



Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands

A grammar of Hamar : a South Omotic language of Ethiopia

Petrollino, S.

Citation

Petrollino, S. (2016, November 10). *A grammar of Hamar : a South Omotic language of Ethiopia. Cushitic and Omotic Studies*. Rüdiger Köppe Verlag, Köln. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/44090>

Version: Not Applicable (or Unknown)

License: [Licence agreement concerning inclusion of doctoral thesis in the Institutional Repository of the University of Leiden](#)

Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/44090>

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

Cover Page



Universiteit Leiden



The handle <http://hdl.handle.net/1887/44090> holds various files of this Leiden University dissertation.

Author: Petrollino, S.

Title: A grammar of Hamar : a South Omotic language of Ethiopia

Issue Date: 2016-11-10

9 Simple clauses

This chapter provides an overview of simple clauses in Hamar, and it describes the expression of TAM values in main clauses. Simple clauses contain one independent clause formed by the main final verbs described in 9.1. Since TAM values can be expressed periphrastically in complex predicates, these will be discussed in section 9.1 for ease of reference. The chapter treats copular clauses (9.2) and existential clauses (9.3) as well. Dependent clauses are described in chapter 10.

9.1 Independent verb forms

This section offers an overview of main (final) verb paradigms. Independent clauses (i.e. stand-alone clauses) in Hamar contain the verb paradigms illustrated by the verb *wuc'á* 'drink' in tables 9.1 and 9.2.

Table 9.1: Independent verb forms (1SG) - Simple predicates

Simple predicates	
Imperative	wuc'á (SG addressee)/ wuc'é (PL addressee)
General Declarative	wuc'á~wuc'á
Present and Jussive	i = da- wuc'é
Future	wuc'á = i = da wuc'é
Intentional Future	wuc'ó = i = de
Perfect	wuc'-idí
Perfective	i = wuc'á-de
Imperfective	i = wuc'á-da
Narrative	wuc'á-ḡ

Table 9.2: Independent verb forms (third person) - Complex predicates

Complex predicates	
Progressive	wuc'á-te ki = dáa-de
Inceptive	wuc'-ánna ki = dáa-de
Optative	kidí wuc'-ánna zag-idí
Completive	kidí wuc'á-ise shid-idí
Experiential	kidí wuc'á-ise des-ê
Present Probability	kidí wuc'-íma gar-ê
Past Probability	kidí wuc'-idí da-íma gar-ê
Irrealis	wuc'á-te ki = ḡaqábe

Dependent forms, which are syntactically subordinated to the main verbs, are discussed in chapter 10. Aspect and tense are expressed mainly syntactically, by means of periphrastic constructions, stem reduplication, auxiliaries and the combination of verb roots and stems with verbal markers. There are two aspectual

markers: the perfective marker *-de*, which denotes a temporally bounded event seen in its entirety, and the imperfective marker *-da*, which denotes events whose temporal boundaries are unknown. The two markers seem to have originated from the existential verb *dáa*.⁴⁸ These are not marked on all paradigms but they are found in the main tenses, namely the past, the present and the future. The perfect marker *-idí* can also be seen as composed of a formative *-d-* derived from the existential *dáa*. Regardless of the presence of the aspectual markers *-de* and *-da*, tense always carries aspectual information in declarative-affirmative verbs. Aspect is not marked in negative paradigms and in interrogative content questions, which instead distinguish only between past and non-past (chapter 11 and 12). There are no sentence type markers in Hamar, nor are there morphemes which mark exclusively declarative, imperative or interrogative mood.

In the following sections the paradigms are organized in simple predicates and complex predicates depending on whether they involve periphrastic constructions. Simple predicates will be discussed one by one, whereas complex predicates are treated together under section 9.1.7.

9.1.1 Imperative

The imperative is one of the few ‘inflected’ paradigms within the Hamar verbal system (cf. chapter 6, section 6.3.3). The singular addressee corresponds to the verb root plus *-á* (1); the plural addressee is formed by the root plus *-é* (2).

- | | | | |
|-----|--|-----|--|
| (1) | gi-á!
say-IMP.2SG
say! (SG addressee) | (2) | gi-é!
say-IMP.2PL
say! (PL addressee) |
|-----|--|-----|--|

For the other persons (the jussive), the present paradigm is used (see 9.1.3).

