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A grammar of Sheko

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A grammar of Sheko

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in 1980

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List of structure morphemes

The list contains all bound morphemes and their main allomorphs in alphabetical order. Forms with a syllabic nasal are only listed under **ṇ...** Tone is written **ṽ** **v** **ṽ** and **ṽ** from lowest (1) to highest (4).

<i>form</i>	<i>gloss</i>	<i>allom.</i>	<i>indication of function/name</i>
-a	ACC	-əra	accusative case (tone 2 or 3).
-a	IMPLC		Implicative (modal)
-a	STD	-ya	stance marker, direct
=a	2SG	ha=	2sg subject clitic
=á	3MS	há=	3ms subject clitic
-àà	PROX	hàà	proximal demonstrative
-àb	REL	-əb	relative clause marker/ complementizer
-àbe	REL.mother	-əbe	relative clause marker/ complementizer feminine
-ara	NEG	-ra, -r	negation (tone 3/4).
-b	REL	-əb	relative clause marker/ complementizer
-bààb	father	-bàb	masculine nominalizer/ complementizer, cf. bāāb ‘father’
-bààstà	WHILE	-bàstà	temporal clause marking, consists of -b-àà-s-tà REL-PROX-M-LOC
-be	mother	-bey	feminine nominalizer/ complementizer, cf. báy ‘mother’
-ee	STI	-ə	stance marker, indirect
-èṣṇtà	MOTIVE	-iṣṇtà	motive marker (~ (y)èṣṇtà)
-ə	STI	-ee	stance marker, indirect
-əb	REL	-àb, -b	relative clause marker/ complementizer
-əbe	REL.mother	-àbe, -be	relative clause marker/ complementizer feminine
-əra	ACC	-ra, -a	accusative case
-əra	INCL	k’ərà	inclusive conjunction
ha-	2SG.POSS		2sg possessor prefix
há-	3MS.POSS		3ms possessor prefix
ha=	2SG	=a	2sg subject clitic
há=	3MS	=á	3ms subject clitic

hàà-	PROX	-à(à)	proximal demonstrative
-ì	F	<ì>	feminine gender
-ī	DIST	yī	distal demonstrative
=í	3FS	yí=	3fs subject clitic
<ì>	F	-ì	feminine gender
-ìn	F.DEF	<ì> -n	feminine gender-definiteness marker
íḡ(í)-	3PL.POSS		3pl possessor prefix
íḡ(í)=	3PL	=íḡ	3pl subject clitic
-ìḡnà	MOTIVE	-èḡnà	motive marker (~ (y)èḡnà)
ítí-	2PL.POSS		2pl possessor prefix
ít(í)=	2PL	=ítí	2pl subject clitic
-ít	PL.ADDR	-t	plural addressee marker
-k	REAL		Realis
-ka	COOR		coordinating conjunction
-ka	WITH		instrumental case
-kn	KNOWN		Obvious (modal)
-kñ	DAT	-ḡ	dative case
-k'à	IN		inessive case
-k'ərà	INCL	-əra	inclusive conjunction
-m	IRR		Irrealis
-n	DS	-m̃	different subject switch-reference
-n	DEF	-m̃	definiteness marker
-n	MIDD	-m	middle derivation
-n	NEG2	-m	state negation (tone 3 or 4)
-n	PURP	-m	purpose clause (tone 3 or 4)
ṇ-	1SG.POSS	ṇ-	1sg possessor prefix
ń-	1PL.POSS	ń-	1pl possessor prefix
ṇ=	1SG	=ṇ, ṇ	1sg subject clitic
ń=	1PL	=ń, ṇ	1pl subject clitic
-ná	or	-má	alternative conjunction
nà	COND	-mà	conditional clause marker/ complementizer
-ḡ	DAT	-kñ	dative case
-on(ka)	ASS	-onko	associative plural
-o	STI.ADDR		stance marker, indirect, in vocatives and interrogatives
-ra	ACC	-əra, -a	accusative case
-ra	NEG	-ara, -a	negation (tone 3 or 4)

-s	M	-z	masculine gender
-s	PL		masculine gender with plural referent
-s	CAUS		causative derivation
-s	OPT	-ʃ	Optative
-s	VIEWP		Viewpoint
-ʃ	OPT	-s	Optative
-t	COP	tə	copula verb
-t	PASS	-t'	passive derivation
-t	SS	-tə	same subject switch-reference
-tà	LOC		locative case
-tana	RESUL		resultative conjunction
-tə	COP	tə, -t	copula verb
-tə	SS	-t	same subject switch-reference
-t'	PASS	-t	passive derivation
-ù	m		masculine gender
-ya	STD	-a	stance marker, direct
yī	DIST	-ī	distal demonstrative
yí-	3FS.POSS		3fs possessor prefix
yí=	3FS	=í	3fs subject clitic
-z	M	-s	masculine gender
ǃ	ELAT		relative, extra high tone (~ tone 4)

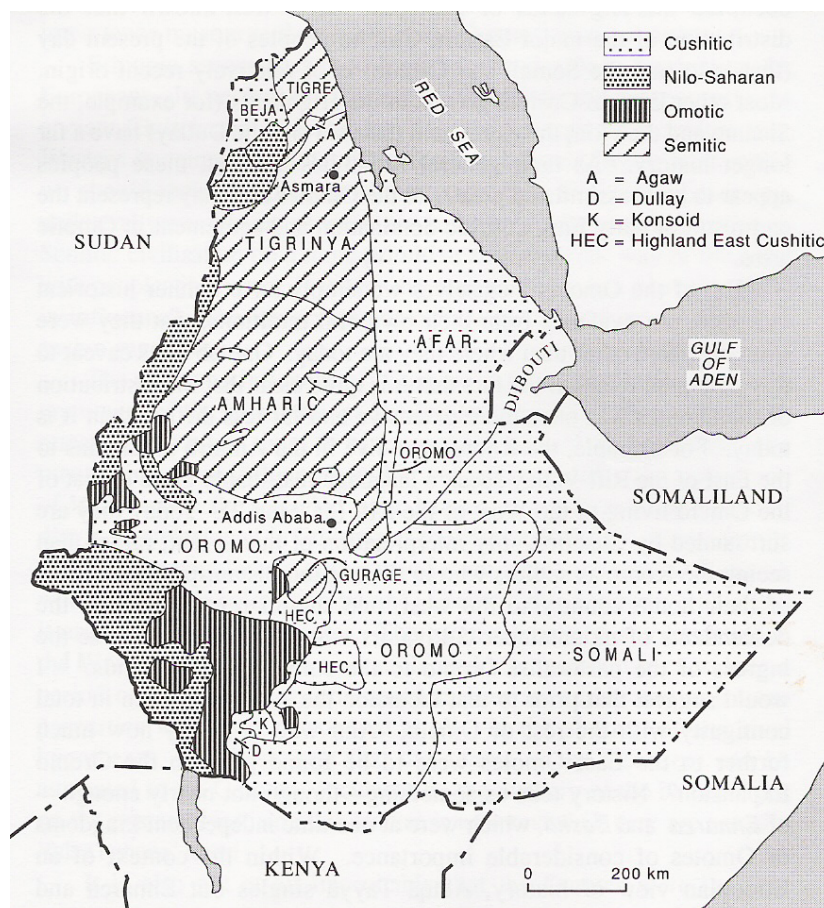
List of abbreviations

<i>gloss</i>	<i>name</i>	<i>basic form</i>
ACC	accusative case	-əra
A.FOC	assertive focus	
Amh	Amharic	
ASS	associative plural	-onka
C	consonant	
CAUS	causative derivation	-s
COOR	coordinative conjunction	-ka
COP	copula verb	tə
COND	conditional	-ntà
CNJ	conjunction	
CNV	converb	
DAT	dative case	-kñ
DECL	declarative	
DEF	definite	-ñ
DIST	distal demonstrative	yī
DS	different subject	-ñ
ELAT	elative (tone 4 or extra high tone)	
EPEN	epenthetic vowel	
EV	expletive vowel	
F	feminine	<ì>, -ì, -nì
FS	Factual stem (Benchnon data)	
FOC	focus marker	
Gf.	Guraferda variant	
H	verb class (tone 4 on the Basic stem)	
IDEO	ideophone	
IMPLC	Implicative	
IN	inessive case	-k'à
INCL	inclusive	
INF	infinitive	
INTJ	interjection	
IPF	Imperfective	
IRR	Irrealis	-m
KNOWN	Obvious	-kn
L	verb class (tone 2 on the Basic stem)	
LOC	locative case	-tà
LCT	locative suffix	-kà
M	masculine	-s, -z
m	masculine	-ù

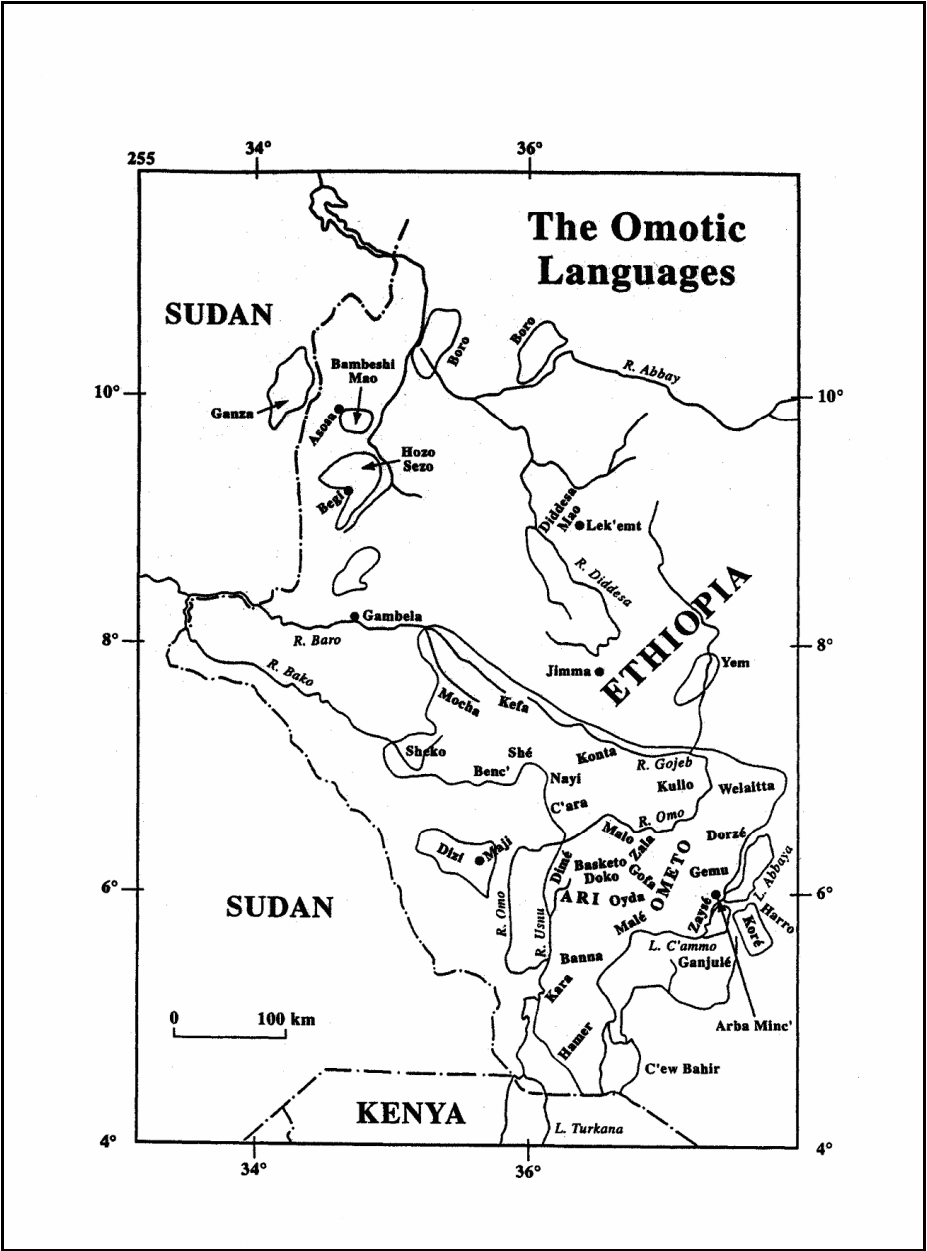
MIDD	middle derivation	-ŋ
MOTIVE	motive case/ clause	-èŋtà
MP	morphophonological rule	
MT	morphotonological rule	
N	syllabic nasal in CV-structure	
NEG	negation (event negation)	-ara (tone 3/4)
NEG2	negation (state negation)	-n (tone 3/4)
NV	non-velar stem	
NMLZ	nominalizer	
NOM	nominative	
NP	noun phrase	
O	object	
OPT	Optative	-s
OQ	open question	
PASS	passive derivation	-t'
PAST	past tense	
PF	Perfective	
PL	plural	-s
PLUR	pluractional	[reduplication]
PL.ADDR	plural addressee	-ít
POSS	possessor	[tonal change in noun]
PR	phonological rule	
PROX	proximal demonstrative	hàà
PURP	purpose	-n (tone 3/4)
Q	interrogative	
RDP	reduplication	
REAL	Realis	-k
REC	reciprocal	
REL	relative	-əb
RESUL	resultative conjunction	tana
S	subject	
S, SG	singular	
SIMIL	similative case	gōntʃi
sp.	species (kind of)	
SS	same subject	-tə
STI	stance marker, indirect	-ə
STI.ADDR	stance marker, indirect	-o
	in vocatives and interrogatives	
STD	stance marker, direct	-a, -ya
TEMP	temporal	
THV	thematic vowel	

V	vowel	
V	verb	
v	tone bearing unit	
VIEWP	Viewpoint	-s
VOC	vocative (term of address)	[tonal change]
WHILE	short for: REL.PROX.M.LOC	-bààstà
WITH	instrumental case	-ka
< >	orthographic representation	
[]	phonetic representation	
//	phonemic representation	
	pause	
°	lexical tone not known	
*	ungrammatical	
*	form in the protolanguage	
1	first person	
2	second person	
3	third person	

Maps

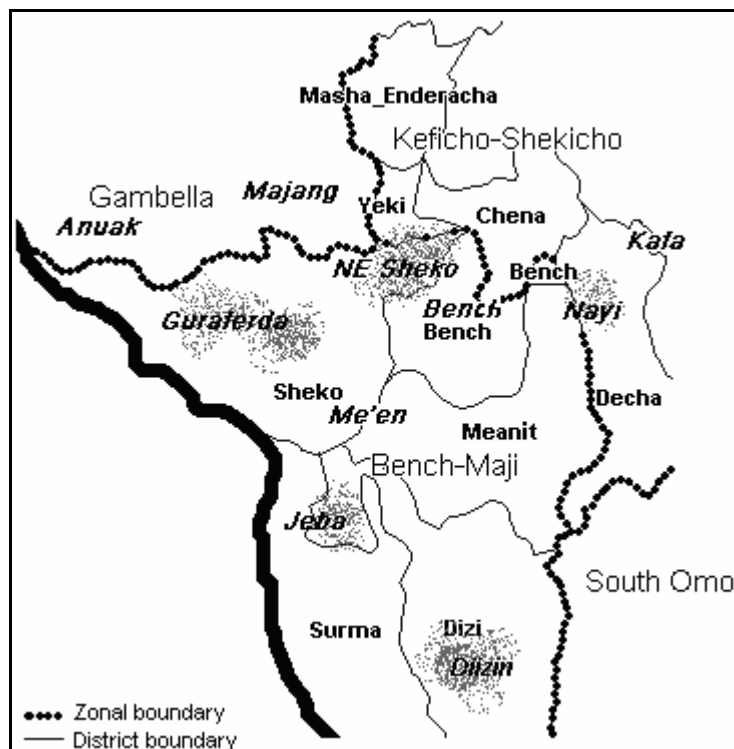


Language families in Ethiopia. Hayward (1995).



The Omotic language family. Bender (2000).





Approximate location of Majoid languages and dialects
in southwest Ethiopia (in grey).

Acknowledgements

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I am glad that my aunt Toos van den Berg (Toysn) could visit me in Boyta. Like Sheko definiteness and gender markers, we attach to the same things. Reinout and Suzanne, Maurijn and Arieke, thank you for your support. Finally, let me thank my parents in my mother tongue: ik bedank jullie uit de grond van mijn hart voor jullie liefde, verbazingwekkend lange e-mails, adviezen (die ik natuurlijk niet allemaal kan opvolgen), aanmoediging, en zorgzaamheid. Ik neem dat alles allemaal mee als ik op reis ga.

1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the Sheko people and the language they speak. Furthermore, it shortly describes previous work on Sheko and the research that forms the basis for this book.

1.1 The people

The Sheko (**şókú yaab** ‘Sheko people’) number about 37.500 people¹ and most of them live in small neighborhoods scattered in the hills of southwest Ethiopia, Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples’ Region, in the Sheko and Guraferda wärädas² (Bench-Maji Zone) as well as in Tepi and the surrounding villages (Yeki wäräda, Sheka Zone). They are bordered in the east by Bench, in the south by Me’en, in the west and north by Majang, Anuak, and Shekkacho people. The Sheko have their own names for other people groups. They call the Bench **diizū**, the Me’en **sūrū**, the Majangir **t’áámá**, the Anyuak **p’éri**, and the Diizi **màǰi**. Amhara and other northerners are called **góórà**. The Majangir in turn call the Sheko *daan yir* (‘daan clan’); the Bench call them *çak* <s’ak>. Generally, they are referred to as Sheko or Shako (after the Amharic **ሻኮ** ‘shäko’), as in public administration and censuses. Sheko must not be confused with Shekkacho, a different Omotic group bordering Sheko on the north, whose language belongs to the Kefoid branch.

1.1.1 Notes on the Sheko culture

Straube (1963) is the first resource for anthropological information on the Sheko (in German). Conti Rossini (1937) and Cerulli (1956) also report on the Sheko. A major source of knowledge is Hildebrand (2003), which contains among others an excellent account of daily life and food production. The Sheko share a common origin with the Diizi (Haberland 1993) and Nayi. Furthermore, the Sheko culture has much in common with the Bench culture (Lange 1975).

¹ Preliminary results of the 2007 census by the Ethiopian Central Statistic Authority.

² wäräda: an administrative unit under the Zone, further divided into qebeles.

Land and agriculture

The Sheko areas of settlement lie roughly between 1100 and 1700 meter altitude. Hildebrand (2003) describes the ecological zones in detail. The land is verdant and rainfall abundant. Fifty years ago, the area was covered by a dense rain forest. In northeast Sheko, the landscape is now more open where people live closer together, in walking distance of roads; whereas remoter areas remain more sparsely populated. As the population density grows, the forest gives way to more and more plots of farmland, where different crops like **ṣét'i** 'maize', **dōnk'ā** 'sorghum', and a variety of tubers are produced. Straube (1963) lists various indigenous types of maize and sorghum, but notes that most of them are replaced by types that the Amhara brought with them. The Sheko are known to be experts in the cultivation of tubers. **baakà** 'taro' is their daily staple. **kát'fī** 'yam' is highly valued and served particularly as food for the nobility in the past. Sheko have specially prepared yam fields and also exploit yams from the forest. According to Hildebrand (2003:248), 'the degree of sophistication of Sheko yam farming and their historical focus on this crop are unique'. However, the farming of yam is perceived as labor-intensive and in present-day farming, the focus is shifting to cash crops such as maize. Taro remains important, since it is available during most of the year. If nothing else is available, not only breakfast but also lunch and dinner may consist of **baakà** 'taro'.

Coffee constitutes the main economic product in northeast Sheko. The coffee grows naturally in the forests that cover the hills, although nowadays large parts of the forest are manipulated to produce larger quantities of coffee. In Guraferda, coffee is gathering importance as markets become more accessible, but the region is better known for its quality honey from various parts of the forest.

Nowadays, the Sheko use the Amharic way of counting the months of the year. In the past, however, the year was measured by the practices surrounding **dōnk'ā** '(red) sorghum' and divided into two. The rainy season or **turà bèngì** started with the preparation of the fields for sowing the sorghum, around May. It lasted until the seventh month, when the sorghum was ripe. The dry season or **kāy'm bèngì** started in the

eighth month, December, when the sorghum was harvested. In the ninth month, people drank the beer made of the harvested grain. The long tenth month at the end of the year was the period in which no activities related to sorghum took place.

Social organisation

Historically, Sheko society was probably quite hierarchical in nature (cf. a.o. Haberland (1993) on Diizi). The chiefs, which had political and spiritual authority, lived in courts and were approached deferentially. There were special rules for behaving in the presence of a chief, and also the chief himself was bound by regulations which prescribed behaviour different from common people. At the lower end of the social stratification were the Bəndu. They were hardly considered human, had to sit on the ground near the door, got food presented in leaves because plates touched by them could not be used by others, etc. One of the reasons they were looked down upon is their habit of eating bush meat (e.g. wild pigs and bushbuck), something which is taboo for other Sheko. Straube (1963:46) states that the Sheko did not eat meat at all, except for meat of wild buffalos. Though their social status has improved since, the Bəndu still live in separate villages today. The main occupations of the Bəndu are pottery making and tanning. They are sometimes asked to hunt wild pigs as these animals damage the crops.

The Sheko are divided into numerous clans, among which are the following (alphabetically listed):

- (1) **Aaka, Bəndu, Baykes, Benti, Bersu, Duudu, Era, Fazha, Gomkes, Goota, Karti, Korzha, Maana, Qorma, Sim, Suumu, S'oykes, Tuud, Uri, Zooz**

Descent is patrilineal and virilocal, i.e. a wife will normally move to her husband's village. Marriage is exogamous. Some clans can traditionally not intermarry. Of the clans, **gootà**, **báykés** and **fāzā** are the highest in rank. The leaders of high clans were each specialized in dealing with certain problems, e.g. rain making in times of drought, or warding off evil in case of disease. The chief had always a member of an associated

lower clan at his side, called **búrǵà**. This person tasted the food for the chief and performed rituals in his presence.

1.1.2 Notes on the Sheko history

Sheko oral history claims that the Sheko migrated from the Maji highlands to their present territory. Two well-known figures play an important role in the stories of the separation of the Sheko from the Diizi: Jeba Burzh, who sent the Sheko away, and Koynəb, his younger brother. Koynəb went from Egita to Badik'a in Guraferda and became a king whose sons spread out over the land and founded important lineages. As Hildebrand (2003:522-530) shows, accounts vary on several points (Koynəb was the son of Jeba Burzh, not his brother; the sequences of migration differ from each other). According to Straube (1963:37), the first king of the Sheko was Wurkenbe, whose elder brother was "Ġǵ Búrǵa". Having come from Egita, they lived for a while in the "Schuro" area (Me'en country?) until they didn't feel safe anymore. The elder brother then went to Jeba and the younger brother to the present Sheko area. The Sheko today see the Diizi as their brothers, and some still pay tribute to the local chief of Jeba on important occasions.

