do not involve base-generation (see §6.5 for discussion on the lack of person matching

with resumptive pronouns). Regardless of which theoretical account one chooses, one still must independently answer why the PNPC occurs only with subject pronouns.

5.1.4. Structural subject requirement

In this section, I put forward the hypothesis that there exists a strong constraint in Esan against phonologically unrealized subjects. That is, there must be an appropriate nominal element which occupies the subject position *overtly* of a finite clause. There have been numerous different ideas as to what "subject" means, a debate which goes at least as far back as Aristotle, and other pre- and post-Socratic thought on Subject/Predicate divisions in language (Moro 2006, den Dikken 2006). Falk (2006: 16) summarizes three different conceptualizations of "subject": (1) subject as structural position, (2) subject as grammatical relation, and (3) subject as grammatical function. In the present study, I concentrate on (1), and illustrate the Esan structure as the striving force behind the obligatory presence of an overt linguistic element in its subject position[26].

I formalize this structural subject requirement via the Extended Projection Principle (EPP) (*à la* Chomsky 1995). The EPP can be stated as follows:

> "The Extended Projection Principle (EPP) plausibly reduces to a strong D-feature of I, and overt WH-raising to a strong D-feature of C (assuming *WH-* to be a variant of D (Determiner))"
>
> (Chomsky 1995: 232; see also Adesola 2005: 102)

Thus, the EPP boils down to a condition that there must be some appropriate linguistic object in the specifier of I (i.e. the subject position) which "checks" (i.e. satisfies) this strong D-feature.

[26] It should be noted that Falk (2006) actively downplays the importance of subject-as-structural-position, and rather focusses on the other two more functional conceptions of "subject".

This D-feature is a property of determiner phrases (DPs), being the type of phrase which nominals and pronominals are (often) introduced under within clauses. Thus, every (finite) clause in Esan must be *saturated* by an overt subject, otherwise the sentence will be ungrammatical[27]. This subject must bear a [+D] feature, a property of certain types of nominals and pronominals.

It should be noted that formalizing the structural subject requirement of Esan with the Extended Projection Principle utilizes a particularly strong version of the EPP. In Esan, a nominal can only satisfy the EPP if it is an overt element (i.e. phonologically pronounced), rather than a covert element (such as an unpronounced trace). When a nominal moves from subject position to another peripheral position, the trace which it leaves in its place does *not* satisfy the EPP. If we compare this to English in analogous relative clause constructions, a language which also has an active structural subject requirement, a gap may satisfy the EPP; a resumptive pronoun is ungrammatical.

(5.31) The man that {*gap*/*he} sold the world.

This therefore entails that this structural subject requirement in Esan must be satisfied at all stages of the derivation of a sentence, whereas in English, it may check this feature, and then move to another position. The particular mechanics distinguishing these two types of languages remain beyond the scope of this paper. What is important is that *only* phonologically overt elements may satisfy the structural subject requirement for Esan, thus resulting in the insertion of

[27] The Extended Projection Principle stems from the Projection Principle, which requires that the thematic properties of a lexical item "remain constant throughout the derivation" (Roberge 1990: 19; see also Pesetsky 1982); i.e. all selectional requirements of a lexical item (selecting a verb phrase, a complement phrase, a noun, *etc*.) are met. Thus, a principle which originally was posited in order to secure proper saturation of *lexical items* (lexically specified projection) was extended in order to secure proper saturation of *the clause itself* (grammatically specified projection).

a resumptive pronoun when a nominal has been extracted from subject position, though not from other structural positions[28].

Further, because pronouns are used for this resumption task to ensure proper clause grammaticality, this entails that they carry a [+D] feature which is able to satisfy this "strong D-feature" condition of I. There is independent evidence that pronouns are [+D], as mentioned in §3.2. First, because pronouns stand for nominals, the nominal will have already been established in discourse, and therefore likely be definite (or, in other words, the establishment of identity of the entity is achieved previous to the use of a personal pronoun, therefore implying definiteness). Further, there is an asymmetry in the syntactic distribution of pronouns versus other nominals. Most nominals can co-occur with overt determiners *ọni* or *eni* 'the' and quantifiers (e.g. *eso* 'some'). However, pronouns are not found co-occurring with these determiners.

(5.32)

(a) *ọnawa*

ọni *awa*

DEF dog

"the dog"

(b) **ọnimẹ*

ọni *imẹ*

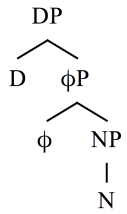
DEF 1.SG

for "the me"

[28] Further, the Esan data is particularly interesting noting that many languages which require resumptive pronouns require them in *non*-subject positions, and actively bar them from subject position (see McCloskey 1990, 2006; refer to the "Highest Subject Restriction" and "Antilocality" in these sources for formalization).

In order to capture this asymmetry between nominals and pronominals, I adopt the position that pronouns occur in the D position within a DP, thus preventing the presence of a determiner (Déchaine & Wiltschko 2002: 410).

(5.33)



Thus pronouns are most like proper names, which are inherently referential, specific, and definite (i.e. [+D]).

I now explore further evidence for a structural subject requirement in Esan. If such a requirement is present in the language, in addition to resumptive pronouns under subject topicalization, we should expect to see a number of places which illustrate this constraint outside of resumptive pronouns. This is indeed what we find.

5.1.5. Corroborating evidence for structural subject requirement

This section aims to unify the hypothesis put forward with respect to the pronominal resumption of traces in the structural subject position with additional data in the language, seeking to illustrate a single source for a constellation of effects in Esan with respect to this subject position. I present four pieces of data which illustrate the pervasive null subject constraint active in the Esan language which effectively prevents a phonologically unrealized subject. These are the following:

(5.34) Empirical data illustrating constraint against empty subject:

(1) Lack of *pro*-drop

(2) Use of expletives and dummy subjects

(3) Overt impersonal subjects in negative imperatives

(4) Raising of nominals from object to subject position with *ri bhi* 'to put at/to be at'

It should be noted that there *are* certain cases where a clause does not occur with an overt phonologically realized structural subject. These include (1) positive imperatives, and (2) co-ordinate VPs, and (3) serial verbs. Also, recall that for certain speakers, the subject resumptive pronoun is optional in relative clauses (see §4.2.2.1 and §5.2.2.2).

5.1.5.1. No pro-drop

The first independent evidence for a requirement that a subject be present is that Esan does not allow a subject to be "dropped" in discourse, even in contexts in which it is pragmatically, and conceivably syntactically, recoverable. Languages which do allow a null subject are known as *pro*-drop languages, and do not have this structural subject requirement (Roberge 1990: 7)[29]; an example from Italian is given below. Here, the "subject" is present only in terms of its agreement on the verb.

[29] A correlation with *pro*-drop permissibility and rich verbal inflection should be noted here, though this correlation is complicated by East Asian languages without such inflectional systems but still displaying *pro*-drop. See Roberge (1990), Huang (1982, 1984), and others for details.

(5.35) Italian:

Possiamo avere due pizze per favore?

Ø *possiamo* *avere* *due* *pizze* *per favore*

Ø can.1.PL have two pizza please

"Can we have two pizzas please?"

In contrast, Esan does not allow a phonologically null and empty category *pro* in subject position. The subject is not found to be optional in the following examples.

(5.36)

(a) **(Mhan) rẹ gịẹgie kpoluwa, *(mhan) bha fẹko luọ.*

**(mhan)* *rẹ* *gịẹgie* *kpolo* *uwa,* **(mhan)*

1.PL although quickly sweep house 1.PL

bha *fẹko* *lu* *ọ*

NEG carefully do 3.SG

for "Although we swept the house quickly, we did not sweep it carefully."

(b) **(Mẹ) yain ebeni!*

**(mẹ)* *yain* *ebe* *ni*

1.SG own book DIST

for "I own that book!"

(c) **(Ọ) ghọnghọn.*

**(ọ)* *ghọnghọn*

3.SG be happy.REDUP

for "He is happy."

This lack of *pro*-drop implies that there is a general principle active in Esan which prevents a null subject which is *not* active in a language like Italian. If we understand this principle as the structural subject requirement already posited, then these facts make sense.

5.1.5.2. Expletives and dummy impersonals

This section discusses two further cases of the structural subject requirement. The first involves expletives which are non-referential *and* non-specific. The second involves the presence of dummy *e* 'they', which although non-specific, does refer to some abstract unmentioned reference.

An expletive refers to a semantically null (i.e. non-referential and non-specific) nominal which is not selected (i.e. projected) by the verbal complex, and consequently does not receive a theta role. In example (5.37) below, the expletive *ọ* 'it' is found in subject position.

(5.37) ***Ọ*** *jabe enibhokhan ghọnghọn.*

ọ	*jabe*	*eni*	*ibhokhan*	*ghọnghọn*
3.SG	seem	DEF	child.PL	be happy.REDUP

"It seems the children are happy."

Because this pronoun is not selected for by the verb *jabe* 'to seem' and it has no referent in the discourse, it follows that its presence is due to a syntactic constraint of the language. If we understand it as a reflex of the structural subject requirement seen elsewhere, then its presence falls out nicely. [Also, see §5.3 for arguments against resumptive pronouns as expletives.]

Further, Esan does not display any "passive" voice which promotes the object to the subject position, and demotes the subject to an oblique position. Instead, when emphasis is

placed on the predicate/object, it correlates with the presence of a dummy impersonal *e* 'they'[30]. This dummy pronoun was described in §4.1.2. In examples (5.38-5.39) below, *e* does not refer specifically to any previously mentioned entity, but rather to an understood abstract group or population of entities.

(5.38) ***E** bha huẹnmọnnokpia.*

e	*bha*	*huẹnmẹn*	*ọni*	*okpia*
they	NEG	like	DEF	man

"The man is disliked." (More lit.: they don't like the man)

(5.39) ***E** khian sienẹmila.*

e	*khian*	*si*	*eni*	*ẹmila*
they	FUT	pull	DEF.PL	cattle

"The cattle will be pulled." (More lit.: they will pull the cattle in)

The presence of this pronoun is important because it shows that even when there is no specific referent to which the proposition applies, there must be an overt subject. Both subjectless passive sentences (5.40a) and object promotion (5.40b) are unattested for.

---

[30] Dummy 'they' is also noted for Ewe (Ermisch 2007: 95, citing Ameka 1991: 282):

(i)

wó	*dze-*	*na*	*náke*	*kpli*	*fiá.*
3pl	split	hab	firewood	with	axe

"Firewood is split with an axe." (More lit.: **they** split firewood with an axe)

Marginally, English permits certain dummy 'they' constructions, as in (ii), where 'they' merely refers to an non-specific set of people:

(ii) They call me Paul around here.

Such constructions in English are limited, however (cf. non-specific reading of (?)*"They split firewood with an axe around here").

(5.40)

(a) No *pro*-drop:

**Khian sienẹmila.*

khian	*si*	*eni*	*ẹmila*
FUT	pull	DEF.PL	cattle

for "The cattle will be pulled."

(b) No passive:

**Enẹmila khian si*

eni	*ẹmila*	*khian*	*si*
DEF.PL	cattle	FUT	pull

for "The cattle will be pulled."

In a language such as Modern Greek which allows subjectless sentences, those clauses occurring in passive voice optionally raise the object to subject position (5.41b); the object may remain *in situ* as well, resulting in a subjectless sentence (5.41c)[31].

(5.41) Optionality of Obj-to-Subj movement in Modern Greek:

(a) Active:

I skili efaghan to faghito.

i	*skili*	*efaghan*	*to*	*faghito*
the.PL.M	dog.PL.M	PAST.eat.3.PL.PAST	the.N	food.N

"The dogs ate the food."

[31] There is of course the possibility in (5.41c) that the object has moved to subject position *and* the verb has moved to a higher position, possibly in the Complement Phrase (CP). Thanks to Maria Kyriakaki for the Modern Greek data and discussion.

(b) Passive & movement:

To faghito faghothike.

to *faghito* *faghothike*

the.N food.N eat.PASS.3.SG

"The food was eaten."

(c) Passive & no movement:

Faghothike to faghito.

faghothike *to* *faghito*

eat.PASS.3.SG the.N food.N

"The food was eaten."