The emphatic particle *-tá* can be suffixed to the singular addressee of the imperative to express stronger force: this is often used by adults addressing children or between same-age peers.

- | | |
|------|---|
| (3a) | yáa fayá gi-a-tá!
2SG well say-IMP.2SG-EMPH
say it well! (speak well!) |
| (3b) | búno baʔá-ise shopá-na im-a-tá!
coffee bring-CNV1 guest:PL-DAT give-IMP.2SG-EMPH
bring coffee and give it to the guests! |

⁴⁸ cf. also Dime where the imperfective marker *-dée-* derived from the existential verb *déen* (Mulugeta 2008: 125).

In sequences of commands, the verbs preceding the final imperative form are always marked by subordinating verbal markers, as in (3b) above (see chapter 10 for subordinate clauses).

9.1.2 General Declarative

The General Declarative is expressed by the reduplication of the citation form of the verb, and it translates the general stance of the speaker, that is it is used to express common truths (4a, 4c), general facts (4b), actions which are planned or take place over specific periods of time or actions which are the logical next step in procedural texts (4d, 4e):

- (4a) **gudirí wongá-dan gaʔá~gaʔá**
 hyena cows:PL-ACC bite~bite
 hyenas bite the cows
- (4b) **bító wuc'á~wuc'á**
 Bító drink~drink
 Bító drinks
- (4c) **éedi wul ási pandát nashá~nashá**
 person all tooth gap like~like
 everybody likes (girls with) gap teeth
- (4d) **agá-rra santé-xa doolá-n qadá~qadadá**
 DEM2.M-ABL cloth:M-INS milk.churn-F.OBL rub~rub:PASS
 after that, the milk churn is rubbed with the cloth
- (4e) **agá-rra kéda dáa-n-dar arsá~arsadá**
 DEM2.M-ABL then pot-F.OBL-ALL1 insert~insert:PASS
 after that, it is inserted in the pot

Examples (4d) and (4e) contain reduplicated passive verbs: only the second (final) stem is extended by the passive derivation. This is common for passive derived stems which get reduplicated, see also the future tense discussed below. The passive derivation is not repeated on the reduplicated verb but it occurs only on one of the two verb stems.

9.1.3 Present, Jussive, Future and Intentional Future

The present and future belong to the set of paradigms for which anaphoric subject clitics are used (cf. table 6.6 in chapter 6). The present is formed by the subject clitic

and the aspectual marker *-da* prefixed to the verb stem ending in *-é* (5). The present refers to actions which take place at the moment of speaking:

- (5) **kánki-xa wo = da-yi?-é**
 car-INS 1PL = IPFV-go-PRES
 we go by car

The aspectual marker is always omitted with third persons: the third person conjugation is generally irregular across paradigms.

- (6a) **wongá diibá-ise wóon ki = dees-é**
 cows:PL steal-CNV1 1PL:ACC 3 = kill-PRES
 they steal our cows and kill us

- (6b) **róoro wul kínka ki = yay-é**
 day every together 3 = move-PRES
 every day they move together

The jussive mood is formed by omitting the aspectual marker *-da* from the Present (7). This means that there is no difference between present tense and jussive mood for third persons, see the full paradigm in table 9.3.

- (7a) **wo = yig-é**
 1PL = play-PRES
 let's play!

- (7b) **ínta kála bish i = da-ool-é, kála bish**
 1SG one only 1SG = IPFV-bray-PRES one only
i = ool-é!
 1SG = bray-PRES
 I bray only once, let me bray just once!

Table 9.3: Present and jussive conjugations

	Present	Jussive
1SG	i = da- wuc' -é	i = wuc' -é
2SG	ha = da- wuc' -é	-
3M/3PL	ki = wuc' -é	ki = wuc' -é
3F	ko = wuc' -é	ko = wuc' -é
1PL	wo = da- wuc' -é	wo = wuc' -é
2PL	ye = da- wuc' -é	-

Future tense is derived from the present by adding a reduplicated verb stem ending in *-á* before the present paradigm (8). The subject clitic and the aspectual marker

can be cliticized to the first verb stem in fast speech (8a). As for the General Declarative, passive derived verbs in the future get the derivational passive suffix only on the final stem (8b).