The first written sources referring to "Gimira" people living to the southwest of the Kafa state are from the late seventeenth century. Lange (1975) cites these early references, which are vague and partly contradictory in nomenclature and location. Cecchi (1886) equated Gimira with the "Binenso" (Bench?) and reports that the "Ghimirrá" and "Sciancallà-Sciurò" are 'the main slave sources for the Kafa, yielding ca. 7000 slaves annually' (Lange 1975:11). Oral traditions of the Shekkacho bring up the presence of 'Gimira (specifically Čako) slaves' at the court of a Shekkacho ruler in the seventeenth century, according to Lange (1975:2). Sheko oral tradition as received by Straube (1963) says that the Sheko would have had to pay a cow and an elephant tusk as a yearly tribute to the Kafa king. They would have become independent from Kafa two generations before the Amhara brought Gimira under their control, killing the Sheko king Kóins. (Straube arrived in Gimira in 1955, one year after his successor had died (Straube 1963:36).)

The Russian officer Bulatovich was one of the first writers to actually traverse the Gimira country with a military expedition in 1897. He lists as political units among others the “Scevo” [She], “Benescio” [Bench], “Sciara” and “Sciaco” [Sheko], which were ‘tributary to the Abyssinians’, and was impressed by the fertility and productivity of the country (Lange 1975:16). In the following decades, the Amhara launched several military campaigns to bring the land under their control, massacring hundreds of people, raiding slaves, and establishing military encampments (katamas) in Mizan Teferi and Maji. Around the military settlements, the people were forced into the gebbar-system of labor. The rest of the area was basically a hunting area for slaves and animals. Haberland (1993) points out that the Diizi, being sedentary, were prone to the destructive gebbar-system (Garretson 1986) and states that the Diizi population was decimated in the first quarter of the twentieth century. Next to violence from their Amharic overlords, raids from the Anuak and Majangir also formed a threat for the farmers. As the population declined, erstwhile fields were reclaimed by the forest.

The Europeans who traveled through the Gimira area, e.g. Montadon in 1910, Athill in 1919, and Hodson in 1924-1927, describe the land as devastated (Lange 1975:21ff). Although Ethiopia officially banned slavery in 1923 as part of the drive to enter the League of Nations, slavery continued for more than a decade. The government advisor De Halpert noted slavery, criminality and gebbar-work (serfdom) as late as 1934 (Lange 1975:23, citing Perham 1948:328-331). Hildebrand (2003:106) reports of one elder in a remote Sheko village, who ‘was taken as a young man by slave traders to northern Ethiopia; after many years of captivity he escaped and somehow returned to his natal village.’

During the short Italian occupation (1937-1941), a few road construction projects were initiated to improve accessibility of the region. Some Sheko state that their people have fought the Italians by laying in ambush and killing them by spear. In the 1950’s, the first anthropological research devoted to the Sheko took place (Straube 1963, cf. Cerulli 1965). When the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie was ended by the coup of the Dergue in

1971, its leader Mengistu Hailemariam imposed a series of radical changes in the political landscape. The Dergue regime was infamous not only for warfare with Eritrea and disregard of food shortage and hunger in rebellious areas, but also for its involuntary resettlement schemes and dismantling of indigenous leadership. Villages were formed into *qebeles*, administrative units governed by Peasant's Associations. In Sheko, this was also a time during which a number of schools, health clinics and roads were built. In Aman, near Mizan Teferi, the former Catholic Mission grounds were converted into a hospital.

After the downfall of the Dergue in 1991, development of the Sheko area slowly continued. Settlements along the road connecting Mizan Teferi and Tepi grew and trade in coffee increased. In 1992, there were violent clashes between Sheko and other ethnic groups in the town of Tepi. Christianity spread during the last thirty years and reached the inaccessible Guraferda area in the second half of the 1990's. The increase of Christendom further weakened the authority of local chiefs. Another development, especially since the turn of the century, is the settling of a considerable number of farmers from other parts of Ethiopia in the Guraferda area.

1.2 The language

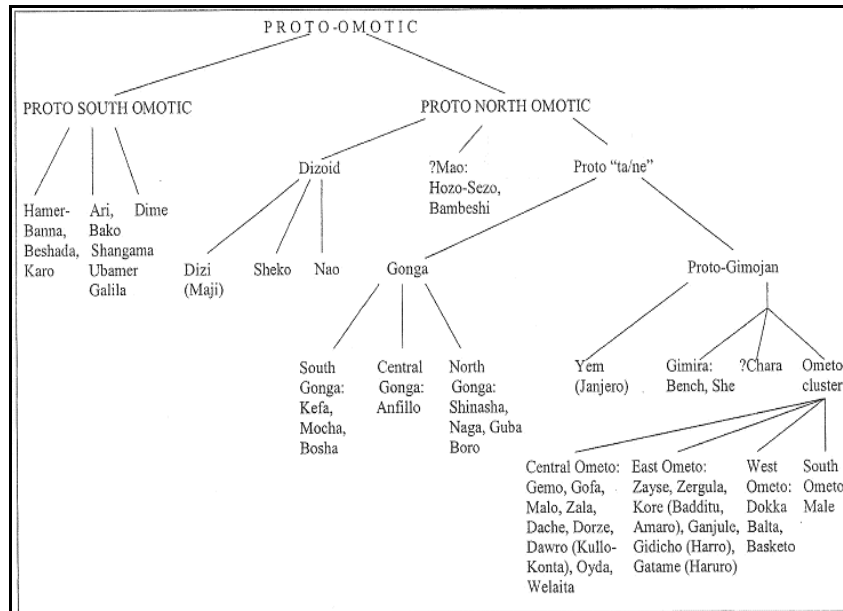
Sheko (*şókú noogù*, cf. *nóógù* 'word, language, matter') is described in this section by pointing out its classification, socio-linguistic situation, division into dialects and by providing a short typological sketch.

1.2.1 Classification

Sheko forms the Majoid (Dizoid) branch of the Omotic language family together with Diizi (Dizi) and Nayi, also called Na'o. The branch is called Majoid because the oral history of all three groups name the area around Maji town as their place of origin (Aklilu 2003:59). In the literature, the name Dizoid is also used, because the Diizi people were the better-known of the three groups.

One of the first classifications of Sheko is given by Montadon (1912); he was a Swiss doctor who stayed in the “Gimira” area around 1910. He categorized the Gimira languages ‘into four separate linguistic groups: 1) “Dizou” [probably stands for She, ACH] and “Bennecho” [Benchnon] 2) “Batchi” [?] and “Chako” [Sheko] 3) “Gourafarda” and 4) “Kayégou” [Kwegu?],’ according to Lange (1975:20). The ethnographic work from Conti Rossini (1937) describes the “Ghimira group”, including Sheko, but gives virtually no language data. Similarly, Cerulli (1956) gives mainly ethnographical and socio-linguistical information. Both authors list different groups as belonging to the “Gimira”. By and large a picture emerges in which Bench varieties on the one hand (sometimes with the addition of “Caba”) and Majoid varieties on the other hand are grouped together. However, a remark like Cerulli (1956: 89) that ‘the Gimira language of Gurafarda (Šakko) is called the language of Dizi, or Dorso (from the name of the southern plateau in its most northern area) by the Abyssinians although it is only a Šhakko dialect’ is elucidating only to a degree. Tucker and Bryan (1956:128f) write that Gimira is the name that the Oromo use for some ‘tribes’ (they list “Shakko (Shako)”, “Bienesho”, “She or Dizu”, “Kaba”, and “Nao”) and they consider the languages that these groups speak as the Gimira dialect cluster, with the addition of “Maji” (i.e. Diizi).

In the 1970’s the first comparative wordlists were collected for all languages and Dizoid was set up as a separate group from Gimira, which was now limited to Benchnon varieties. Bender (1971) and Fleming (1976) classified Dizoid as a subbranch of North Omotic, placing it on a par with Gongga-Gimojan, i.e. they saw Dizoid as the first split-off from Proto-North-Omotic. In later classifications, its outlying position within North Omotic did not change, although the internal arrangements of other branches were refined and the little-known Mao languages were set apart as the first offshoot from Proto-Omotic.

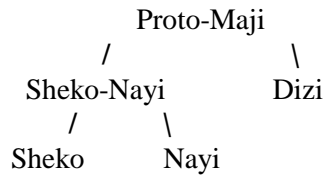


Language tree after Fleming (1976). Copied from Hildebrand (2003). **Gonga** = Kefoid; **Gimojan** = Gimira (Benchnon), Macro-Ometo, and Janjero (Yemsa).

In contrast, Bender (2000; 2003) classified Dizoid as South Omotic together with Dime and the Aroid languages. A main reason for this shift lies in the forms of the pronouns. Thus, Majoid is dissimilar from North Omotic, and at the same time its similarity to South Omotic languages is limited, so that Majoid was only recently associated with the South Omotic branch. Hayward (2009: 92) remarks on Majoid that ‘this group stands somewhere midway between Aroid and the TN languages³. It shares certain features with one group and certain features with the other.’

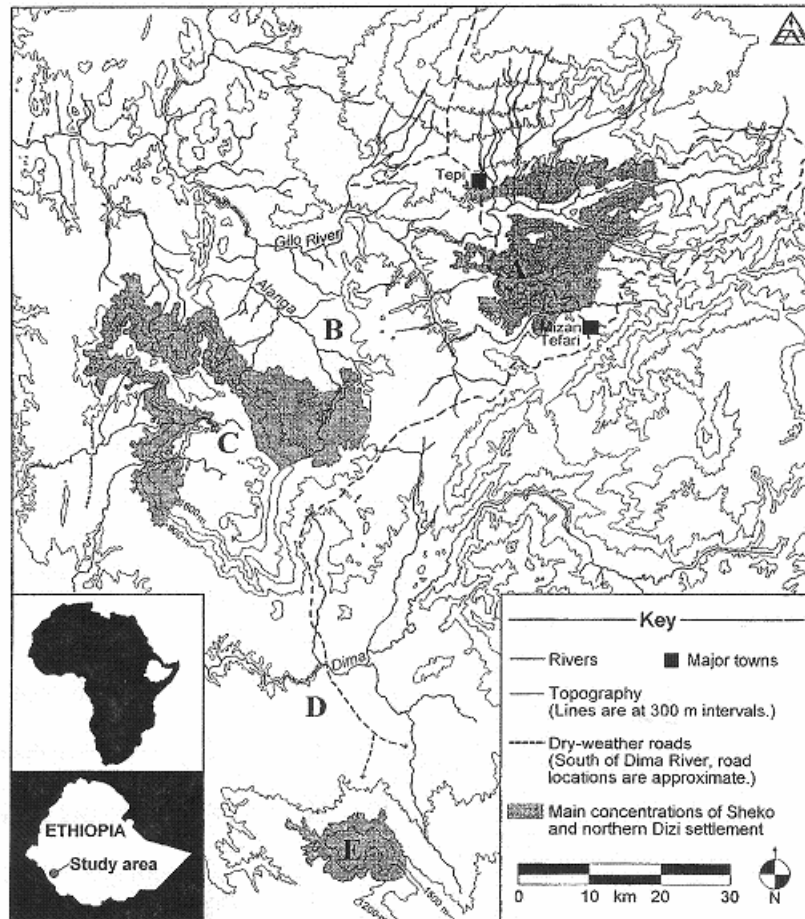
On the internal classification of Majoid, Aklilu (2003) proposes a split between Diizi on the one hand and Sheko-Nayi on the other, based on phonological correspondence-sets.

³ i.e. North Omotic languages characterized by **t** and **n** elements for 1sg and 2sg pronominals respectively.



Subgrouping of Majoid languages, from Aklilu (2003).

Further linguistic research suggests that there is more or less a continuum from Maji to Jeba to Guraferda to Tepi and Sheko. The Diizi and Sheko communities live in the midlands and uplands, and the settlement areas are separated from each other by less inhabited lowlands. The Maji and Jeba massifs (Diizi) are separated by the Dima lowlands from the Guraferda massif (Sheko), which in turn is separated from the Sheko and Tepi area to the northeast by the lowlands through which the Akobo (Gilo) river runs. The dialect situation correlates with the geographic-ecological conditions. It is not clear how Nayi fits into the picture. The Nayi language, which is highly endangered since its speakers are switching to Kafa (Aklilu 2003:62), is spoken to the east of the Bench-She area. Sheko speakers generally are not familiar with the term Nayi or Na'o, although some know that there live people 'who speak like Diizi' near Shewa-Bench.



Map copied from Hildebrand (2003:110). A: northeast Sheko highlands. B: Alanga lowlands. C: Guraferda massif. D: Dima lowlands. E: Jeba massif.

1.2.2 Socio-linguistic situation

Sheko is clearly a minority language. Especially in towns and in the area bordering Bench, there is a strong pressure from Benchnon and Amharic, which have both gained a positive attitude. Intermarriage with Bench is a widely accepted practice, and Sheko may refer to them as *zyāāmā* ‘in-laws’. Benchnon is spoken in and around the regional centre Mizan Teferi. Amharic is valued highly due to the school system, use in church, and the job possibilities it offers, however limited in the Sheko area itself. In 2006, there were about seventeen schools in the Sheko wäräda (district), of which only one

provided classes till grade 10, four till grade 8. Sheko is not used as language of instruction; there are almost no Sheko teachers. Few Sheko continue their study on higher levels. There is a high grade of bilingualism in the languages mentioned: although only 30% or less of the children go to school, almost all people, except elderly and some women, speak Amharic to a fair degree. Especially in towns, the children start learning Amharic when they are still young, if not in school then from playmates. In areas bordering on Bench there is also bi- and trilingualism. I met some people in Mizan Teferi, the regional centre, who had given up Sheko, since they lived in a non-Sheko area. Even in Sheko-town some people raise their children in Amharic rather than Sheko. For the Guraferda area there may be influence from other languages next to Amharic, such as Me'enit.

At present, the use of Sheko in home-situations is still stable. It is also used outside the house in most situations when only Sheko are present. However, in dealing with outsiders people mostly switch to Amharic or another language. Outsiders, like teachers (even if they have lived for many years in the area) usually do not learn Sheko. Some Bench women married to Sheko men do learn Sheko. In church, Sheko is the second language, even when no outsiders are present. Most of the time, the service is interpreted from Amharic into Sheko. More socio-linguistic information can be found in SIL (2002) (data gathered in 1993). Recently, the zonal government has expressed a wish to develop mothertongue education materials for Sheko. In 2009, a trial orthography was accepted. This development may strengthen the position of the Sheko language in the future.

1.2.3 Dialects

Sheko is considered one language by all speakers. The main dialects of the Sheko language are usually referred to with place names. People commonly recognize three variants:

- Sheko (Sheko wäräda, spoken around Sheko town)
- Tepi (around Tepi town, in Yeki wäräda)
- Guraferda (Guraferda wäräda)

Formerly, dialects called Bulla and Dorsha or Daanyir were reported (Conti Rossini 1937; Straube 1963; SIL 2002), but according to my informants these do not exist, cf. Aklilu (1988:vi). ‘Daanyir’ is a Majangir clan with many people from Sheko origin, according to Unseth (1998). While Sheko and Tepi variants do not differ much from each other, the most divergent dialect appears to be the Guraferda variant. People in Sheko town can tell a few words which are different in the Guraferda and Tepi variant (the item ‘four’ is popular: **kūbm̃** in Sheko vs. **kirkū** in Tepi and Guraferda). Generally, the people in Sheko do not know in what other respects the Guraferda variant is different, but they do not readily understand the dialect since most Shekos have hardly any contact with people from Guraferda. However, they maintain that it is the same language and, according to some, “the original way of speaking Sheko.” People from Guraferda identify themselves and the language they speak as Sheko. They usually understand speakers from Sheko town better than vice versa.

Below, a few examples of lexical differences between the Sheko and Guraferda variants are given. These include kinship terms; basic verbs; quantifiers, and others. Tone in the Guraferda list is very tentative.

(2)	<i>Sheko</i>	<i>Guraferda</i>	<i>English gloss</i>
	yááb	yám̃	‘man, person’
	báádù	ótʃú	‘younger sibling’
	bāāyā	gāāzì	‘lion’
	éd	ʃéébú	‘mouth’
	ʔyáts’ń	ʃāātā	‘moon’
	ség	t’aay	‘see’
	maak	gants	‘tell’
	tʃ’ór	bóór	(Sh: ‘move away’) ‘finish’
	k’yaas	oy	(Sh: ‘reject’) ‘leave’
	kéta	ùfa	‘all’
	āngā	nòka	‘much’

From data gathered during two short visits to Kuki and Samerta in Guraferda, it appears that there are considerable grammatical differences between the variant of Sheko spoken around Sheko-town and the variant spoken in Guraferda. This

goes from pronouns which resemble those in Diizi (section 6.1.2), to different verbal morphology and sentence type marking. Further research could uncover a wealth of insights on the relation between Sheko and Diizi, the possible historical developments of Sheko and the various pathways dialects can take when they develop more or less separately.

1.2.4 Profile of the Sheko language

Sheko is an agglutinating language which generally follows an SOV-typology. The language is strictly verb-final, dependent clauses precede main clauses, and most affixes are suffixes, although there is one series of possessive prefixes and a gender infix. However, in the noun phrase, the unmarked order appears to be head-initial rather than head-final. Modifiers occur on both sides of the head noun, and the head noun is marked tonally if preceded by a modifier.

In the phoneme inventory, most remarkable is the series of four retroflexes (plain and ejective stops, voiceless and voiced fricatives). Vowel length is phonemic and the language has a (much-used) syllabic nasal. Sheko has four level tones and borders Benchnon which has five levels of height. Lexical tone of verbs is however restricted to two classes. Furthermore, tone on verb stems varies to reflect modal distinctions.

Nouns are marked for definiteness and gender, and indirectly for number, although nouns are basically transnumeral. Definiteness marking excludes plural marking and is always accompanied by a gender marker: **-ṇ-s** ^{-DEF-M} for masculine and **<ɪ>-ṇ** ^{<F>-DEF} for feminine. In compound nominals with **bāāb** ‘father’ as second element, there is apparently a gender mismatch when the compound is made definite. Surprisingly, nominal morphology is used on verbs as well: definiteness-gender marking can attach directly to verb stems in adjective derivation; and **-bààb** ‘father’ and **-be** ‘mother’, which are extensively used as nominalizers/ complementizers, can attach to Irrealis verb forms. In relative clauses, a resumptive pronoun may be present. The resumptive pronoun can occur before its antecedent, which is claimed to be rare cross-linguistically (Keenan 1985:148-149). In possessive

constructions, juxtaposed and case-marked noun phrases are employed to signal (in)alienability.

In the verb system, modal distinctions in main clauses include Imperative-Jussive (unmarked), Optative, Realis, Irrealis, Obvious and Implicative. Furthermore, negative and interrogative clauses have their own marking. Next to modal markers, there are stance markers, which indicate the attitude of the speaker towards his utterance: an indirect stance marker signals distance and is used e.g. for politeness and reported speech, whereas a direct stance marker makes an utterance more direct and less polite. Sheko distinguishes between final main verb forms, which have aspectual and modal markers, and medial verb forms, i.e. cosubordinate verbs which have no aspectual and modal markers (although the tone on the verb stem indicates modal distinction to a degree). Medial verb forms are marked for switch-reference and medial verb clauses often form long chains. The language has verb-verb sequences which can be analysed as serial verb constructions; they differ morphologically from medial clause chains in that the first verb form consists of a bare stem, and functionally in that they present actions as a single event.

Verb derivation includes causative, passive and middle. Interestingly, the reciprocal is built by causative-middle suffixes. Some experiencer verbs are causative, with the Experiencer as an object.

Interrogatives are marked in several ways. First of all, interrogatives do not have a modal marker, unlike their declarative counterparts. Dropping off a grammatical element which is obligatorily present in the declarative is one of the divergent ways in which Omotic languages mark interrogatives. Secondly, falling intonation marks clauses with a simple negative verb and negative copula as interrogative, and is optionally present in other clauses. Additionally, the form of the indirect stance marker indicates interrogativity if it is present.

Subject agreement clitics play an important role in the informational structure of a clause. When they procliticize to

the verb in main clauses or to the first constituent of medial clauses, they signal verbal predicate focus, which correlates to a topic-comment structure. When they encliticize to other hosts, they signal different informational structures. They encliticize to non-subject constituents in focus; their enclitization to certain verb stems indicates verb polarity focus; and finally, they are absent in subject focus constructions.

1.3 Research on Sheko

This section discusses previous linguistic work on Sheko and Majoid languages and describes the fieldwork situation and methods for the research that underlie this thesis.

1.3.1 Previous linguistic work

As for linguistic analysis of Sheko, there are only a few accessible data on the language. There are some unpublished fieldwork notes from the early '70s (Bender, Fleming) and we find some notes in Fleming's "Omotic overview" (Bender (1976)). The main work on Sheko is Aklilu (1988), which deals with the phonology, morphophonemics and basic syntax of the Sheko language; I started the preliminary research with his highly valuable grammar in mind. Aklilu presented some more (unpublished) materials at conferences; such as a paper on aspects of Sheko morphology (1989). The first published material on Sheko is found in a phonological comparison of Bench and two Majoid languages (1994b). Furthermore, Aklilu Yilma's 1996 article "Sheko phonology and morphophonemics" was published in the *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, 29(2): 23-46. Bender (2000; 2003) draws from the work by Aklilu.

The record of Majoid languages owes a lot to Aklilu as he also worked on Nayi and Diizi (see bibliography). Comparative work is limited to phonology and morphophonemics, in the pioneering work of Aklilu (2003). Furthermore, there are several articles on Diizi (Dizi), such as Allan (1976a,b); Claudi (1985); Claudi and Serzisko (1985), and two BA theses at Addis Abeba University. A major step forward in the linguistic knowledge on Diizi is the appearance of Beachy (2005).

1.3.2 Research for this book

My research on Sheko started with a short preliminary research in January 2005, partly financed by the Leiden University International Study Fund (LISF). In September 2005 I started my PhD studies at Leiden University in the project “The morpho-syntax of two modal categories in Omotic”.⁴ This project, led by prof.dr. M. Mous and dr. Azeb Amha, aimed at a comparative overview of the way Omotic languages distinguish between declaratives and interrogatives. The subproject on Sheko, as a representative language of the understudied Majoid languages, aimed at providing a detailed analysis of Sheko grammar, including an investigation of sentence types.