Further, as also discussed in §4.1.2, the impersonal pronoun *a* 'one, we, people' is also used to convey a passive-like interpretation, emphasizing the predicate/object over any agent. This use of the impersonal pronoun shows another context in which an overt subject is required by the structure of the language, even when the agent of the proposition non-specific/ unemphasized.

(5.42)

(a) ***A*** *lọniyan.*

a *le* *ọni* *iyan*

GEN.PRO eat DEF yam

"We've eaten the yam.", "One eats the yam.", "The yam has been eaten."

(b) *Agbons **a** timẹ.*

Agbons	***a***	*ti*	*imẹ*
Agbons	**GEN.PRO**	call	1.SG.F

"I am called Agbons." (Lit.: Agbons (is what) one calls me)

(c) *Ayọn n**a** da ọ rioria bhẹnbhẹn.*

ayọn	*ni*	***a***	*da*	*ọ*	*ri*	*ọria*	*bhẹnbhẹn*
wine	REL	**GEN.PRO**	drink	3.SG	CAUS	person	crazy.REDUP

"Drinking wine makes a person crazy."

(More lit.: wine that one/people/the world drinks, it makes a person crazy)

(d) ***A** sabọ miẹn ẹbhe lebe*. (Uromi Dialect)

a	*sabọ*	*miẹn*	*ẹbhe*	*le*	*ebe*
GEN.PRO	be able	find	goat	eat	leaf

"A goat probably ate some leaves."

(More lit.: one can/might find that a goat ate some leaves)

5.1.5.3. Negative imperatives

Imperatives cross-linguistically very often utilize a basic or reduced form of a verb, and often occur without an overt subject (see Zhang 1990). In Esan, however, in negative imperatives, the general pronoun *a* 'one, we' or the general negative pronoun *ẹ* 'it/he/she/they/ one does not' is often found in subject position. This can be understood as following from the requirement of an overt subject.

(5.43)

(a) ***A*** *yi gbọnnebe*.

a	*yi*	*gbẹn*	*ọni*	*ebe*
GEN.PRO	NEG.COP	write	DEF	letter

"Don't write the letter!" (Also: one doesn't (ever) or shouldn't ever write the letter / we shouldn't write the letter)

(b) ***Ẹ*** *gbọniletter!*

ẹ	*gbẹn*	*ọni*	*iletter*
NEG.PRO	write	DEF	letter

"Don't write the letter!"

This pronoun *a* in negative imperatives should not be confused with the use of the habitual/ progressive/continuous marker *gha* CONT in imperatives.

When *gha* is found in imperatives, it places emphasis on the result of the desired action, especially a change of state. In this context *gha* is often translated as English 'just', example (5.44a), or 'do', example (5.44b).

(5.44)

(a) *Gha gbọniletter!*

gha	*gbẹn*	*ọni*	*iletter*
CONT	write	DEF	letter

"Just write the letter!"

(b) *Gha fẹko!*

gha *fẹko*

CONT careful!

"You do be careful!"

Though these two markers are nearly phonologically identical, they do not represent the same morpheme. Evidence for this is (1) the pronoun *a* always proceeds the negative copula *yi* in negative imperatives, and (2) the pronoun *a* and the T/A marker *gha* may co-occur within the same sentence (5.45).

(5.45) *Gh**á**i ghá ghọnghọn!*

*gh-**a***	*yi*	*ghá*	*ghọnghọn*
ASSOC-**GEN.PRO**	NEG.COP	CONT	be happy.REDUP

"Don't be happy!"

It should be noted that using as supporting evidence the presence of overt subjects in negative imperatives is weaker than the other evidence put forward for two reasons. First, this pronominal is optional, with the negative interpretation able to be provided strictly intonationally (5.46a). Second, *positive* imperatives in Esan do not occur with an overt subject (5.46b).

(5.46)

(a) *Gbọnnebe!*

Ø	*gbẹn*	*ọni*	*ebe*
Ø	write	DEF	letter

"Ø Don't write the letter!"

(b) *Vare bhena!*

Ø	*va-re*	*bhi*	*ena*
Ø	come-CPM	LOC	here

"Ø Come here!"

5.1.5.4. Object to subject movement

The verbal complex *ri bhi* 'to put at/to be at' arguably involves the movement of a nominal from object to subject position. If this is the correct analysis, then this structure provides additional evidence that there must be a structural subject in every (finite) clause.

The location construction *ri bhi* can have multiple interpretations, based on how many arguments there are, and also the semantics of the arguments. It is composed of *ri,* a causative marker glossed as CAUS, and *bhi*, a locative preposition glossed as LOC. There are three main constructions which *ri bhi* phrases occur in. The letters represent different arguments respectively, where X=causer, Y=causee, and Z=location; t stands for trace.

(5.47) /X *ri* Y *bhi* Z/ → X put Y in/on Z (locational causative)

/Y_t *ri* t *bhi* Z/ → Y is in/on Z (locational existential)

/Y_t *ri* t *bhi* it/ → Y exists (non-locational existential)

(5.48) /X *ri* Y *bhi* Z/:

Mẹ ***ri****ọnebe* ***bh****aga.*

mẹ	***ri***	*ọni*	*ebe*	***bhi***	*aga*
1.SG	CAUS	DEF	book	LOC	chair

"I put the book on the chair."

(5.49) /Y_t *ri* t *bhi* Z/

*Enebe ne khua **ri bh**aga.*

eni	*ebe*	*ni*	*e*	*khua*	***ri***	***bhi***	*aga*
DEF	book	REL	3.PL	be heavy	CAUS	LOC	chair

"The heavy books are on the chair.", "There are heavy books on the chair."

(5.50) /Y_t *ri* t *bhi* it/

*Osẹnobua ọ **ri bh**ọ.*

Osẹnobua	*ọ*	***ri***	***bhi***	*ọ*
Jehovah	3.SG	CAUS	LOC	3.SG

"God exists." (Lit.: God is in it)

In (5.48), the interpretation is that a causer X has made an causee Y go or be somewhere Z. This contrasts with examples (5.49-5.50), where there is no interpretation of a causer, but rather an existential reading "there are...". Thus, in an example like (5.50), there is no interpretation of causation, only existence, despite the use of the same verbal construction *ri bhi*.

Because in examples like (5.49-5.50) there is no interpretation of a causer/agent, it then follows that no causer is generated in the subject position. **If** (1) no causer is generated in the subject position, **and** (2) we maintain that the causee/experiencer is generated in the object position based on the selectional constraints of *ri bhi*, **then** (3) the causee/experiencer moves from the object position to the subject position. If we acknowledge a structural subject requirement, then this movement can be accounted for, and acts as another piece of evidence supporting this requirement in the language[32].

[32] This provides evidence for our hypothesis whether this movement is a synchronic aspect of the grammar, or if this holds only diachronically. The latter case would imply that *ri bhi* has been reanalyzed as a single indivisible verbal unit *ribhi* meaning "to be located at", with different selectional requirements.

5.2. Resumptive pronouns in relative clauses (RCs)

This section aims to tie in resumptive pronouns (RPs) in relative clauses (RCs) with the account of RPs already presented. I discuss the phenomena related to resumptive pronouns in relative clauses which support the present analysis here (§5.2.1), as well as those places in which relative clauses diverge from post-nominal pronoun constructions, and require an additional account (§5.2.2).

5.2.1. Similarities between the PNPC and RCs

Like the PNPC, relative clauses contain resumptive pronouns. Similarly, resumptive pronouns only occur when a nominal is co-indexed with the subject position of a relative clause, and not with the nominal in any other position.

(5.51)

(a) RP in subject position:

ọnokpia$_i$ [*n**ọ**$_i$ dọnebe*]

ọni *okpia*$_i$ [*ni* ***ọ**$_i$* *dẹ* *ọni* *ebe*]

DEF man REL **3.SG** buy DEF book

"the man [that bought the book]"

(Lit.: the man$_i$ that **he$_i$** bought the book)

(b) No RP in object position:

izẹ*$_i$ [*nimẹ dọ**$_i$*]

izẹ$_i$ [*ni* *imẹ* *dẹ* ***ọ**$_i$*]

rice REL 1.SG buy **3.SG**

for "rice that I bought"

(c) Gap in object position:

izẹ$_i$ [*nimẹ dẹ*]

izẹ$_i$ [*ni* *imẹ* *dẹ* **Ø**$_i$]

rice REL 1.SG buy **gap**

"rice that I bought"

When a nominal is co-indexed with an object in a relative clause, there is a gap in this location, analogous to the English RC construction (5.51c). These facts shows that resumption only occurs in relative clauses in subject position, and a principle is required to account for this. **If** we assume that the nominal has moved from the relative clause position to the higher clause position, and **if** the structural subject requirement which has been put forward for the PNPC holds, **then** resumption is expected when an element from a subject position has moved.

Further, like resumptive pronouns in PNPCs, the resumptive pronoun in an RC is invariably a third person. Here, all persons are neutralized, and only number is shared; an example such as (5.52) has not been attested.

(5.52) **Bha n**ibha** *lọnebai.*

bha *ni* ***ibha*** *le* *ọni* *ebai*

2.PL REL **2.PL.F** eat DEF food

for "You all who ate the food."

However, there is marginal variation with first and second plural persons *mhan* 1.PL and *bha* 2.PL. In the example below, it is presently uncertain which resumptive pronoun is more appropriate.

(5.53) (?)*Bha* ***nọ ~ e*** *lọnebai*.

bha	*ni*	{***ọ ~ e***}	*le*	*ọni*	*ebai*
2.PL	REL	{**3.SG ~ 3.PL**}	eat	DEF	food

for "You all who ate the food."

As noted in §4.2.2.1, data for relative clauses with these pronoun is very limited. See §7.2 for further examples of variation with respect to resumptive pronouns.

5.2.2. Differences between the PNPC and RCs

There are two crucial places where resumption differs structurally from that of PNPCs. First, the relativizer *ni* REL 'that' is used in RCs, not found in PNPCs, and second, the resumptive pronoun in subject position RCs is optional for some speakers. This optionality points to the fact that in Esan a relative clause might have two forms for some speakers: one form in which the RC is *externally* headed, and the other in which it is *internally* headed. Further, as mentioned in §4.2.2.1 and §5.2.1, data of relativization of first and second persons is lacking, and a concrete comparison with post-nominal pronoun constructions cannot be

conducted. These differences present serious challenges to the present analysis, and therefore should be acknowledged here[33].

5.2.2.1. Presence of relativizer ni

One distinction between RCs and PNPCs is the presence of the relativizer *ni* 'that' in RCs which is not found in PNPCs, as shown by the pair below:

(5.54)

(a) RC:

ọnawa nọ kpọlọ

ọni	*awa*	{*ni*/*Ø}	*ọ*	*kpọlọ*
DEF	dog	{REL/*Ø}	3.SG	be big

"the dog that is big"

[33] Moreover, I do not discuss two further differences: (1) possessive relative clauses normally occur with *ọ* 3.SG 'it', and do not agree in [Number] with the co-indexed referent (as discussed in §4.2.2.3; see example (i) below), and (2), at present it has not been determined whether the full forms of resumptive pronouns are permitted in relative clauses, or if this is restricted to the reduced forms (of the type in example (ii)).

(i) Invariability with possessive RCs:

Ọ daghologbo$_i$ n{***ọ$_i$***/*?***e$_i$***}*ghọle.*

ọ	*daghe*	*ologbo$_i$*	*ni*	{***ọ$_i$***/*?***e$_i$***}	*ghọ*	*ọle*
3.SG	see	cat	REL	{**3.SG/*?3.PL**}	belong to	3.SG.F

"He sees his cats."

(More lit.: He sees the **cats$_i$** that {**it$_i$** /*?**they$_i$**} belong(s) to him)

(ii) Not determined - full form of pronoun in RC:

?*ọnawa n****ọle*** *kpọlọ*

ọni	*awa*	*ni*	***ọle***	*kpọlọ*
DEF	dog	REL	**3.SG.F**	be big

hypothesized for "the dog that is big"

(b) PNPC:

Ọnawa ọ kpọlọ.

ọni	*awa*	{Ø/**ni*}	ọ	*kpọlọ*
DEF	dog	{Ø/*REL}	3.SG	be big

"The dog is big."

