



Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands

Plural Gender: Behavioral evidence for plural as a value of Cushitic gender with reference to Konso

Tsegaye, M.T.

Citation

Tsegaye, M. T. (2017, July 5). *Plural Gender: Behavioral evidence for plural as a value of Cushitic gender with reference to Konso*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/51345>

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/1887/51345>

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

Cover Page



Universiteit Leiden



The handle <http://hdl.handle.net/1887/51345> holds various files of this Leiden University dissertation

Author: Tsegaye, M.T.

Title: Plural Gender: Behavioral evidence for plural as a value of Cushitic gender with reference to Konso

Issue Date: 2017-07-05

PLURAL GENDER

**Behavioral evidence for plural
as a value of Cushitic gender
with reference to Konso**

Published by

LOT

Trans 10

3512 JK Utrecht

The Netherlands

phone: +31 30 253 6111

e-mail: lot@uu.nl

<http://www.lotschool.nl>

ISBN: 978-94-6093-244-1

NUR 616

Copyright © 2017: Mulugeta Tarekegne Tsegaye. All rights reserved.

PLURAL GENDER

Behavioral evidence for plural as a value of Cushitic gender with reference to Konso

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van

de graad van Doctor aan de Universiteit Leiden,

op gezag van Rector Magnificus prof.mr. C.J.J.M. Stolker,

volgens besluit van het College voor Promoties

te verdedigen op woensdag 5 juli 2017

klokke 16:15 uur

door

Mulugeta Tarekegne Tsegaye

geboren te Gondar, Ethiopië

in 1977

Promotors: Prof. dr. Niels O. Schiller
Prof. dr. Maarten Mous

Beoordelingscommissie: Prof. dr. Marian Klamer (secretaris)
Prof. dr. Herbert Schriefers
(Radboud University)
Dr. Felix K. Ameka
Dr. Francesca Di Garbo
(Stockholm University)

The research on which this dissertation is based was part of a project in the Leiden University Centre for Linguistics (LUCL) ‘Language Diversity in the World’ research profile area.

Acknowledgements

My sincere gratitude goes to my supervisors, Niels Schiller and Maarten Mous. It was really a privilege for me to work with Niels Schiller and Maarten Mous, whose patience, guidance and vast knowledge in the area contributed enormously to my research.

I am grateful to Ongaye for helping me in selecting the stimuli. I wish to thank Jessie Nixon for editing some of the chapters in the dissertation. I also thank Suzanne van der Meer for translating the summary of my dissertation into Dutch. My supportive paranymphs, Amanda Delgado and Yang Yang, who assisted me for final preparations, deserve special thanks.

My gratitude goes to Azeb Amha and Jan Abbink for their hospitality. Thanks also to Teshome for hosting me during my stays in Leiden. Some of the many others who made my life easier during my stay in Leiden were Victoria Nyst, Heleen Smits, Rebecca Voll, Josh Wilbur, Christian Rapold, Angoua Tano, Stanly Oomen, Khalid Mourigh, Hamine Wane, Nazar Nazarudin, Sara Petrollino, Leticia Pablos, Tesfaye, Hailemicheal, Meseret, and Mulusew.

My fellow PhD candidates and other colleagues have been supportive, which made my stay in Leiden joyful. For that, I thank Felix Ameka, Yifei Bi, Martine Bruil, Yiya Chen, Elly Dutton, Anne-Christie Hellenthal, Andreea Geambasu, Jean Chavula, Anne van der Kant, Olga Kepinska, Allison Kirk, Maarten Kossmann, Saskia Lensink, Claartje Levelt, Marieke Meelen, Gareth O'Neill, Arum Perwitasari, Thilo Schadeberg, Kalinka Timmer, Bobby Ruijgrok, Marijn van 't Veer, Daan van de Velde, Rinus Verdonshot, Man Wang, Junru Wu and Nurenzia Yannuar.

I am indebted to the Leiden University Fund for providing me financial support during my first field trip. I am thankful to Gea

Hakker and Merel van Wijk for their administrative support. I am grateful to the Department of Linguistics at Addis Ababa University for granting me study leave for the period of my study and to all my colleagues in the Department.

My special thanks go to my wife Fasika for her devotion over the past years, and to our lovely son Haniel. My gratitude goes to my brother Geremew and his wife Blen for hosting me during my stays in Addis Ababa. I am grateful to Shashiye, Getnet, Meseret, Workinesh, Asrat, Melsew, Armaye, Birhanu, Emuye, and Awake (with all their family members) for their countless support. My utmost gratitude goes to the late Abeba, my mother, who will always have a special place in my life.

