

An Investigation of Reflexive Constructions in Nkporo-Igbo

Charity Oluchi Mbah¹
Chukwunonyelum Esther Okoli²
Maureen Azuka Ezeani³
co.mbah@unizik.edu.ng
es.okoli@unizik.edu.ng
ma.chikeluba@unizik.edu.ng

Abstract

Reflexive construction is a linguistic phenomenon that expresses self-reference or self-action within a sentence. In other words, it is often used to express action(s) that are done to oneself, such as *I shaved myself*. This study therefore, examines reflexive construction in Nkporo-Igbo with particular focus on the forms and functions of reflexive constructions, using binding theory in order to depict how this approach can be used to provide insights into the forms, functions and structure of reflexive constructions in the dialect. The data used for this study were collected from the native speakers of the Nkporo dialect through elicitation method, interviews, and natural language samples. The collected data were analyzed using the framework of binding theory. The findings reveal that reflexive constructions in the dialect require a compatible clause-mate antecedent due to the strong anaphoric relationship between reflexive markers and their antecedents. The findings further reveal that the form of Nkporo reflexive constructions consist of the reflexive pronoun, which comprises of a nominal *onwo* (self) and an appropriate form of *personal pronoun* together with its *antecedent* it agrees with in number and person. In terms of the structure, findings reveal that reflexives come before or after the verb of the clause in which they occur. This means that the reflexive pronoun ‘onwo’ can be used in a variety of syntactic positions, including the subject and object positions. The finding further reveals that reflexives in the dialect perform both non-emphatic and emphatic functions. Finally, the findings will provide a framework for the analysis of reflexive constructions in other languages using binding theory.

Keywords: Reflexive pronoun, Personal pronouns, Antecedent, Reflexive construction, and Binding theory

Introduction

Reflexive construction is a common feature of many languages, including the Nkporo dialect of Igbo. In this construction, a participant is co-referential with another participant of the same sentence expressed in a special way, typically through the use of a reflexive pronoun and an antecedent. Thus, reflexive constructions are constructions which consist of reflexives, a type of pronoun and their antecedents.

The study of reflexive construction has in recent times generated much interest among scholars, especially within the framework of Government and Binding. Government and Binding (GB) is a classical Chomskyan model of grammar which gives an insight that language is a relationship between sounds and meanings (Chomsky, 1981). Although some studies have been done on the topic in different languages like Igbo by Uchechukwu (2006) and Okeke (2008, 2015), Ga by Otoo (2016), Arabic by Al-Raba’a (2017), and Japanese by Nishigauchi (2017), and Akan by Saah (2018), it appears that the study of reflexive constructions in Nkporo dialect of the Igbo language has received little or no attention, to the best of the researchers’ knowledge. This could be because the dialect has not been investigated at all in this area of syntax to provide relevant literature in the language. It is against this background that this paper examines and describes reflexive construction in Nkporo-Igbo with a view to ascertaining the forms and functions of Nkporo reflexive constructions. This study will fill this gap in the literature and provide a valuable resource for researchers and linguists interested in the dialect. The data for this study were collected from the native speakers of the Nkporo dialect through elicitation method, interviews, and natural language samples. The collected data were analysed by drawing insights from binding theory to provide a multifaceted understanding of reflexive constructions.

This paper therefore focuses on reflexive constructions in Nkporo-Igbo. It is, therefore, hoped that this work will form part of the written records of the Nkporo syntax and make a colossal contribution to

knowledge by complementing available literature on the subject matter in other dialects of the Igbo language as well as in other languages and also serve as a reference for researchers and scholars alike. This study was, precisely, carried out in Elughu Nkporo in Ohafia Local Government Area of Abia state. Nkporo dialect belongs to the Cross-River group of dialects (CRGD) according to Nwaozuzu (2010) dialect cluster.

The rest of this paper is structured as follows: section two reviews some related literature, section three presents the methodology adopted in this work, section four presents the data analysis while section five summarizes and concludes the study.

Review of Related Literature

In this section, the concepts that are relevant to the study are reviewed, as well as the concept of binding theory that will be adopted for this work.