Example (5.54a) shows that the absence of the relativizer leads to ungrammaticality, whereas (5.54b) shows that the presence of the relativizer is ungrammatical in the PNPC. This relativizer is the only marker distinguishing these two constructions, therefore possibly preventing its presence or absence in the other construction[34]. Further, the presence of the relativizer may also function to allow the optionality of the resumptive pronoun in relative clauses, while its absence functions to *prevent* such optionality in post-nominal pronoun constructions (topicalization). I turn to this next.

5.2.2.2. Optionality of RPs in RCs

The canonical structure of relative clauses involves resumptive pronouns in subject position. However, for some speakers a relative clause may occur without a resumptive pronoun, though this is not common; canonically, the structure occurs with a resumptive pronoun. This optionality is shown below:

[34] Tone and intonation may also function to distinguish these two types of constructions as well, given that they play such a significant role in the grammar of Esan already (see §2.4). This is uncertain at present.

(5.55)

(a) With resumptive pronoun:

Ọnokpia$_i$ [*nọ$_i$ dọnebe*]

ọni *okpia$_i$* [*ni* *ọ$_i$* *dẹ* *ọni* *ebe*]

DEF man REL 3.SG buy DEF book

"the man [that bought the book]"

(Lit.: the man$_i$ that he$_i$ bought the book)

(b) Without resumptive pronoun:

ọnokpia [*ni dọnebe*]

ọni *okpia* [*ni* *dẹ* *ọni* *ebe*]

DEF man REL buy DEF book

"the man [that bought the book]"

Where in (5.55a) there is a resumptive pronoun, in (5.55b) there is a gap instead (assuming the analysis of relative clauses as externally headed). This variation is difficult to understand under our current account of the structural subject requirement. If there is indeed a requirement in place which prevents a phonologically unrealized subject, then this is an exception which requires an account. In particular, this account must both account for the exceptions, and also not overgenerate the optionality of subjects, and undermine the requirement itself.

At present, it may be important to note that when a resumptive pronoun is dropped in a relative clause, the clause is still unambiguously interpreted as a relative clause due to the presence of the relativizer *ni* 'that'. If we compare this to a topicalization construction (i.e. a PNPC), the only item signaling topicalization is *the resumptive pronoun itself*, as no relativizer is

found between the extracted nominal and the lower pronoun. Thus, the co-referential pronoun in a relative clause is "expendable" in a way which the same pronoun in a topicalization structure is not.

Further, Esan may maintain two different relative clause forms: an externally headed one and an internally headed one. The externally headed RC would be one in which a relative clause modifies a nominal and there is a *gap* in the position in the relative clause corresponding to the relativized nominal. This would therefore occur in all structural positions, including subject or object position. The internally headed RC would be of the type where the modified nominal is actually *within* the relative clause, and subsequently co-refers to a nominal in a higher clause. This is left for further investigation.

5.3. Distinction of resumptive pronouns and expletives

I have argued that the pronouns in question are arguments, and serve as resumptive pronouns in a vacated subject position. One might ask if they are better analyzed as expletives. Recall from §5.1.5.2 that expletives are semantically null nominals which are non-referential and non-specific, and inserted to meet a requirement of the syntax rather than required by a specific verb. An example of an expletive in Esan is provided below:

(5.56) ***Ọ*** *jabe enibhokhan ghọnghọn.*

ọ	*jabe*	*eni*	*ibhokhan*	*ghọnghọn*
3.SG	seem	DEF	child.PL	be happy.REDUP

"It seems the children are happy."

In (5.56), the pronoun *ọ* 3.SG is present in the subject position, but does not refer to any entity in the sentence, or in the discourse in general. Also note that the pronoun is singular, though the

lower nominal is plural; the form of expletives do not alter (i.e. they are not sensitive to the morphology of their neighboring words).

Like resumption, expletive insertion is attributable to the structural subject requirement active in Esan, which requires an overt subject. Thus, a pronoun is found in subject position in certain Esan clauses where it has more of a grammatical role, rather than a more lexical one. Nevertheless, resumptive pronouns have properties that differentiate them from expletives.

Resumptive pronouns should not be thought of as expletives because the subject pronoun is co-referential with the higher nominal. This co-referentiality is evidenced by the (partial) feature matching which occurs between the extracted nominal and the nominal in the lower clause. As shown below, the two nominals match for number:

(5.57)

(a) Third Person Singular

*Omon **ọ** kpoluwa.*

Omon	***ọ***	*kpolo*	*uwa*
Omon	**3.SG**	sweep	house

"Omon swept the house."

(b) Third Person Plural

*Enafiamẹnna **e** gha ghọnghọn.*

eni	*afiamẹn*	*na*	***e***	*gha*
DEF.PL	bird	PROX	**3.PL**	CONT

ghọnghọn

be happy.REDUP

"These birds were happy."

Recall from §5.1.5.2 that expletives were defined as non-referential in that they do not refer to any entity in the discourse. **Because** there is no co-referentiality between an expletive and any other nominal, **then** there should be no feature sharing between these objects; **therefore** a default/least marked/underspecified pronominal is expected when the context requires an overt nominal. [We see in §6.3 how underspecification is captured under a pronominal feature geometry.] However, because in Esan the insertion of the pronoun depends upon the features of the extracted nominal in the PNPC (and relative clauses), this suggests that it is *not* a default insertion, making any expletive interpretation unlikely[35].

In cases where it has been argued that some resumptive-like pronoun is actually an expletive, only one pronoun invariably surfaces. In Edo for instance, when a subject is extracted and moved to some peripheral position, only one subject concord marker *ọ́* 3.SG 'he/she/it' may fill the extracted position (Amayo 1975: 16, Ọmọruyi 1989: 281). Thus, this *ọ* marker occurs with *all persons and numbers* in this language. In (5.58a), we see *ọ* co-occurring with the conjoined plural *Ozo kere Osagie*.

[35] Cases involving a dummy *e* 'they' (as shown in §4.1.2.2 and §5.1.5.2) are not representative of this, as *e* in such contexts is non-specific but still abstractly referential.

(5.58)

(a) [*Ozo kere Osagie*]$_i$ *ore* ***ọ$_i$*** *gbe Uyi ewe*

Ozo and Osagie be **3.SG** kill Uyi goat

"It was Ozo and Osagie who killed Uyi's goat" (Edo; Adesola 2005, citing Uyi Stewart, p.c.)

(b) *Òsàrọ́* (*È ré*) ***ọ́*** *bọ́ òwá*

Osaro it be **PRO** build house

"Osaro, he's building a house" (Edo; Ọmọruyi 1989)[36]

(c) *ùwọ̀****ọ́*** *ghà rré*

ùwẹ̀ ***ọ́*** *ghà rré*

you **he** irr come

"it is you who should have come" (Edo; Amayo 1975)

Furthermore, in Yoruba, Bamgbose (1967: 37) states that "when the subject is moved to the initial position of the clause, a third person pronoun must be substituted for it". Adesola (2005) shows that this marker is invariably the third person singular *ó*, despite the number or person of the antecedent in the higher nominal.

[36] Note that *è ré* is entirely optional. When it is deleted, the only thing left to signal the different meaning is the resumptive pronoun/expletive.

(5.59) [*Adé* *àti* *Olú*]$_i$ *ni* ***ó*$_i$** *ra* *ìwé*

Ade and Olu be **3s** buy book

"It was Ade and Olu who bought books." (Yoruba; Adesola 2005: 103)[37]

Thus pronouns in these constructions in Edo and Yoruba are *insensitive* to the morphosyntactic context, whereas pronouns in similar constructions in Esan are *sensitive* in those same contexts. This suggests that an expletive interpretation is untenable for Esan.

If resumption is the phonological realization of a trace, then we should expect that there should be full featural matching between the extracted nominal and the trace which is left. Esan facts (at least superficially) indicate, however, that there is only a *partial matching system*. [Number] is shared to the exclusion of [Person] as the following example shows:

(5.60) First Person Singular:

(a) PNPC:

Mẹ {*ọ*/**mẹ*} *lọnnebe.*

mẹ {*ọ*/**mẹ*} *lẹn* *ọni* *ebe*

1.SG {3.SG/*1.SG} know DEF book

"I knew that book."

---

[37] Expletive type constructions are found optionally in Ewe and Guro (GOA) [Mande, Niger-Congo: Côte d'Ivoire], as well. In Ewe focus constructions, third person singular *í* may occur in the position vacated by the focused nominal, co-occurring with *all persons*. Any concord between these positions is disallowed (ii).

(i) ɖ*eví-* *má-* *wó-* *é* *m-* *ná-* *dɔ-* (*í*)
child dem PL foc 1sg give work 3sg
"I gave work to THOSE CHILDREN."/ "It were those children to whom I gave work."
Literally: "Those children I gave work to (him/her/it)." (Ewe; Ermisch 2007: 103)

(ii) *ɖ*eví-* *má-* *wó-* *é* *m-* *ná-* *dɔ-* *wó*
child dem PL foc 1sg give work 3pl
for: "Those children I gave work to them" (Ewe; Ermisch 2007: 103)

Moreover, in Guro, expletive type subject markers occur in imperfective subject pronoun constructions, and are invariably *ē*/*é* 3.SG for all potential antecedent person/number types (Benoist 1969: 57-58, 61-67, cited in Vydrine 2005: 88).

(b) RC:

*Mẹ {nọ/*nimẹ} lọnnebe.*

mẹ	*ni*	*{ọ/*imẹ}*	*lẹn*	*ọni*	*ebe*
1.SG	REL	{3.SG/*1.SG.F}	know	DEF	book

"I that knew that book."[38]

Thus, when a nominal is extracted and occurs in a non-canonical position, the element which occurs in the lower position is in some way referentially deficient. In order to understand this data, we must understand (1) the inventory of features which Esan draws upon, (2) how these features are organized, and (3) the manner in which extracted nominals are treated and the way in which features are shared with resumptive pronouns. It is to these issues I turn to next in chapter 6.

5.4. Summary of resumptive pronouns

This chapter has looked at resumptive pronouns in post-nominal pronoun constructions (PNPCs) and relative clauses (RCs). I have shown that resumptive pronouns in PNPCs are true pronouns rather than representative of a predicational agreement system, and invariably third person. These were based on four diagnostics, gleaned from a close comparison with the fellow Edoid language Ivie, whose post-nominal pronouns have been argued to be subject-verb agreement markers. These diagnostics are (1) the Esan resumptive pronoun is not obligatory, (2) resumptive pronouns are not found in co-ordinated verb phrases, (3) a contrast between full versus reduced pronoun forms is still available, and (4) there is a meaning contribution from

[38] In fact, this lack of feature agreement is what lead Adesola 2005 to claim that the "resumptive pronoun" in Yoruba cannot be thought of as generated in the derivation and then moving to this position, but can only be thought of as an expletive. How a nominal could "lose" features along the way cannot be explained, and therefore the only possible solution is expletive insertion (Adesola 2005: 106).

resumptive pronouns for some speakers. These diagnostics point to resumptive pronouns in the post-nominal pronoun construction as occurring in the subject position (spec IP), and the antecedent in the topic position (spec TopP).

The presence of resumptive pronouns can be attributed to a pervasive constraint in the language against phonologically unrealized structural subjects. When a nominal in subject position is extracted to some other position in a higher clause, it leaves a trace (Chomsky 1995), which is realized as a co-indexed resumptive pronoun (i.e. an overt trace; Koopman & Sportiche 1986). I formalize this structural subject requirement as a particularly strong manifestation of the Extended Project Principle (*à la* Chomsky 1995: 232). This structural subject requirement is corroborated by independent evidence in the language against a phonologically empty subject position, including (1) a lack of *pro*-drop, (2), the use of expletives and dummy subjects, (3) the presence of an impersonal subject in negative imperatives, and (4) the raising of objects to subject position in existential clauses with the verbal complex *ri bhi* 'to put at/to be at'.

Resumptive pronouns in relative clauses are like resumptive pronouns in PNPCs in that they only occur in subject position, and are invariably third person despite the person of the co-indexed nominal. There are two crucial places where resumption differs structurally from that of PNPCs, however: (1) the relativizer *ni* REL 'that' is used in RCs, not found in PNPCs, and (2) the resumptive pronoun in subject position RCs is optional for some speakers, though less common.

Finally, I have shown that resumptive pronouns should not be thought of as expletives because the realization of the pronoun depends upon the grammatical number features of the extracted nominal in the PNPC (and relative clauses), and therefore it is not a default insertion.