- (8a) **ínta bashá=i=da bash-é**
 1SG win=1SG=IPFV win-PRES
 I will win

- (8b) **doolá-no sharká=ko sharkad-é**
 milk.churn:F.S shake=3F shake:PASS-PRES
 the milk churn will be shaken (with a piece of smouldering charcoal)

Some passive verb stems, however, are reduplicated and the passive derivation is repeated in the reduplicated stem, see for instance example 26 in section 10.1.5, chapter 10.

Intentional future can be expressed only for the first person singular. The verb form consists of the purposive marker *-o* (see chapter 10, section 10.1.5) and the perfective marker *-de*. The intentional future translates the intention and willingness of the speaker to perform the action expressed by the verb. The action is intended to be performed soon after the moment of speaking:

- (9a) **ínta kais-ó=i=de**
 1SG disappear:CAUS-PURP=1SG=PFV
 I'll disperse (them)!

- (9b) **támpo boʔ-ó=i=de**
 tobacco bring-PURP=1SG=PFV
 I'll bring tobacco!

Intention can be expressed also by the future tense illustrated in (8) above. The difference between the future and the intentional future lays in the temporal boundary of the action: for the ordinary future marked by the imperfective aspect *-da*, the beginning or the end of the action performed by the verb is not known, as it is not known whether the action will ever take place. The intentional future marked by *-de* denotes an action which will be performed soon after speaking, cf. (10a) and (10b):

- (10a) **ínta haan kalshá=i=da kalsh-é**
 1SG 2SG.ACC help=1SG=IPFV help-PRES
 I will help you (now, later, one day)

- (10b) **ínta haan kalsh-ó=i=de**
 1SG 2SG.ACC help-PURP=1SG=PFV
 I will help you (right now)

9.1.4 Perfect

The perfect form of the verb is invariable with all persons and it is characterized by the suffixation of the perfect marker *-idí* to the verb root. Previous analysis (Lydall 1976; Cupi et al. 2012) considered the first vowel *-i* of the perfect suffix *-idí* part of the verb stem. The verb stem ending in *-i* was thus referred to as the ‘perfect stem’ (Cupi et al. 2012) or ‘descriptive stem’ (Lydall 1976). As already mentioned in chapter 6 and in section 9.1 above, the present study does not associate aspectual values to verb stems.

The perfect refers to actions viewed as already completed at the time of reference. The completed action might have present relevance:

- (11a) **t’álian kédá ni?-idí**
 Italians then come-PF
 the Italians then came
- (11b) **qáski-l gecc-idí ukulí-l gecc-idí**
 dog-INCL become.old-PF donkey-INCL become.old-PF
 both Dog and Donkey became old
- (11c) **núu guní-ɖan dees-idí**
 fire snake-ACC kill-PF
 Fire killed Snake

The copula *-ne* can additionally be suffixed to the perfect form of the verb to mark focus (similar to what is described in 9.3 for the existential verb *dáa*). When the copula *-ne* is suffixed to the perfect form of the verb, the scope of the focus is on the entire clause (the truth value of the entire clause is asserted):

- (12) **ínta kátti purɖ-idí-ne**
 1SG a.lot be.full-PF-COP
I am completely full (I have eaten a lot)

The perfect marker is suffixed to adjectival stative verbs to express states:

- (13) **naanó qajaɖ-idí-ne**
 girl:F.S be.tired-PF-COP
 the girl is tired

9.1.5 Perfective and Imperfective

Perfective and imperfective are formed by the citation form of the verb plus the aspectual markers *-de* (14) and *-da* (15) respectively. These verb forms are labelled ‘perfective’ and ‘imperfective’ since they primarily encode aspectual distinctions, however perfective and imperfective are often used with reference to past events. The perfective describes events which are seen as temporally bounded. In the perfective the emphasis is put on the whole event, whereas in the perfect described above the emphasis is on the end point of the action.⁴⁹

- (14a) **gáya-be kóopini-be kínka haamí ki = paxá-de**
 baboon-COM squirrel-COM together field 3 = till-PFV
 Baboon and Squirrel tilled a field together
- (14b) **“gaitâ likká-xa wongá-dan gishá!”**
 baboon:M small:M-INS cows:PL-ACC herd.IMP.2SG
hamá-ise ki = giá-de
 say-CNV1 3 = tell-PFV
 “oh small baboon, herd the cows!”, he said
- (14c) **ínta búska-r i = addá-de**
 1SG Buska-IN 1SG = give.birth:PASS-PFV
 I was born in Buska

The perfective describes events whose internal composition is not further analyzable, whereas the imperfective denotes temporally unbounded event which might have been performed habitually, continuously or for long periods.