I went to Ethiopia for two fieldwork periods. During both stays, I took courses of a month in Amharic, which I used as a meta-language when necessary. I tried to speak Sheko when possible. The data for this thesis are mostly gathered in Boyta, a place where almost everybody is Sheko, apart from the school teachers. I lived at the house of Ato (Qes)⁵ Ayna Bejih and his family, who did everything they could to make me feel at home. I stayed with them in January 2005; two times seven weeks during my fieldwork period in the first half of 2006; 15 weeks in total in the first half of 2008 and a few days in February 2009.

Next to participant observation, for which Boyta was an ideal location, I worked with semi-structured elicitation and transcribed oral texts. The texts are an invaluable rich source of data on semantics (e.g. metaphorical use of words), structural analysis (e.g. use of certain constructions, clitic placement and word order) and discourse features (e.g. use of conjunctions and highlighting devices). As such, the texts complemented data collected through elicitation, while at the same time providing new input for elicitation. Lastly, apart from the linguistic value, the various types of texts form part of the cultural heritage of the Sheko and some will be used in alphabetisation as reading materials.

⁴ This project is part of the endangered languages programme of the Dutch Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO).

⁵ Ato (Amh) ‘mister’; Qes (Amh) ‘reverend’.

Ato Ayna was my main help during many hours of transcribing stories. He also took me to Ato Ziiti Bani and Komtu Shewa Tureta, whom we interviewed about Sheko history. Of the neighbors, Meseret Deesa took an interest in working with me, but he had left to study in Awassa when I returned to Boyta in 2008. Others who worked with me one or more times include Qes Wandimu Jarka, Ato Wondu Tadese, Adane Ayna, Mimi Deesa, Ato Ali Bejih, Marta Shibe, Siqaay Xhonu, Shanta Mashku, Mesqerem, and Asxhennaqi Beqe.

As Boyta is close to Sheko town, I used to walk every other day to town to recharge my computer. The bible translators' office kindly let me use their generator when power was off, and the translators themselves also became important language consultants: Ato Defera Xhonu (from Boyta) and Qes Pexros Kiatus (from Qorxha near Tepi). In 2008, I also met a few times with Ato Xərata Aləmu, a school teacher who grew up in Goota but has lived in Sheko town for many years. He obtained permission from the wäräda administration to join Qes Pexros, Defera and myself for a six-week tone workshop in Addis Abeba, organised by SIL in June-July 2008, during which we (finally) nailed down most of the tone system. We concentrated on the noun, noun phrase, verb paradigms and simple sentences. We also gained basic knowledge of tone in medial and subordinate clauses; tone in relative clauses is based more on extrapolation. I hope future research will refine the present tone analysis.

On trips to the Guraferda area with Qes Ayna, I learned to speak a few words of that local Sheko variety. In 2006, I shortly visited Kuki, and stayed in Samərta for ten days together with Josine van der Wal, a BA student from Leiden University. In 2008, I wanted to go as far as Dorita, but had to remain in Samərta for health reasons. I worked there for about five days with Aberra Toosu and others; the verb and clause morphology proved to be quite different from what I was used to and merits its own documentation. In this thesis, I have only included data from Guraferda (Samərta) where I thought it could further comprehension or evaluation of the Sheko data.

In February 2009, I returned to Mizan Teferi for a SIL workshop on orthography and learned new things from the enthusiast participants Pextros Kiatus, Defera Xhonu, Ayna Bejih, Xərata Aləmu, Gaata Zentu, Gutema Chukusa, Aberra Toosu, and Adisu Ayina. Unfortunately, there was no time to do much checking of earlier work.

1.3.3 The present study

The aim of this book is a descriptive grammar of Sheko, which includes phonology, morphology, and syntax of the language. In presenting the analysis, terminology is kept as basic as possible to ensure accessible reading for people from different theoretical backgrounds; terminology which is particular to a single theory is avoided. The presentation is data-intensive, and some texts are made available in the appendix. In this way, the reader is invited to check the analysis and come up with counter-analyses where necessary.

Although this work is first and foremost descriptive, I have added comparative notes wherever I thought it might be fruitful. The careful reader will discover a tendency to cite from works on Benchnon, Zargulla and Dime in particular. Benchnon is the geographical neighbor of Sheko and belongs to North Omotic, together with Zargulla. Dime is a South Omotic language. Since the classification of Majoid languages has switched from being North Omotic to being South Omotic, it makes sense to look for parallels in both branches of the family. Moreover, the research project of which my work forms a part is in many ways a continuation from earlier research on Dime and Zargulla. In addition, Sheko is compared in a few places with its sister languages Diizi and Nayi.

1.3.4 Orthography and representation

The Sheko data are represented using IPA symbols, following the recommendations of the International Phonetic Association except in a few cases (see section 2.1.2). The main exceptions are the Africanist use of **y** for **j** and the absence of a written glottal stop in word-initial position before a vocoid. Tone is written **ṽ v Ṽ** and **ṽ** from lowest (1) to highest (4). Contour tones other than **ṽ** or **ṽ** on a short vowel have been represented

with the end point symbol on the following consonant (e.g. **bārkāy̐** ‘monkey’).

The transcription of Sheko data generally follows a surface-phonemic principle, except when it occurs between phonetic brackets. Applying this principle means that an allophone of an underlying phoneme is written different from the default realisation if the allophone can be represented by (is very similar to) the default realisation of another phoneme. Thus, the syllabic nasal / **ɲ** /, which is underlying alveolar but assimilates to the preceding or following consonant is written **ɲ** when it has the phonetic value of [**ɲ**] adjacent to a labial. If the allophone does not correspond to an existing Sheko phoneme, it is represented by the default realisation, e.g. the phonetic value of the syllabic nasal adjacent to a post-alveolar or velar [**ɲ**, **ɲ**] is written **ɲ** since **ɲ** and **ɲ** are not phonemic in Sheko. Exceptions are the dative case marker following first person pronouns, which is written **-ɲ** (basic form **-kɲ**); and verb forms of the verb **noɲ** ‘talk’ without adjacent velar (cf. **nóógù** ‘word, language’). The surface-phonemic principle is generally not followed in the rules that simplify or delete a stop preceding a syllabic nasal.

Verbs are cited in their Imperative form. Verbs and nouns whose lexical tone is not known are marked by the symbol ° in the gloss. In transcriptions between phonetic brackets and elsewhere, post-lexical H-spreading is not represented.

Translations have been kept quite literal. In some cases, an even more literal wording follows between brackets if it may help to understand the Sheko structure better. In a few cases, possible additional translations are added which may help to highlight the sense of the utterance. Usually, only one translation is given (often based on the context of the example) where several translations lie within the semantic scope (in or out of context). For instance, an Irrealis form can be rendered only with a deontic modal verb form (*should*), whereas other modal values (*could*, *would*) as well as habitual and generic also fall within the scope of the Irrealis. In the glosses, Sheko names are generally represented in the Sheko orthography, unless a well-known English equivalent exist. Thus, **sókú** is

glossed S'oku. In the translation and running text I use <Sheko>, as that name is common in the literature. The Sheko alphabet is presented in Appendix B.

2 Phonology

This chapter discusses the phonological inventory of Sheko and the possible combinations of sounds.

Sheko has 28 consonant phonemes, 5 long and 6 short vowel phonemes and a syllabic nasal phoneme. Furthermore, it has four tonemes. The phonemes, their possible combinations and allomorphs are discussed, as well as word structure.

The phonology of Sheko has much in common with Benchnon, its geographical neighbor. Aklilu (1994b) draws attention to the phonological similarities in his article on phonological comparison of Benchnon and two Majoid languages, concluding that Benchnon has more in common with Majoid than with Ometo.

2.1 Consonants

2.1.1 Consonant phonemes overview

Sheko has the following consonant phonemes:

	labial	alveolar	post-alveolar	retroflex	velar	glottal
ejective stops	p'	t'			k'	
voiceless stops		t			k	ʔ
voiced stops	b	d			g	
ejective affricates		ts'	tʃ'	tɕ'		
voiceless affricates		ts	tʃ	tɕ		
voiceless fricatives	f	s	ʃ	ɕ		h
voiced fricatives		z	ʒ	ɖ		
nasal	m	n				
tap		r				
approximants			y		w	

Table 1. Consonant inventory

The phonological representation follows the conventions of the International Phonetic Alphabet, except in the following cases: affricates are not marked by a tie bar (**ts** = **ts̥**); **r** is used instead of **ɾ**; and **y** is used for IPA **j**, following Africanist tradition.

As a writing convention, word-initial glottal stop is not written before a vowel or syllabic nasal. (Tone is written **ṽ**, **ṽ̄**, **v**, **ṽ̇** from high to low.)

The phoneme inventory given here is basically the same as Aklilu (1988).

2.1.2 Notes on the table

The sibilants in table 1 are put in a box, because of the sibilant harmony which applies to this group of phonemes. Sibilant harmony is discussed in section 2.5.4 and 3.1, *PR 13*. In the context of Omotic languages, the series of retroflex sibilants is unique to the Majoid languages. It occurs in Sheko, Nayi and the western dialects of Diizi (Aklilu 2003:66). The equivalent segments in the neighboring Benchnon language are analysed as alveo-palatals (Rapold 2006:64).

The velar nasal **ŋ** is not considered phonemic. In all cases, **ŋ** is adjacent to a velar and can thus be analysed as an assimilated **n**. Therefore **ŋ** is not represented in table 1. In two cases, a velar element is only found in related words. In the dative first person pronoun, the dative marker is **-ŋ**; in other environments the dative is [**-kŋ**]. Secondly, verb forms of the verb **noŋ** ‘talk, discuss’ contain an **ŋ**; the corresponding noun **nóógù** ‘word, matter, language’ has a voiced velar stop. In Diizi, however, **ŋ** is phonemic. It is contrastive in word-final position following a vowel, according to Beachy (2005:29).

The labio-velar phoneme **w** is grouped with the velar consonants, because it does not trigger labialisation of **ŋ** as the labial consonants do (see section 2.3.1 for examples). In initial position, **w** occurs only preceding the back vowels **o** and **u**.

Sheko has no contrast between **l** and **r**, unlike the other Majoid languages and unlike Benchnon. **l** has merged into **r** in Sheko (Aklilu 1994b:1055, 1061). Furthermore, **r** does not appear in

word-initial position. Loanwords starting with **l** or **r** in the source language are pronounced with an initial **n** in Sheko.

- (1) **níkí** ‘right, correct’ < **līkk** (Amh)
námád ‘be used to’ < **lämmädä** (Amh)
nado ‘radio’ < **radion, radio** (Amh/ Ital/ Engl)
 (~ **nadiyo, radiyon, rediyo**)
nobra ‘airplane’ < **awroplan** (Amh)
 (Guraferda dialect)

2.1.3 Geminated consonants

Geminated consonants are rare, except in emphatic expressions such as ideophones (2) and elatives (3). Therefore, gemination has a clear functional load (i.e. it codes intensity), but hardly any lexical load.

- (2) **dóddo** ‘very red’
ójjof ‘look intently’
- (3) **kétta** ‘all’ cf. **kéta** ‘all’
nějjā ‘very firmly’ cf. **nějā** ‘firmly’

A few adverbs (4) have a geminated consonant. Two nouns vary in pronunciation between a single and geminated consonant (5).

- (4) **şotta** ‘distant’
syätta ‘quietly’
- (5) **kādū** ~ **kāddū** ‘three’
toka ~ **tokka** ‘dot, full stop’

2.1.4 Series to substantiate phonemic status

This section presents data to indicate the phonemic status of the consonants given above. The data is ordered first according to place of articulation, while manner of articulation is kept constant, and secondly according to manner of articulation and airstream mechanism, while place of articulation is kept constant. Sibilants are presented in additional environments in order to show that vowel quality does not affect their

articulation. At the end, the phonemic status of the glottal consonants **ʔ** and **h** versus the approximants **w** and **y** is illustrated.

contrasting place of articulation:

p' - t' - k' word-initial

- (6) **p'éép'** 'pray'
t'eer 'swell'
k'eet' 'swallow'

word-medial

- (7) **ōp'ā** 'vine sp.'
k'ōt'à 'comb'
ṣūk'à 'stiff porridge'

word-final

- (8) **ṣááp'** 'tear off'
káát' 'dig, hoe'
tʃ'aak' 'have a headache'

t - k - ʔ word-initial

- (9) **tarà** 'wasp'
karà 'leaf'
árà 'brains, thought'

word-medial

- (10) **kátá** 'grass sp.'
bākā 'tree sp.'
dáʔà 'battering, to batter'

word-final

- (11) **kyát** 'sting'
mák 'measure in cups'
dáʔ 'batter, make dough'

b - d - g word-initial

- (12) **bārkā** ‘thigh’
dargà ‘plant sp.’
gárgá ‘termite’

word-medial

- (13) **záábá** ‘line’ (also **záábà**)
gāādā ‘wall’
náágá ‘iron’

word-final

- (14) **daab** ‘create’
máád ‘deceive’
daag ‘invite’

t’ - ts’ - tʃ’ - tʂ’ word-initial

- (15) **t’árà** ‘injera’
ts’ámà ‘eagle’
tʃ’áárù ‘waterfall stone’
tʂ’át’ì ‘top ring of grass roof’

word-medial

- (16) **ʃirt’ū** ‘(clan name)’
hárts’ù ‘top of tree’ (also **hárts’ú**)
p’èrtʃ’ū ‘grass sp.’
k’ártʂ’ú ‘wrist/ ankle joint’

word-final

- (17) **báát’** ‘turn away’
ts’ááts’ ‘shine (sun)’
bátʃ’ ‘be angry’
k’aatʂ’ ‘hit with stone’

preceding **i**

- (18) **t'isn** 'bird sp.'
ts'ir 'clay'
tʃ'irú 'unripeness, being green'
gèètʃ' = í-k 'she laughed'

following **i**

- (19) **mít'i** 'pepper'
gits' 'girdle, put on trousers/ skirt'
íítʃ'à 'witchcraft, evil'
 -

preceding **u**

- (20) **t'uus** 'know'
ts'úúts' 'whistle'
tʃ'úbí 'small knife'
tʃ'ūūrū 'knot of a tree'

following **u**

- (21) **nūūt'ū** 'wild animal'
ts'úúts' 'whistle'
mútʃ'à 'bird of prey sp.'
búútʃ' 'pluck (chicken)'

t - ts - tʃ - tʃ word-medial

(**tʃ** and **tʃ** do not appear in word-initial position)

- (22) **kátá** 'grass sp.'
yatsà 'flat basket'
batʃà 'bed'
hāātʃ'ā 'shoot at tree trunk'

preceding **i**

- (23) **tīti** 'back'
útsì 'fly'
kóótʃi 'mother-in-law'
keetʃ = í-k 'she spins, twists'

following **i**

- (24) **tíft** 'look, stare'
iits 'boil'
ditʃ 'sneeze'
 -

preceding **u**

- (25) **tīitù** 'bird of prey sp.'
bītsù 'fern'
gāātʃū 'teff'
kútʃú 'hand, arm'

following **u**

- (26) **ūtī** 'love'
útsì 'fly'
kútʃi 'chicken'
buʃà 'nest'

f - s - ʃ - ɣ - h word-initial

- (27) **fāānà** 'fork (in branch, in road)'
sāāyā 'fable'
ʃāārà 'song'
ɣáánà 'baldness'
háárá 'knife'

word-medial

- (28) **kafà** 'bird'
kasà 'mamba'
bākāʃà 'three-legged stool'
máʃá 'flat storage place under the **dámà** rack'
kyáhà 'stake (for stretching a hide)'

word-final

- (29) **syaf** 'be wet, rotten'
myás 'hew'
máj 'be patient'
aş 'plant'
ts'áh 'dry, ripen'

preceding **i**

- (30) **fūsi** 'afterbirth (of humans)'
sítsú 'hair'
jíth 'lake'
şííz 'plant sp. (parasitic)'

following **i**

- (31) **jiif** 'add'
síís 'listen'
yiiş 'pull out, dig up'
giiş '1. pull 2. abduct for marriage'

preceding **u**

- (32) **fūūk'ū** 'straw'
súkú 'rope, vein'
şúfá 'smell'
şúúkù 'handle'

following **u**

- (33) **dúúf** 'hit'
fus 'finish a period of time'
kuş 'be sick'
wúş 'kill'
búh 'bark'

z - ʒ - ʒ word-initial

- (34) **zārā** 'seed'
zázá 'peace'
zaak'ñ 'afternoon'
word-final
- (35) **gaz** 'snap, break'
kááz 'be happy'
gaaz 'prune'
preceding **i**
- (36) **zirkū** 'day'
zírbi 'cotton'
mùz=í-k 'she shredded'
preceding **u**
- (37) **zūmà** 'veins and ribs of plant'
zufi 'bat'
gòrzū 'lizard' (also **gòrzūbe**)
- m - n** word-initial
- (38) **maarù** 'mercy'
nāārū 'wind'
word-medial
- (39) **gōōmā** 'equal (born during the same period of time)'
gōōnā 'beehive half'
word-final
- (40) **daam** 'plant (v.) sticks for yam'
gaan 'make consenting noises'

contrasting manner of articulation, voicing and airstream mechanism

p' - f - b - m word-initial

- (41) **p'urk'** 'be uprooted'
fuur 'trade'
búr '1. flow by; 2. ask payment of a debt'
mūṣk'n̄ 'swim'

word-final

- (42) **ṣááp'** 'tear off'
kaaf 'build'
k'ááb 'pour out'
k'áám 'rear someone else's child'

t - t' - d - n - r - y word-initial

- (43) **tárà** 'spur'
t'árà 'injerra'
dárú 'plant sp.'
náánú 'elder brother'
 -
yākū 'six'

(r does not occur word-initially)

word-final

- (44) **kyát** 'sting'
mat' 'ferment'
gad 'start'
án 'put'
ár 'think'
áy 'dance'

ts' - ts - s - z word-initial

- (45) **ts'ámà** 'bird of prey sp.'
 -
sam 'remain behind'
zámà 'machete'

(ts does not occur word-initially)

word-final

- (46) **ts'úúts'** 'whistle'
búúts 'cut with horizontal movement, mow'
boos 'filter'
booz 'stroll'

tʃ' - tʃ - ʃ - ʒ word-medial

- (47) **dāātʃ'ù** 'worm'
gāātʃū 'teff'
tāāʃū 'skirt of grass'
gāāʒū 'sideboards, whiskers'

tʂ' - tʂ - ʂ - ʐ word-medial/-final

- (48) **k'aatʂ'** 'hit with a stone'
hāātʂā 'shoot at tree trunk, bud (n.)'
ááʂ 'stand'
gaazʐ 'prune'

ʔ - h - k - k' - g word-initial

- (49) **árà** 'brains'
háára 'knife'
karà 'leaf'
k'ára 'newly, raw, green'
gárgá 'termite'

word-final

- (50) **gyáʔ** 'chew'
ts'áh 'dry, ripen'
jáak 'weave'
kák' 'suspend, hang'
nyag 'be spread out'

contrasting the approximants and glottal consonants

? - h - w - y word-initial

- (51) **ááb** '1. eye; 2. fruit'
hāāy 'water'
yááb 'man'
 -

(w and y are in complementary distribution in word-initial position, see section 2.4.1)

word-medial

- (52) **dáʔà** 'battering, to batter'
kyááhà 'stake for stretching hides'
dayà 'bow'
kawà 'fat'

word-final

- (53) **baʔ** 'carry on back'
ts'áh 'dry, ripen'
k'áy 'rise'
ts'aw 'darken, become black'

2.2 Vowels

2.2.1 Vowel phonemes overview

Sheko has the following vowels:

- (54) i ii u uu
 e ee ə o oo
 a aa

Long vowels are written with double graphs instead of a colon.

The schwa (ə) has no long counterpart like the other vowels. Its pronunciation varies; for some people, including my consultants from the Boyta area, the schwa somewhat

resembles [e], while for others it is almost pronounced as [a]. The schwa appears to be not very frequent in lexical items, but it also occurs in some frequently used grammatical morphemes, e.g. the indirect stance marker -ə.

- | | | |
|------|--------------------------|--------------|
| (55) | góri | ‘head’ |
| | səri | ‘legume sp.’ |
| | gōp’ərà ~ gōp’ārà | ‘boulder’ |
| | ʃəʃkə | ‘snake sp.’ |
| | ʃət’i | ‘maize’ |

According to one language consultant, the independent pronouns given in (56) also have a schwa. However, all other consultants disagreed.

- | | | |
|------|--------------------|------------|
| (56) | yeta ~ yəta | ‘you (sg)’ |
| | nata ~ nəta | ‘I’ |
| | náta ~ néta | ‘we’ |

The status of schwa in Omotic is difficult. Bender (2003) mentions a sound correspondence **a~e** and suggests it might be a sixth vowel, but it is not straightforwardly reconstructable for proto-Omotic (see Bender 2003:133-4; 263; 311).

The vowels **e**, **o** and **ə** do not occur as terminal vowel in nouns underlyingly. One word with final **ay** contracts to **e**, notably **báy ~ bé** ‘mother’.

2.2.2 Vowel length

All vowels except schwa occur short and long. To support the phonemic status of vowel length, the following pairs are given:

- | | | | | |
|------|---------------|--------------------------------|--------------|---|
| (57) | dīik’ñ | ‘be mute, dumb’ | díkə | ‘heel’ |
| | k’iis | ‘milk’ | k’is | ‘drink’ |
| | ēēd | ‘door’ | éd | ‘mouth’ |
| | k’éédà | ‘ring’ | k’ēdā | ‘oath’ |
| | ééná | ‘wealth’ | énà | ‘later today’ |
| | k’eets | ‘1. be sharp
2. catch fire’ | k’ets | ‘roast cooked food
on coals’ (caus.) |

dāādū	‘lightning’	dādū	‘child’
zāārā	‘clan’	zará	‘fly sp.’
báár	‘take a mouthful’	bár	‘become blind’
gaar	‘bear fruit (non-tuber)’	gar	‘sing drunkenly’
maak	‘tell’	mák	‘measure in cups’
bōōtā	‘dust’	bōtā	‘big mortar’
gōōnā	‘beehive half’	gōnā	‘tree sp.’
oorà	‘snare’	órá	‘wet dung’
bóór	‘move to far area’	bór	‘curse (revocable)’
toos	‘bind on rope to haul up’	tos	‘storytell’
búúrā	‘waist-cloth’	burà	‘flood’
kúújú	‘plant sp.’	kuʃ(u)	‘sickness’
ts’úúts’	‘whistle’	ts’uts’	‘itch’
búúr	‘slaughter a pregnant animal’	búr	‘1. flow; 2. ask for payment of a debt’

In nouns, long vowels are restricted to the initial syllable. Verb stems mostly consist of only one syllable and the vowel can be long or short. Long vowels cannot co-occur with complex codas in the same syllable.