Third plural nominals co-occur with the resumptive pronoun *e* 3.PL; all other (pro)nominals co-occur with the resumptive pronoun *ọ* 3.SG. Thus at least *partial* matching occurs. I show next how the form of the resumptive pronoun in specific contexts reflects the feature geometry of the Esan pronominal system.

6. THE FEATURE GEOMETRY OF ESAN PRONOUNS

As discussed in §3, because of the grammatical function which pronouns provide in the tracking of participants in a discourse, they can be viewed as composed of purely grammatical elements. Following Harley & Ritter (2002), I assume that these grammatical elements are features, with individual features dominated by super-ordinate features, called nodes. Taken together, these feature relations form a "feature geometry", whose organization should necessarily reflect the form and distribution of pronouns in the language. In this chapter, I argue that the Esan personal pronoun system be organized under two such feature nodes: [Person] (also called [π] or [Participant]) and [Number] (also called [#] or [Individuation]). I argue that the distribution of the resumptive pronouns necessitates an account where the singular pronouns are unspecified for [Number], non-singular pronouns *mhan* 'we' and *bha* 'you$_{pl}$' are specified as [Mass], and non-singular pronoun *e* 'they' is specified as [Group]. I adopt a distributed morphology approach, *à la* Halle & Marantz (1993), to account for the insertion of resumptive pronouns. Finally, I argue that the feature [Person] is not shared between a nominal and its resumptive pronoun, resulting in all resumptive pronouns surfacing in the third person. Under the ideas of distributed morphology adopted here, this entails that no [Person] features are left in trace position by an extracted nominal, and that all extracted nominals are treated as third person (i.e. a default person). I use mostly data from post-nominal pronoun constructions in this chapter to develop this account because data from relativized first and second person relative clauses is lacking (see §4.2.2.1).

The chapter is organized as follows. §6.1 provides a background on feature geometry, §6.2 provides a review of some debate concerning the [Number] feature node, §6.3 illustrates the

Esan feature geometry, §6.4 provides an overview of its implementation in resumptive pronoun environments, and §6.5 discusses the lack of [Person] surfacing among resumptive pronouns, what this entails, and why this is problematic.

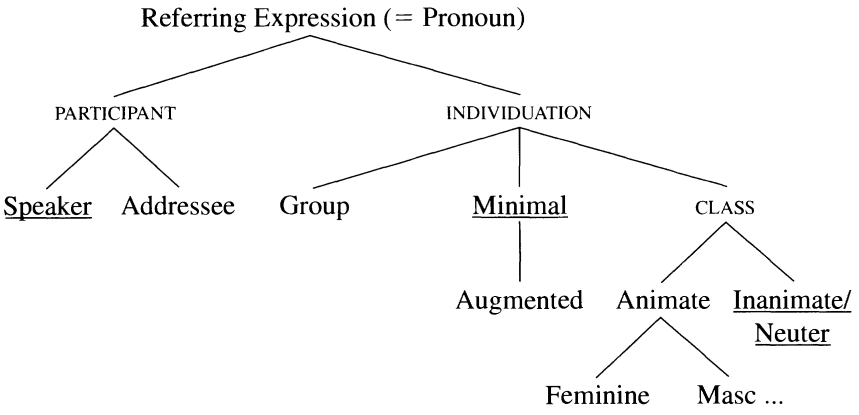
6.1. Background on feature geometry

Feature geometry refers to the organization of linguistic features into a structure employing dependency, dominance, conditionality, and hierarchy. While originally developed for phonology (e.g. Clements & Hume 1995), feature geometry has been extended to account for aspects of morphosyntactic systems as well (e.g. Ritter & Harley 1998, Harley & Ritter 2002, Heap 2002, Cowper 2005). Feature geometry provides a multi-dimensional approach to feature organization, diverging from "flat bundles" of features in which structures such as dependency are not utilized. A geometric view allows us to capture the fact that specific features *only* occur as a consequence of some other feature or node already being present. Thus, with respect to the features of pronominal systems, Harley & Ritter (2002) argue that,

> "[c]ollecting the person, number, and gender features together into mutually exclusive subgroups brings the paradigmatic possibilities down to something much more closely approximating the facts of natural language"
>
> (Harley & Ritter 2002: 483)

This mutual exclusivity is reflected in their conception of the pronominal system's feature geometry; I present their universal geometry conception in (6.1).

(6.1) Universal feature geometry (Harley & Ritter 2002: 486):



The features at the terminal points in the branches of (6.1) above are dependent upon three specific nodes: a participant node, an individuation node, and a class node[39]. PARTICIPANT refers to the traditional grammatical distinction of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd persons, INDIVIDUATION to distinctions between singular, dual, trial, paucal, and plural, and CLASS to feminine, masculine, *etc*. The underlined elements indicate the less marked form, what is generally known to be the *underspecified* form.

I diverge from the above feature geometry, among other places, in not assuming that an underlined form equates to the most underspecified form. Rather I maintain that the most underspecified form is a *bare* feature node, with no dependent feature specifications. Thus a [Participant] node which does not have a dependent feature [Speaker] or [Addressee] will represent the most underspecified, or least marked, element within a pronominal system (corresponding to 3rd person in traditional grammatical terms). This will become important in

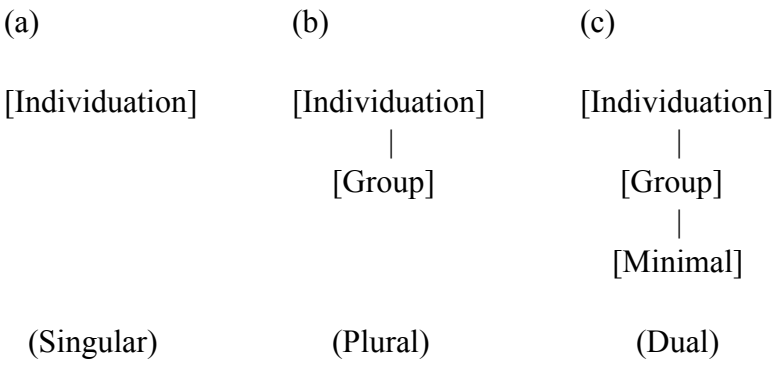
[39] The fact that the node [Class] is dependent upon the feature individuation is posited in order to reflect the fact that a language never displays a contrast in class (e.g. masculine vs. feminine pronouns) if it does not also display a contrast in individuation (e.g. singular vs. plural). This constraint reflects Greenberg's (1963) "universal 36", cited by Harley & Ritter (2002: 514), which notes that "if a language has the category of gender, it always has the category of number" (Greenberg 1963: 95).

discussing the manifestation of resumptive pronouns in §6.4, where I argue that those elements which are more underspecified will be used in more syntactic contexts.

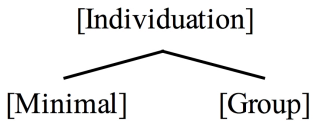
6.2. [Number] & [Mass]

Number is represented by Harley & Ritter (2002) as [Individuation], as in (6.1) above. Throughout this chapter, [Individuation] and [Number] refer to the same node. While there is a general acceptance of the feature node [Number] itself, its detailed specification is contested. Debate over [Number] has largely centered around how to account for peripheral pronominal units indicating dual (e.g. two people), trial (e.g. three people), and paucal (e.g. a few people) as distinct from singular and plural, using formal linguistic features. For example, Cowper (2005) presents two analyses brought forward by Harley and Ritter in different publications to account for the patterning of dual person in Southwest Native American languages such as Zuni and Hopi.

(6.2) [Individuation] under Ritter & Harley (1998):



(6.3) [Individuation] under Harley & Ritter (2002)[40]:



(Dual)

Cowper notes that both of these conceptualizations of dual number are inadequate to account for the Zuni pronoun system, and proposes to modify the pronominal feature geometry with a feature [>2] dependent upon a feature [>1] within the [#] node (i.e. [Number]).

(6.4) Number node under Cowper (2005):

(a)	(b)	(c)
[#]	[#] | [>1]	[#] | [>1] | [>2]
(Singular)	(Dual)	(Plural)

I do not go into the details of these analyses; what is important to note here is that modifications to the [Number] node has been attempted based on complicating empirical evidence.

Like Zuni and Hopi, Esan also presents a need to modify the feature geometry proposed in Harley & Ritter (2002), but under different circumstances. In Zuni, a modification is proposed to account for a new grammatical number, while in Esan, the need to modify a number derives from an *asymmetry* within the node itself. Recall that Esan data splits 1.PL and 2.PL from 3.PL within the post-nominal pronoun construction; a chart is repeated from §4.2.1. The resumptive

[40] This feature geometry of dual number here is slightly more complicated than this tree indicates, though I abstract away from these details. Refer to Harley & Ritter (2002) for explanation.

pronoun is always third person; 1.PL and 2.PL pronouns do not co-occur with third person pronoun *e* 'they'.

Gloss	Translation	Subject	Post-Nominal Pronoun	Gloss	Translation	Subject	Post-Nominal Pronoun
1.SG	'I'	*mẹ*	*ọ*	1.PL	'we'	*mhan*	*ọ*
2.SG	'you'	*wẹ*	*ọ*	2.PL	'you'	*bha*	*ọ*
3.SG		NP_{sg}	*ọ*	3.PL		NP_{pl}	*e*
3.SG	'he'	*ọ*		3.PL	'they'	*e*	

Table 5: Post-nominal pronoun form distribution

Thus, in Esan, we see a need for feature modification not *between* [Number] designations, but rather *within* a [Number] designation, namely plural. This is shown in the tables below; the dotted line indicates where that data of the specific language forces a modification to the feature geometry.

1 SG	2 SG	3 SG
1 PL	2 PL	3 PL
1 DUAL	2 DUAL	3 DUAL

Table 6: Zuni & Hopi pronominal complication

1 SG	2 SG	3 SG
1 PL	2 PL	3 PL

Table 7: Esan pronominal complication

Thus, under previous feature geometry proposals, there did not arise the need to split 1.PL and 2.PL from 3.PL, which Esan requires[41].

[41] Heap (2002) illustrates a similar problem in split pro-drop systems in the Gallo-Romance language continuum, where there is a split between 1.SG, 1.PL, 2.SG contexts which canonically occur with a null subject, versus 2.PL, 3.SG, 3.PL contexts, where the subject is canonically overt. His argument is that such a division cannot be captured by a Null Subject Parameter, whose vary purpose is to formally distinguish languages from languages, and not language-*internal* phenomena, such as [Number] from [Number] or [Person] from [Person].

In order to account for the distribution of these two types of plural pronouns, I posit that 1st person *mhan* 'we' and 2nd person *bha* 'you$_{pl}$' are specified with a formal feature [Mass], whereas the 3rd person pronoun *e* 'they' is specified as [Group], as other 3rd person plural nominals are. The idea of a [Mass] feature being overtly realized within the morphosyntax of a language has been posited previously by Hualde (1992) for the Lena dialect of Spain (cited in Corbett 2000: 124-126). There, (certain) nouns and adjectives maintain three distinct number forms between singular, plural, and mass, and trigger different agreement patterns:

(6.5)

(a) *la* *maéra* *tába* *sék-**o***
DEF.SG.FEM wood was dry-**MASS**
"the wood (mass) was dry"

(b) *la* *maéra* *tába* *sék-a*
DEF.SG.FEM wood was dry-**SG.FEM**
"the (piece of) wood was dry" (Lena; Hualde 1992: 108)

One might ask why this paper does not use the features [Min] and [Aug] put forward by Harley & Ritter (2002: 486) to capture this asymmetry in the [Number] node, allowing for greater cross-linguistic similarity. This is not possible because it would not allow us to capture the division between 1st and 2nd non-singular persons, and 3rd non-singular person. **If** (1) we unify all non-singular persons with the feature [Group], **and** (2) amend the 1st and 2nd non-singular pronouns with, e.g., [Min], **then** (3) because all non-singular persons are still designated with [Group], we expect *all* non-singular persons to pattern with the third person [Group] *e* 'they'. However, as shown in table 5 above, this is not the case. Therefore, within the non-

singular series of Esan pronouns, we must adopt some feature which effectively divides 1st and 2nd from 3rd. I adopt the feature [Mass] for this purpose.