Reflexive Construction

A reflexive construction is a grammatical construction that can only be used when two participants of a clause are co-referential and contain a special form (a reflexivizer) that signals this co-reference (Haspelmath, 2019). The author further explains that in a reflexive construction, a participant in a sentence is coreferential with another participant of the same sentence, and this is typically expressed through the use of a reflexive pronoun. This means that the two participants refer to the same entity, as illustrated in the following examples:

1. Jane bit herself
2. I washed myself
3. She dressed herself
4. We enjoyed ourselves
5. They hurt themselves

From the above examples, it can be seen that the two underlined participants known as antecedent and reflexive pronoun (*Jane* and *herself*, *I* and *myself*, *she* and *herself*, *we* and *ourselves*, and *they* and *themselves*) in each of the reflexive constructions indicate coreference and as a result are coreferentials because they refer to the same entity. In other words, the reflexive pronouns just like (*herself*, *myself*, *herself*, *ourselves* and *themselves*), according to Oosthuizen (2015) obligatorily enters into a coreferential relationship with the subjects – *the antecedents* (*Jane*, *I*, *She*, *We* and *They*) of the sentence. This further implies that the reflexive or self-form takes as its antecedent the subject of the sentence.

Pronouns and Antecedents

Antecedents are forms which supply the interpretations of referents in a relationship between pronouns and other units (Kuiper and Nokes 2014). Pro-forms also used to mean pronouns that are in dependency relationship with their antecedents such that the occurrence of a pro-form in a syntactic structure is dependent on the antecedent it points to. This means that any NP that a pronoun depends on for its meaning is called its *antecedent*.

Examples:

6. Ada has left, she was here yesterday.
7. John and Kingsley ran because they saw their teacher.

From the above examples, it can be seen that the underlined words which are the pro-forms occurred based on the morphosyntactic properties of their antecedents. In example (6), the morphosyntactic properties of the antecedent 'Ada' are: singular, feminine which influenced the occurrence of the pro-form 'she' which bears the same morphosyntactic properties. The same goes for example (7).

Reflexive Pronoun

Reflexive pronoun also known as a reflexivizer or a self-form is a sub-grammatical category of the grammatical category 'pronoun'. It is a form that can be used in the position of a full nominal and that signals co-reference with an antecedent in the same clause (Haspelmath, 2019). According to Quirk and Greenbaum (1973:103), reflexive pronouns replace a co-referential noun phrase, normally, within the

same finite verb. That is to say, reflexive pronouns are references to an antecedent subject NP of a sentence in which they occur as seen in the sentence *Mary baths herself* where the reflexive pronoun *herself* points back to the antecedent *Mary*. Also, reflexive pronouns just like other sub-categories of pronoun have first, second and third person; singular and plural. It can also be deduced that the third person singular reflexive pronouns, “*himself*” and “*herself*” are gender oriented whereas others do not depict gender.

Reflexive pronouns, also are seen as combination of pronominal elements that have to agree with a noun phrase based on the number, gender, and person in the same clause and the morpheme ‘self’ which is suffixed to the pro-form (Quirt et al 1985). This implies that the selections of the reflexive pronouns must agree with the number, gender and person of their antecedents. Thus, the person and number of reflexive pronouns are clearly shown in the table below:

Table 1

Person	Singular	Plural
1st	Myself	Ourselves
2 nd	Yourself	Yourselves
3 rd	Him/Her/Itself	Themselves

Culled Eyisi (2006).

Furthermore, Quirk and Greenbaum (1973:103-105), opine that there is a reflexive pronoun formed by the addition of the indefinite pronoun *one* to *self* to get *oneself* as seen in the example: *one mustn't fool oneself*. Here, the use of the reflexive pronoun is in a general sense because it does not refer to any particular person. This research work is of the stance that reflexive pronouns can be classified into two types of definite reflexive pronouns comprising *myself*, *yourself*, *himself*, *herself*, *ourselves*, *yourselves*, *themselves*, and indefinite reflexive pronoun comprising *oneself*.