For Abeba, Fasika and Haniel

Table of contents

Acknowledgements.....	i
Table of contents.....	v
List of tables.....	ix
List of symbols and abbreviations.....	xi
Map	xiii
1. General introduction	1
1.1. Background.....	2
1.2. The number of genders in Cushitic languages.....	5
1.3. What is the status of the so-called plural gender in Cushitic languages?	6
1.4. The psycholinguistics of grammatical gender	11
1.5. Does producing bound morphemes involve competitive processes?	15
1.6. Introduction to experimental chapters	20
2. Picture-word tasks during bare noun and definite noun production in Konso	27
2.1. Introduction	29
2.2. Gender system of Konso.....	35
2.3. Gender congruency effect experiments in Konso	37
Overview of the experiments	38
Experiment 1: Production of bare nouns in Konso.....	40
Experiment 2: Production of definite nouns in Konso	46
2.4. General discussion.....	50
3. Psycholinguistic evidence for “plural” as a value of gender in Konso.....	59
3.1. Introduction	61
3.2. Experiment 1: Definite noun production.....	74
Methods	75
Results and discussion	77
3.3. Experiment 2: Sentence production	79
Methods	79
Results and discussion	81
3.4. General discussion.....	83
4. Picture-word tasks support plural as a category of gender instead of number in Konso	97
4.1. Introduction	99
4.2. Experiment 1: Definite noun naming	111
Method	113

	Results	115
	Discussion	118
4.3.	Experiment 2: Overt subject sentence naming	121
	Method	123
	Results	125
	Discussion	127
4.4.	Experiment 3: Null subject sentence naming	128
	Results	131
	Discussion	134
4.5.	General discussion.....	135
5.	Bound gender-marked morphemes are selected competitively: evidence from simple picture naming tasks in Konso	151
5.1.	Introduction	153
5.2.	Experiment 1a: Definite noun naming.....	162
	Method	163
	Results and discussion	165
5.3.	Experiment 1b: bare noun naming.....	167
	Method	167
	Results and discussion	168
5.4.	Experiment 2a: Overt subject sentence naming	170
	Method	171
	Results and discussion	172
5.5.	Experiment 2b: Null subject sentence naming.....	174
	Method	175
	Results and discussion	176
5.6.	Experiment 2c: bare noun naming	178
	Method	178
	Results and discussion	179
5.7.	General discussion.....	180
6.	General discussion	191
6.1.	Introduction	192
6.2.	The processing of plural as a gender in Cushitic languages	194
6.3.	The competitive nature of selecting bound morphemes	204
6.4.	Aspects of field-based psycholinguistics.....	212
	Coping with less accessible and less conducive environments	213
	Working with small number of participants	215
	Dealing with scarcity of stimulus materials	219
7.	References.....	223

8. Summary	229
9. Nederlandse samenvatting.....	239
10. Curriculum vitae	249

List of tables

Table 1 Example of the experimental items used in Experiment 1	41
Table 2 Reaction Times (RTs) in ms and error in percentage (%e)	42
Table 3 Mean RTs by target gender and distractor condition.....	44
Table 4 Targets that show relatively slow RTs with possible reasons	45
Table 5 Examples of the experimental items used in Experiments 2	47
Table 6 Reaction Times (RTs) in ms and error in percentage (%e)	48
Table 7 Mean RTs by target gender and distractor condition.....	49
Table 8 Appendix A: Stimulus materials in Experiment 1	53
Table 9 Appendix B: Stimulus materials in Experiment 2	57
Table 10 Reaction times (RTs) in ms, error percentage (%e), and gender congruency effect in Experiment 1	78
Table 11 RTs in ms, percentages of errors (%e), and gender congruency effect across the two response types of Experiment 2	81
Table 12 Appendix A: stimulus materials in Experiment 1.....	91
Table 13 Appendix B: stimulus materials in Experiment 2.....	93
Table 14 Examples of utterances in Experiment 1a and 1b.....	112
Table 15 Mean naming latencies (RTs) in ms and percentage errors (%e) in Experiment 1a (Definite noun naming, single-reference distractor)	116
Table 16 Mean naming latencies (RTs) in ms and percentage errors (%e) in Experiment 1b (definite noun naming, multiple-reference distractor)	117
Table 17 Examples of utterances in Experiments 2a and 2b	122
Table 18 Mean naming latencies (RTs) in ms and percentage errors (%e) in Experiment 2a (sentence naming, single-reference distractor)	126
Table 19 Mean naming latencies (RTs) in ms and percentage errors (%e) in Experiment 2b (sentence naming, multiple-reference distractor) ..	127
Table 20 Examples of utterances in Experiments 3a and 3b	130