- (15a) **t’álian ká-te qaldó-n-te qaná-da**
 Italians PRX.SP-LOC lap-F.OBL-LOC hit-IPFV
 the Italians used to hit here on the laps
- (15b) **sóqo-no óo somále-n pé-rra badá-da**
 salt-F.S DST Somali-F.OBL land-ABL bring:PASS-IPFV
 the salt was brought from there, from the land of the Somali

⁴⁹ The difference between perfective and perfect in Hamar is well described in the difference drawn by Comrie between ‘complete’ and ‘completed’ actions (Comrie 1976:18): “The perfective does indeed denote a complete situation, with beginning, middle, and end. The use of ‘completed’, however, puts too much emphasis on the termination of the situation, whereas the use of the perfective puts no more emphasis, necessarily, on the end of a situation than on any other part of the situation, rather all parts of the situation are presented as a single whole”.

- (15c) **kéda laii yi?á-da, báa búska ko = utá-de**
 then IDEO.far go-IPFV UP Búska 3F = climb-PFV
 then (they) kept on going further on, and climbed up at Búska

Verbs marked by the imperfective aspect can be repeated to express the iterative aspect of the action:

- (16) **éen-na qánte wáa-n ogó-dan**
 people.F.OBL-DAT DAT meat-F.OBL DEM2.F-ACC
taxá-da taxá-da
 cut-IPFV cut-IPFV
 (he) kept on cutting that meat for the people

The suffix *-da* marking imperfective aspect is sometimes found before the verb. I do not have an explanation for the movement of the imperfective marker *-da*, and speakers confirmed that there is no change in meaning:

- (17a) **kidí wushkí-n-ka kat'á-te da-ni?á**
 3 bullet-F.OBL-INS shoot-SE IPFV-come
 they were coming shooting the bullets
- (17b) **mangisê káa banqí da-zagá**
 government:M DEM1.M fight IPFV-want
 this *government* was looking for war
- (17c) **kodí t'álian gállo da-hamhá**
 3F Italians enemy:F.S IPFV-say:PASS
 They were/used to be called 'the Italian enemies'
- (17d) **qáski-be ukulí-be kínka ooní-n-te da-ashká**
 dog-COM donkey-COM together house-F.OBL-LOC IPFV-do
 Dog and Donkey were working together in the house

9.1.6 Narrative

The narrative marker *-b* is suffixed to the citation form of the verb and it is used in the narrative flow to mark sequential actions. Narrative verbs are uninflected.

- (18a) **gámuri ni?á-b, gámuri ni?á-ise**
 jackal come-NARR jackal come-CNV1
báasha-dan yedá-b
 chicken-ACC catch-NARR
 the jackal came, the jackal came and caught the chicken

- (18b) **gaitâ** **aafó-n** **galt'á-ḡ**, **hayá-ise**,
 baboon:M mouth-F.OBL seal-NARR do-CNV1
 yí = sa **qáu** **róxa** **yi?á-ḡ**
 REFL = GEN forest PER go-NARR
 the baboon sealed the opening, then went through the forest

9.1.7 Complex predicates

This section offers an overview of complex predicates and the periphrastic expression of aspect and mood in main clauses. Complex predicates generally consists of a final auxiliary verb which provides information on tense, aspect, and person specification, plus a verb providing semantic content and functioning as the predicate of the auxiliary. Even though the lexical verb is syntactically dependent on the main final auxiliary verb, the periphrasis as a whole is understood as a single predicate. For more details on subordinating suffixes see chapter 10.

The auxiliary *dáa* 'exist' is used for the expression of progressive (19) and inceptive (20) aspect. Progressive and continuous actions are expressed by the existential predicator *dáa* (see also 9.3) and the complement verb marked by the same-event marker *-te*. The converb marker *-te* is homophonous with the locative case *-te* which is suffixed to NPs and nouns, thus the construction can be alternatively seen as a locative construction. The same-event converb covers a range of several syntactic functions, see chapter 10 for more details.