2.3 Syllabic nasal

In addition to the vowels, Sheko has syllabic nasals. A syllabic nasal forms the nucleus of a syllable and bears tone, just like vowels. On the other hand, a syllabic nasal differs from vowels in the way it is distributed.

2.3.1 Nasal assimilation

The syllabic nasal is analysed as alveolar underlyingly, since the place of articulation is alveolar preceding glottal consonants (58a,b) (and preceding alveolar consonants (58c,d)).

- (58) a. **ɲ = hàày-k** [ʔɲfiààyk]
 1SG = spend.night-REAL
 ‘I spent the night’

- b. **ɲ = ʔom-k** [ʔɲomk]
 1SG = replete-REAL
 ‘I am replete (ate my fill)’
- c. **ɲ = dòòr-k** [ʔɲdòòrk]
 1SG = run-REAL
 ‘I ran’
- d. **ɲ = ts’èsn-k** [ʔɲts’èsɲk]
 1SG = be.satisfied-REAL
 ‘I am satisfied’

The syllabic nasal assimilates in place to the adjacent consonant.

- (59) **ts’āp’ṁ** [ts’āp’ṁ] ‘root’
 básń [básń] ‘doorstep’
 tútʃṁ [túʈṁ] ‘top of the head’
 ʃúk’ń [ʃúk’ṁ] ‘eyebrow’

Orthographical note: Syllabic nasal is written as **ɲ** when it is adjacent to a labial, and **ɲ** in all other cases. Thus, assimilation to palatal or velar place of articulation is not indicated, except between phonetic brackets. See *PR 9. Assimilation of alveolar nasals* in section 3.1 for further description of nasal assimilation.

The phoneme **w** triggers velarization of a nasal, rather than labialization. Therefore it is presented together with velar consonants rather than bilabial consonants in the consonant overview at the beginning of this chapter. The example below demonstrates that **w** patterns with the velar consonants.

- (60) a. **ɲ = bààs-kì-k** [ʔɲbààskik]
 1SG = want-exist-REAL
 ‘I want’
- b. **ɲ = gèètʃ’ù-kì-k** [ʔɲgèètʃ’ùkik]
 1SG = laugh-exist-REAL
 ‘I am laughing’

- c. **ɲ = wuɣ-kì-k** [ʔɲwuɣkìk]
 1SG = kill-exist-REAL
 ‘I am killing’

2.3.2 Distribution

The distribution of the syllabic nasal in nouns is restricted to the second syllable.

- | | | | | |
|------|--------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|
| (61) | ʃāp’ṁ | ‘larvae of bees’ | dīkṁ | ‘heel’ |
| | kūbṁ | ‘four’ | kōōkṁ | ‘road’ |
| | ʦ’ádṁ | ‘war’ | ts’úk’ṁ | ‘charcoal’ |
| | ūūṁ | ‘rat’ | ʔyáts’ṁ | ‘moon’ |
| | sagṁ | ‘nine’ | úʃṁ | ‘flower’ |
| | kásṁ | ‘whiskers’ | góórzṁ | ‘throat, gullet’ |
| | ʔyázṁ | ‘right’ | ʃōrṁ | ‘fear’ |

Like nouns, verb stems never have a syllabic nasal in the initial syllable. Syllabic nasals in verb stems may all be related to the middle derivation (62), see section 12.3.

- (62) **zīp’ṁ** ‘chase away’
 dēfṁ ‘be rotten (wood)’
 gāts’ṁ ‘help’
 āyṁ ‘think much about’
 t’ōsk’ṁ ‘leak’
 ts’úbṁ ‘be narrow’

N.B. The syllabic nasal can occur in the first syllable of a word. The first person possessor prefixes (63) and subject clitics (64) occur word-initially.

- (63) **ɲ-kyàṁ**
 1SG.POSS-dog
 ‘my dog’

- (64) **ṁ = baɣ-ə**
 1PL = work-STI
 ‘let us work’

2.3.3 The status of syllabic nasals

This section discusses evidence concerning the independent phonemic status of syllabic nasals.

The syllabic alveolar nasal is in opposition with vowels. Although the distribution of syllabic nasal is limited compared to vowels, many examples showing contrast can be found, except word-initially. Word-medial pairs are presented below.

- (65) a. **kɪ = a-k-ə**
 exist = 2SG-REAL-STI
 ‘you were there’
 b. **kɪ = ŋ-k-ə**
 exist = 1SG-REAL-STI
 ‘I was there’
- (66) a. **gyādū-s**
 rope-PL
 ‘ropes’
 b. **gyād-ñ-s**
 rope-DEF-M
 ‘the rope’
- (67) a. **ɪŋɪ = tʰusù-s-k-ə**
 3PL = know-CAUS-REAL-STI
 ‘they made known’
 b. **ɪŋɪ = tʰus-ñ-s-k-ə**
 3PL = know-MIDD-CAUS-REAL-STI
 ‘they introduced themselves (made themselves known)’

Some word-final pairs are given in (68) and (69).

- (68) a. **ń = síís-â**
 1PL = listen-put.Q
 ‘shall we listen?’
 b. **ń = síís-ń**
 1PL = listen-MIDD
 ‘let us listen (for our own benefit)’

- (69) **bākā** ‘tree sp.’
bákń ‘molar tooth’
dōrī ‘rainbow’
dōrñ ‘running’
gībù ‘cloud’
gībñ ‘wrestling’

Moreover, the tone on the syllabic nasals in (69) is not predictable: all six tonal patterns in nouns are found with final vowels as well as nasals (see section 4.7 for examples).

The opposition to consonantal nasals is a more complicated issue in Sheko, partly because of the distribution of syllabic nasals and consonantal nasals; and partly because of the scarcity of suffixes starting with a consonantal nasal. But with help of simple and morphologically complex words, opposition to consonantal nasals can be found in the same environment (the dot indicates a syllable boundary):

- (70) a. **gin.k’-ə** (non-syllabic nasal)
doze-STI
‘doze!’
b. **kì.=ń.k-ə** (syllabic nasal)
exist = 1PL-REAL-STI
‘we are there’
- (71) a. **kān.tà** ‘basket’ (non-syllabic nasal)
b. **tə.-ñ.tà** (syllabic nasal)
COP-COND
‘if it is’
- (72) a. **fñ** (non-syllabic nasal)
descend
‘descend!’
b. **kì.-ñ** (syllabic nasal)
exist-DS
‘...is, ...’

The (b) examples are subject to optional desyllabification.

There are numerous morphemes which start with a syllabic nasal. The morphemes are from nominal as well as verbal domains. A list is presented in (73).

(73)	ŋ=	(tone 2)	1sg subject clitic
	ŋ-	(tone 2)	1sg possessor prefix
	ń=	(tone 4)	1pl subject clitic
	ń-	(tone 4)	1pl possessor prefix
	-ñ	(tone 1)	definiteness marker
	-ŋ	(unpred.)	(terminal vowel/ nominalizer)
	-ŋ	(tone 3/4)	state negation marker
	-ŋ	(tone 3/4)	middle derivation
	-ŋ	(tone 3/4)	purpose
	-ñ	(tone 1)	different subject switch-reference
	-ñtà	(tone 1.1)	conditional

There is only one suffix which starts with a non-syllabic nasal. This is the conjunction **-ná** ‘or’. Contrasting forms which are morphologically complex can be found. Examples are given in (74) and (75).

- (74) a. **fāāfā-ná** **māngō**
 papaya-or mango
 ‘papaya or mango’
- b. **ééz-ñ-s-ka** **úk’-ń-s-ka**
 honey-DEF-M-COOR milk-DEF-M-COOR
 ‘the honey and the milk’
- (75) a. **gēbe-ŋ-o**
 queen-1SG.POSS-STI.ADDR
 ‘oh my queen’
- b. **gēbe-ná**
 queen-or
 ‘a queen?’
- c. **yàb-m̄-o**
 man-1SG.POSS.VOC-STI.ADDR
 ‘oh my friend’

- d. **yááb-má**
 man-or
 ‘a man/person?’

Given the number of grammatical morphemes containing **ɲ**, the clear opposition to vowels and the opposition to consonantal nasals, as well as the distribution of tone on the syllabic nasal, the syllabic nasal can be established as an independent phoneme of Sheko.

The following remark relates to the tone on syllabic nasals. The tone of most morphemes in (73) is predictable from the preceding tone. After a non-factual verb stem (which can have tone 3 or 4 depending on lexical class), the syllabic nasal has tone 3 or 4 (e.g. for permissive, purpose) and after a factual verb stem with tone 1 or 2 it has tone 1 (e.g. for *DS*, *COND*). After nouns, the definiteness marker has tone 1 if the noun is monosyllabic and otherwise it has the same tone as the terminal vowel would have. However, the tone on the minimal pairs **ɲ** ‘I’ vs. **ń** ‘we’ cannot be explained by tone rules. Also, the tone of the terminal vowel is unpredictable, see (76) below.

- (76) **dōrɲ** ‘race’ **door** ‘run’
sīp’ɲ ‘awl’ **siip’** ‘sew’
ʔyázɲ ‘ability’ **ʔyáz** ‘be able’

2.3.4 A bilabial syllabic nasal?

As has been discussed in the previous section, syllabic nasals are phonemic, at least the alveolar syllabic nasal. From the existing literature on Sheko, the status of the bilabial nasal is unclear. The data of the present research are not conclusive either.

Aklilu (1994b) posits one alveolar (syllabic) nasal, which assimilates in place. However, Aklilu (2003:60) has both **ɲ** and **ɱ** as phonemes. It is stated that diachronically the syllabic nasals come from ***um** and ***un** respectively (Aklilu 2003:77-78). His data are the following:

(77)		Sheko	Nayi	Dizi	Proto-Maji
	ashes ⁶	ts'eákɲ	ts'eákɲ	ts'yákɲ	*ts'eákun
	grandfather	ákɲ	ákú	ákɲ	*ákun
	short ⁷	ʃík'ɲs	ʃík'	ʃíguz	*ʃík'uns
	eat!	ɲ	ɲ	ɲ	*um
	tomorrow	berɲ	bearɲ	byaru	*bearun
	wide	(h)ɲʃkɲshaɲʃu		haɲʃuz	*haɲʃkuns
	bark (of tree)	órk'ɲ	-	ork'ú	*ork'ún
	four	kubɲ	kubɲ	kubɲ	*kubum
	die	ʃub	ʃubɲ	ʃubu	*ʃubum
	green	tʃ'irɲs	tʃ'ilu	tʃ'iluz	*tʃ'iluns

It is possible that ***un** and ***um** are the sources of the present day sounds in nouns. But it needs to be noted that the syllabic **m** always occurs adjacent to a bilabial, and the occurrence of this syllabic nasal can be accounted for by assimilation. There is one exception where **m** is not adjacent to a bilabial, i.e. the verb 'eat'. This verb is given as **ɲ** for the three daughter languages. It is analysed **ʔm** in Diizi (Beachy 2005).

In my corpus of Sheko, the stem for 'eat' alternates between **ʔúm-** (78) and **m-** (79). In example (78), the subject agreement marker does not assimilate, which it would if it were adjacent to a bilabial.

- (78) a. **ɲ = ʔum-kì-k** [ʔnumkík] * [ʔmmkík]
 1SG = eat-exist-REAL
 'I am eating.'
- b. **úm-ára** **k'é-ə**
 eat-NEG remain-STI
 'Don't eat!'
- (79) a. **m-â**
 eat-INF
 'to eat/eating'

⁶ In my data: **ts'yākɲ** 'ashes'; **ākā** (vocative **ákɲ**) 'grandfather'; **ʃík'** 'be short'; **um/ m-** 'eat'; **byārɲ** 'tomorrow'; **hāʃkɲ** 'be wide'; **órk'h** 'peelings' (**gōp'arà** 'bark'); **kūbɲ** 'four'; **ʃúb** 'die'; **tʃ'ír-á-s** 'green' (**tʃ'ír** 'be wet, unripe, fresh (maize)').

⁷ The adjectives 'short', 'wide' and 'green' are words consisting of multiple morphemes, i.e. a verb root plus nominal suffixes. See section 7.2.

- b. **há = m-á-m**
 3MS = eat-put-IRR
 ‘he will eat’

However, a single syllabic nasal is accepted as a possible pronunciation of the (affirmative) imperative, as in (80).

- (80) **úm** [**ʔúm**] ~ [**ń**]
 eat
 ‘eat!’

Apart from **m-/úm** ‘eat’, there is a syllabic bilabial nasal as an allomorph of the Irrealis marker **-m**. Its syllabicity seems to depend on the CV-structure: only in (81c) and (d), where a consonant follows, does it occur as a syllabic nasal. In (a) and (b), there would be three or four nucloid elements following each other if the bilabial nasal were syllabic. On account of (d), one could posit the syllabic bilabial nasal as the underlying form, but it needs to be noted that all occurrences of it are with the form **-m-bààb** and it could thus be syllabic analogous to (c) (since CVC stems are frequent and CV stems rare). Moreover, the form in (d) is given as [**há.kĩm.bààb**] as well. Therefore, it would also be possible to posit the non-syllabic labial as the underlying form. (Besides, it is hard to hear the difference between a syllabic and non-syllabic bilabial nasal in this context, in spoken as well as in whistled speech, since the syllabic nasal is silent in whistling).

- (81) a. **há = sǎg-á-m-ə**
 3MS = see-put-IRR-STI
 ‘he will see’
 b. **há = séé-m-ə**
 3MS = see.NV-IRR-STI
 ‘he might see’
 c. **há = sǎg-ń-bààb-ə**
 3M = see-IRR-father-STI
 ‘he must see’
 d. **há = kī-ń-bààb**
 3MS = exist-IRR-father
 ‘who will live’

There is no other place in Sheko where questions arise about the necessity of positing a second (bilabial) syllabic nasal as a phoneme.

It should be noted that for the other Majoid languages the verb ‘eat’ is the only ‘evidence’ given for positing **ɱ** as a phoneme. However, in Benchnon, the dative **ɱ** on pronouns is underivable and gives evidence for the phonemic status of **ɱ** in addition to the verb ‘eat’. Still, its distribution remains very limited (Rapold 2006:55-62).

2.4 Phonotactics

2.4.1 Occurrence restrictions in word-initial position

The phoneme **r** does not occur word-initially, except in the ideophonic word **rururu** ‘[call a cat]’.

The non-ejective affricative sibilants **ts**, **tʃ**, **tʂ** do not occur in word-initial position.

w in word-initial position only occurs when followed by a back vowel **o** or **u**, whereas **y** in word-initial position only occurs when followed by a front vowel **i** or **e** or by **a**⁸. **w** and **y** are thus in complementary distribution in word-initial position. In other positions, they are contrastive, as shown in the last series of section 2.1.4.

Non-initial sequences of **y** and a back vowel or **w** and a front vowel do occur on morpheme boundaries.

- (82) **băy-o**
 mother.VOC-STI.ADDR
 ‘oh mother’

- (83) **kyàw = í-k**
 shout = 3FS-REAL
 ‘she did shout’

⁸ The word ‘uniform’ is borrowed as **yinifo(r)m** accordingly.

Finally, the consonant-vowel sequences **p'a**, **p'i** and **p'o** have not been found in word-initial position.

2.4.2 Restrictions on combinations of consonants and vowels

The non-ejective affricative sibilants **ts**, **tʃ**, **tʂ** are not attested preceding **e**, **ə** and **o** in mono-morphemic words, because they do not occur in word-initial position, and the vowels **e**, **ə** and **o** do not occur as final vowel of nouns or other mono-morphemic words. However, verbs ending in one of these consonants can suffix the indirect stance markers **-ə** and **-o**. Furthermore, the sequences **ots** and **itʂ** are not attested in mono-morphemic words.

The ejective affricate sibilants also have gaps in their distribution with respect to vowels. The sequences **tʃ'e**, **itʂ'**, **otʂ'**, **tʂ'e**, **tʂ'i**, and **tʂ'o** are not attested in mono-morphemic words in my corpus.

The fricative voiced sibilants too display a few gaps. Sequences that are not attested so far in mono-morphemic words are **iz**, **eʒ**, **eʒ** and **ʒo**. For **ʒ**, which is rare, **ʒa** is the only consonant-vowel sequence found in mono-morphemic words.

These gaps may be due to the relative infrequency of the sibilants in question and the distribution of the vowels.

Other unattested vowel-consonant sequences in mono-morphemic words are **uw**, **ih**, **iʔ**, **eʔ**, **oʔ** and the consonant-vowel sequence **p'o**.

2.4.3 Restrictions occurring with the syllabic nasal

In mono-morphemic words, only stops (84) and fricatives (85) occur as onset in a syllable with a nasal nucleus.

- | | | |
|------|-----------------|--|
| (84) | ʂòr.t'ñ | 'lungs' |
| | dūp'.k'ñ | 'leaf at the bottom part of an ensete' |
| | mūʂ.k'ñ | 'swim' |
| | zér.k'ñ | 'time' |

- | | | |
|------|----------------|-------------|
| | wōf.kñ | ‘move’ |
| | yár.bñ | ‘blood’ |
| | úr.gñ | ‘hail’ |
| (85) | ǰūr.fñ | ‘slurp’ |
| | kúy.sñ | ‘drizzle’ |
| | būr.ǰñ | ‘slip’ |
| | dēf.ǰñ | ‘be rotten’ |
| | góór.zñ | ‘gullet’ |

The only consonants which can follow the syllabic nasal are voiceless sibilants. This is the masculine gender marker **-s** and its allomorphs following the definiteness marker **-n**.

- | | | |
|------|--------------------|----------------------|
| (86) | sārk-ñ-s | [sār.kñs] |
| | be.hot.NV-DEF-M | |
| | ‘hot’ (adjective) | |
| | k’éétǰ-ñ-ǰ | [k’éét.ʔñǰ] |
| | be.cold-DEF-M | |
| | ‘cold’ (adjective) | |

2.4.4 Sequences of consonants

Apart from a **Cya** onset, sequences of consonants occur in word-medial and word-final position. The word-final sequences occur for instance in Imperatives.

C1 cannot be filled by an affricate, **h** or **w**. The preferred sequences are **r** and **n** followed by a stop. However, many other combinations are possible. They are exemplified below. Note that in the verbs in (87), the sonority sequencing scale is violated, i.e. the segments do not have a decreasing sonority counting from the nucleus towards the edges of the syllable.

- | | | | |
|------|-----------------|----------------------------|------------------|
| (87) | dūp’k’ñ | ‘leaf at bottom of ensete’ | stop - stop |
| | áábdà | ‘floor smeared with dung’ | |
| | k’áp’ts’ | ‘cut (scissors)’ | stop - affricate |
| | kóbtǰ’ | ‘make roof beams’ | |
| | mùkmūrì | ‘top leaf of ensete’ | stop - nasal |

	gubsì zibs	‘tree sp.’ ‘look for, beg’	stop - fricative
(88)	kāntā sínt’ù kāmdì şōngū wunk’ díntʃà damtʃ’àrà dāmfa kumş	‘basket’ ‘nose’ ‘cow with much offspring’ ‘lyre’ ‘steal’ ‘black spotted maize’ ‘ginger’ ‘sycamore tree’ ‘be pulverized’	nasal - stop nasal - affricate nasal - fricative
(89)	bìsbìrì gáʃtù āşkū ts’ezgà aft dāfşù mūzrñ	‘basilicum sp.’ ‘pig’ ‘meat’ ‘udder’ ‘be drunk’ ‘evil’ ‘melt’	fricative - stop fricative - fricative fricative - tap
(90)	gērbī gúrdí ts’ertì ts’írkú k’írk’ wúrts’ú úrmà kúrsì gòrzū gīrfū	‘armpit’ ‘skirt’ ‘rue (herb)’ ‘diarrhea’ ‘bend’ ‘tadpole’ ‘platform’ ‘insect sp.’ ‘lizard’ ‘spider’	tap - stop tap - affricate tap - nasal tap - fricative
(91)	fayt’ gáydú āynā ʃáyʃn	‘be weak’ ‘problem’ ‘grief’ ‘squirrel’ (F)	approximant - stop approximant - nasal approximant - fricative

2.4.5 Ambiguous sequences

Affricates

Potentially, affricates could be analysed as a sequence of two phonemes, i.e. homorganic stop-fricative sequences. However, there are at least two reasons to analyse them as affricates, i.e. as single phonemes. First, syllabification by native speakers shows that the affricates are treated as single segments. Homorganic stop-fricative sequences are never divided over two syllables but always assigned to one syllable.

- (92) **ú .tsí** ‘fly’ **ká .tʃí** ‘yam’
 wúr .ts’ú ‘tadpole’ **ʃeb .tʃ’à** ‘taro sp.’
 k’āb .ts’i ‘cockroach’ **k’áá .tʃ’ù** ‘ant sp.’

Secondly, the list of syllable patterns would have to be enlarged to accommodate stop-fricative sequences, but only because of homorganic ones. Homorganic stop-fricative sequences are found in all positions where other consonants are also found. While the present analysis of the sequences as affricates increases the phoneme inventory, the number of syllable patterns is kept constant. If the affricates would be analysed as sequences of separate phonemes not only the number of syllable types would have to be enlarged but also the number of phonemes, since the palatal and retroflex affricates do not have a corresponding stop. These phonemes would only occur in a homorganic sequence but nowhere else.

In short, the above arguments support an analysis of affricates as single segments.

Vowel-glide sequences

The following nouns and verb stems serve to show the vowel-glide sequences which could be analysed as vowel-consonant sequences, vowel-vowel sequences or diphthongs.

- (93) **gōytā** ‘shaft’
 gōydù ‘guereza monkey’
 bóytú ‘plant sp.’
 ʃooy ‘be spilled (of liquid)’
 boy ‘drive’

gáydú	‘problem’
màyzā	‘herb sp.’ (var. mèèzī)
gàyzīrì	‘long knife’
k’áy	‘rise’
èywū	‘locust’
zey	‘attract force’
gúy	‘farmland which has to be tilled’
gūyǎm	‘bow down, worship’
iw	‘live, reside’ (Gf.)
kew	‘shout’

I analyse **y** and **w** as consonants. This does not increase syllable patterns, since the presence of codas is established independently. Furthermore, the tonal melodies for the words given above suggest that **y** and **w** do not bear tone. If **y** and **w** would be viewed as the vowels **i** and **u**, we would have to increase the vowel inventory with diphthongs or the possible syllable structures with sequences of different vowels. Therefore it is more economical to adopt the view that **y** and **w** in this position are consonants.

Cya sequences

Preceding the vowel **a**, both plain consonants and consonants followed by a palatal element appear in root-initial position. Phonetically, the palatal element is heard as a short off-glide of the preceding consonant. Phonologically, I adopt an analysis of a sequence of two phonemes.