In addition, Oji (1998) in Eyisi (2006:127) proposes three syntactic positions for reflexive pronouns which include:

- a. Indirect object of a transitive verb as in: He bought *himself* a bag.
- b. Direct object of a transitive verb: I can see *myself* in the mirror.
- c. Object of a preposition: It depends on *ourselves* either to do it or not.

Sequel to the above assertion, Heaton and Stocks (1966:281) argue that some verbs can be used either reflexively or non-reflexively as seen in the two examples: (a) They enjoyed *themselves* at the party yesterday and (b) They enjoyed the party. Whereas, certain verbs are always reflexive as in (c) He always prides *himself* on his appearance. This latter view is supported by Eyisi (2006:127) where she says that verbs like *absent*, *avail* and *pride* are used reflexively. Continuing, Eyisi further explained that the above-mentioned verbs are transitively used when the reflexive pronouns are in the objective case since they are the objects of the verbs.

Also, according to Okwor et al (1996:9), there are situations in which reflexive pronouns can be misused and such situations are:

- a. When the reflexive pronoun has no antecedent. As in “the secretary and *myself* will be there”. Instead of “*the secretary and I will be there*”
- b. When it is used as a substitute for a personal pronoun. For example, “*Tina and yourself are wanted by the teacher*”. Instead of “*Tina and you are wanted by the teacher*”.
- c. When it is used as the subject of a sentence. For example, “*herself came*”. Instead of “*she came herself*”

Uses of Reflexive Pronoun

Reflexive pronouns are grouped into two uses. They are

- a. Emphatic or intensive use
- b. Basic or reflexive use

Emphatic Use

This type of usage is when reflexive pronouns are used to lay emphasis on a particular thing. According to Huddleston (1988:99), this can be seen usually in an appositive construction as exemplified in the following sentence: “*Tom himself signed the letter*”. Continued the author, himself in the above sentence is in apposition to *Tom* as opposed to someone else who signed the letter and commonly, the pronoun is moved to the right, yielding the non-kernel construction: “*Tom signed the letter himself*”. Apparently, this is pictured in Quirk and Greenbaum (1973:105) where they say; in a related but emphatic usage, that reflexives occur in apposition, with positional mobility as in:

- a. I have never been there **myself**.
- b. I **myself** have never been there.
- c. I have never **myself** been there.

Basic Use

This type of usage that occurs when the action of the subject reflects upon the doer. According to Huddleston (1988:99), the basic use is the real sense of reflexive and it functions as complement in VP and PP structure. He further posits that reflexive pronouns contrast with the personal pronouns as seen in the following examples below:

- i. Tom hurt himself
- ii. Tom hurt him/her

From the above examples, it is evident that the two pronouns ‘reflexive pronoun and personal pronoun use in the above examples differ in their function and usage. In sentence (a) *himself* is a reflexive pronoun. It reflects the action back to the subject, indicating that Tom performed the action of hurting himself. In other words, the pronoun *himself* is anaphoric to *Tom*. This further implies that the reflexive pronoun *himself* is co-referential with its antecedent NP *Tom*. That is, the reflexive pronoun *himself* is used when the subject and object of a sentence refer to the same person. Whereas in sentence (b), *him* or *her* is a personal pronoun which refers to someone other than the subject *Tom* and serves as the object of the verb *hurt*. This implies that, the personal pronouns *him* and *her* are used to indicate that Tom caused harm to someone else other than himself.

Sequel to the above explanation, it can be concluded that the reflexive pronoun “*himself*” in the first example reflects the action back to the subject, indicating that Tom hurt himself. The personal pronouns ‘*him* or *her*’ in the second example refer to someone other than the subject (*Tom*), indicating that Tom hurt that person.

Difference between Emphatic and Basic Use of Reflexive Pronoun

The differences between both usages can be summarized thus:

- a. Emphatic use emphasizes the doer, while the basic use reflects the doer in a sentence in which it occurs
- b. Emphatic use is positional mobile whereas basic use lacks such ability.
- c. Emphatic pronoun can be removed from the sentence and the core meaning would not be affected but reflexive pronoun is indispensable.