The auxiliary *dáa* can be marked by the aspectual markers *-da* and *-de*: the perfective marker *-de* suffixed to the existential verb generally has present interpretation, whereas the imperfective marker *-da* gives past reading to the predicate:

- (19a) **kɔsɔ** **mée** **anshá-te** **ki = dáa-de**
 ball:M down descend-SE 3 = exist-PFV
 the ball is descending down
- (19b) **gudirí-be** **panáq-be** **kí = ɗan** **bagá-te** **dáa-da**
 hyena-COM frog-COM 3 = ACC tease-SE exist-IPFV
 Hyena and Frog were teasing each other

The inceptive aspect of an action is given by the optative marker *-ánna* (see chapter 10) suffixed to a complement verb in an existential construction:

- (20a) **dommó** **qan-ánna** **ko = dáa-de**
 rain:F.S hit-OPT 3F = exist-PFV
 It is about to rain

- (20b) **naaná** **raat-ánna** **ki = dáa-de**
 children:PL sleep-OPT 3 = exist-PFV
 the children are falling asleep (are about to sleep)

The notion of imminence can be conveyed also by the combination of the dative marker *qánte* and the optative marker (cf. chapter 8, section 8.2.1). In these constructions the dative marker *qánte* has a verbal complement:

- (21a) **ínta** **yi?-ánna** **qánte**
 1SG go-OPT DAT
 I am about to go
- (21b) **guní** **kí = ďan** **ga?-ánna** **qánte**
 snake 3 = ACC bite-OPT DAT
 a snake was ready to bite him

If the existential auxiliary in (20b) is changed into a volitional verb the construction does not convey inceptive meaning, but instead it takes on an optative meaning, i.e. it translates the wish of the subject:

- (22a) **naaná** **raat-ánna** **zag-idí**
 children:PL sleep-OPT want-PF
 the children want to sleep
- (22b) **índo-be** **ímbo-be-na** **kurí** **ba?-ánna** **zag-idí-ne**
 mum-COM dad-COM honey bring-OPT want-PF-COP
 (I) want to bring honey to mum and dad

The verb of cognition ‘think’ often has the optative suffix on its complement verb, combined with the benefactive marker as in (23) below (see also complement clauses in chapter 10):

- (23a) **róoro** **kála** **shóqo-be** **kóofini-be** **kínka**
 day one tick-COM squirrel-COM together
gob-ánna **qaabá-da**
 run-OPT think-IPFV
 one day, Tick and Squirrel were planning to race each other

- (23b) **éedi kála-be qáari-be kínka baití**
 person one-COM python-COM together river
sag-ánna qánte qaabá-ḡ
 cross-OPT DAT think-NARR
 a guy and a python were planning to cross a river together

Other verbs can add aspectual meaning to a clause. The completive and perfective aspect conveyed by the marker *-idí* for instance can be emphasized by using the verb *shidá* ‘stay, remain’ as the auxiliary of the lexical verb providing the semantic information:

- (24) **íi-no kó=sa dard, kéda agá-te**
 stomach:F.S 3F=GEN IDEO.explode then DEM2.M-LOC
kodí diá-ise shid-idí
 3F die-CNV1 remain-PF
 her stomach exploded, then she died there

The verb of cognition *desá* ‘know’ is used negatively to express an action that has never been performed before (this has also been referred to as ‘experiential perfect’ by Comrie 1976). The construction involves the verb *desá* inflected for negative present tense and preceded by the embedded lexical verb marked by the converb suffix *-ise*:

- (25) **yáa éna éedi-bet gobá-ise des-atáne**
 2SG past person-COM run-CNV1 know-PRES.NEG.2SG
 you never raced with anybody before! (lit. running you don’t know)

Constructions involving negative clauses are used for the expression of epistemic modality. Present and future probability is conveyed by the auxiliary verb *gará* ‘stop’ inflected for person and negative present tense, and preceded by the lexical complement verb marked by the negative subordinative marker *-íma* (see chapter 12 for negative markers). The semantic path conveying probability originates in the negation of a verb which is already inherently negative, *gará* ‘stop, prevent, not do anymore’:

- (26a) **shopá saxá ni?-íma gar-ê**
 guest:PL tomorrow come-NEG.SUB1 stop-PRES.NEG.3
 the guests might come tomorrow (lit. the guests don’t do anymore not coming, no longer not coming)

- (26b) **áari óo ooní-n-te da-íma gar-ê**
 Aari DST house-F.OBL-LOC exist-NEG.SUB1 stop-PRES.NEG.3
 maybe Aari is there in the house
- (26c) **árpi lámá kaapá-ise ínta yi?-íma gar-atíne**
 moon two pass-CNV1 1SG go-NEG.SUB1 stop-PRES.NEG.1SG
 in two months I might go

Probability in the past is expressed as follows: the lexical verb is inflected for perfect aspect and functions as the main verb of the clause; probability is conveyed by a negative construction similar to that in (26), with the existential verb *dáa* marked by the negative subordinative marker and the verb *gará* inflected for negative present tense, cf. (27) with (26a).