(94) fyáánú	[fʰáánú]	‘frog’
nyākū	[nʷākū]	‘young man’
syangà	[sʷangà]	‘dried vines’
tyáárà	[tʷáárà]	‘calabash for drinking’
dyaas	[dʷaas]	‘soak in water’
k’yááf	[kʷaaf]	‘kick’
tyaak’	[tʷaak’]	‘cut a yam root’

So far, **t’y**, **ts’y**, **k’y**, **ty**, **ky**, **ʔy**, **by**, **dy**, **gy**, **fy**, **sy**, **zy**, **my**, **ny** are attested in my data. The following consonants do not have palatalised counterparts: the palatal and retroflex sibilants **tʃ**,

tʃ, **ʃ**, **ʒ**, **ʒ**, **z**, as well as **w**, **h** and **p**. The gap for **p** is due to scarcity of word-initial occurrence. (Consonants not mentioned do not appear in initial position.) The following pairs serve to show the distinctivity of palatalised consonants as opposed to plain consonants.

(95)	bāà	‘crow’	byāà	‘calf’
	gádà	‘to start’	gyādū	‘rope’
	āngā	‘much, very’	ʔyāngā	‘ram’
	zāmà	‘machete’	zyāāmà	‘in-law’
	kats	‘cook’	kyats	‘fell’
	káám	‘be lit (of light)’	kyam	‘meet’
	k’aatʃ	‘hit with stone’	k’yaas	‘leave’

There are four ways to analyse the palatal element in this position.

1. V_1V_2 vowel sequence. This solution goes against the lack of V_1V_2 sequences within single morphemes. Underlying V_1V_2 sequences on morpheme boundaries are changed by phonological rules, so that phonetically V_1V_2 is not present (see section 3.1, *PR 18* and *PR 19*). If vowel sequences are allowed, it is strange to do so because of **ia** in this environment only. Note also that palatalised consonants appear before short and long vowels (**a** and **aa**); a CVVV(C) syllable would be odd.

Aklilu (1996:28-31; 2003:61-62; 79-80) has analyzed the **Cya** sequence as a vowel-vowel sequence on an underlying level, i.e. **Cea** surfacing as [**Cʷa**]. He does so on the basis of the following pieces of evidence (examples taken from Aklilu 2003:61-62, in my own words):

- affixation and derivation - the underlying front vowel /e/ is revealed when a morpheme is added, as is the passive **-t** to the stem **fyats** ‘shave’ in the example below

(96) [**fyats’-t**] > [**fest’**]

Commentary: although Aklilu shows how the basic stem **fyats** could be derived from underlying **feats** (palatalisation

preceding front vowel and deletion of the palatalizing segment) he does not go on to explain how to arrive from the underlying form at the pronunciation of the passive [**fɛst'**], leaving it to his readers to explain the disappearance of the other underlying vowel **a** in this case.

- deletion of front vowels at morpheme boundary - the examples given are with the relative clause marker after the verb stems **gé** 'say' and **ki** 'exist'.

- (97) /ge-àb/ > [gʷàb] 'who said'
 /kì-àb/ > [kʷàb] 'who lived'

- dialectal variation and cognates in Nayi

- (98) [gyanu] 'coffee' (around Sheko)
 [gyenu] 'coffee' (around Tepi)
 [kyanu] 'dog' (Sheko)
 [keenu] 'dog' (Nayi)

These points lead Aklilu to adopt / **Cea** / for all instances of [**Cʷa**] in mono-morphemic words.

Variation in pronunciation of the same word occurs even with speakers from the same area and maybe even for the same speaker at different rates of speed or different occasions. This applies to all the examples below, although with long vowels variation is less acceptable (99b).

- (99) a. ʔyázń [ʔʷázń] ~ [ʔézń] 'ability'
 tyārbū [tʷārbū] ~ [tērbū] 'drum'
 byārń [bʷārń] ~ [bērn] 'tomorrow'
- b. byāāsū [bʷāāsū] ~ ?[bēēsū] 'crocodile'
 tsʷyāāts'ù [tsʷyāāts'ù] ~ ?[ts'ēēts'ù]
 'sunshine'

- (100) a. fyàst' = á-k [fʷàst'ák] ~ [fèst'ák]
 shave.PASS = 3MS-REAL
 'He was shaven'

- b. **ʔyàtʃ=á-k** [ʔyàtʃák] ~ [ʔètʃák]
 hide.PASS = 3MS-REAL
 ‘It is hidden’
- (101) a. **ge-àb** [gʷàb] ~ [gèb]
 say-REL
 ‘who said’
- b. **kì-àb** [kʷàb] ~ [kèb]
 exist-REL
 ‘who was’

Given the fact that variation in pronunciation occurs regularly, I fail to see this as sufficient evidence for positing an underlying vowel **e**. One can view **Ce** as contraction or simplification not only of **Cea** (Aklilu), but of **Cia**, **Cʷa** or **Cya** as well. Moreover, I have not attested any contour tone in mono-morphemic words with **Cya** sequences, except for **byāà** ‘calf’. A contour tone could have been used as an argument for a previously lost tone bearing unit.

If one adopts the V_1V_2 analysis it would be impossible to decide whether V_1 is **i** or **e** in most instances, unless comparative evidence exists⁹. However, this impossibility does not disprove the analysis or make it less favourable than the other solutions.

2. ¹**a** diphthong. An unambiguous diphthong of this kind has not been reported for any of the Omotic languages (Bender 2003; cf. Rapold 2006:102).

3. **Cʷa**, i.e. palatalised consonants before **a**. This analysis would increase the phoneme inventory with 14 consonants. It would be a quite systematic increase, except for the gap **pʷ** (all [+

⁹ Bender (2003:238) remarks that **ia** in Dizoid corresponds to **i** in Aroid, and does not occur in the TN-family. Thus he confines **ia** to Dizoid. The correspondence to **i** in Aroid is true for 1 out of 4 mentioned correspondence series (no. 6, the other 3 do not correspond to **i**). Other series such as 35, 129 which contain **ia** are not mentioned, although Dime has **e/a** in 35. Benchnon (TN) has **ia** in 6 and 35 as well. Compare this to p. 295, where the analysis of **ia** also causes problems in Mao: there are 4 **ia**-series in which ‘perhaps some cases’ are ‘best seen as palatalisation of the preceding C’; the reconstructed items show **ia**, **i** and **aa** vowels. Moreover, transcriptions of **ia** in the same word by different authors vary (eya, ia, iya, ya, etc.). All this is not very helpful for setting up an underlying V1.

Glottal stops are prone to deletion. Preceding syllabic nasals, glottal stop can be optionally deleted. Intervocalic glottal stops may also be deleted.

- (104) **ŋ-gərì** [**ʔŋgərì**] ~ [**ŋgərì**]
 1SG.POSS-head
 ‘myself’

Observe that the glottal stop is not predictable in initial position before **y**, as in (105) and (106)-(107) below.

- (105) **ʔyááná** ‘pot’
yáánà ‘planting yam, to plant yam’

Phonetically, the palatal element is heard as a short off-glide of the preceding glottal stop. The glottal stop behaves the same as other consonants which occur plain and with the palatal off-glide. This environment implies that the initial glottal stop is present underlyingly.

Moreover, some words with initial [**ʔya**] sequence vary in pronunciation with [**ʔe**]. Now we are back at the starting point of the discussion with a glottal stop preceding a word-initial vowel.

- (106) **ʔyár** ‘praise (elegy)’ [**ʔyár**] ~ [**ʔér**]
yári ‘sesame’
ár ‘think’

- (107) **ʔyází** ‘ability’ [**ʔyází**] ~ [**ʔézí**]
yāzī ‘reproach’

In addition, glottal stops are present in reduplication.

- (3) a. **í-ʔíík’ńsə̀b** ‘old ones’ [**ʔíʔíík’ńsə̀b**]
 b. **irk’-ʔirk’a gé** ‘be damp (getting wet)’ [**ʔirk’:irk’a**]

For the reasons given above, I treat the word-initial glottal stop preceding a vowel as present underlyingly. Writing convention: initial glottal stop is not written, except in the sequence **ʔya**.

2.5 Word structure

2.5.1 Syllable structure

The following syllable types are attested in Sheko:

(108)	CV	CVV	CN
	CVC	CVVC	CNC
	CVCC		
	CCV	CCVV	
	CCVC	CCVVC	
	CCVCC		

Only in suffixes, additional onset-less syllables are found (109). It is possible to view them as CN and CNC, if one posits a glottal stop as the first C, which is deleted in suffixation. A glottal stop in medial position often is deleted, according to phonological rule 5 in section 3.1. An initial stop before a syllabic nasal may be deleted as well. As for vowel-initial suffixes, they exist, but the language avoids having sequences of different vowels on a phonetic level (see section 3.1 *PR 18, 19*) and one could again posit a glottal stop which is deleted in suffixation.

(109)	N
	NC

Below, all possible syllable types are illustrated, starting with those in the upper row of (108), then going down row by row.

open syllables

(110) a. CV	só	[só]
	‘up there’	
b. CN	ń-ò<i>t-ń	[ʔń.ʔòy.t̩] ~ [nõy.t̩]
	1PL.POSS-COW <F> -DEF	
	‘our cow’	
c. CVV	gēēṣū	[gēē.ṣū]
	‘lower back’	

closed syllables

C following N is always a sibilant.

- (111) a. CVC **éd** [ʔéd]
 ‘mouth’
- b. CNC **kārb-m̄-s** [kār.b̄ms̄]
 be.strong-DEF-M
 ‘strong’ (adjective)
- c. CVVC **faad** [faad]
 ‘body’

closed syllables with a complex coda

See section 2.4.4 on the restrictions of co-occurrence of the consonants in the coda.

- (112) a. CVCC **besk** [besk]
 divide
 ‘divide!’

syllables with a complex onset

Complex onsets always consist of **Cy** followed by **a** or **aa** in the nucleus. This ambiguous sequence is discussed in section 2.4.5.

- (113) a. CCV **kyáhà** [kyá.hà]
 ‘stake’
- b. CCVV **gyāāsū** [gyāā.sū]
 ‘shield’
- c. CCVC **myāngū** [myāŋ.gū]
 ‘forefather spirit’
- d. CCVVC **ts’yááts’** [ts’yááts’]
 tie
 ‘tie! / imprison!’
- e. CCVCC **ʔyard** [ʔyard]
 enter
 ‘Enter!’

Onset-less syllables with a nasal as nucleus

Onset-less syllables occur with suffixes starting in a syllabic nasal. The syllable may remain onsetless if the nasal does not lose its syllabicity.

- (114) a. N **an-ntà** [?ā.ṇ.tà] ~ [?àn.tà]
 put-COND
 ‘if (he) put’
- b. NC **bō-ñ-s** [bō.ñs] ~ [bōns]
 belly-DEF-M
 ‘the belly’

As said elsewhere, initial **ṇ**-syllables may optionally be pronounced without glottal stop.

- (115) **ṇ-zègù** [?ṇ.zè.gù] ~ [ṇ.zè.gù]
 1SG.POSS-ox
 ‘my ox’

The syllable types are not equally distributed: in lexical items, the nucleus of the initial syllable is always a vowel, never a nasal. The vowel can be long or short. (However, if a word starts with an inflecting morpheme, e.g. subject clitic, the nucleus may be a syllabic nasal.) The nucleus of the second syllable may be a short vowel or a syllabic nasal. If the nucleus of the second syllable is a nasal, no coda will follow. A complex onset occurs only in the initial syllable of a lexical item.

2.5.2 Syllable patterns of nouns and verbs

A noun shows one of the following canonical syllable patterns. The preferred CV-structures for nouns are CV.CV, CVV.CV and CVC.CV. Section 4.7 treats tone in combination with CV-structure. It discusses some aberrant CV-shapes as well.

- (116) CV **ǰí** ‘faeces (of dog etc.)’
 CVC **ṣōw** ‘cold’
 CVVC **yááb** ‘man, person’
 CCVC **t’yám** ‘breast’
 CCVVC **kyāāz** ‘lord’
 CCVCC **?yārb** ‘tongue’

- | | | | |
|-------|---------------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| (117) | CV.CV | défi | ‘treshold’ |
| | CVV.CV | zóófi | ‘plant sp.’ |
| | CVC.CV | yéngí | ‘deadwood, firewood’ |
| | CVVC.CV | áábdà | ‘floor smeared with dung’ |
| | CCV.CV | ?yāmi | ‘paternal aunt’ |
| | CCVV.CV | myáák’ú | ‘egg’ |
| | CCVC.CV | myāngū | ‘forefather spirit’ |
| | | | |
| (118) | CV.CV.CV | sēkiri | ‘wattle, sixth finger/toe’ |
| | CVC.CV.CV | mùkmūri | ‘middle ensete leaf’ |
| | CVC.CVC.CV | gìngìngà | ‘milipede’ |
| | | | |
| (119) | CV.CVC.CVC.CV | sàkàrbārti | ‘large edible mushroom’ |

The ordinary shape of Sheko verb roots is monosyllabic. A few verbs consist of only CV(V). CVC and CVVC are the most common. Disyllabic verb roots are relatively few in number, and trisyllabic verb roots have not been attested. One verb varies in shape between C and CVC; this is the verb **m-/úm** ‘to eat’.

- | | | | | |
|-------|--|-------------------------------------|---|------------------|
| (120) | CV
gé
ki | ‘say’
‘exist, live’ | | |
| (121) | CVV
tée | ‘go’ (Non-Factual stem) | | |
| (122) | CVC
k’or
séh
gób
k’uts’ | ‘beg’
‘erase’
‘jump’
‘cut’ | CCVC
k’yár
gya? | ‘beat’
‘chew’ |
| (123) | CVVC
tíít
maak
búúts
k’iis | ‘look’
‘tell’
‘mow’
‘milk’ | CCVVC
ts’yááts’
fyaan | ‘tie’
‘peel’ |

- | | | | | |
|-------|----------------|------------|--------------|---------|
| (124) | CVCC | | CCVCC | |
| | k'áp'ts | 'cut' | ?yárd | 'enter' |
| | gásk | 'insult' | | |
| | ints | 'be heavy' | | |

Underived disyllabic verb roots all end in **-ar** or **-ər**, which might be a frozen suffix. A possible derivational suffix **.ar** is also reported for Benchnon (Rapold 2006:197ff). Note that all of these verbs have H tone.

- | | | | | |
|-------|----------------|------------------------|--|--|
| (125) | CVCVC | | | |
| | gédár | 'exchange' | | |
| | k'ók'ár | 'be incomplete (?)' | | |
| | ʃíbár | 'stroke over the head' | | |
| | túk'ár | 'gush, spring forth' | | |
| | ákár | 'seem, resemble' | | |
| | úk'ér | 'crow (of cock)' | | |
-
- | | | | | |
|-------|---------------|----------|----------------|--------------|
| (126) | CVCCVC | | CCVCCVC | |
| | bángár | 'return' | kyángár | 'curse' |
| | | | byángár | 'be crooked' |

Rapold reports nouns ending in **.ar** for Benchnon. In Sheko, a couple of nouns end in **.arà**. These are listed in (127). The words in (128) might also be related.

- | | | |
|-------|----------------------|--|
| (127) | <i>words in .arà</i> | |
| | bákàrà | 'griddle' |
| | dūfàrà | 'elephantiasis' |
| | gōp'arà | 'bark' |
| | ībàrà | 'truth' (cf. Benchnon ībār 'truth') |
| | k'ōp'arà | 'open place in stone or wood' |
| | sāmbàrà | 'tree sp' |
| | damtʃ'arà | 'ginger' |
| | gofàrà | 'toad' |
-
- | | | |
|-------|----------------|--|
| (128) | tumzèrà | 'tree sp.' |
| | úndérkñ | 'day before yesterday' (.kñ < dative?) |
| | zùngàrà | 'turn halfway back' (with gé 'say') |

Verbs borrowed from Amharic are made to fit one of the above mentioned patterns. Most are of the pattern CVCVC, since most Amharic verbs consist of three radicals (consonants), but CVC does occur as well.

- | | | | | | |
|-------|--------------|---------|---|----------|----------------------|
| (129) | támár | ‘learn’ | < | tämarä | ‘learn’ |
| | nábáb | ‘read’ | < | anäbbäbä | ‘read’ |
| | dáwár | ‘phone’ | < | däwwälä | ‘ring a bell, phone’ |
| | ts’af | ‘write’ | < | ts’afä | ‘write’ |

2.5.3 Length of words

While verb roots commonly consist of one syllable, as shown in the preceding section, verb forms composed of multiple morphemes can be much longer.

- (130) **íſi = kyàngàr-sù-s-ñ-kì-kñ-ya** (9 syllables)
3PL = curse-CAUS-CAUS-MIDD-exist-KNOWN-STD
 ‘they are cursing each other (as you should know)’

The majority of nouns has two syllables, some have one and a few have three syllables. Nouns of four or more syllables are mostly compounds. Compounds are discussed in section 5.5.3. The following are examples of multisyllabic nouns which are not considered compounds:

- (131) **şàkàrbārti** ‘large edible mushroom’
gārāmātsi ‘(name of spirit)’ (but see 4.7, (40) on **tsi**)

Numbers, quantifiers and adverbs have mostly two, sometimes one syllable, like nouns. Pronouns have one or two syllables as well. Ideophones are generally two or more syllables, but display a lot of reduplication. The structure of ideophones is dealt with in section 8.1. Derivational and inflection morphemes are short. Most consist of a single consonant or one syllable; the maximum is two syllables (**-ñtà** ‘COND’, **íshi-** ‘3PL.POSS’)

2.5.4 Root structure condition

In Sheko, sibilant harmony occurs not only across morpheme boundaries but also root-internally. The following three

examples shows that root-internally, the sibilants have the same place of articulation, even if other consonants occur in between the sibilants. Example (132) illustrates alveolar sibilants, example (133) post-alveolar sibilants, and example (134) retroflex sibilants.

- | | | |
|-------|-----------|-----------------------------|
| (132) | sískh | ‘scorpion, crab’ |
| | sítsú | ‘hair’ |
| | ts’ěts’ì | ‘grass sp.’ |
| | ézk’úsì | ‘plant sp.’ |
| | sááts’ | ‘dawn, become light’ |
| | síís | ‘listen’ |
| | ts’uts’ | ‘itch’ |
| | ts’yááts’ | ‘tie’ |
| | ts’yāsñ | ‘break off with fingertips’ |
| (133) | ǰáyǰn | ‘squirrel’ |
| | ǰéntǰú | ‘sin’ |
| | ǰebtǰ’à | ‘taro sp.’ |
| | ǰáǰ | ‘wet, make sharp’ |
| | ǰátǰ | ‘herd’ |
| | zǰáǰz | ‘be good’ |
| (134) | ʂííʂ | ‘plant sp.’ |
| | ʂóóʂ | ‘snake’ |
| | ʂórʂú | ‘plant sp.’ |
| | ʂúʂkú | ‘weed’ |
| | tʂ’ūūtʂ’ù | ‘louse’ |
| | ʂóóʂ | ‘parch, roast’ |
| | ʂōʂkñ | ‘be light, easy’ |

This root structure condition occurs in other Omotic languages as well, e.g. Benchnon (Rapold 2006:115), Bambassi Mao (Ahland 2010:11), Maale (Azeb 2001a:19), and other languages. The Sheko data once again support Hayward’s claim that sibilant harmony as a root structure condition is reconstructable for proto-Omotoc (Hayward 1988:287). Sibilant harmony applies across morpheme boundaries in Sheko, see section 2.6.2, *PR 13*.

3 Phonological and morphophonological processes

This chapter aims at giving an overview of the (morpho)phonological processes in Sheko, captured in phonological rules (*PR*) and morphophonological rules (*MP*). Furthermore, the chapter discusses reduplication processes.

3.1 Phonological rules

The phonological rules in the following subsections are numbered *PR 1* - *PR 21*. The numbering does not imply rule ordering. The rules are roughly organised from rules that apply to single segments to rules that apply to groups of segments.

PR 1. Free variation of ʒ allophones

PR 2. Lenition of b

PR 3. Strengthening of f

PR 4. Realisation of h

PR 5. Intervocalic glottal stop deletion

PR 6. Optional deletion of glottal stop preceding a syllabic nasal

PR 7. Desyllabification of syllabic nasal

PR 8. Resyllabification of uy

PR 9. Assimilation of alveolar nasals

PR 10. Nasal-nasal merging

PR 11. Sibilant merging

PR 12. Realisation of retroflexes

PR 13. Sibilant harmony

PR 14. Devoicing of fricatives preceding voiceless stops

PR 15. Simplification of affricates preceding a syllabic nasal

PR 16. Palatalisation preceding e

PR 17. Labialisation preceding back vowels

PR 18. Reduction of vowel to glide and contraction

PR 19. Glide insertion between vowels

PR 20. Internasal stop reduction

PR 21. Internasal stop deletion in rapid speech

PR 1. Free variation of ʒ allophones

For ʒ, there are free variants [ʒ] and [dʒ]. Impressionistically, ʒ is more prominent in the Sheko dialect, whereas dʒ and ʒ are more prominent in the Guraferda dialect.

- (1) bāʒà [bāʒà] ~ [bādʒà] ~ [bājà] ‘work’

The variation can occur word-initially as well as word-medial and -final, but if a word contains two / ʒ / fricatives, the second allophone cannot be more closed than the first.

- (2) ʒáʒá [ʒáʒá] ~ [dʒáʒá] ~*[ʒádʒá] ‘peace’

PR 2. Lenition of b

The labial voiced plosive / b / is optionally weakened to [β] following a vowel. For some people, the resulting fricative is subject to *PR 14, Devoicing of fricatives*.

- | | | | | |
|-----|--------|------------|--------------|----------------|
| (3) | yááb | [yááb] | ~ [yááβ] | ‘man’ |
| | kùbayà | [kùbayà] | ~ [kùβayà] | ‘cup’ |
| | dòòbū | [dòòbū] | ~ [dòòβū] | ‘nettle plant’ |
| | ábsì | [ʔábsì] | ~ [ʔáβsì] | ‘up’ |
| | | | ~ [ʔáϕsì] | |

PR 3. Strengthening of f

The labial voiceless fricative / f / has the allophones [ϕ] and [p]. [ϕ] can occur in all environments. The allophone [p] occurs adjacent to a labial stop or nasal, i.e. it is strengthened by the stop feature. Some language consultants did not accept [f] adjacent to a labial stop or nasal.