For example:

(8) a. He *himself* cut the cake. (Emphatic use)

b. He cut the cake.

(9) a. He cut himself. (Basic/reflexive use)

b. He cut...?

- d. Emphatic pronoun is used to form an appositive construction while reflexive pronoun is used to form a reflexive construction as seen in the above example (8a) and (9a) respectively.

Reflexive Construction in the Igbo language

The reflexive construction in Igbo is made up of a reflexive pronoun ‘*onwe*’, a personal pronoun together with a noun phrase known as an antecedent, both of which give rise to the reflexive construction. Apart from gender, Igbo reflexive pronouns or reflexive forms are number and person

sensitive (Uchechukwu, 2011). This implies that in the Igbo language, the reflexive forms pronoun with its antecedent must agree with in number and person. Examples:

(10) a. Ngozi gburu onwe ya ehi
 Ngozi kill-rV(past) self 3sg cow
 ‘Ngozi killed a cow for himself’

b. Uche na Obi tiri onwe ha ihe
 Uche CONJ Obi beat-past self 3pl something
 ‘Uche and Obi beat themselves’

In the example (10a), *Ngozi* is coreferential with *onwe ya*. There is agreement in number and person (i.e. *Ngozi* a third person singular NP takes a third person singular reflexive pronoun *ya*). In (b) also, the 3rd person plural NP, Uche and Obi take the 3rd person plural reflexive pronoun *ha*.

Theoretical framework

One of the theoretical approaches to the study of reflexive constructions is binding theory under Universal Grammar (UG). According to Chomsky (1981), UG is a classical model of grammar, which helps to determine the common properties of the languages of the world and reduce same to a minimum of rules, such that these rules will be used to account for the natural languages used by man in his immediate environment. Universal Grammar proposed two major properties of language, namely, principles and parameters. Principles are universal attributes of natural languages or the properties of grammatical operations, while parameters refer to the dimensions of grammatical variations among natural languages (Ndimele, 2004). This implies that principles are those properties commonly shared by all languages of the world, while parameters are parametric variations (differences) that are specific to each language. The principle that applies to this study is binding theory. This paper adopts the binding theory, because of the strong coreferential relationship between a pronoun and its antecedent. Binding theory was proposed by Chomsky (1981) in his book entitled *Lectures on Government and Binding*. The main ideas behind binding theory as proposed by Chomsky (1981) are to: characterize the anaphoric or interpretive relations between different NPs in a sentence, and determine the distribution of reflexives, pronominals, and overt NPs. Simply put, binding theory tries to find out if in a given linguistic expression containing more than one NP, a given NP can be interpreted as co-referential to another (Mbah, 2011). Anaphor is an NP, which can have no independent reference, but which takes its reference from some other expression in the sentence, its antecedent (Radford, 1981). Meanwhile, a reflexive pronoun is an anaphoric pronoun which bears the action performed by its antecedent (Mbah, 2011).

Data Presentation and Analysis

Below are the data from Standard Igbo and Nkporo dialect. The data are presented and analysed using the framework of binding theory. The two classes under which the data are to be presented and analyzed in line with the framework of binding theory include: *forms*, and *functions* of reflexive constructions. Each sub-section is focused on a particular class and its realizations in Standard Igbo and Nkporo dialect.

(a) Forms of Reflexives in Standard Igbo and Nkporo Dialect

	Standard Igbo	Nkporo Dialect	Gloss
11	O sara onwe ya ahu 3sg bath-rV(past) self 3sg body	O wuru onwo ya ekwu 3sg bath-rV(past) self 3sg body	He bathed himself
12	Mmesoma meruru onwe ya ahu Mmesoma injure-rV(past) self 3sg body	Mmesoma meruru onwo ya ekwu Mmesoma injure-rV(past) self 3sg body	Mmesoma injured herself