Classifying these pronouns *mhan* 'we' and *bha* 'you$_{pl}$' with [Mass] is motivated in several ways. First, mass nouns pattern with singular nouns in Esan, and second, the conceptual plurality of referents with *mhan* 'we' and *bha* 'you$_{pl}$' is distinct from that of referents of plural nominals (e.g. *eni ikpia* 'the men'). These two points are discussed next within this section, as well as a potential problem with a [Mass] designation. An analysis within distributed morphology is presented in §6.4.

6.2.1. [Mass] patterning with singular nominals

I first examine the patterning of mass nouns with respect to number. In (6.6a–b) below, the mass nouns *izẹ* 'rice' and *amẹ* 'water' are referred to with the singular pronoun *ọ* 3.SG.

(6.6)

(a) *Mẹ gha d**izẹ**$_i$ fo, mẹ gha khiunwa rọ y**ọn**$_i$.*

mẹ	*gha*	*dẹ*	***izẹ***$_i$	*fo*	*mẹ*	*gha*	*khian*	*uwa*
1.SG	CONT	buy	**rice**	finish	1.SG	CONT	go	home

rọ	*yẹn*	***ọ***$_i$
go and	cook	**3.SG**

"(When) I finish buying **rice**$_i$, I go home to cook **it**$_i$."

(b) *Amẹ$_i$ **ọ**$_i$ khian rọ.*

amẹ$_i$	***ọ***$_i$	*khian*	*rọ*
water	3.SG	FUT	fall

"It will (certainly) rain."

Like these mass nouns, pronouns *mhan* 'we' and *bha* 'you$_{pl}$' also co-occur with *ọ* in a PNPC, and pattern with mass nouns with respect to the PNPC. This parallel is shown in (6.7).

(6.7) *Bha* ***ọ*** *gbikhiẹn.*

bha ***ọ*** *gbe* *ikhiẹn*

2.PL **3.SG** beat dance

"You all did dance."

6.2.2. Conceptual difference of the plurality of the referents

It has been widely acknowledged in the literature that "plural" 1st and 2nd persons are not necessarily "plural" in the same way in which 'the boys' or 'the rocks' are plural. This conceptualization of plural pronouns is found in Bhat (2004), who notes:

> "...the terminology used for describing the non-singular forms of first and second person pronouns is misleading because the forms do not stand in the same relationship to singular forms as *boy, cows,* etc. do to *boy, cow,* etc. The word *boys* indicates several boys, but the pronoun *we* does not indicate several speakers; instead, it indicates one speaker (specifically, the speaker of the sentence in which it occurs) and one or more non-speakers."
>
> (Bhat 2004: 92)

Conceptualizations of 'we' and 'you$_{pl}$' are plural by approximation (Bhat 2004: 93), and are "used for denoting different combinations of speech roles *rather than the plurality of their referents*" (Bhat 2004: 10, italics mine). Thus, number distinction within pronominals is *not* necessarily the same as with nominals under this conceptual framework, at least with respect to

1st and 2nd person. Bhat (2004) cites Jespersen (1924: 192), Lyons (1968: 277), and Benveniste (1971) who similarly express this conceptual distinction of "plurality" in earlier works[42].

This conceptual distinction lays the ground for a linguistic/grammatical distinction, as evidenced from first and second person mass pronouns *mhan* and *bha* patterning distinct from third person plural *e* and other plural NPs, which I argue is captured by a feature [Mass] as distinct from [Group].

6.2.3. A potential problem with the feature [Mass]

Positing that Esan pronouns *mhan* 1.PL and *bha* 2.PL should be designated as [Mass] may be problematic on semantic grounds. If we understand a mass noun as an unbounded collection which is not able to be quantified, i.e. without internal structure (Corbett 2000: 80, citing Jackendoff 1991), this then entails that the internal composition of mass-designated nominals are not able to be *individuated.* Under the idea that pronouns stand for nominals in a discourse, acting as shifters (see chapter 3), all pronouns stand for one or more individuals, and may be decomposed as such. Thus, a term meaning 'we' can be decomposed to the individuals which it refers to, such as referring to "Person X, Person Y, and Person Y's four friends". Calling *mhan* and *bha* "mass" is problematic because a "mass" noun does not individuate the internal structure of its referent, whereas pronominals do.

It may turn out to be more appropriate if these pronouns were designated "associative" rather than "mass". Daniel & Moravcsik (2005) distinguish between associative plurality and other types of plurality. For instance, "additive plurals" are those of the type 'boys' in which all members of the plural form (i.e. 'boys') can also be a referent of the stem (i.e. 'boy').

[42] Forchheimer (1953) is also cited as important here.

"Associative plurals", on the other hand, are exemplified by Japanese *Tanaka-tachi* 'Tanaka and his associates', in which only *one* member of the plural form can also be a referent of the stem. The semantic plurality of Esan first and second person plural pronouns may be closer to this associative interpretation, in that the concept 'we', for instance, does not (usually) refer to more than one speaker, but to one speaker plus some non-speakers. A hypothetical feature [Associative] would consequently need to be posited.

What is most important to take away here is that we need two different plural features which reflect two distinct conceptualizations of plurality. Further research will determine whether the feature [Mass] here is the best way to represent this[43].

6.3. Feature geometry illustration

I show below the proposed feature geometry of Esan personal pronouns, modified from (Harley & Ritter 2002).

---

[43] An additional possibility is that pronouns *mhan* 1.PL and *bha* 2.PL in Esan are of the type of plurality as the English word *committee,* which are deemed "collective" or "corporate" nouns (Corbett 2000: 188). Under Jackendoff's (1991) formal semantic terms, such nouns are like traditional plurals (which he calls "aggregates") in having internal structure, though are like singulars (i.e. "individuals") in being bounded.

feature values	category	examples
+bounded, -internal structure	individuals	*a book, a pig*
+bounded, +internal structure	groups	*a committee*
-bounded, -internal structure	substances	*water*
-bounded, +internal structure	aggregates	*books, pigs*
(Jackendoff 1991, cited in Corbett 2000: 80)		

Pronoun feature equivalent
[Singular]
?
[Mass]
[Group]

I have provided a [Number] feature equivalent next to Jackendoff's chart. This shows that collective nouns do not correspond to a [Number] feature posited here; Esan first and second person plural pronouns may represent this type of nominal.

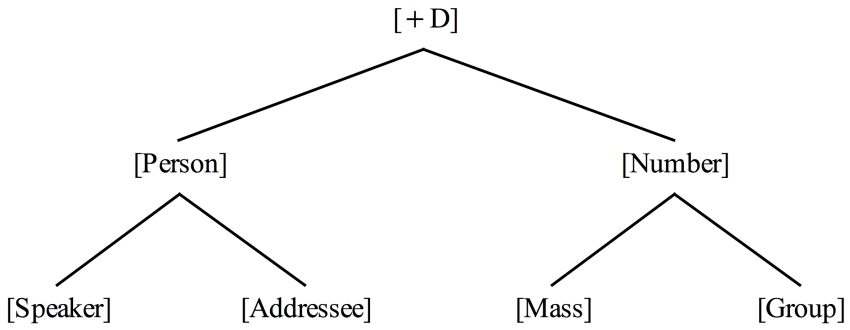
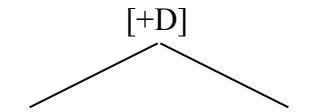
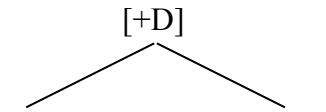
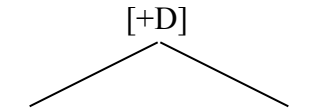
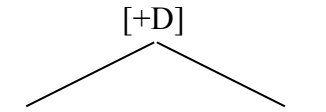
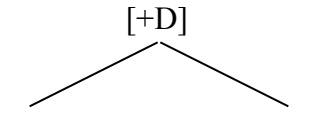
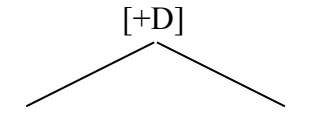


Figure 5: Esan feature geometry

The head of the tree is represented as [+D], indicating that pronouns are classified as definite nominal elements in head-D positions of DPs. This allows them to act fully as arguments, and to check [+D] feature requirements of I, such as the Extended Projection Principle (see §5.1.4 for the motivation of this [+D] feature). Under this head feature are two nodes: [Person] and [Number] (synonymous with [π] or [Participant] and [#] or [Individuation], respectively). I illustrate the featural specifications of the individual pronouns in table 8 below.

Table 8: Individual featural composition

 1.SG *mẹ* 'I'	 1.PL *mhan* 'we'
 2.SG *wẹ* 'you$_{sg}$'	 2.PL *bha* 'you$_{pl}$'
 3.SG *ọ* 'he/she/it'	 3.PL *e* 'they'

In table 8, pronouns on the left-hand side bear an unmarked [Number] node; this is interpreted as singular. Pronouns which are overtly marked on the [Number] node are marked as either [Mass] or [Group]. First persons are marked as [Speaker], second persons as [Addressee], and third persons as unspecified for a [Person] feature. Thus, the pronoun *ọ* 'he/she/it' is the most

underspecified pronoun in this system; this will become important in §6.4 in accounting for the realization of resumptive pronouns[44,45].

Although this modified feature geometry for Esan perhaps sacrifices a strict *universally* principled account of pronominal features (which would represented a *strong* version of Harley and Ritter's pronominal feature geometry), I feel that it allows us to better capture feature organizations which fall outside of current hypotheses, though still have linguistic motivation. The idea that (at least some) features emerge from the specific language *a posteriori* and are not endowed *a priori* is supported by works in Mielke (2005, 2008), among others[46]. If we understand morphosyntactic features as properly reflecting morphosyntactic activity operating within the grammar (i.e. distribution patterns), then language specific feature geometry modifications become necessary amendments.

I illustrate in the next sections the implementation of the feature geometry of Esan within specific environments calling for resumption.

---

[44] This underspecification of third person is echoed in Cysouw (2003) as well:

> "The principle categories of participant deixis are SPEAKER (the originator of the speech) and ADDRESSEE (the recipient of the speech)...All deixis that does not include either of these categories can be summarized negatively."
>
> (Cysouw 2003: 6; capitals his)

[45] I have left aside here the featural composition of the pronominal units *a* GEN.PRO 'one, we, people', *ẹ* NEG.PRO 'not it/he/she/they/we', the logophor *ọbhọ* LOG 'he himself/she herself', and reflexives and reciprocals (e.g. *egbimẹ* 'myself'). I also leave out how full versus reduced forms of pronouns (e.g. *iyain* 3.PL.F. vs. *e* 3.PL) can be distinguished featurally, and whether these are formal features or not.

[46] See, for instance, work on phonological features in Dresher 2009, who argues extensively that feature specification must necessarily reflect the activity and contrast of a specific language, and does not operate unalterably from a universally endowed organization.

6.4. Implementation with resumptive pronouns

In accounting for the more mechanical implementation of resumptive pronouns, I adopt Halle & Marantz' (1993) distributed morphology (DM). This approach to morphology allows for underspecification of forms (also called "vocabulary items"):

> "The competition among different Vocabulary items nondistinct from the features of a terminal node at MS [Morphological Structure] ensures that the Vocabulary item that *matches the most features of the node* will be inserted. ...Vocabulary items may therefore be *underspecified* for the morpho-syntactic feature complexes that they realize."
>
> (Halle & Marantz 1993: 121-122; italics mine)

Cowper (2005) adopts DM in her work on feature geometry, noting that this theory makes it "possible that some features are active in the syntactic computation without being overtly spelled out by [vocabulary items]" (Cowper 2005: 444). This is the exact consequence which we desire.

I illustrate the distribution of the resumptive pronouns in the post-nominal pronoun construction below, using first as an example a third person plural nominal *eni ipkia* 'the men', followed by second person plural *bha* 'you_{pl}'.

(6.8)

(a) *Enikpia **e** gbikhiẹn.*

eni	*ikpia*	***e***	*gbe*	*ikhiẹn*
DEF	man.PL	**3.PL**	beat	dance

"The men did dance."