- | | | | | |
|-----|--------|------------|---------------|--------------|
| (4) | ʃáfá | [ʃáfá] | ~ [ʃáϕá] | ‘fingernail’ |
| | gīrfū | [gīrfū] | ~ [gīrϕū] | ‘spider’ |
| | dāmfā | [dāmϕā] | ~ [dāmpā] | ‘tree sp.’ |
| | ʃūrfm̃ | [ʃūrϕm̃] | ~ [ʃūrp̃m̃] | ‘gulp down’ |

PR 3 can also be described as the reverse, i.e. lenition of p, which is probably the historic reality. However, synchronically, my consultants preferred to write the grapheme <f> for all

occasions. Therefore I have chosen / **f** / as the basic form, by lack of a phonological reason to choose one over the other. Word-initial **f** has become [**h**] in Diizi.

PR 4. Realisation of h

/ **h** / in word-initial position is most often pronounced with voicing, and little friction, as in e.g. [**fiáára**] ‘knife’. Therefore, it is hardly audible. Before back vowels, it may be heard as a soft **w** (5b). Before front vowels, it seems to have merged with **y**. The only trace left may be a variation **y** ~ **ʔ** before front vowels in a few items (5c). Whereas language consultants readily distinguish between / **ʔa** / and / **ha** /, it is hard for them to differentiate / **wo** / and / **ho** /, and they do not make a distinction between / **yi** / and / **hi** /.

- | | | | | |
|-----|----|-----------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| (5) | a. | hāātš’ā | [fiāātš’ā] | ‘shoot at treetrunk’ |
| | | haay | [fiay] | ‘water’ |
| | | hártʃ | [fiártʃ] | ‘rip, tear’ |
| | | hark | [fiark] | ‘respect (a taboo)’ |
| | b. | hōmfā | [wōmɸā] | ‘canoe’ |
| | | húmtʃ’ā | [wúmtʃ’ā] | ‘rib of ensete leaf’ |
| | | húunú | [wúunú] | ‘flower sp.’ |
| | c. | (h)èʃntà | [yèʃntà] ~ [ʔèʃntà] | ‘for, about’ |

/ **h** / in medial or final position is a voiceless fricative (6). See also *MP 8* where **h** is grouped with the voiceless fricatives.

- | | | | |
|-----|--------------|------------------|-------------------------------|
| (6) | yéhí | [yéhí] | ‘woven sieve’ |
| | kyáhà | [kʰáhà] | ‘stake (for stretching hide)’ |
| | byáh | [byáh] | ‘open’ |

Schematically:

- | | | |
|-----|----------|-----------------------------|
| (7) | h | > w / #_ o, u |
| | | > y / #_ i, e |
| | | > fi / #_ a |
| | | = h / elsewhere |

The weakening of **h** in initial position may be linked to the free variation **h/ w/ y/ ʔ** in initial position in some Omotic languages. In these languages, the variation is limited to a certain group of lexical items, and does not occur across the board. Variation is reported for e.g. **h~ʔ** in Wolaitta (Lamberti 1997:29f); **h~y** before front vowels and **h~w** before back vowel **o** in Maale (Azeb 2001a:15f); as well as **h~ʔ** before **a** and **h~y** before **i** in Dime (Mulugeta 2008:24); cf. also initial **h** in Benchnon (Rapold 2006:79).

PR 5. Intervocalic glottal stop deletion

A glottal stop between two vocoids is deleted in fluent speech. The result of the glottal stop deletion rule may be subject to other rules. Example (8) is subject to the rules of glide formation and vowel assimilation (*PR 18*).

- (8) **bàʔù-tə** [**bàwtə**] ~ [**bòòtə**]
 carry.on.back-ss
 ‘carried’
- (9) **ɲ = ʔàtsù-tə** [**ʔàtsùtə**]
 1SG = give-ss
 ‘I gave’

PR 6. Optional deletion of glottal stop preceding a syllabic nasal

A glottal stop preceding a syllabic nasal is optionally deleted.

- (10) **ń = tág-ə** [**ʔńtágə**] ~ [**ńtágə**]
 1PL = go-STI
 ‘Let’s go’

PR 7. Desyllabification of syllabic nasal

A syllabic nasal may lose its syllabicity if it can fill an onset or coda position. Since it loses the ability to carry tone, the syllable to which it is reassigned may obtain a contour tone. The tendency to desyllabify is naturally stronger in rapid speech.

- (11) **ń-ʔò<i>t-ń** [ʔńòyt̪̀] ~ [n̪òyt̪̀]
 1PL.POSS-COW < F > -DEF
 ‘our cow’

(for the deletion of the glottal stop, see *PR 5, 6* above)

- (12) **há=kì-ńt̪̀** [fiákìnt̪̀] ~ [fiàkìnt̪̀]
 3MS = exist-COND
 ‘if he is’

PR 8. Resyllabification of uy

The sequence **uy** may be resyllabified to **wi**.

- (13) **gùym-ít-ə** [gùymít̪̀] ~ [gʷimít̪̀]
 worship-PL.ADDR-STI
 ‘worship (pl)!’

PR 9. Assimilation of alveolar nasals

An alveolar nasal assimilates in place to the adjacent consonant. This applies to the syllabic as well as to the non-syllabic alveolar nasal. Examples (14) and (15) show the assimilation of the (non-syllabic) alveolar nasal consonant to the adjacent consonant.

- | | | | |
|------|----------------|-------------|--------------------|
| (14) | yéntʂ'à | [yéntʂ'à] | ‘continence’ |
| | fúntʂú | [fúntʂú] | ‘chaff’ |
| | bonk' | [bonk'] | ‘burn, be on fire’ |
| | béngár | [b'éngár] | ‘be crooked’ |

- (15) **áz-náà ha-bààb-máà** **emà** **t̪̀**
 3MS-or 2SG.POSS-father-or so.and.so COP.Q
 ‘Is it he or your father or so-and-so?’

A bilabial nasal consonant does not assimilate, thus non-homorganic sequences do occur.

- (16) **kōmtū** [kʷōmtū] ‘chief’
k'ámtʂù [k'ámtʂù] ‘sand’ (also **hámʂù**)

kūmṣūṣ	[kūmṣūṣ]	‘pulverize by hand’
gómkés	[gómkés]	‘name of a clan’

Example (17)-(19) show assimilation of the syllabic nasal **ɲ** to the following consonant. The syllabic nasal may be a clitic, affix or part of the root.

- (17) a. **ɲ = bààs-k** [**?ɲbààsk**]
 1SG-want-REAL
 ‘I wanted’
- b. **ɲ = yìṣ-k** [**?ɲyìṣk**]
 1SG = pull.out-REAL
 ‘I pulled out’
- c. **ɲ = tṣ’adn-k** [**?ɲtṣ’adn̩k**]
 1SG = fight.MIDD-REAL
 ‘I fought’
- d. **ɲ = gādù-k** [**?ɲgādùk**]
 1SG-start-REAL
 ‘I started’
- (18) a. **yí = mùz-ṣ** [**yímùzṣ**]
 3FS = shred-DS
 ‘she shredded’ (e.g. cabbage)
- b. **yí = gòðf-ṣtā** [**yígòðfṣtā**]
 3FS = brood-COND
 ‘if she broods’
- c. **āṣ-ṣ-s** [**?āṣṣ**]
 leg-DEF-M
 ‘the leg’
- (19) **k’ōp’ṣ** [**k’ōp’ṣ**] ‘eyelash’
yárbrṣ [**yárbrṣ**] ‘blood’
ūṣṣ [**?ūṣṣ**] ‘horns’
ṣíṣkṣ [**ṣíṣkṣ**] ‘claw’

Progressive assimilation is stronger, as speakers accept variation preceding but not following a noun, as in (20a,b) below. In case of conflict, usually progressive assimilation is strongest as well (20c).

- (20) a. **m-bààb** [m̀bààb] ~ [ɲbààb]
 1SG.POSS-father
 ‘my father’
- b. **báb-m̀** [báb̀m̀] *[báb̀ǹ]
 father.VOC-1SG.POSS
 ‘my father’ (term of address)
- c. **há = ʃɪk-ǹt̀à** [h́áʃɪk̀ǹt̀à]
 3MS = be.sweet-COND
 ‘if it is sweet’

The rule of assimilation is ordered before internasal stop reduction and merging of nasals.

PR 10. Nasal-nasal merging

Nasal-nasal sequences merge into one nasal element. It is also possible to say that the first nasal is deleted, since under *PR 21*, the nasal element preceding the stop is deleted.

- (21) **an-ǹ** [ʔàǹ]
 put-DS
 ‘he put’

PR 11. Sibilant merging

Sibilant-sibilant sequences merge into one sibilant.

- (22) **kʼíʃ-s** + tone change > **kʼíʃ** [kʼíʃ]
 drink-CAUS
 ‘cause to drink’

The causative suffix **-s** merges with a preceding sibilant element, i.e. a sibilant fricative or last part of an affricate. (Other changes also take place in derivation, see chapter 12 for a detailed description.)

- (23) **kʼíʃ** ‘drink’ **kʼíʃ** ‘cause to drink’
ts’óóts’ ‘be full’ **ts’òts** ‘fill’

PR 12. Realisation of retroflexes

Retroflexes can have an accompanying lip-rounding and color adjacent vowels, since the tongue is pulled backwards.

- (24) **maṣa** [**maṣ^wa**] ‘spirit’
zāākñ [**zāwā^kñ**] ‘noon’
tuuts’ù [**tuuts^w’ù**] ‘knot’

PR 13. Sibilant harmony

Sibilants in suffixes assimilate to the place of preceding sibilants. Sibilants include affricates, see table 2 below.

	alveolar	post-alveolar	retroflex
ejective affricates	ts’	tʃ’	ʈs’
voiceless affricates	ts	tʃ	ʈʂ
voiceless fricatives	s	ʃ	ʂ
voiced fricatives	z	ʒ	ʐ

Table 2. Sibilants.

In Sheko, sibilant harmony is a root structure condition (root-internal harmony, see section 2.5.4) and also applies across morpheme boundaries.

Suffixes containing an **-s** obligatorily assimilate in place if the syllable to which the suffixal **-s** belongs contains a sibilant. Examples are given with the causative suffix (25) and the plural suffix (26) and the masculine suffix (27). Assimilation is in place only, not in voicing, as can be seen from such examples as **bāz-ūʃ** ‘cause to work’ and **ʃóóʐ-ù-ʃ** ‘snakes’.

- (25) **yíits’** ‘sprinkle’ **yīts’-ūs** ‘cause to sprinkle’
baʒ ‘work’ **bāz-ūʃ** ‘cause to work’
ʃooy ‘spill a liquid’ **ʃoy-ʃ** ‘cause to spill’
aʃ ‘plant’ **āʃ-ūs** ‘cause to plant’
zár ‘spill grain’ **zār-ʃ** ‘cause to spill’

- | | | | | |
|------|------------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|
| (26) | sāzā | ‘beetle sp.’ | sāzā-s | ‘beetles’ |
| | gātʃi | ‘stick’ | gātʃi-ʃ | ‘sticks’ |
| | tʃ’ūūtʃ’ù | ‘louse’ | tʃ’ūūtʃ’ù-ʃ | ‘louses’ |
| | ʃóózɿ | ‘snake’ | ʃóózɿ-ù-ʃ | ‘snakes’ |
| (27) | úʃn | ‘flower’ | úʃ-n-ʃ | ‘the flower’ |
| | butʃà | ‘nest’ | butʃ-n-ʃ | ‘the nest’ |

If the preceding sibilant is not in the same syllable, the suffix does not assimilate in careful speech, as evidenced by the examples below.

- | | | | | |
|------|----------------|--------------|------------------|-----------------|
| (28) | ʃik’ | ‘be short’ | ʃik’-ūs | ‘make short’ |
| | zákák’ | ‘peel maize’ | zákák’-ūs | ‘cause to peel’ |
| (29) | ʃáfá | ‘fingernail’ | ʃáfá-s | ‘fingernails’ |
| | tʃ’āārū | ‘medicine’ | tʃ’āārū-s | ‘medicines’ |
| | zákáká | ‘anklet sp.’ | zákáká-s | ‘anklets’ |

In fast speech, sibilant harmony may apply even when the sibilants are separated by more elements and do not belong to the same syllable.

- (30) **ʃéti** ‘fan’
ʃéf-m-s [**ʃéʃm̩s**] ~ [**ʃép̩m̩s**]
 fan-DEF-M
 ‘the fan’

Sibilant harmony does not apply between the root and the third person plural subject clitic **íʃi** = ~ = **íʃi** (31). There is also no harmony between the root and the possessive prefixes in (32), except in fast careless speech when **íʃi-** is reduced to **íʃ-**.

- (31) a. **gààzɿ=íʃi-k-ə**
 prune = 3PL-REAL-STI
 ‘they pruned’
 b. **kààs=íʃi-k-ə**
 play = 3PL-REAL-STI
 ‘they played’

- c. **íŋi = zèèr-k-ə**
 3PL = advise-REAL-STI
 ‘they advised’
- d. **íŋi = zaak’u-k-ə**
 3PL = husk-REAL-STI
 ‘they peeled (e.g. maize)’

- (32) **íŋi-ŋòngù** ‘their lyre’
íŋi-zààrà ‘their clan’

While in the above cases none of the affixes and clitics can impose harmony, the Optative complicates the picture: the Optative marker **-s** changes to **-ʃ** after the 3pl clitic. The 3pl form is as a rule contracted to **-íʃ-ə** after the verb stem. The **-ʃ** in the 3fs form may be a case of paradigmatic leveling; it is not phonologically conditioned. Except for third person plural affixes and clitics, there are no other morphemes with a non-alveolar sibilant.

- (33) 3ms **kááts = á-s-ə** ‘may he ripen’
 3fs **kááts = í-ʃ-ə** ‘may she ripen’
 3pl **kááts = íŋi-ʃ-ə** ‘may they ripen’ ~ **kááts = íʃ-ə**

In any case, a sibilant cannot bring about harmony on preceding sibilants, and affixed sibilants do not impose harmony on the root. From these examples it is evident that sibilant harmony at root level and word level are different. In a root, all sibilants agree in place, whereas on word level the harmony is not necessarily complete.

PR 14. Devoicing of fricatives preceding voiceless stops

Voiced fricatives (i.e. voiced sibilants and voiced stops which underwent lenition) devoice when they precede a voiceless plosive in fluent speech (34). They may also devoice before a pause (35).

- | | | | | |
|------|-------------------|------------|-------------------|--------------|
| (34) | áz-ka | [ʔáskā] | 3MS-WITH | ‘with him’ |
| | yīz-tà | [yīstà] | DIST.M-LOC | ‘at this’ |
| | íʒ-kù | [ʔíʃkù] | 3FS-DAT | ‘her’ |
| | ɲ = booz-k | [ɲbòòsk] | 1SG = stroll-REAL | ‘I strolled’ |

- (35) **yīz** [**yīs**] ‘this’
yááb [**yááβ**] < [**yááβ**] ‘man’

Note that ejectives are not specified for voice and normally do not trigger devoicing of a sibilant.

- (36) **ezk’usi** [**?ezk’usi**] ‘plant sp.’
yiz-k’a [**yizk’a**] DIST.M-IN ‘in this’

PR 15. Simplification of affricates preceding a syllabic nasal

Affricates lose their fricative part preceding a syllabic nasal. (Affricates do not occur as the first member of a consonant cluster, therefore affricates do not occur preceding a non-syllabic nasal.)

This rule is illustrated in example (37) below where the definiteness-gender marking **-ñ-s** DEF-M is suffixed to nouns. Besides the deletion of the terminal vowel of the nouns, the affricates become simple stops. Likewise, if the last consonant of a verb stem is an affricate, it loses its fricative part when a suffix with a syllabic nasal is added (38).

- (37) **bītsù** ‘fern’ **bītsñs** [**bītñs**] ‘the fern’
ts’ēts’ì ‘grass sp.’ **ts’ēts’ñs** [**ts’ētñs**] ‘the grass’
gātʃì ‘stick’ **gātʃñs** [**gāçñʃ**] ‘the stick’

- (38) **há=wùmtʃ’-ñ** [**fiáwùmtʃñ**]
3MS = rinse-DS
‘he rinsed (his mouth)’

PR 16. Palatalisation preceding e

Consonants are optionally palatalised preceding the vowel **e** in the first syllable of a stem.

- (39) **géék’ù** [**géék’ù**] ~ [**gʲéék’ù**] ‘goat’
ts’ēzgà [**ts’ēzgà**] ~ [**tsʲ’ēzgà**] ‘udder’
meen [**meen**] ~ [**mʲeen**] ‘buffalo’
kéés [**kéés**] ~ [**kʲéés**] ‘go out’

- (40) **há = tee-tə** [**fiáteetə**] ~ [**fiátʰeetə**]
 3MS = go.NV-SS
 ‘he went and...’

It is my impression that there is no palatalisation before the vowel **i**. Therefore, one could argue that the above examples are a sign of underlying **ie** sequences (cf. the section on **Cya** sequences). The optional nature of the palatalisation, the parallel with labialisation and the occurrence before short and long vowels make that less likely.

PR 17. Labialisation preceding back vowels

Consonants are also optionally labialised preceding the back vowels **o** and **u**. The tendency is strongest with velar and bilabial pulmonic plosives.

- (41) **kóóká** [**kóóká**] ~ [**kʷóóká**] ‘low point of valley’
góórà [**góórà**] ~ [**gʷóórà**] ‘Amhara’
bókín [**bókín**] ~ [**bʷókín**] ‘time’
- (42) **ha = kùfù** [**fiakùfù**] ~ [**fiakʷùfù**]
 2SG = be.sick-[Q]
 ‘Are you sick?’

PR 18. Reduction of vowel to glide and contraction

Sheko does not allow a sequence of two unlike vowels. Normally, underlying V_1V_2 sequences will be reduced to glide-vowel or vowel-glide sequences. The remaining vowel may be lengthened to compensate for the loss of a tone bearing unit.

- (43) **sà-ù-tə** [**sàwtə**]
 arrive.NV-EV-SS
 ‘arriving...’

In the Tepi and Guraferda variants, the above verb form is rendered **sàk-ù-tə**. However, the negative is identical in all variants and displays the stem **sa**, as shown below.

- (44) **sā-ārā**
 arrive.NV-NEG
 ‘not arriving’

Furthermore, a sequence of two vowels or of vowel and glide may be contracted. An alternative pronunciation for (43) is given in (45). **ya** and **ay** sequences may be contracted to **e** or **ɛ** (46)-(47).

- (45) **sà-ù-tə** [**sòtə**]
 arriving.NV-EV-SS
 ‘arriving’
- (46) **ʔyard-ə** [**ʔyardə**] ~ [**ʔerdə**]
 enter-STI
 ‘Enter!’
- (47) **ń-ʔà<ì>g-ñ** [**ńʔàygñ**] ~ [**ńʔègñ**]
 1PL.POSS-grandmother < F > -DEF
 ‘our grandmother’

In case of prohibitives for plural addressee, the glide may be assimilated in vowel quality in rapid speech.

- (48) **kāās-ārā** **k’é-ít** [**kāāsārā k’éyt**] ~ [**kāāsārā k’éét**]
 play-NEG remain-PL.ADDR
 ‘Don’t play (pl)!’

Note that subject clitics do not assimilate.

- (49) **kì=á-k** [**kyăk**] ~ [**kʔăák**] but *[**kěk**]
 exist=3MS-REAL
 ‘he exists’

PR 19. Glide insertion between vowels

An alternative solution for avoiding V_1V_2 -sequences is to insert a glide between the two vowels. This is mostly done in slow, careful speech.

- (50) **náánú-onka** [náánúwɔŋka]
 elder.brother-ASS
 ‘elder brothers’
- (51) **kì=á-k** [kiyák] ~ [kʔàák]
 exist = 3MS-REAL
 ‘he exists’

PR 20. Internasal stop reduction

In normal fluent or careful speech, a voiceless stop between two nasals is still audible as a voiceless nasal. This is because the feature [-voice] is retained. Since the nasal cavity is not closed, the air goes through it and the stop becomes a voiceless nasal.

This rule is ordered after the nasal assimilation rule (*PR 9*). The preceding nasal may or may not be deleted. (A voiced stop is not detectable between two nasals: since it would become a voiced nasal it would not be distinguishable from the neighboring assimilated nasals.)

- (52) **ùn-t-ṇ** [ʔùnʔṇ] ~ [ʔùṇ]
 ignite-PASS-DS
 ‘was ignited’
- há=yank’-ṇ** [fiáyayṇ] ~ [fiáyayṇ]
 3MS = be.angry-DS
 ‘he was angry’
- (53) **ín-bààb-on-kṇ** [ʔímbààboṇ] ~ [ímbààboṇ]
 1PL.POSS-father-ASS-DAT
 ‘to our fathers’

PR 21. Internasal stop deletion in rapid speech

In rapid speech, an internasal stop is deleted completely. This rule occurs for example in (passive) verbs preceding the different subject marker -ṇ (54) or the conditional marker -ṇtà (55), and in nouns preceding the definiteness-gender marker

ñ-s ‘DEF-M’, see section 5.2.1. This rule is ordered after *PR 9*, assimilation of alveolar nasals. The output of this rule may be subject to further rules, such as *PR 10*, merging of nasal-nasal sequences.

- (54) **há = kánt-ñ** [**fiákāñ**]
 3MS = beg.milk-DS
 ‘he begged milk’
há = fāng-ñ [**fiáfāñ**]
 3MS = spread.legs-DS
 ‘he spread his legs’
- (55) **àn-t-ñtà** [**?àntà**] ~ [**?àntà**]
 put-PASS-COND
 ‘if it was put’

3.2 Morpho-phonological rules

The morpho-phonological rules are numbered *MP 1* - *MP 12*. They are presented here together to give an overview of the morpho-phonology of Sheko. The first five rules concern nominal morphology, whereas the other rules apply to the verbal domain. *MP 1* - *MP 4* involve definiteness-gender marking and *MP 6* - *MP 10* involve causative and passive formation.

- MP 1. Deletion of the terminal vowel preceding the definiteness marker*
MP 2. Deletion of internasal sibilants preceding the definiteness marker
*MP 3. Realisation of the definiteness marker following **r** in feminine nouns*
*MP 4. **ns-C** simplification in rapid speech*
MP 5. Realisation of the accusative marker
- MP 6. Shortening of long vowels in derivation*
MP 7. Deglottalisation of ejective preceding the causative
MP 8. Deglottalisation of the passive-middle -tʰ following fricatives
MP 9. Metathesis and cluster simplification with velar stops in derivation

MP 10. Metathesis and cluster simplification with affricates in derivation

MP 11. Simplification of 3pl in Optative

MP 12. Contraction in compound negative tenses

3.2.1 Rules pertaining to definiteness marking

MP 1. Deletion of the terminal vowel preceding the definite marker

The terminal vowel of a noun is deleted preceding the definite-gender marking. (Its tone is then linked to the definiteness marker -**ṇ**, see section 4.5 for more information.)