13	Emeka n' onwe ya gburu agwo ahu Emeka PREP self 3sg kill- rV(past) snake DET	Emeka n' onwo ya gburu agwo ahu Emeka PREP self 3sg kill-rV(past) snake DET	Emeka himself killed the snake
14	Ugo na Nneji siri onwe ha ofe Ugo CONJ Nneji prepare- rV(past) self 3pl soup 'Ugo and Nneji (they) made soup for themselves'	Ugo na Nneji tere onwo wa ofho Ugo CONJ Nneji prepare-rV(past) self 3pl soup 'Ugo and Nneji (they) made soup for themselves'	Ugo and Nneji made soup for themselves

In the examples above, it can be seen that all the reflexive pronouns in Standard Igbo and Nkporo dialect belong to the same minimum clause, and are co-indexed with their antecedents. Also, while (11)-(13) show reflexives in the third person singular, (14) shows reflexive in the form of third person plural. In the above examples, it is evident that *number* serves to distinguish between the third person singular and the third person plural. The number on the reflexives in (11)-(13) is singular, while that of example (14) is plural. Reflexives as seen in the above examples (11, 12 and 14) and (13), in both Standard Igbo and Nkporo dialect occur before and after the verb. While reflexives in (11, 12 and 14) occur before the verb, reflexive in example (13) comes after the verb. This is in contrast with what is obtainable in English where the reflexives only come after the verb. This positioning concurs with Rooryck and Wyngaerd's (2011:14) submission that "...correct insertion of reflexive and non-reflexive pronouns requires that the context of insertion has to be able to read off the syntax what is and what is not a reflexive environment". This then concurs with the rule of principles and parameters in Universal Grammar, which states that languages may have certain features in common (principles) but the way of realizing such features may differ (parameters). Also, based on the three binding conditions proposed in Government and Binding, which state that: (i) an anaphor is bound in its local domain: this means that all reflexives must be properly bound to their antecedents; (ii) a pronominal is free in a local domain: this means that every pronoun is free in the minimal clause containing it; and (iii) a referring expression is free: this means that all referential experiences (entities called by name) are free (Ndimele, 2004; Mbah, 2011; Agbedo, 2015). It can be said the reflexives above concurred with the first condition because they properly bound to their antecedents. With the above examples from (11)-(14), it is indicated that the structure for reflexives in the minimal clause in which they occur are SOV and SVO (i.e. the object, which is the reflexive can occur before or after the verb).

(b) Functions of reflexives in Standard Igbo and Nkporo Dialect

Reflexives perform basically two functions in Nkporo-Igbo and in Standard Igbo: the emphatic and non-emphatic functions. Below are examples to illustrate the functions they perform. Examples (11)-(13) above, as well as (14)-(17) below are all examples of emphatic functions of the reflexive pronouns in the dialect while examples (18-23) are non-emphatic functions of the reflexives.

- **Emphatic functions**

Below are examples of emphatic functions of the reflexive pronouns in Standard Igbo and Nkporo Dialect:

	Standard Igbo	Nkporo Dialect	Gloss
15	Tom n' onwe ya binye-re aka Tom PREP self 3sg endorse- rV(past) hand n'akwukwozi ahu PREP letter DET	Tom n' onwo ya binye- re aka Tom PREP self 3sg endorse-rV(past) hand n'ekwukwozi ahu PREP letter DET	Tom himself signed the letter'

16	Mụ onwo m si-ri nri ahụ Isg self 1sg cook-rV(past) food DET	Mụ onwo m wu-ru erimeri ahụ Isg self 1sg cook-rV(past) food DET	I myself prepared the meal
17	Mụ onwe m agabeghi ebe ahu 1sg self 1sg PFX-V-go-PP- NEG place DET	Mụ onwo m agabeghi ebe ahu 1sg self 1sg PFX-V-go-PP- NEG place DET	I myself have never been there

• **Non-emphatic functions**

Below are examples of non-emphatic functions of the reflexive pronouns in Standard Igbo and Nkporo Dialect:

	Standard Igbo	Nkporo Dialect	Gloss
18	Ọ zụ-rụ onwe ya akpukpukwu 3sg buy-rV(past) self 3sg shoe	Ọ zụ-rụ onwo ya akpuokpa 3sg buy-rV(past) self 3sg shoe	He bought himself a pair of shoes
19	Onwe m ju-ru m afo self 1sg fill-rV(past) 1sg stomach	Onwo m ju-ru m afo self 1sg fill-rV(past) 1sg stomach	I am pleased with myself
20	Emeka gwa-ra onwe ya okwu asi Emeka tell-rV(past) self 3sg word lie	Emeka gha-ra onwo ya ugha Emeka tell-rV(past) self 3sg lie	Emeka perjured himself
21	Okeoyibo ahu zopusa-ra onwe ya Rabbit DET set-rV(past) self 3sg	Okeoyibo ahu zopusa-ra onwo ya Rabbit DET set-rV(past) self 3sg	The rabbit set itself free
22	O nye-re onwe ya oke nke pekarisiri mpe 3sg give-rV(past) self 3sg share COMP be-like-more-SUFF little	O ni-ri onwo ya oke nke 3sg give-rV(past) self 3sg share COMP dikarisiri nta be-like-more-SUFF little	She gave herself the smallest portion

From the above examples, it can be seen that there is similarity between the functions of reflexive pronouns Standard Igbo and Nkporo dialect. Consequently, one can easily distinguish between the emphatic and non-emphatic functions of the reflexives in Standard Igbo and Nkporo dialect based on their positions. The reflexives in Standard Igbo and Nkporo dialect assume a different position to perform either non-emphatic or emphatic functions. The first is the occurrence of the reflexive after the nominal elements (antecedent) or before the predicate to perform an emphatic function as in examples (14-17), while the second is the occurrence of the reflexive pronoun after the verb to perform a non-emphatic function as in examples (18)-(22).

Findings

Based on the presented data, we observed several similarities and linguistic variations in the reflexive constructions between Nkporo-Igbo and Standard Igbo. These similarities and differences shall be explained in a little more detail:

(i) Reflexive Constructions in Standard Igbo

In Standard Igbo, reflexive constructions are used to express actions performed by the subject on itself. The reflexive pronoun *onwe* is commonly employed to indicate self-reference as seen in the examples above.

(ii) Reflexive Constructions in Nkporo-Igbo

In Nkporo Igbo, the reflexive pronoun 'onwe' is modified to 'onwo' reflecting a specific linguistic variation within the dialect. This subtle variation in pronunciation does not change the fundamental function and meaning of the reflexive pronoun. Similarly, the third person plural pronoun 'ha' in Standard Igbo is spelled as 'wa' in Nkporo-Igbo as seen in the bold examples above. This variation in spelling does not alter the core meaning and usage of the pronoun, as it still represents the third-person plural.

(iii) Common Features of Reflexive Constructions

Despite these variations, both Nkporo-Igbo and Standard Igbo share similarities in the forms and forms of reflexive constructions. Here are some common features:

- **Self-Reference:** reflexive constructions in both Standard Igbo and Nkporo are used to express actions performed by the subject on itself.
- **Pronominal Forms:** Reflexive pronouns whether 'onwe' or 'onwo', serve as the central element of self-reference in both Standard Igbo and Nkporo dialect.
- **Syntactic Position:** Reflexive pronouns generally occupy the object position in a sentence, indicating that the subject is performing the action on itself.

In line with the above findings, it can be concluded that reflexive constructions in Nkporo-Igbo and Standard Igbo exhibit similarities in their forms and functions. Both utilize reflexive pronouns to indicate self-reference, albeit with slight variations. While Standard Igbo employs 'onwe' and 'ha' for reflexive and third person plural pronouns, respectively, Nkporo-Igbo uses 'onwo' and 'wa'. Despite the slight differences in the realization of the reflexive pronoun 'onwe' and the third-person plural pronoun, Standard Igbo and Nkporo dialects maintain the core functions and meanings of reflexive constructions. This analysis not only contributes to our understanding of the linguistic diversity within the Igbo language and underscores the importance of studying dialectal variations in reflexive phenomena but also allows us to appreciate the richness and diversity within the Igbo language.