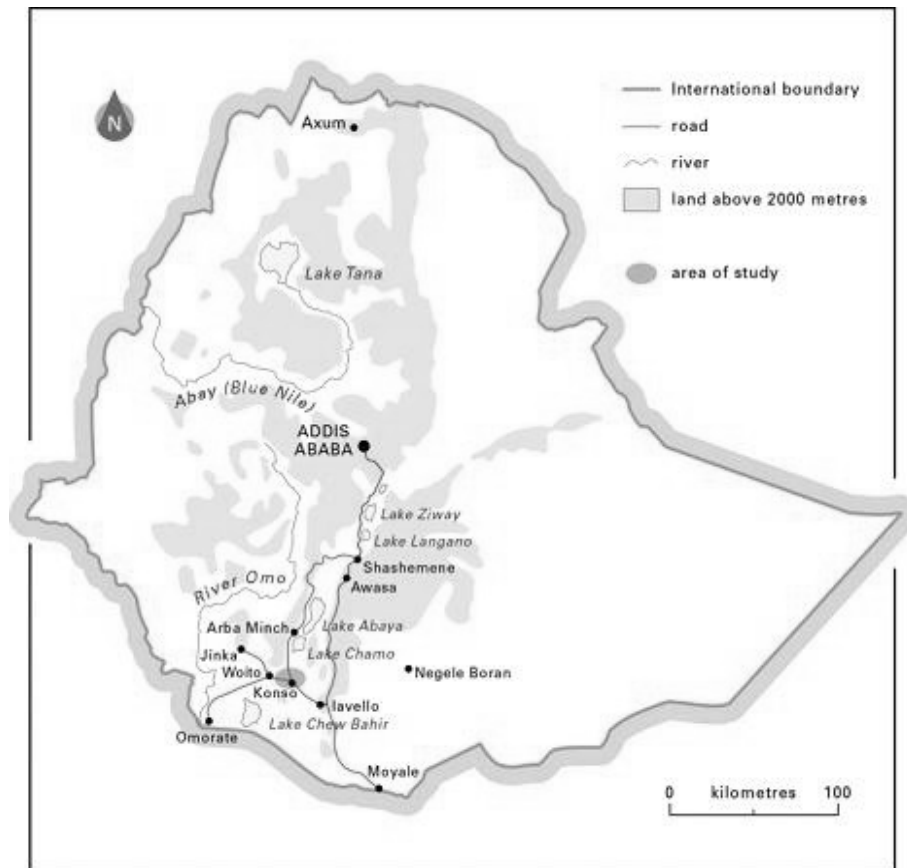
Table 21 Mean naming latencies (RTs) in ms and percentage errors (%e) in Experiment 3a (null subject sentence naming, single-reference distractor)	132
Table 22 Mean naming latencies (RTs) in ms and percentage errors (%e) in Experiment 3b (null subject sentence naming, multiple-reference distractor)	134
Table 23 Appendix A: Experiment 1: definite noun naming.....	147
Table 24 Appendix B: Experiments 2 & 3: Sentence naming	149
Table 25 Mean naming latencies (RTs) in ms and error rates in percentage (%e) by number and gender for definite noun naming	166
Table 26 Mean naming latencies (RTs) in ms and error rates in percentage (%e) by number and gender for bare noun naming	168
Table 27 Mean naming latencies (RTs) in ms and error rates in percentage (%e) by number and gender for overt subject sentence naming	174
Table 28 Mean naming latencies (RTs) in ms and error rates in percentage (%e) by number and gender for null subject sentence naming	177
Table 29 Mean naming latencies (RTs) in ms and error rates in percentage (%e) by number and gender for bare-noun naming.	179
Table 30 Appendix A: Experiment 1: definite noun naming.....	187
Table 31 Appendix B: Experiments 2a and 2b: Sentence naming	189
Table 32 Bayso number system (Hayward, 1979, p. 102).....	202

List of symbols and abbreviations

1	first person
3	third person
.	separates more than one gloss elements that correspond to one object-language element
=	marks subject clitic boundaries
~	connects the reduplicated element to its stem
%e	error rate in percentage
ADJ	adjective
ANOVA	analysis of variances
C	consonant
COM	common gender
CSA	central statistics agency (of Ethiopia)
DEF	definite
DET	determiner
DSIH	Determiner Selection Interference Hypothesis
DUR	durative
F	feminine gender
GSIH	Gender Selection Interference Hypothesis
IN	Independent Network model
IPF.FUT	imperfective future
M	masculine gender
MULT	multiple-reference number (plural number)
N	neuter gender
NP	noun phrase
P	plural gender
PAS	passive
POS	possessive
PF	perfective

PRT	particle
RDP	reduplication
RTs	reaction times
PWI	picture-word interference
SG	single-reference number (singular)
SOA	Stimulus onset asynchrony
SPN	simple picture naming
WEAVER + +	Word Encoding by Activation and VERification model
V	vowel

Map



The location of Konso in Ethiopia (map by Ian Agnew: taken, with permission, from <http://www.geog.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/konsoethnography/>)