(b) *Bha* ***ọ*** *gbikhiẹn.*

bha ***ọ*** *gbe* *ikhiẹn*

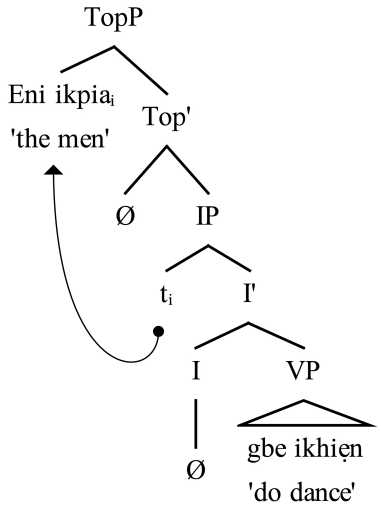
2.PL **3.SG** beat dance

"You all did dance."

In (6.8b), recall that resumptive pronouns in Esan are invariably third person; thus this account using DM will not take into account features present in the [Person] node, only those present in the [Number] node. This lack of [Person] sharing is discussed in §6.5.

As a first step, the subject nominal *eni ipkia* moves to topic position, and leaves in its extracted position a co-indexed trace.

(6.9)

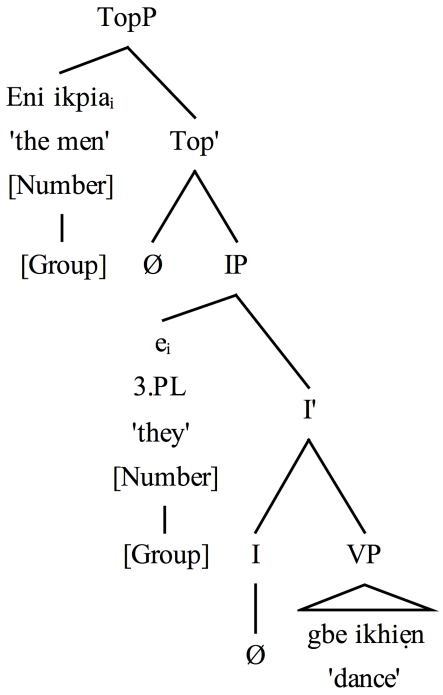


Recall from §5.1.4, Esan requires a phonologically overt subject. Thus, when the nominal moves from subject to topic position, a nominal must be inserted. I propose that this subject, i.e. the inserted vocabulary item, has features which *best* match the syntactic context. The inserted pronominal must be the *same set of* features, or a subset of features, of that of the topic nominal;

additional features will incur feature *clashes*, which are not permitted by the grammar, and result in ungrammaticality.

When *eni ikpia* 'the men' moves from subject to topic position, the resumptive pronoun which results is *e* 3.PL. Both of these nominals bear the feature [Group] under its [Number] node, and therefore there is no clash when *e* resumes this subject position, maximally spelling out [Number] features.

(6.10)



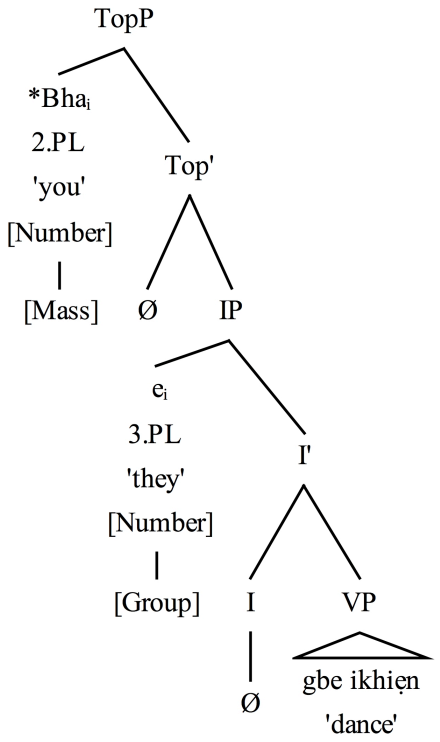
(6.11) *Enipkia e gbikhiẹn.*

eni ikpia	*e*	
[Number]	[Number]	
[**Group**]	[**Group**]	← **No clash**

"The men did dance"

With respect to example in (6.8b) above, *bha* 2.PL does not co-occur with *e* 3.PL, but rather with *ọ* 3.SG. Because *bha* is designated with the feature [Mass] whereas *e* is designated with [Group], *e* cannot spell-out the trace position in the subject position without incurring a feature clash. This is shown in (6.12).

(6.12) Clash between [Mass] and [Group]:



(6.13) **Bha e gbikhiẹn.*

bha		*e*		
[Person]	[Number]	[Number]		
[Addr]	[**Mass**]	[**Group**]	←	**Clash**

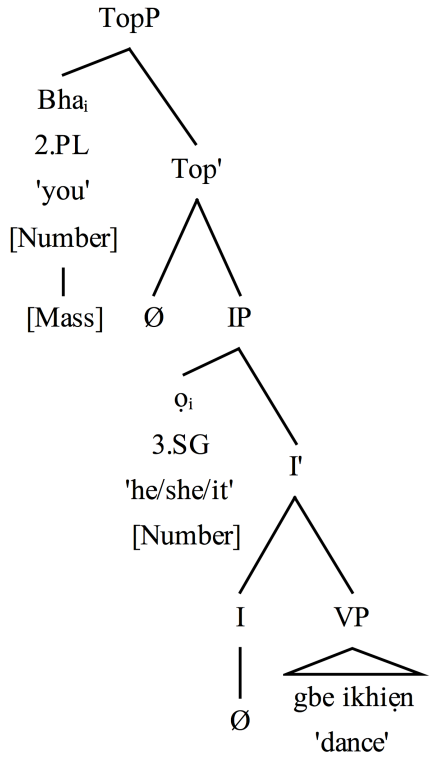
for "You$_{pl}$ did dance."

In (6.13), there is a clash because the features in the resumptive pronoun are not a subset or the same set of features as that of the higher nominal. The scenario in (6.13) would imply that

features are being *added* by the resumptive pronoun to the syntactic context, which is not permitted under the theories adopted here.

Instead, the pronoun *ọ* 3.SG is found which is least specified for [Number]. Because it is underspecified, it does not incur any feature clash.

(6.14)



(6.15) *Bha ọ gbikhiẹn*

bha		*ọ*		
[Person]	[Number]	[Number]		
[Addr]	[**Mass**]	**Ø**	←	**No Clash**

The matching scenario proposed above begs a very important question: why is only [Number] shared to the exclusion of grammatical [Person]? That is, why are the examples in which both person and number match between the two arguments not attested for?

(6.16)

(a) *Mẹ* {*ọ*/***mẹ***} *gbikhiẹn.*

mẹ {*ọ*/***mẹ***} *gbe* *ikhiẹn*

1.SG {3.SG/***1.SG***} beat dance

"I did dance."

(b) *Bha* {*ọ*/***bha***} *gbikhiẹn.*

bha {*ọ*/***bha***} *gbe* *ikhiẹn*

2.PL {3.SG/***2.PL***} beat dance

"You$_{pl}$ did dance."

Under the ideas about vocabulary insertion adopted, these starred constructions should be the featurally best matched resumptive pronouns. I turn to this now.

6.5. Lack of [Person] sharing

This section lays out what the lack of [Person] sharing between an extracted nominal and its resumptive pronoun suggests about the syntax of these constructions, and further why this is problematic to account for. I put forward that when a nominal is extracted, it is treated uniformly as a third person (i.e. as unspecified for person), thus making its person features invisible to the syntax, and any vocabulary insertion. Although person is not visible, the number of the extracted nominal remains visible to the syntactic computation, and is spelled out in a vocabulary item. I leave a definitive account of *why* there is this uniform treatment of extracted nominals for future research.

As I have argued, only [Number] features are shared in Esan in these constructions. This places Esan in between two systems acknowledged within the literature: those systems which

have *full* feature sharing between an extracted nominal and its lower clause, and those systems which have *no* feature sharing between an extracted nominal and its lower clause. Ewe is an example of the first type, as well as archaic and current varieties of English (6.17). Yoruba and Welsh are examples of the second, non-agreeing type (6.18).

(6.17) Agreeing:

(a) Ewe:

Mìàwó$_i$	*ya*	***mìè***$_i$***-ʃ****le*	*atikutsetse*
2p.pron	top	**2p**-buy	fruit

"You bought some fruit." (Badan & Buell 2010: 2)

(b) English (archaic):

O	thou	who	art	generous and merciful!
	2.SG		COP.**2.SG**	

(6.18) Non-agreeing:

(a) Yoruba:

[***Adé***	***àti***	***Olú***]$_i$	*ni*	***ó***$_i$	*ra*	*ìwé*
Ade	**and**	**Olu**	be	**3s**	buy	book

"It was Ade and Olu who bought books." (Adesola 2005: 103)

(b) Welsh:

Chwi	*a*	*{ddaeth/*ddaethoch}*
you.**PL**	that	{**is**-come/***are**-come}

"You who came" (Rouveret 1994:405, cited in Boeckx 2003: 88)

In (6.17), we see that there is full agreement with respect to both [Person] and [Number], as seen in the verbal agreement in English and the choice of pronoun in Ewe. In (6.18) on the other hand, a default third person singular form occurs, with no sharing of [Person] or [Number]. This complete lack of agreement has been attributed to default expletive insertion in Yoruba (Adesola 2005), or to an "Anti-Agreement Effect" in the case of Welsh, whereby the verb cannot agree with the extracted subject in certain languages under particular conditions (Ouhalla 1993).

The facts of Esan show that [Number] is shared between an extracted nominal and its lower clause, but not [Person]; thus there is only *partial* feature sharing. This is shown in example (6.19) below.

(6.19) *Mẹ {ọ/*mẹ} gbikhiẹn.*

mẹ	{*ọ*/**mẹ*}	*gbe*	*ikhiẹn*
1.SG	{3.SG/*1.SG}	beat	dance

"I did dance."

Because Esan presents a case of partial feature sharing, falling between the two previously attested types of systems, this suggests that one cannot draw a clean binary distinction between languages[47].

For Esan, then, one can make the following descriptive statement:

---

[47] A similar partial agreement is described in Ouhalla (2005) for some Berber varieties. Here, "the predicate carries gender and number inflection that agrees with the extracted subject"; agreement in *person* is not found (Ouhalla 2005: 675).

(i) Tashlhit (Berber: Morocco):
irgazn nna ffegh-n-**in**
men Comp left-Part-**Pl**
"the men who left" (Chafiq 1990: 123, cited in Ouhalla 2005: 675)

However, this partial agreement is only apparent from verbal inflection; no resumptive pronoun is (presumably) permitted in the subject position of the lower clause in these Berber varieties.

(6.20) [Person] constraint:

Only [Number] features are shared in nominal chains in Esan, to the exclusion of [Person]; nominal chains form when a nominal is moved and resumed by another nominal.

This constraint holds only when the two nominals form a chain, i.e. that movement has occurred. With verbs that select a complement phrase (e.g. *gualọ* 'to want'), this constraint does not apply. In (6.21) below, the matrix subject does not move from the embedded clause to the matrix clause, thus the two nominals in their respective clauses do not form a chain, despite being co-referential.

(6.21) *Mẹ gualọ {nimẹ/*nọ} lọ guan niania.*

mẹ	*gualọ*	{*ni*	*imẹ/*	**ni*	*ọ}*	*lẹ*	*ọ*
1.SG	want	{REL	1.SG.F/	REL	3.SG}	be with	3.SG

guan *niania*

speak now.REDUP

"I need to talk to her right away."

(More lit.: I want that {I/*he} speak with her right now)

Because there is no movement, there is complete feature matching between the two nominals in such syntactic contexts, unlike in post-nominal pronoun constructions or relative clauses.

In dissecting the statement in (6.20), it follows that the reason why [Person] features are not shared is that all extracted nominals are treated as third person, i.e. the trace which is left does not contain [Person] features, only [Number] features, unaffected by extraction. To elaborate, under the ideas of distributed morphology, as discussed in §5.1.1.1 and §6.4, it follows

that the morphological item (or vocabulary item) which best matches the syntactic environment is inserted. Therefore, when the trace is resumed by a resumptive pronoun due to some syntactic principle (such as the structural subject requirement argued for here), it surfaces only as a third person, i.e. as *ọ* 3.SG or *e* 3.PL (or one of its full forms). In this way, the syntax sets up the environments which are then filled in by the morphology.