- (27) **kodí arbamín-shet yi?-idí da-íma gar-ê**
 3F Arba Minch-ALL2 go-PF exist-NEG.SUB1 stop-PRES.NEG.3
 maybe she went to Arba Minch

The adjunct *daíma garê* at the end of the sentence in (27) has become a lexicalized expression: the verb *garê* does not inflect for person as in the present probability construction in (26), but the expression *daíma garê* is used indifferently with all persons.

Events that did not take place, but that could have happened are expressed in a construction involving the invariable auxiliary *daqábe*. The auxiliary expresses irrealis aspect and translates ‘almost completed’ actions. It seems to be derived from the verb *daqá* ‘avoid’. The lexical verb gets the same-event converb marker:

- (28) **naasâ baqá-te ki = daqábe**
 child:M fall-SE 3 = IRR
 the child almost fell

9.2 Copula

Equative and attributive nominal clauses are marked by the invariable copula *-ne*. In addition to copular clauses, this section deals as well with the expression of comparison.

The equative copula is invariable for person (29), tense and aspect (30). It occurs sentence finally and it is cliticized to the predicate nominal of the non-verbal clause:

- (29a) **éedi naasí-na qánte dembí líkka-ne**
 person child-DAT DAT death small-COP
 for human beings⁵⁰ death is a small thing (lit. to human beings death is small)
- (29b) **wɔxá káa t'íá-ne**
 ox:M DEM1.M black-COP
 this ox is black
- (29c) **naanó koró gudúḡ-ine**
 girl:F.S DEM1.F tall-COP
 this girl is tall
- (30) **zóbo éna waḡénka éedi wodímo-ne**
 lion once.upon.a.time person rich-COP
 Once upon a time Lion was a rich person

In (29c) the prosthetic vowel *i* is inserted after the consonant ending noun *gudúḡ* (phonological rule P3).

The predicate of a copular clause can be a noun (31), an adjective (32), a possessive pronoun (33), or a demonstrative (34):

- (31) **wollí eedá-ne**
 Wollí relative-COP
 Wollí is a relative
- (32) **gaitâ gaarê kátti dúrpi-ne**
 baboon:M big:M very fat-COP
 the big baboon (M) was very fat
- (33) **ukullá kirá inná-ne**
 donkey:PL DEM1.PL 1SG:PL-COP
 these donkeys are mine
- (34) **búska agá-ne**
 Buska DEM2.M-COP
 Buska is that one

⁵⁰ *éedi naasí* translates as 'human beings'

The copula can be used for focus coding; for instance it marks truth-value focus when it follows the affirmative perfect form of verbs (see section 9.1.4 above) or the existential verb *dáa* (9.3 below).⁵¹

Copular clauses are used for the expression of comparison. The standard NP in a comparative construction is marked by either the dative case or the genitive case, with no difference in meaning (cf. 35b and 35c):

- (35a) **qultâ káa qultâ káa-na sháaqa-ne**
 goat:M DEM1.M goat:M DEM1.M-DAT small-COP
 this goat is smaller than this goat

- (35b) **otólo walé-na gaarí-ne**
 Otólo Walé-DAT big-COP
 Otólo is bigger than Walé

- (35c) **otólo walé-sa gaarí-ne**
 Otólo Walé-GEN big-COP
 Otólo is bigger than Walé

Nominal clauses without copula in Hamar are hardly ever attested, and the occurrence of the copula *-ne* is not restricted to certain pragmatic contexts as in other Omotic languages (cf. Azeb 2012a and the overview in Crass and Meyer 2007). The copula can be omitted when the presentational marker *-sh* is suffixed to demonstratives: a variant of example (34) above can be expressed by (36a) below. If two copular clauses are coordinated, the copula is exceptionally cliticized only once, on the rightmost predicate nominal at the end of the clause (36b).