- (56) a. **zēgū** ‘ox’
zēg-ṇ-s [**zēgṇs**]
 OX-DEF-M
 ‘the ox’
- b. **k’osà** ‘basket sp.’
k’o<ì>s-ṇ [**k’oysṇ**]
 basket < F > -DEF
 ‘the little basket’ (feminine gender has diminutive connotation)

With other suffixes, the terminal vowel may or may not be deleted.

- (57) a. **ṇ-naanu-onka** [**?ṇnaanuwoṇka**]
 1SG.POSS-elder.brother-ASS
 ‘my elder brothers’
- b. **ṇ-naan-onka** [**?ṇnaanonka**]
 1SG.POSS-elder.brother-ASS
 ‘my elder brothers’
- (58) **ṇ-naanu-ra** [**?ṇnaanura**]
 1SG.POSS-elder.brother-ACC
 ‘my elder brother (acc)’

MP 2. Deletion of internasal sibilants preceding the definite marker

When the definiteness-gender marking is suffixed to a noun with a nasal-sibilant cluster, the sibilant is deleted. The remaining adjacent nasals merge (*PR 10*). (For the tonal side, see *MT 2*.)

- (59) a. **íntʃù** ‘wood’
 íntʃ-ń-ʃ [ʔíʃ]
 wood-DEF-M
 ‘the wood’
- b. **ʃénʃí** ‘fifty cents coin’
 ʃénʃ-ń-ʃ [ʃénʃ]
 50.cents-DEF-M
 ‘the fifty cents coin’
- c. **hámʃù** ‘sand’
 hámʃ-ń-ʃ [hámʃ]
 sand-DEF-M
 ‘the sand’
- d. **ʔyants’à** ‘bee’
 ʔya <ì>nts’-ń [ʔyayn]
 bee <F>-DEF
 ‘the bee’

Note that in other environments a sibilant between two nasals is not deleted.

- (60) **há=sàn-s-ń** [fíasànsn]
 3MS = turn-CAUS-DS
 ‘he turned it’

MP 3. Realisation of definiteness marker following r in feminine nouns

The definiteness marker in feminine nouns with an **r** as last consonant is realised not as a syllabic nasal, but as a vowel-consonant sequence **-ín**.

- (61) a. **bāārā** ‘young woman’
bāā <ì>r-ñ > [**bāārín**]
 young.woman <F>-DEF
 ‘the young woman’
- b. **túúrú** ‘tree sp.’
tú<ì>r-ń > [**túyrín**] ~ [**twírín**]
 tree<F>-DEF
 ‘the tree’

(the resyllabification of **uy** is captured in *PR 8*)

*MP 4. Simplification of **ns-C** cluster in rapid speech*

Generally speaking, in rapid or careless speech the assimilation to adjacent elements is stronger and deletion of elements more likely. A good instance of this is given in (62), where the gender marker **-s** completely disappears. The outcome of this rule is subject to rules of assimilation (*PR 9*) and internasal stop reduction (*PR 20*).

- (62) **zīin-ñ-s-kñ** > [**zīĩŋñ**]
 leopard-DEF-M-DAT
 ‘to the leopard’

3.2.2 Realisation of the accusative marker

*MP 5. Realisation of the accusative marker **-əra***

The accusative marker **-əra** is **-ra** after a vowel (63)-(64) and tends to be **-a** after a sibilant (65). After the nominalizer **-bààb** the allomorph **-a** is often used (66).

- (63) **ééz-əṛā** **es=à**
 honey-ACC harvest.honey = 2SG.Q
 ‘Did you harvest honey?’
- (64) **gyādū-rā** **há=kéétɕ-á-m**
 rope-ACC 3MS = twist-put-IRR
 ‘He makes rope.’

- (65) **gyāñ-s-a** **íʃ = fùùr-k-ə**
 coffee.DEF-M-ACC 3PL = trade-REAL-STI
 ‘They sold the coffee.’
- (66) **ha = yāg-m̄-bààb-a** **íʃ = t’ùùs-k-ə**
 2SG = come-IRR-father-ACC 3PL = know-REAL-STI
 ‘They knew that you would come’

3.2.3 Rules pertaining to verb derivation

The following four rules all occur in the causative and/ or passive formation. The formation of causatives and passives is partly lexical. More information on derivation is given in chapter 12.

MP 6. Shortening of long vowels in derivation

In causative and passive formation, a long vowel is shortened.

- | | | | | |
|------|--------------|-----------|-----------------|--------------------|
| (67) | k’éét | ‘swallow’ | k’ēt’-ūs | ‘cause to swallow’ |
| | door | ‘run’ | dor-s | ‘cause to run’ |
| (68) | deeb | ‘bury’ | deb-t’ | ‘be buried’ |
| | góóm | ‘pile’ | gom-t’ | ‘be piled’ |

MP 7. Deglottalisation of p’ preceding causative -s

An bilabial ejective is deglottalised, i.e. becomes a simple voiceless stop preceding the causative marker **-s**.

- (69) **t’ip’** ‘fill up, clog’ **t’ips** ‘cause to fill up’

Stems ending in another ejective may be suffixed by the causative **-ūs**; or metathesis and cluster simplification may apply.

MP 8. Deglottalisation of the passive marker

The passive marker **-t’** deglottalises and becomes the voiceless plosive **-t** after a voiceless fricative (70). Note that the passive marker does not change after a voiced fricative (71).

- | | | | | |
|------|-------------|-------------|--------------|------------------|
| (70) | dúúf | ‘hit’ | duft | ‘be hit’ |
| | wos | ‘send’ | wost | ‘be sent’ |
| | baaf | ‘slaughter’ | baft | ‘be slaughtered’ |
| | byáh | ‘open’ | byaht | ‘be opened’ |
-
- | | | | | |
|------|------------|------------|-------------|---------------|
| (71) | baɜ | ‘work, do’ | baɜt | ‘be done’ |
| | muz | ‘shred’ | muzt | ‘be shredded’ |

MP 9. Metathesis and cluster simplification with velar stops

In some verbs with a stem-final velar stop, metathesis takes place. Example (72) illustrates this for the causative **-s** and (73) for the passive **t’**. It is not fully predictable whether the glottal element of the passive is preserved.

- | | | | | |
|------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|--------------|
| (72) | wóók’ | ‘be tired’ | wosk’ | ‘tire’ |
| | tík | ‘be extinguished’ | tisk | ‘extinguish’ |
-
- | | | | | |
|------|--------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|
| (73) | duuk’ | ‘sow (maize)’ | dukt’ | ‘be sown’ |
| | haak | ‘pick’ | hatk | ‘be picked’ |

Further changes are assimilation in voice, i.e. clusters of a voiced velar stop and **-t’** ‘PASS’ or **-s** ‘CAUS’ become voiceless. Only the second consonant (after metathesis) may be ejective. The presence of the ejective feature is not fully predictable.

- | | | | |
|------|------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|
| (74) | yáb-m̩-s | dàtk = á-k-ə | (< daag-t’) |
| | man-DEF-M | invite.PASS = 3MS-REAL-STI | |
| | ‘The man was invited.’ | | |
-
- | | | | |
|------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| (75) | kátʃí | bòsk’ = á-k-ə | (< boog-s) |
| | yam | harvest.yam.CAUS = 3MS-REAL-STI | |
| | ‘He caused (him) to harvest yam’ | | |
-
- | | | |
|------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| (76) | sòsk = á-k | (< sok’-s) |
| | sleep.CAUS = 3MS-REAL | |
| | ‘He sleeps.’ | |

MP 10. Metathesis and cluster simplification with affricates

Furthermore, some verbs ending in an affricate simplify the cluster that is created after suffixing the passive *-t'* to a cluster of homorganic sibilant and stop.

- (77) **gúy-̀̀n-s** **b̀̀st = á-k-ə** (< **buuts-t'**)
 grass-DEF-M cut.PASS = 3MS-REAL-STI
 'The grass is cut.'
- há = ts'yàstù-k** (< **ts'yaats-t'**)
 3MS = tie.PASS-REAL
 'he was imprisoned' / 'it was tied'
- k'àtɕ = á-k-ə** (< **k'atɕ-t'**)
 stone.PASS = 3MS-REAL-STI
 'he was stoned'

Likewise, the causative suffix *-s* sometimes forms one cluster with a verb-final affricate. If the affricate is ejective, the ejective feature is dropped.

- (78) **ts'óóts'** 'be full' **ts'ots** 'fill'
k'eets' 'be reheated (of taro)' **k'ets** 'reheat taro'

3.2.4 Rules pertaining to specific paradigms

MP 11. Simplification of 3PL in Optative

The sequence **íʃi-ʃ** in the Optative 3rd person plural is simplified to **íʃ**.

- (79) **nyāas = íʃi-ʃ-ə** → [**nyāāsíʃə**]
 bear.child = 3PL-OPT-STI
 'let them bear children'

MP 12. Contraction in complex negative tenses

If a complex negative tense is contracted, the last vowel of the negative suffix **-ārā** is deleted (80b). In the first person, the negative marker and the first person marker are further contracted to **-en** plus tone (81b).

- (80) a. **maak-ara** **yí=kì-k-ə** [**māākārā** **ʔíkikə**]
 tell-NEG 3FS = exist-REAL-STI
 ‘She did not tell’
- b. **maak-ar-í=kì-k-ə** [**māākāríkikə**]
 tell-NEG-3FS = exist-REAL-STI
 ‘She didn’t tell’
- (81) a. **māāk-ārā** **ŋ=kì-k-ə** [**māākārā** **ŋkikə**]
 tell-NEG 1SG-exist-REAL-STI
 ‘I did not tell’
- b. **māāk-en=kì-k-ə** [**māākeŋkikə**]
 tell-NEG.1SG-exist-REAL-STI
 ‘I didn’t tell’

3.3 Reduplication

There are various reduplication processes in Sheko. This section describes two reduplications found across word categories. In ideophones, more processes are found which are unique to that word class (see section 8.1.1).

The two reduplication processes are full reduplication of the stem and reduplication of the initial CV. It is not clear whether there is a meaning difference between the two processes. They can be used interchangeably at least to some extent (see examples (82), (85) and (86); other examples have not been discussed with language consultants). The reduplicated part is glossed *PLUR* for ‘pluractional’. Although this term is usually connected with verbs, I use it for other word categories as well.

3.3.1 Full reduplication

For full reduplication of the stem, the following textual examples are attested: in (83)-(82), a noun is reduplicated; in (83), a question word and in (84)-(85) verbs. Note that the causative derivation is part of the stem and the expletive vowel **u** is also reduplicated.

- (82) **bērgū-bērgū-k'à=ee zēgū byaà úzì**
 PLUR-year-IN-STI ox calf firstborn
há=tə-ntà m-bààb-kn órá-tà
 3MS=COP-COND 1SG.POSS-father-DAT garden-LOC
hààs-tà m=bāāf-ā-m-ə
 PROX.M-LOC 1SG=slaughter-put-IRR-STI
 'Year upon year, I slaughter an ox, preferably a firstborn male calf,
 here in the garden of my father.'
 also possible: **bē-bērgū-k'à**
- (83) **gōmfā-ka yàf-tù-kì-b k'ōdāmà**
 gomfa-WITH find-PASS-exist-REL qodama
ge-t'ù-b-is áás-ʔáás-t=á
 say-PASS-REL-DIST.M PLUR-how-COP=3MS
é-tù-t=á há=yááb fày-kìy
 do.NV-PASS-SS=3MS 3MS=man be.healthy-exist[Q]
 'How is this what is called *qodama* which is acquired from the
gomfa bird done, and people get better?'
- (84) **dìmbēri sàskù-tə íntfù dàrk'ùs-dàrk'ùs-tə**
 boundary(Amh) arrive.CAUS-SS wood PLUR-chop.off.CAUS-SS
às-tà kaari íntfù bùtù-tə
 PROX.M-LOC toward wood throw-SS
 '...making a boundary, they chopped branches into pieces and threw
 the wood towards it...'
- (85) **yí=zàrsù-zàrsù-t=í wúja étsn dirisì**
 3FS=PLUR-spill.CAUS-SS=3FS IDEO month until(Amh)
zārsū-kì-bààstà
 spill.CAUS-exist-WHILE
 'she spilled and spilled (the food) and while she spilled it for many
 months,...'
 also possible: **yí=zà-zàrsù-t=í...**

In (86), an adjective has undergone reduplication. Adjectives are derived from verbs by the definiteness-gender marking. Reduplication is the only way to overtly indicate plurality of the referent for adjectives.

- (86) **bây** **ʔyār-s-ārā-kì-b** **ʔyáát̪s-ʔyáát-n-s-àb-ìs**
 woman enter-CAUS-NEG-exist-REL PLUR-big-DEF-M-REL-DIST.M
yīs-tə **k'ūš-ā-m**
 DIST.M-COP milk-put-IRR
 ‘Those who have not yet married a wife, who have become big, it is those who milk (the cows).’
 [**ʔyétsʔyétsàbis**]
 also possible: **ʔyá-ʔyátsàbis**, cf. example (88))

3.3.2 Reduplication of the initial CV

In the following examples, the initial CV of the syllable is reduplicated. In example (87), the first syllable of the noun **góri** ‘head’ is reduplicated. (88) and (89) show adjectives, while (90) illustrates an adverb.

- (87) **íʃi-gə-gəri-k̪n** **gúy-k'à** **tee-t=íʃi**
 3PL.POSS-PLUR-head-DAT grassland-IN go.NV-SS=3PL
íʃi-ʔumt'à **íʃ=kōōš-ō-m**
 3PL.POSS-food 3PL=farm-put-IRR
 ‘...they would go each to their/ to each others’ grassland and farm their food.’
- (88) **ʔyá-ʔyááts-n-s-əb-a** **na-ŋ** **ats-ə** [**ʔeʔetnsəba**]
 PLUR-big-DEF-M-REL-ACC 1SG-DAT give-STI
 ‘Give me the big ones.’
- (89) **í-ʔíík-í-s-əb** **yaab-ù-s** **yīs** **tə**
 PLUR-be.old-DEF-M-REL man-m-PL DIST.M COP
ōtì-ra **k'ūts'ū-án-kì-b**
 cow-ACC tie.cattle-put-exist-REL
 ‘It’s the old people who were keeping cattle.’
- (90) **kà-kàyástá** **t'àwla** **ha=k'áp'ts'ú-tə**
 PLUR-again board(Amh) 2SG=cut-ss
 ‘then again, you can cut a board and ...’ (Context: introducing the next method of preventing a honey badger from reaching the beehive.)

The reduplication of initial CV is also found with manner ideophones. The reduplication processes found with ideophones are discussed in detail in section 8.1.1.

- (91) **nà-nààp'a gé zút-yəg-ə**
 PLUR-step.lightly say trample-come-STI
 'Come stepping nimbly.'
 also possible: **nààp'-nààp'a**

Interestingly, the reduplication processes described here are also found in Dime, a South Omotic language. Reduplication is frequent according to Mulugeta (2008:34). E.g. adjectives can reduplicate the full stem or the initial CV; in addition a plural marker **-(i)d** can be used, which occurs only with adjectives (examples from Mulugeta 2008:83):

- (92) a. **kúlú gičč'ó-gičč'ó-b-is**
 stick RDP-big-M-DEF
 'big sticks'
- b. **ʔéh-af čə-čəkk'-ub**
 house-PL RDP-small-M
 'small houses'
- c. **kul-af gičč'ó-d**
 stick-PL big-PL
 'big sticks'

Reduplication in Dime is also common with imperfective verbs, as shown in (93). With some verbs, the final syllable is reduplicated. For more details on this fascinating language the reader is referred to Mulugeta's grammar.

- (93) **de-deis-déé-n**
 RDP-kill-IPF-3/2
 'is killing'

Finally, reduplication can be contrasted with repetition. The Sheko examples below show the repetition of a whole verb form. In (94) and (95), the complete verb form is repeated including subject clitics (for the use of **gé** 'say' see 15.5.2).

- (94) **kādū yí=haay-ntà kādū íʃ=tūūʃ-ā-m**
 three 3FS=spend.night-COND three 3PL=knot-put-IRR
súkú guru íʃi=tūūʃ-ge-t=íʃi
 rope only 3PL=knot-say-SS=3PL
tūūʃ-ge-t=íʃi ʃót'-n-ʃ gāār-kì-bààstà
 knot-say-SS=3PL maize-DEF-M bear.fruit-exist-WHILE
 ‘When (the moon) appeared in the third night, they made a third knot. Knotting and knotting that rope while the maize was ripening, ...’
- (95) **há=tee-t=á tee-t=á tee-t=á**
 3MS=go.NV-SS=3MS go.NV-SS=3MS go.NV-SS=3MS
há=ōtì datà sàk-n
 3MS=cow near.LOC arrive-DS
 ‘he went and went and went and reached a cow; ...’

4 Tone

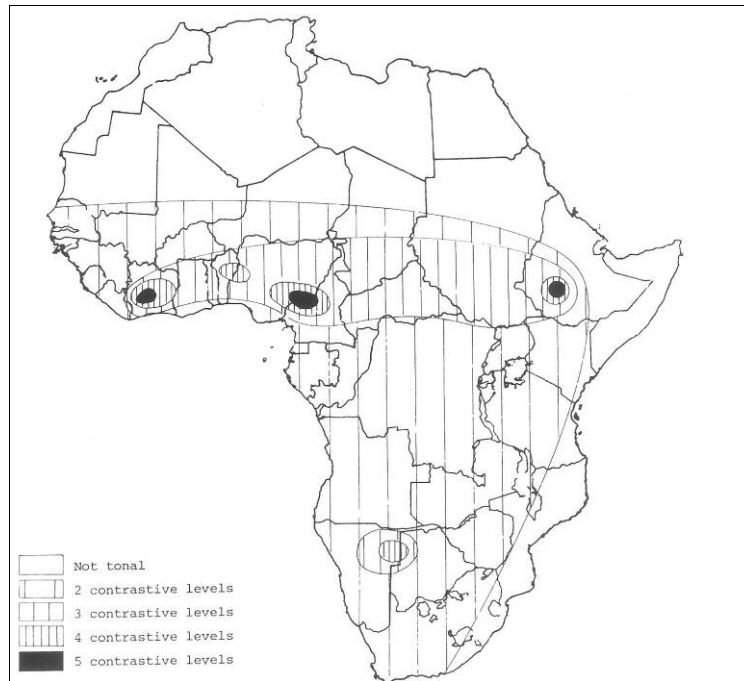
This chapter gives an overview of tone in Sheko, including its functions, its realisation, and its distribution.

Sheko has four level tonemes. These play a role in the lexicon and in the grammar. The levels are numbered from 1 (lowest) to 4 (highest). The tones are written as follows:

tone 4 (highest)	ṽ̌
tone 3	ṽ̄
tone 2	ṽ̌̌
tone 1 (lowest)	ṽ̌̌̌

(ṽ stands for any tone bearing unit, i.e. a vowel or a syllabic nasal.)

A language with more than three tones is uncommon in Africa. There are just a few languages with four or five tones. These are in Namibia (Khoisan), Ivory Coast (Mande, Kru and Gur), on the Nigerian borders (Benue-Congo), and in Ethiopia (Omotic). These areas are shown in the map below, taken from Wedekind (1985a).



In Ethiopia, Benchnon is the only language which has the rare number of five levels of height. It has six tonemes: five level tones and one glide (Wedekind 1983; Breeze 1989; Rapold 2006). Benchnon is the geographical neighbor of Sheko. Four-tone languages had not been reported for Omotic, although in general on Wedekinds' map five-tone languages are bordered by four tone languages. Aklilu (1988) mentioned that Sheko has three tones but recommended further research. I have analysed Sheko as having four tones. Thus, Sheko is a bridge between Benchnon with five tones and the surrounding two- or three-tone Omotic languages such as Kafa (2 tones, Taddese 2001) and Nayi (3 tones, Aklilu 1994a). Whereas Benchnon nouns commonly have CVC-structure, most Sheko nouns have a CV(V)CV-structure. Wedekind (1985b) suggests that the loss of segments is connected to the development of the fifth level of tone in Benchnon.

Sheko differs from the other Majoid languages in having four levels of height. It is noteworthy that Diizi and Sheko have the same CV-structure. In Diizi, the final vowel may be dropped

when nouns in isolation are elicited. However, Diizi has only three tone levels according to Aklilu (2003) and Beachy (2005). Nayi is reported to have three tonemes as well (Aklilu 1994a:602). It would be interesting to investigate tone comparatively and try to find evidence for the historical circumstances which led to the present divergence in tone systems. It is known from oral history that the Sheko came from the Maji area to their present area.

4.1 Overview

Tone in Sheko has a lexical as well as a grammatical functional load. Tone can be characterized as follows:

- On the whole, tone in Sheko appears as stable.
- There is no downstep (not to be expected with four levels of height).
- One of the major functions of tone is to distinguish between persons. This distinction is found with pronouns, possessor prefixes and verbal subject clitics. Compare for example (1a) and (b). The function of tone in this domain is outlined in section 6.1.1.

- (1) a. **ṁ-baadù-ra** **ha = dùfù**
 1SG.POSS-younger.sibling-ACC 2SG = hit.[Q]
 ‘Did you hit my younger brother?’
- b. **ṁ-baadù-ra** **há = dùfù**
 1PL.POSS-younger.sibling-ACC 3MS = hit.[Q]
 ‘Did he hit our younger brother?’

Tone in nouns and verbs can be summarized in the following four points:

- Tone on nouns does not change except on head nouns with a preceding modifier, and in some terms of address (masuline and feminine vocatives). Modifiers following the noun or case markers do not have an influence on the tone of the head noun. See section 9.1 on NPs with modifiers and section 5.3.4 on vocatives. The tone of modifiers such as adjectives, demonstratives and possessive prefixes does not change.

- All verbs can be classified “H” or “L”. Tone on verb stems in the TAM paradigms is predictable once the lexical tone class is known. The two classes cover the range of four levels of tone in inflection. The lexical class label refers to the relative height within a verb paradigm, not to a specific tone level, i.e. a “L” stem has a lower tone level than a “H” stem in each verb paradigm, but across paradigms the tone level for a “L” stem differs.
- From a tonal point of view, verb paradigms can be grouped into Basic, Factual, and Non-Factual. The Basic paradigm is formed by the Imperative singular and Jussive; in this paradigm the tone on the verb stem is on level 2 for “L” stems and on level 4 for “H” stems. Factual paradigms are e.g. Realis and Obvious, and the tone on verb stems is on level 1 for “L” stems or level 2 for “H” stems. In Non-Factual paradigms, such as Irrealis and Optative as well as Negative, the tone is on level 3 for “L” stems or level 4 for “H” stems. Examples are given in section 4.2 below. The division of verb paradigms is fully discussed in section 10.3.1.
- In verb derivation such as causative formation, all verbs become L, as is shown in chapter 12. The relation between verb and derived adjective is not regular (section 4.7).