Summary and Conclusion

This study has successfully examined reflexive construction in Nkporo dialect of Igbo using the framework of binding theory. It empirically proves that reflexive constructions abound in the Nkporo dialect. This implies that the dialect expresses reflexive constructions such that the antecedent and reflexive pronoun 'onwo (self) + personal pronoun' of the constructions respectively serve as the subject and object of the constructions, and the pronoun that goes with the reflexive 'onwo' must bear the morphosyntactic property of the antecedent it refers to. From the analysis, it is revealed that reflexives in the Nkporo require a compatible clause-mate antecedent due to the strong anaphoric or co-referential relations between reflexive marker 'onwo' (self) and its antecedent. It is also observed that the dialect makes a dual distinction for number and person, i.e., while the personal pronoun is marked for number and person, the form of the reflexive marker does not change; only the antecedent changes its form to indicate a change in number and person. It is also discovered that reflexives in the dialect perform both non-emphatic and emphatic functions. Additionally, it is ascertained that reflexives come before and after the verb of the clause in which they occur structurally. Finally, in line with the objectives and findings of this study which are streamlined only to the form and functions of reflexive construction in Nkporo. It is therefore recommended that more studies be done to ascertain other aspects of reflexive construction in the dialect as well as other dialects of the Igbo language.

References

- Agbedo, C. 2015. *General Linguistics: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*. Nsukka: Ntaeshe Press Inc.
- Al-Raba'a, B. I. 2017. *Reflexivity and Reciprocity in Arabic*. PhD Dissertation. Bloomington: Indiana University.
- Chomsky, N. 1981. *Lectures on Government and Binding*. Dordrecht: Foris Publications.
- Chomsky, N. 1995. *The Minimalist Program*. Massachusetts: The MIT Press.
- Eyisi, J. 2006. *A Grammar of English*. Nimo: Rex Charles publication.
- Haspelmath, M. 2019. *Comparing Reflexive Constructions in the World's Languages*. MPI-SHH Jena & Leipzig University.

- Kuiper, K. and Nokes, J. 2014. *Theories of Syntax Concepts and Case Studies*. Palgrave: Macmillan.
- Mbah, B. M. 2011. *GB Syntax: A Minimalist Theory and Application to Igbo*. Enugu: CIDJAP Press.
- Ndimele, O. 2004. *Principles and Parameters of Universal Grammar: A Government-Binding*. Owerri: Educational Services.
- Nishigauchi, T. 2017. *Syntax of Reciprocals in Japanese*. Journal of East Asian Linguistics, 1(2):157-196.
- Okeke, C. O. 2008. *Reflexivization and Reciprocity in Igbo*. Journal of the Linguistic Association of Nigeria, 11:185-197.
- Okeke, C. O. 2015. *Reflexive and Reciprocal Verbs in Igbo*. Igbo Language Studies, 1:87-104.
- Oosthuizen, J. 2015. *Reflexives and Reflexive Constructions in Afrikaans*. South Africa: Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics Plus
- Otoo, R. 2016. *Reflexives and Reciprocal Relations in Ga*. Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal, 3(11):141-153.
- Oosthuizen, J. 2015. *Reflexives and Reflexive Constructions in Afrikaans*. South Africa: Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics Plus
- Quirt, R. Greenbaum, G. and Svartrik, J. 1973. *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*. Longman.
- Radford, A. 1981. *Transformational Syntax*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rooryck, J. & Wyngaerd, G. V. 2011. *Dissolving Binding Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Saah, K. K. 2018. *The Syntax of Reciprocal Constructions in Akan*. Ghana Journal of Linguistics, 7(2):52-70.
- Uchekukwu, C. 2006. *The Reflexive-Reciprocal Polysemy in Igbo*. MA Thesis. Nsukka: University of Nigeria
- Uchekukwu, C. (2011). *The Reflexive Reciprocal Polysemy in Igbo*. Charles and Patrick Publication.

Abbreviations used

- COMP = Complementizer
DET = Determiner
NEG = Negation
PREP = Preposition
PST = Past tense
NP = Noun phrase
PP = Past participle
PFX = Prefix
SUFF = Suffix
V = Verb
rV (past) = R + vowel marking past tense in Igbo language
1sg = First person singular pronoun
3sg = Third person singular pronoun.
3pl = Third person plural pronoun