- (36a) **búska agá-sh**
 Buska DEM2.M-PRS
 Buska is that one (accompanied by gesture)

⁵¹ The copula *-ne* resembles the declarative sentence marker *-ne* of Maale (Azeb 2001:148), however there are no reasons for analyzing *-ne* in Hamar as a declarative sentence marker since it is found also in negative sentences. The morpheme occurs as affirmative copula at the right edge of non-verbal sentences as illustrated in this section, but it functions as a focus marking device when it is found at the right edge of the existential predicator *dáa* (see 9.3) or cliticized to the perfect marker *-idí*. The morpheme *-ne* is not obligatory in the latter two contexts. A formative *-ne* can be individuated as well in negative inflections: verb paradigms for both past and present negative end in *-ne* (see chapter 12). This feature resembles rather the negative perfective verbs of Konso (Ongaye 2013:217). In Hamar negative copular clauses, the negative copula *-tê* is used, see chapter 12.

- (36b) **qushumbá-no** **kí=sa** **líkka,** **zará-no-l** **kí=sa** **orgó-ne**
 horn-F.S 3 = GEN small body-F.S-INCL 3 = GEN short-COP
 his horns were small and his body was short

Clauses with adjectives used predicatively can be expressed by stative verbs (cf. chapter 3 and chapter 6 on adjectival stative verbs). Adjectival stative verbs cannot occur as predicates, and if they function predicatively, the perfect form of the verb is used instead:

- (37a) **ée** **bard-idí**
 man:M be.drunk-PF
 the man is drunk

- (37b) ***ée** **bardá-ne**

The copula *-ne* has a corresponding interrogative and negative copula, discussed in chapter 11 and 12, respectively. Non-verbal predication in subordinate clauses is expressed by the existential verb *dáa*, and it is treated in chapter 10.

9.3 Existential

Existential predication is used in Hamar to express existence, location and possession. The verb *dáa* ‘to live’ is a regular and fully inflectable verb as shown in (38a) below, and it functions as existential predicator (38b) in the predicative constructions discussed in this section.

The verb stem *dáa* differs from canonical Hamar verbs in that it does not have a final high tone in the citation form (**daá*), and this makes it homophonous with the related noun *dáa* ‘life’.⁵²

- (38a) **kínka** **dáa-n** **da-idí**
 together life-F.OBL live-PF
 (they) lived (the life) together
- (38b) **sillamá** **óo** **óolo-n-sa** **íi-n-te** **dáa**
 evil.spirit DST hole-F.OBL-GEN stomach-F.OBL-LOC exist
 Bogey man is there in the hole / Bogey man lives there in the hole

When the verb stem *dáa* functions as predicator in existential constructions, it is not fully inflectable as its lexical equivalent *dáa* ‘to live’. In this sense it is irregular, and it shows syntactic restrictions which vary depending on whether the construction is predicating generic existence, possession or location. Generic existence, possession

⁵² ‘life’ can also be expressed by the abstract noun *daínta*, cf. chapter 3.

and location are all expressed by the predicator *dáa*, however the first two are syntactically restricted to the General Declarative (39), whereas the latter (location) is restricted to perfective aspect (40).

- (39a) **noqó** **dáa**
 water exist
 there is water

- (39b) **í = sa** **waakí** **dáa**
 1SG = GEN cattle exist
 I have cattle / I have a cow

- (40) **kɔsɔ̃** **noqó-n-te** **ki = dáa-de**
 ball:M water-F.OBL-LOC 3 = exist-PFV
 the ball (M) is in the water

The existential predicator marked by perfective aspect in (40) requires subject cross-referencing: this means that the subject of existential predications expressing location (also referred to as figure) need to be inflected for gender or number, that is to say, the subject must be definite. Uninflected nouns (i.e. non-definite nouns) cannot be used in sentences such as the one in (40). On the other hand, the subject of existential predications denoting existence (39a) can be either inflected or non-inflected: the General Declarative does not cross-reference the subject. These syntactic restrictions are secondary effects of the organization at the level of the information structure and reveal how the semantic categorization of location and existence is structured.

The expression of generic existence is restricted to the General Declarative form of *dáa*. Different from canonical verbs, the General Declarative of *dáa* is not expressed by repetition of the citation form of the verb (cf. 9.1.2). The General Declarative is expressed by the citation form alone as in (39) above and (41) below, or by the citation form followed by the copula *-ne* if the construction is focused (42).