Following this reasoning, because resumptive pronouns are only realized as third person pronouns despite the number of the co-referent, it must be that the syntactic environment which they are inserted into requires only third person pronouns, otherwise a first or second person pronoun would be inserted. If we understand that in Esan all extracted nominals as treated as third-person, that is, as a *default* person, then it follows that only third person pronouns can be inserted in resumption contexts. If this reasoning stands, where [Person] features are not present (or are invisible) in these syntactic contexts, it then follows why this should be the case. This is problematic because (1) it is unclear *why* extracted nominals are uniformly treated as a default third person, despite their internal person make-up, and (2) in languages such as Ewe and English, shown above in (6.17), person features *do* manifest in the lower clause from which a nominal has been extracted. These issues are left for future research[48].

[48] In Esan, there may be the possibly that first and second person pronouns cannot be obligatorily bound. That is, they must be able to find their antecedent in the pragmatic context (for more on binding, see McCloskey 2006: 94, Cinque 1990: 6, among others). If a first or second person pronoun were to be a resumptive pronoun, it would only find its antecedent within the nominal chain it forms (i.e. be bound in this way), and *not* be able to find its antecedent elsewhere in the context (i.e. be free). This might be problematic if we understand first and second person pronouns as never referring *back* to entities mentioned in the discourse, but to always referring to participants *present* in the current dialogue. If first and second person pronouns' major role is to establish participant speech roles in the current dialogue, then the grammar may not allow them as capable of having such a grammatical role as resumption. This is unlike third person pronouns, i.e. non-participant pronouns, which *can* refer back to previously mentioned entities in a discourse.

6.6. Summary of pronoun features

This chapter has shown that pronouns in Esan can be decomposed into grammatical elements called features (following Harley & Ritter (2002), among others). These feature relations form a "feature geometry", whose organization necessarily reflects the form and distribution of pronouns in the language. In Esan pronouns, there are two main nodes [Person] and [Number] under a main [+D] feature. First persons are characterized as having a [Speaker] feature, second persons as having an [Addressee] feature, and third persons as having a bare [Person] feature, making them the most underspecified. Singular pronouns are unspecified for [Number], non-singular pronouns *mhan* 'we' and *bha* 'you$_{pl}$' are specified as [Mass], and non-singular pronoun *e* 'they' is specified as [Group]. The non-singular pronouns are divided in this way to capture the fact that *mhan* and *bha* pattern distinct from third plural nominals: the former co-occur with the singular *ọ* 3.SG in the post-nominal pronoun construction, whereas the latter co-occur with *e* 3.PL.

I have proposed that when the nominal moves from subject to topic position, and a resumptive pronoun is found in its place, a vocabulary item is inserted whose features *best* match the syntactic context. The inserted pronominal must be the *same set of* features, or a subset of features, of that of the topic nominal; additional features will incur feature *clashes*, which are not permitted by the grammar. I have shown that if *bha* 2.PL and *e* 3.PL were to co-occur, it would result in a clash between the [Number] features [Mass] and [Group] between the two; therefore the most underspecified *ọ* 3.SG is found. This insertion is formalized under the constraints of distributed morphology (Halle & Marantz 1993).

Finally, the fact that resumptive pronouns never show [Person] features suggests that all extracted nominals are treated as third person, i.e. as a default person. This makes any person features of the trace invisible to the syntax in resumptive contexts, and consequently invisible for vocabulary insertion when a pronoun resumes an extracted subject position.

7. FINAL REMARKS

I have provided in this paper (1) a formal descriptive overview of the pronominal system of Ogwa Esan, and (2) an account of what I call resumptive pronouns in the post-nominal pronoun construction (a type of topicalization) and relative clauses. I have argued that when a nominal is extracted from a lower clause subject position to a higher clause, it is resumed by a resumptive pronoun. This is due to a structural subject requirement in the language which requires an phonologically overt subject in all finite subject positions (formalized as a Extended Projection Principle-type constraint). This account is attractive because first, it explains why resumptive pronouns are only found in subject and not object or another structural position, and second, it explains why resumptive pronouns are only found in certain clauses, i.e. ones in which a subject has moved. This is unlike agreement systems in which a marker showing concord between a subject and verb is obligatorily present on all finite clauses.

The type of pronoun which is inserted in this position depends upon the morphosyntacic features of the nominal. Only third person plural nominals co-occur with the resumptive pronoun *e* 3.PL; all other (pro)nominals co-occur with *ọ* 3.SG, including seemingly plural *mhan* 1.PL and *bha* 2.PL. I have shown that this is a reflex of (1) all extracted nominals being treated as a default third person, and (2) third person plural being encoded with the feature [Group], whereas first and second person plural pronouns encoded with [Mass]. Any co-occurrence between these two feature designations results in a feature clash.

This paper provides a number of contributions to the understanding of Esan and natural language. In particular, this paper provides the first comprehensive descriptive overview of the pronominal system in Esan, and the contexts in which resumptive pronouns occurs. I have

attempted to show here that the phenomena related to resumptive pronouns can be tied into other phenomena present in the language, such as the lack of agreement, lack of subject dropping, the patterning of mass nouns, among others. This allows for a more unified view of Esan syntax, having reflexes into a number of different structural domains. As a whole, this paper acts as a starting point for deeper analysis of personal pronouns in Esan for the future.

Further, from a cross-linguistic perspective, Esan provides an excellent an excellent case study for studying those systems with structural subject requirements, and which contexts will adhere to such a principle, and which ones will not. This study also provides an interesting example of resumption *only* occurring in subject position. This is particularly striking noting that in many languages resumptive pronouns are in fact *banned* from this position, and are more likely to occur in non-subject position (e.g. Irish; see the "Highest Subject Restriction" of McCloskey 1990, 2006, and the references cited within it). Moreover, the parts of this study which focus on the *form* of the resumptive pronoun (here invariably third person) presents a rare system which is situated between two other systems better documented in the literature: those in which there is complete phi-matching between an extracted nominal and its lower clause (i.e. Ewe), and those in which there is no matching/a default matching (i.e. Edo, Yoruba).

In addition to its contributions, there are a number of residual issues. I summarize some of these below:

(7.1) List of key residual issues:

1. Diachronic developments across Edoid:

a. How have resumptive pronouns and its cognates developed in Esan and across Edoid?

2. Variation within [Number] in (Ogwa) Esan:

a. How do we account for variation in [Number] with respect to resumptive pronouns?

3. Lack of **ọ ọ*, **e e*:

a. Why do we not see the co-occurrence of third person pronouns (i.e. **ọ ọ*, **e e*), in a post-nominal pronoun construction? (see 4.2.1)

4. Need for conversational analysis:

a. Under which discourse contexts do we find a resumptive pronoun?

b. What is the interaction between prosody and topicalization?

5. Lack of structural subject in certain finite clause:

a. Subjectless imperative

b. Optionality in relative clauses

c. Serial verb constructions

I provide a brief overview of the first two issues below.

7.1. Diachronic developments across Edoid

This work has primarily been a synchronic account of Esan pronouns and resumptive pronouns. An important question which stems from this work is how have resumptive pronouns developed *diachronically* in Esan, and also how have they across Edoid? If we accept that languages such as Esan, Ivie, Edo, Degema, among others, all belong to one larger Edoid family, then by using the comparative method we can gain greater insight into the developments of resumptive pronouns and/or agreement markers in these particular languages.

I have argued that the post-nominal pronoun construction in Esan is a form of topicalization involving resumptive pronouns, and the similar construction in Ivie involves agreement markers. If we assume that these structures represent two current structural manifestations of a proto-construction, then some form of reanalysis has occured at some point in the development of one or both of these languages. That a formally topic construction may be reanalyzed or grammaticalized is well documented. Li & Thompson (1976: 484, cited in Green 2007: 148) note that "subjects are essentially grammaticalized topics", with Topic-Comment systems often diachronically developing into Subject-Predicate systems. Such a development cline is diagrammed in Fuß (2005: 302), who provides the following grammaticalization path:

(7.2) (1) free pronoun → (2) weak pronoun → (3) clitic pronoun → (4) (dissociated Agr-morpheme) → (5) syntactic Agr- morpheme → (6) Ø

In the diagram above, Esan resumptive pronouns represent one of the pronoun stages above, whereas Ivie's subject markers bear resemblance to the dissociated Agr-morpheme stage, with possible reanalysis[49]. Further research is needed to determine the exact developmental paths for these Edoid languages, and if they match the genetic sub-classifications put forward thus far for Edoid (see an overview of the genetic classification for Esan in §2.2).

---

[49] With respect to any possible reanalysis hypothesized for Ivie, such a diachronic development is not surprising if we acknowledge the functional role which all of these subject markers play. As noted by Givón (1976: 151),

> "in languages in which pronouns -- rather than zeros -- are used in anaphora, the coreferent noun within the sentence itself is replaced by an anaphoric pronoun. This pronoun should be viewed as topic agreement." (Underlining his)

Thus, because co-referential pronouns in subject position and agreement markers often play the same, or similar, functional role in languages, it is unsurprising that, diachronically, they may develop from one to the other.

7.2. Variation of [Number] in (Ogwa) Esan

There are certain pieces of data which seem to contradict the proposal put forward with respect to resumptive pronouns and feature geometry. Here, these data represent [Number] occurrences which are unexpected given our proposal thus far.

(7.3) *Agbons khian gual**iyan eva** nọ y**ọnle**.*

Agbons	*khian*	*gualọ*	[***iyan***	***eva***]$_i$	*ni*	*ọ*	*yẹn*	***ọle**$_i$*
Agbons	will	seek	**yam**	**two**	REL	3.SG	cook	**3.SG.F**

"Agbons will find [two yams]$_i$ to cook it$_i$."

(7.4) ***Bha** **ne** lọnebai.*

bha	*ni*	***e***	*le*	*ọni*	*ebai*
2.PL	REL	**3.PL**	eat	DEF	food

"You all who ate the food."

(7.5) Variability with conjoined noun phrases:

(a) *Ọnokpia biọnokhuo **e** lengbe.*

[*ọni*	*okpia*	*bi*	*ọni*	*okhuo*]$_i$	***e**$_i$*	*lẹn*	*egbe$_i$*
DEF	man	and	DEF	woman	**3.PL**	know	self

"The man and the woman know each other."

(b) *Akhere bi Ivie **ọ** huẹnmengbe.*

[*Akhere*	*bi*	*Ivie*]$_i$	***ọ**$_i$*	*huẹnmẹn*	*egbe$_i$*
Akhere	and	Ivie	**3.SG**	like	self

"[Akhere and Ivie]$_i$ like each other$_i$."

(7.6) *Iy**ọ**n khian yu*.

Iyain	***ọ***	*khian*	*yu*[50]
3.PL.F	**3.SG**	FUT	die

"They will die."

In (7.3) above, the singular pronominal *ọle* 3.SG.F 'it' refers back to *iyan eva* 'two yams', despite the fact that this antecedent is plural. In (7.4), the relativized pronominal *bha* 2.PL is co-indexed with a resumptive pronoun *e* 3.PL, which is unexpected if we assume that *mhan* and *bha* are encoded with the [Mass] number feature, and not [Group] (as laid out in §6.2). Further, in (7.5), we see variation with respect to number between conjoined nominals and the post-nominal pronoun, variably surfacing as *ọ* 3.SG 'he/she' or *e* 3.PL 'they'. Finally, in (7.6) we see the full form of the third person plural pronoun *iyain* 'they' co-occur with *o* 3.SG in a post-nominal pronoun construction, instead of the expected *e* 3.PL.

I have adopted the analysis thus far because these examples do not represent the canonical agreement patterns, and are very few in number. Despite this infrequency though, this variation suggests instability with respect to [Number] in modern Esan. This instability is corroborated by two additional pieces of data from the language, as well: (1) the reinterpretation of historically prefixal noun class markers carrying [Number] designations as being part of the root (e.g. *awa* 'dog ~ dogs' (**a*+*wa*)), and (2) for some Ogwa speakers, the collapse of the distinction between the definite markers *ọni* DEF ~ DEF.SG and *eni* DEF ~ DEF.PL (e.g. *eni awa* 'the dog ~ the dogs'). These data suggest that grammatical number as a whole might

[50] There is dialectical variation between *yu* ~ *wu* 'to die' in different Esan dialects.

possibly be lost in future varieties of Esan. This variation must be accounted for in future investigations.

References

Adesola, O.P. 2005. *Pronouns and null operators - A-bar dependecies and relations in Yoruba*. Doctoral Dissertation. Rutgers.