- (41) **apá-ɓ** **hayá-ise** **ko = qaj-ína** **kéda** **máati-no**
 unfold-NARR do-CNV1 3F = be.cold-COND then yeast-F.S
 dáa
 exist
 after spreading (the dough), if it cools down, then you have obtained the
 yeast (lit. there is the yeast)

- (42) **éedi** **báz-in-te** **dáa**
 person lake-F.OBL-LOC exist
 there is a person in the lake

Predicative possession as well has the form of an existential sentence in which the possessed NP functions as the subject of the existential verb and the possessor NP is marked by the genitive case:

- (43) **éna í=sa qulí gebí dáa**
 past 1SG=GEN goat a.lot exist
 in the past I had many goats (lit. many goats exist of me)

In both possessive and existential constructions the predicator *dáa* is invariable for tense, aspect and person marking: the General Declarative form is used for past, present and future reference.

In existential predication expressing location of a definite (i.e. inflected) figure, the verb *dáa* is marked by the perfective marker *-de* and it gets obligatorily pronominal subject marking:

- (44a) **éno gabá-n-te ko=dáa-de**
 people:F.S marked-F.OBL-LOC 3F=exist-PFV
 the people (F) are in the market
- (44b) **ée gabá-n-te ki=dáa-de**
 man:M marked-F.OBL-LOC 3=exist-PFV
 the man (M) is in the market

The existential predicator marked by perfective aspect in (44) is used for the expression of progressive and inceptive aspect: *dáa* functions as the main final verb and it provides subject specifications, whereas the verb providing semantic content occurs as complement of *dáa* (45), see section 9.1.7.

- (45) **ínta kəs̃ gungusá-te i=dáa-de**
 1SG ball:M roll:CAUS-SE 1SG=exist-PFV
 I am making the ball roll

In order to locate an uninflected, non-definite noun (i.e. the general form), an existential construction like to the one in (42) above is used:

- (46a) **kóso noqó-n-te dáa**
 ball water-F.OBL-LOC exist
 there is a ball in the water
- (46b) **éedi ooní-n-te dáa**
 person house-F.OBL-LOC exist
 there is a person in the house

The existential verb *dáa* shows stem suppletion in the negative and interrogative paradigms (a common strategy cross-linguistically, see Creissels 2013). The suppletive root *qol-* is used to form the negative existential predicator *qolê*. The negative existential predicator is invariable for tense, aspect and person and it is used to negate existential predication and predicative possession:

- (47a) **búno qolê**
 coffee exist.not
 there is no coffee
- (47b) **ooní-n-te búno qolê**
 house-F.OBL-LOC coffee exist.not
 there is no coffee in the house
- (47c) **kó=sa búno qolê**
 3F=GEN coffee exist.not
 she doesn't have coffee

Interrogative clauses differentiate generic existence from location in the following way. Existential predication (together with predicative possession) can be questioned only by means of the general interrogative form (48). The question in (48) elicits existential constructions with the General Declarative of *dáa*, or the suppletive negative stem *qolê*.

- (48a) **búno dá-u?**
 coffee exist-INT.COP
 is there coffee?
- (48b) **búno há=sa dá-u?**
 coffee 2SG=GEN exist-INT.COP
 do you have coffee?

In order to express location in interrogative clauses, the suppletive interrogative predicator *qóle* 'where is?' is used, or alternatively, the question word *hamó* 'where' followed by the interrogative perfective paradigm of *dáa* (see chapter 11 for interrogative paradigms).

- (49a) **búnno qóle?**
 coffee:F.S exist.INT
 where is the coffee?

- (49b) **éeno** **hamó-te** **ko = dáa?**
 people:F.S where.NSP-LOC 3F = exist.INT
 where are the people?

Locative clauses as those given in (40) and (44), which involve an inflected subject and perfective aspect marking plus pronominal subject marking on the existential predicator, are the only adequate answers to the interrogative clauses in (49).

Definiteness restrictions on the figure, perfective aspect on the predicator, and the overall syntactic organization of existential predication suggest that Hamar distinguishes the two categories of existence and location in a subtle way: even if the same lexical predicator is used in syntactically similar constructions, different pragmatic statuses are assigned depending on whether the focus (Koch 2012) or the perspectival centre (Creissels 2013, Partee and Borschev 2007) is on the figure or on the ground.