Adesola, O.P. 2006. "A-bar dependencies in the Yoruba reference-tracking system". *Lingua*, 116: 2068-2106.

Agbedor, P. & D.A. Adonae. 2005. "Pronouns in Kaakyi and Ewe: A comparison". In Dakubu & Osam (Eds.), *Studies in the languages of the Volta Basin 3: Proceedings of the Annual Colloquium of the Legon-Trondheim Linguistics Project* 18-20 Jan 2005. University of Legon. 96-103.

Amayo, A. 1975. "The structure of verbal constructions in Edo (Bini)". *The Journal of West African Languages,* 10(1): 5-25.

Ameka, F.K. 1991. *Ewe: Its grammatical constructions and illocutionary devices*. Doctoral Dissertation. Australian National University.

Auger, J. 1994. "Pronominal clitics in Quebec Colloquial French: A morphological analysis". Doctoral Dissertation. University of Pennsylvania.

Badan, L. & L. Buell. 2010. "Subjects in Ewe". Presentation at the 41st Annual Conference on African Linguistics (ACAL2010). University of Toronto.

Bamgbose, A. 1967. *A short Yoruba grammar.* Ibadan: Heinemann Eductional Books (Nig.) Ltd.

Bamgbose, A. 1980. "Pronouns, concord, and pronominalization". *Afrika und Übersee*, 43: 189-198.

Bejar, S. 2003. *Phi-syntax: A theory of agreement*. Doctoral Dissertation. University of Toronto.

Benincà, P. 2001. "The position of topic and focus in the left periphery". In Cinque & Salvi

(Eds.), *Current studies in Italian syntax. Essays offered to Lorenzo Renzi*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. 40-64.

Benoist, J-P. 1969. *Grammaire gouro (group mandé - Côte d'Ivoire)*. Lyon: Afrique et Langage 3.

Benveniste, É. 1971. *Problems in general linguistics*. Translated by M.E. Meek. Coral Gables: University of Miami Press.

Bhat, D.N.S. 2004. *Pronouns*. Oxford: OUP.

Boeckx, C. 2003. *Islands and chains: Resumption as stranding*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins publishing company.

Brandi, L. & P. Cordin. 1989. "Two Italian dialects and the null subject parameter". In Jaeggli & Safir (Eds.), *The null subject parameter*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Chafiq, M. 1990. *44 lessons in the Tamazight language,* Teaching Manual. Cairo & Rabat: Arab-Africa Press.

Chomsky, N. 1995. *The minimalist program.* Cambridge: The MIT Press.

Chomsky, N. 2000. "Minimalist inquiries: The framework". In Martin, Michaels, & Uriagereka (Eds.). *Step By Step: Essays In Syntax in Honor of Howard Lasnik*. Cambridge: MIT Press. 89–155.

Cinque, G. 1977. "The movement nature of left dislocation". *Linguistic Inquiry*, 8: 397-412.

Cinque, G. 1990. *Types of A-bar-dependencies.* Cambridge: The MIT Press.

Clements, G.N. & E. Hume. 1995. "The internal organization of speech sounds". In Goldsmith (Ed.), *The handbook of phonological theory*. Cambridge: Blackwell. 245-306.

Corbett, G.G. 2000. *Number*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cournane, A. 2008. “The grammaticalization of subject clitics in Quebec French: An analysis of reanalysis”. M.A. Thesis.

Cowper, E. 2005. "A Note on number.” *Linguistic Inquiry,* 36: 441-455.

Cysouw, M. 2003. *The paradigmatic structure of person marking*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Daniel, M. & E. Moravcsik. 2005. “The associative plural”. In Haspelmath, Dryer, Gil, & Comrie (Eds.), *The World Atlas of Language Structures*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 150-153.

de Cat, C. 2007. “French dislocation without movement”. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory,* 25: 485-534.

Déchaine, R., & M. Wiltschko. 2002. “Decomposing pronouns”. *Linguistic Inquiry*, 33(3): 409-442.

den Dikken, M. 2006. *Relators and linkers: The syntax of predication, predicate inversion, and copulas* (Linguistic Inquiry Monograph 47). Cambridge: MIT Press.

Donwa, F.S. 1982. *The sound system of Isoko*. Doctoral Dissertation. University of Ibadan.

Dresher, B.E. 2009. *The contrastive hierarchy in phonology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ejele, P.E. 2000a. “The syntax and semantics of tense marking in Esan”. *Journal of West African Languages*, 28(1): 85-95.

Ejele, P.E. 2000b. “Durativity, punctuality, and the imperfective paradox: The case in Esan”. *Journal of West African Languages,* 28(2): 71-83.

Ejele, P.E. 2002. “Temporal distinctions as bases for the semantic classification of verbs: Insights

from Esan". *Journal of West African Languages,* 29(2): 65-80.

Elugbe, B.O. 1989a. *Comparative Edoid: phonology and lexicon* (Delta Series No. 6). Port Harcourt: University of Port Harcourt Press.

Elugbe, B.O. 1989b. "Edoid". In Bendor-Samuel (Ed.), *The Niger-Congo languages*. Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America. 291-304.

Emuekpere-Masagbor, G. 1997. "Preverbal subject markers in Ivie". Doctoral Dissertation. Université de Sherbrooke.

Ermisch, S. 2007. *Issues in the left periphery: A typological approach to topic and focus constructions.* Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.

Forchheimer, P. 1953. *The category of person in language*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.

Givón, T. 1976. "Topic, pronoun, and grammatical agreement". In Li (Ed.), *Subject and topic*. New York: Academic Press. 149-188.

Green, M. 2007. *Focus in Hausa*. Publications of the Philological Society, 40. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Greenberg, 1963. *Universals of Language.* London: MIT Press.

Halle, M. & A. Marantz. 1993. "Distributed morphology and the pieces of inflection". In Hale & Keyser (Eds.), *The view from building 20.* Cambridge: MIT Press. 111-176.

Harley, H. & E. Ritter. 2002. "Person and number in pronouns: A feature-geometric analysis". *Language*, 78(3): 482-526.

Haspelmath, M. 2004. *Indefinite pronouns.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Heap, D. 2002. "Split subject pronoun paradigms: Feature geometry and underspecification". In Satterfield, Tortora, & Cresti (Eds.), *Current Issues in Romance Languages*. Amsterdam/

Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company. 129-144.

Hirschbühler, P. 1975. “On the source of lefthand NPs in French”. *Linguistic Inquiry*, 6: 155-165.

Hoffman, C. 1974. “The languages of Nigeria by language family”. Unpublished manuscript, University of Ibadan: Nigeria.

Hualde, J.I. 1992. “Metaphony and count/mass morphology in Asturian and Cantabrian dialects”. In Laeufer & Morgan (Eds.), *Theoretical analyses in Romance linguistics: Selected papers form the nineteenth Linguistics Symposium on Romance Linguistics (LSRL XIX): the Ohio State University. 21-23 April 1989* (Current issues in linguistics theory 74). Amsterdam: John Benjamins. 99-114.

Huang, C.-T.J. 1982. *Logical relations in Chinese and the theory of grammar*. Doctoral Dissertation. MIT.

Huang, C.-T.J. 1984. “On the distribution and reference of empty pronouns”. *Linguistic Inquiry*, 15: 531-574.

Jackendoff, R. 1991. “Parts and boundaries”. *Cognition*, 41: 9-45.

Jespersen, O. 1924. *The philosophy of grammar*. London: George Allen and Unwin.

Kari, E.E. 2005. “Degema subject markers: Are they prefixes or proclitics?”. *Journal of West African Languages*. 32(1-2): 13-20.

Koopman, H. & D. Sportiche. 1986. “A note on long extraction in Vata and the ECP”. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory*, 4: 357-374.

Kuteva, T.A. & B. Comrie. 2005. “The typology of relative clause formation in African languages”. In Voeltz (Ed.), *Studies in African linguistic typology*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. 209–228.

Larsson, E. 1979. *La dislocation en français: Étude de syntaxe générative.* Lund: CZK Gleerup.

Lewis, M.P. (Ed.). 2009. *Ethnologue: Languages of the World, Sixteenth edition*. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International. Online version: http://www.ethnologue.com/.

Li, C. & S.A. Thompson. 1976. "Mechanism for the development of copula morphemes". In C.N. Li (Ed.), *Mechanism of syntactic change*. Austin: University of Texas Press. 419-444.

Lyons, J. 1968. *Introduction to theoretical linguistics*. London: Cambridge University Press.

Marfo, C.O. 2005. "Akan focus and topic construction and the prosody-syntax interface". *Journal of West African Languages,* 32(1-2): 45-59.

McCloskey, J. 1990. "Resumptive pronouns, Ā-binding and levels of representation in Irish". In Hendrick (Ed.), *Syntax of the modern Celtic languages*. *Syntax and Semantics,* Vol 23. New York and San Diego: Academic Press. 199-248.

McCloskey, J. 2006. "Resumption". In Everaert & van Riemsdijk (Eds.), *The Blackwell Companion to Syntax, Vol 4*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing. 94–117.

Mielke, J. 2005. "Ambivalence and ambiguity in laterals and nasals". *Phonology,* 22: 169-203.

Mielke, J. 2008. *The emergence of distinctive features*. Oxford: OUP.

Moro, A. 2006. "Copular sentences". In Everaert & Riemsdijk (Eds.), *The Blackwell Companion to Syntax, Vol. 2*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing. 1-23.

Odiagbe, A.I. 2004. *Esan/English dictionary*. Benin City: New Era Publications.

Okoduwa, A.I. 2001. "In search of Esan origin". *Iroro: Journal of Arts*. Ekpoma: Abrose Alli University. 8(1&2): 219-224.

Okojie, C.G. (Ed.). ms. *Esan Dictionary*.

Okojie, C.G. & P.E. Ejele. 1987. "Esan orthography". In Agheyisi (Ed.), *Orthography Manual V*.

Lagos: National Language Centre, Federal Ministry of Education.

Ọmọruyi, Thomas O. 1989. “Focus and question formation in Edo”. *Studies in African Linguistics,* 20 (3): 279-300.

Osiruemu, E.O. ms. “Ibadan word list of 400 basic items: Ogwa & Uromi [dialects]”. University of Benin.

Ouhalla, J. 1993. “Subject-extraction, negation, and the anti-agreement effect”. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory*, 11: 477-518.

Ouhalla, J. 2005. “Agreement features, agreement, and antiagreement”. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory*, 23: 655-686.

Panagiotidis, P. 2002. “Pronominal nouns”. In Simon & Wiese (eds.), *Pronouns - Grammar and representation.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company. 183-203.

Pesetsky, D. 1982. “Paths and categories”. Doctoral Dissertation. MIT.

Ritter, E. & H. Harley. 1998. “Meaning in morphology: A feature-geometric analysis of person and number”. Paper presented at the 40th GLOW Colloquium. Tilburg University.

Rizzi, L. 1986. “On the status of subject clitics in Romance.” In O. Jaeggle & C. Silva-Corvalan (Eds.), *Studies in Romance Linguistics.* Dordrecht: Foris Publications. 391-419.

Rizzi, L. 1997. “The fine structure of the left periphery”. In L. Haegeman (ed.), *Elements of grammar.* Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers. 281-337.

Roberge, Y. 1990. *The syntactic recoverability of null arguments*. Montreal: McGill and Queens University Press.

Rouveret, A. 1994. *Syntaxe du gallois*. Paris: CNRS éditions.

Simon, H.J. & H. Wiese (Eds.). 2002. *Pronouns - Grammar and representation.* Amsterdam:

John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Vydrine, V. 2005. “Pronoms personnels gouro”. *Journal of West African Languages*, 32(1-2): 83-108.

Webster, J.B. & O.W. Ogbomo. 1997. “Chronological Problems in C. G. Okojie’s Esan Narrative Traditions”. *History in Africa*, 24: 345-362.

Wiese, H. & H.J. Simon. 2002. “Grammatical properties of pronouns and their representation: An exposition”. In Simon & Wiese (eds.), *Pronouns - Grammar and representation.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company. 1-22.

Williamson, K. & R. Blench. 2000. “Niger-Congo”. In Heine & Nurse (Eds.), *African languages. An introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 11-42.

Zhang, S. 1990. *The status of imperatives in theories of grammar.* Doctoral Dissertation. University of Arizona.