Question intonation, if present, is marked by a final falling intonational contour.¹⁰ This intonation in interrogatives is illustrated comprehensively in section 13.3. The high (4) or extra high tone of the elative may be viewed as intonational as well. Furthermore, a high tone or rise on the last tone bearing unit of a clause may signal that the speaker wants to continue the sentence, and it is glossed CONT where attested.

4.2 Evidence for contrasts

The clearest evidence for the four levels of height is found in the verbal system. In (2a, c) the verb **síís** ‘listen’ and in (2b, d)

¹⁰ Falling intonation is notated through tone 1 and the gloss .Q where tone 1 is distinctive. The gloss [Q] is used in all other cases. In chapter 13, a downward arrow is used to signal falling intonation.

the verb **kaas** ‘play’ is used. The segmental make-up of the verbs does not influence the tone. In (a, b) the verb forms are in the Irrealis mood, a Non-Factual paradigm. In (c, d) the verb forms are in the Realis mood, a Factual paradigm. Taken together, (a-d) display four levels of height.

- (2) a. **ɲ = síís-tə** **ɲ = māāk-ā-m-ə**
 1SG = listen-ss 1SG = tell-put-IRR-STI
 ‘I will listen and talk’
- b. **ɲ = kāās-tə** **ɲ = māāk-ā-m-ə**
 1SG = play-ss 1SG = tell-put-IRR-STI
 ‘I will chat and talk’
- c. **ɲ = siis-tə** **ɲ = kootu-k-ə**
 1SG = listen-ss 1SG = wait-REAL-STI
 ‘I listened and waited’
- d. **ɲ = kààs-tə** **ɲ = kootu-k-ə**
 1SG = play-ss 1SG = wait-REAL-STI
 ‘I chatted and waited’

The tone levels pair in two ways, namely levels 4 and 2; 3 and 1 according to “H” and “L” lexical verb class, as well as 4 and 3; 2 and 1 according to mood. These pairings suggest approaches of ‘tone’ and ‘register’, see Yip (2002:42ff) for a summary. An explanation for tone and register phenomena is the involvement of two different muscles in making tone.

In the noun, six tonal melodies are attested. Examples are given in (3). Instrumental measurements in graphs of the six melodies are presented in the following section. Other word classes display additional patterns, exemplified in (4). See further section 4.7 on distribution of tone in several word classes.

- (3) **bádá** 4.4 ‘tree sp.’
 tóri 4.1 ‘fork which branches into three’
 k’ēfi 3.3 ‘tobacco holder on water pipe’
 kādi 3.1 ‘cactus (*Euphorbia candelabrum*)’
 utṣà 2.1 ‘honey badger’
 tètjū 1.3 ‘pebble’

- (4) **kétā** 4.3 'all'
kóta 4.2 'little, few'
gàma 1.2 'truly'

Minimal pairs and a few triplets are recorded. Multiplets of more than three nouns have not been found, which is reasonable in view of the complex syllable structure and number of consonants. The nominal triplets are given in (5), and some minimal pairs in (6).

- (5) **tʃ'áárù** 4.1 'waterfall (stone)' **fōōrū** 3.3 'entrance'
tʃ'āārū 3.3 'medicine' **foorù** 2.1 'rotation'
tʃ'aarù 2.1 'twin' **fòòrū** 1.3 'bird sp.'
- (6) **bótà** 4.1 'calabash half' **tʃ'ūbū** 3.3 'smoke'
bōtā 3.3 'mortar' **tʃ'ubù** 2.1 'sin'
hāāy 3 'water' **zíínà** 4.1 'tree sp.'
haay 2 1. 'ear' **zīīnā** 3.3 'leopard'
2. 'leaf of ensete/yam'

Some minimal pairs for verbs include the following:

- (7) **bár** 'become blind'
bar 1. 'boil (of liquids)'
2. 'throw away' 3. 'flower (of trees)'
búr 1. 'flow by' 2. 'ask your money back'
bur 'flood'
gáb 'be collected'
gab 'gossip'
ór 'urinate'
or 'meow, make a sound (of animals)'

If one mixes different categories and uses inflected verbs, multiplets of more than three members do occur.

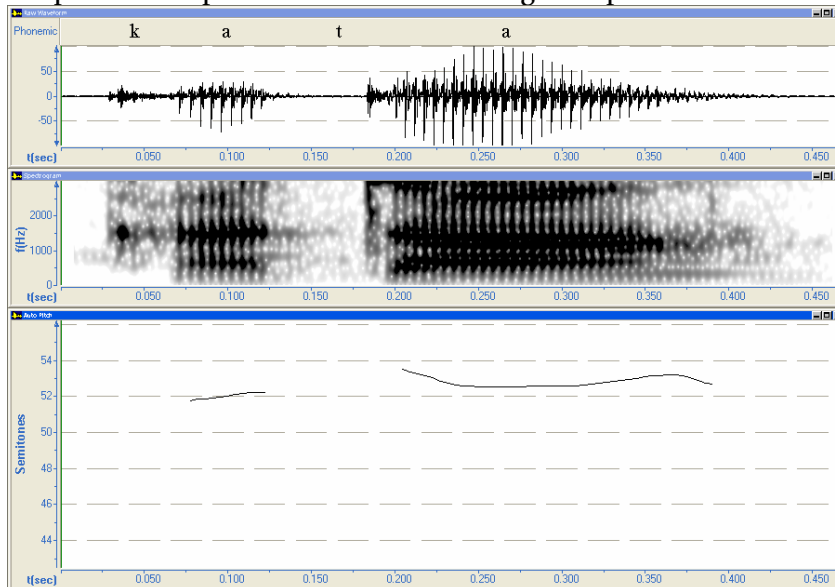
- (8) **bāārà** '100'
bāārā 'girl'
báárà 'to take a mouthful' (inf.)

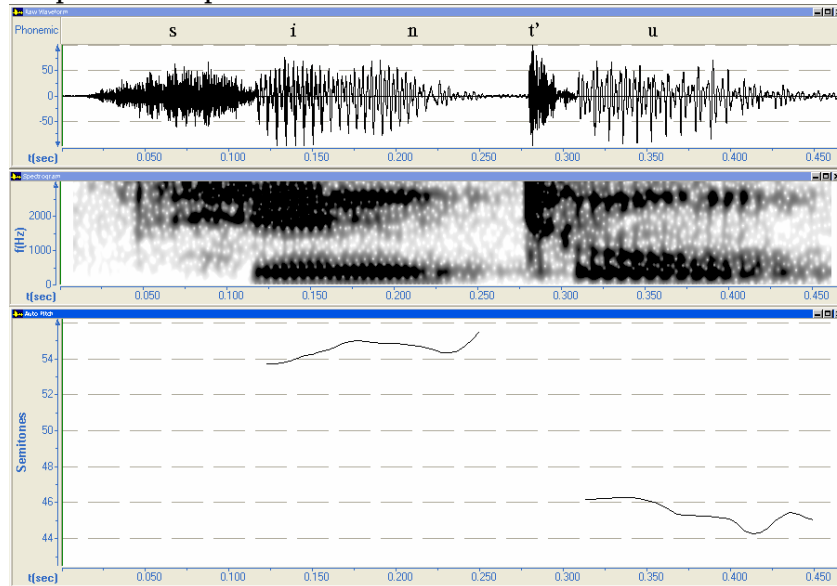
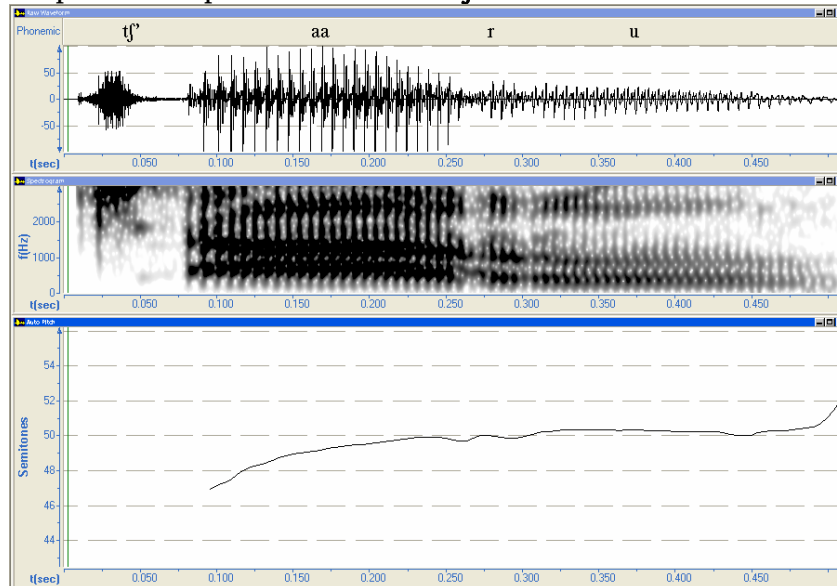
	baarà	‘did you take a mouthful?’
	baarâ	‘did he take a mouthful?’
(9)	órá	‘wet dung’
	ōrā	‘garden’ (but almost always with -tā ‘LOC’)
	órà	‘1. to meow 2. to urinate’ (inf.)
	orà	‘did you urinate?’
	orâ	‘did he urinate?’
	òrà	‘did you meow?’
	òrâ	‘did he meow?’

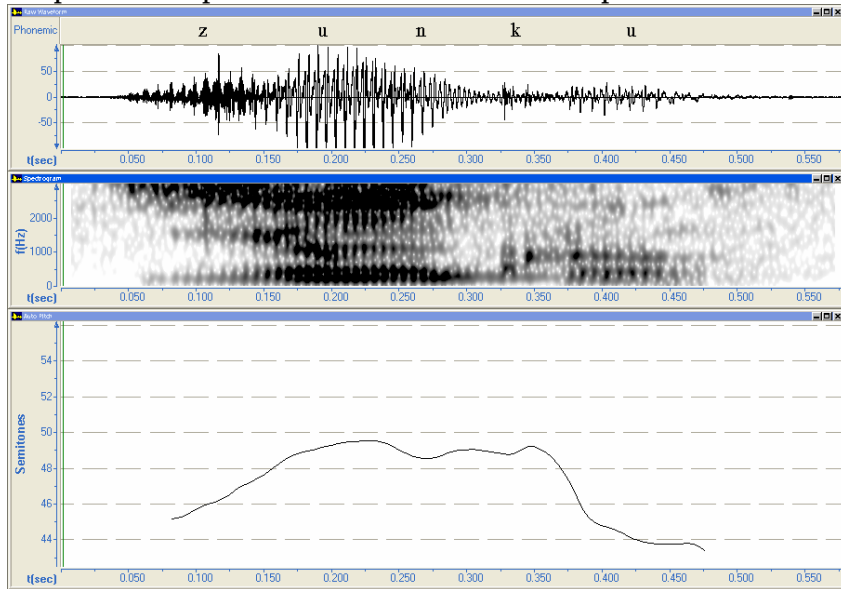
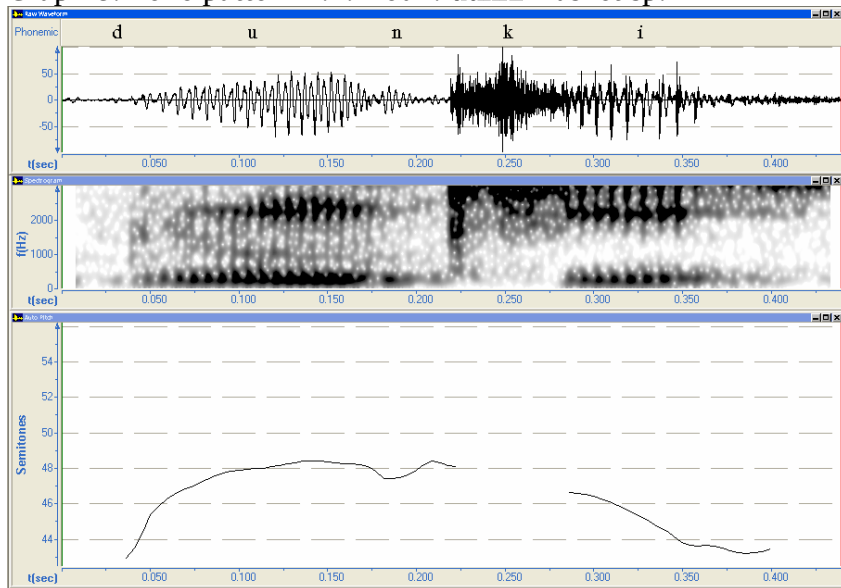
4.3 Phonetic realisations

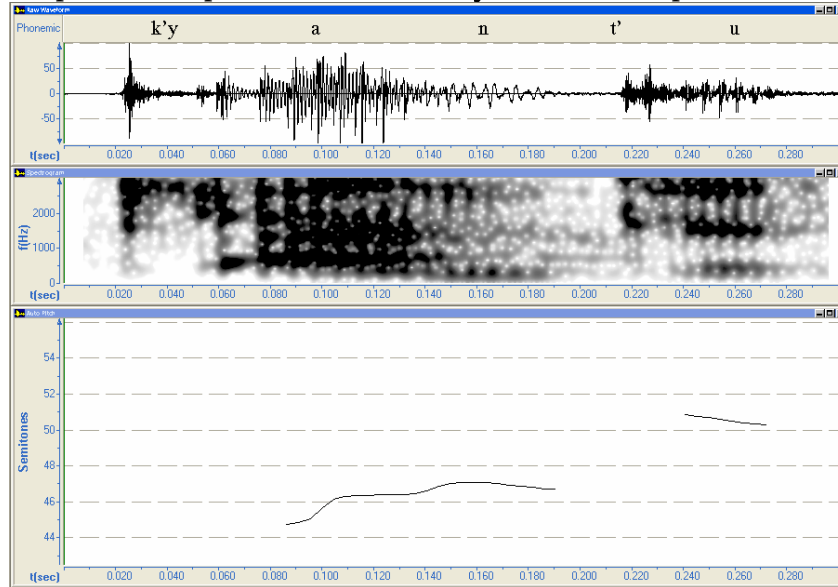
To give an idea of the four levels of tone, this section presents six graphs with each graph showing the phonetic realisation of one of the six patterns found on disyllabic nouns. All nouns are pronounced by the same male person of about 35 years. The graphs show semitones and in this case, level 4 \approx 53 semitones, level 3 \approx 50 semitones, level 2 \approx 48 semitones and level 1 \approx 45 semitones.

Graph 1. Tone pattern 4.4. Noun: **kátá** ‘grass sp.’



Graph 2. Tone pattern 4.1. Noun: **sínt'ù** 'nose'Graph 3. Tone pattern 3.3. Noun: **tʃāārū** 'medicine'

Graph 4. Tone pattern 3.1. Noun: **zũnkù** ‘sheep’Graph 5. Tone pattern 2.1. Noun: **dũnkì** ‘basket sp.’

Graph 6. Tone pattern 1.3. Noun: **k'yànt'ũ** 'flower sp.'

4.4 Tonological rules

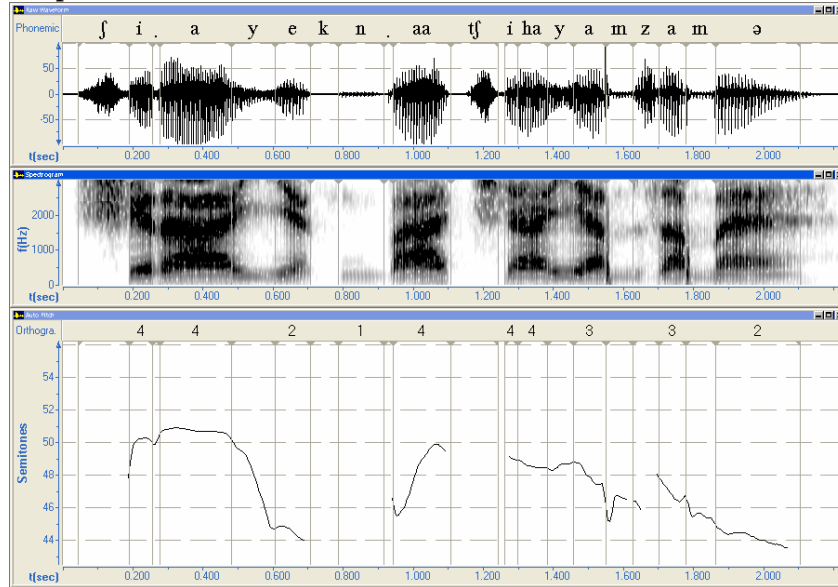
The only purely tonological rules are *TR 1. Downdrift* and *TR 2. Raising tone 1 in rapid speech*.

TR1. Downdrift

A general tendency among languages is a downward inclination, which may be strong in some languages and slight in others. This is called downdrift or automatic downstep. It means that the reference point for the realisation of a tone or string of tones is lowered following a phonological lower tone. Downdrift can be observed in Sheko as well. In example (10), the second set of tones on level 4 is phonetically one to two semitones lower than the first pair. (The level 2 tone at the very end is also slightly lower than the level 2 tone on the pronoun.)

- (10) **ʃírá** **ye-k̀n báátʃí há=yā̃mz-ā-m-ə**
 day.after.tomorrow 2SG-DAT skin 3MS = hurt-put-IRR-STI
 ‘The day after tomorrow, your skin will hurt.’

Graph 7. Downdrift.



The exact nature of the rule and the factors which influence setting tonal reference points need further investigation. The effect of downdrift is not marked in this thesis.

TR 2. Raising tone 1 in rapid speech

Optionally (in rapid speech) a single tone 1 preceding a tone 2 may be raised to level 2.

(11) **dàtʃa** [**dàtʃa**] ~ [**datʃa**] 'right, correct'

(12) **emà-ra** [**?emàra**] ~ [**?emara**]
so.and.so-ACC
'so and so'

4.5 Morphotonological rules

The following rules are described in this section:

MT 1. Contour formation

MT 2. Deletion of tone of definiteness marker

MT 3. Contour simplification

MT 4. Tone change on a pre-modified noun

MT 5. Realisation of tone 2 on case suffixes

MT 6. Tone lowering in causative and passive formation

Additionally, there are some lexicalised, i.e. partly unpredictable tonal changes. For adjectives, these are described in section 4.7 and for vocatives in section 5.3.4.

MT 1. Contour formation

MT 1 happens in the context of loss of a tone bearing unit, such as described by the rule about V_1V_2 sequences (*PR 18* on glide formation and vowel contraction). Its output may be subject to *MP 3*.

When two tone bearing units meet across a morpheme boundary the first tone bearing unit loses its syllabicity and thereby its ability to carry tone, then its tone is relinked to the following tone bearing unit.

- (13) **há=tēē-b-tà=á** > [fiátʔēēbtǎ]
 3MS = go.NV-REL-LOC = 3MS
 ‘when he went, he...’

- (14) **kì=á-k-ə** > [kʔǎkə]
 exist = 3MS-REAL-STI
 ‘he/it is there’

One environment where contour formation does not apply is in definiteness marking (see *MT 2*).

MT 2. Deletion of tone of definiteness marker

The basic tone of the definiteness marker -**ñ** is 1. This is its realisation when the definiteness marker is suffixed to a monosyllabic noun.

- (15) **yááb** ‘man, person’
yááb-ñ-s [yáábñs]
 man-DEF-M
 ‘the man’

When the definiteness marker is suffixed to a noun with two or more syllables, its own tone is deleted. The preceding tone, whose tone bearing unit is deleted in the process, is relinked to it.

- (16) **didū** ‘scar’

did-ñ-s [**dīdñs**] *[**dīdñs**]
 scar-DEF-M
 ‘the scar’

MT 3. Contour simplification

A contour tone is optionally simplified by dropping the first tone. Further investigation into contour simplification is needed, to check under which circumstances simplification takes place, and whether it is always the first tone which is dropped.

- (17) **há = tēē-b-tà = á** > [**fiátʳēēbtǎ**] ~ [**fiátʳēēbtá**]
 3MS = go.NV-REL-LOC = 3MS
 ‘when he went, he...’

MT 4. Tone change on a pre-modified noun

When a modifier precedes its head noun, the tonal pattern on the head noun changes. The following table shows the tonal changes in disyllabic nouns for all six tonal patterns. The numbers in brackets indicate the tone level of the two syllables of the noun. Tone 4 is replaced by tone 2 and all other tones are replaced by tone 1. Note that four of the six contrastive patterns are neutralized by this replacement.

noun in isolation	pre-modified noun
kábí (44) ‘axe’	há-kabi (22) ‘his axe’
zámà (41) ‘machete’	há-zamà (21) ‘his machete’
tōsā (33) ‘story’	há-tòsà (11) ‘his story’
būdà (31) ‘pumpkin’	há-bùdà (11) ‘his pumpkin’
batʃà (21) ‘bed’	há-bàtʃà (11) ‘his bed’
t’ètʃū (13) ‘pebble’	há-t’ètʃū (11) ‘his pebble’

Table 1. Tone on pre-modified nouns

Section 9.1 discusses modification of head nouns in detail.

MT 5. Realisation of tone 2 on case suffixes

Case suffixes with underlying tone 2, are on level 3 following a tone on level 3 or 4 for some speakers. The case suffixes concerned are the accusative marker **-ra** and the instrumental marker **ka**.

- (18) a. **háára-ka** [**fiáára-ka**] ~ [**fiáarákã**]
 knife-WITH
 ‘with a knife’
 b. **gēēni-ka** [**gēēni-ka**] ~ [**gēēnikã**]
 pouring.cup-WITH
 ‘with a pouring cup’

Note that e.g. compounds do not show the same variation.

- (19) **kújmbé** [**kújmbé**] ‘ant sp.’ (? + **bé** ‘mother’)

MT 6. Tone lowering in causative and passive formation

A “H” verb root becomes “L” when followed by the causative suffix **-s** or the passive suffix **-t**. In the Imperative singular (which is also the citation form), H stems have tone 4 and L stems have tone 2.

- (20) **gób** ‘jump’ **gob-s** ‘cause to jump’
úm ‘eat’ **um-t** ‘be eaten’

The causative or passive verb stem behaves like a “L” verb stem in all paradigms, except in the Imperative singular and Jussive when the derived stem consists of two syllables: then the tonal height on the verb stem is not on level 2 but on level 3. This is exemplified for causative Imperatives in (21) with the verbs **bááj** ‘slaughter’ and **yii** ‘pull out, dig up’.

- (21) a. **bááj**
 slaughter
 ‘slaughter! (sg)’

- b. **bāŋ-ūŋ**
slaughter-CAUS
'cause to slaughter! (sg)'
- c. **yiiŋ**
pull.out
'pull out!' (sg)
- d. **yīŋ-ūŋ**
pull.out-CAUS
'cause to pull out!' (sg)

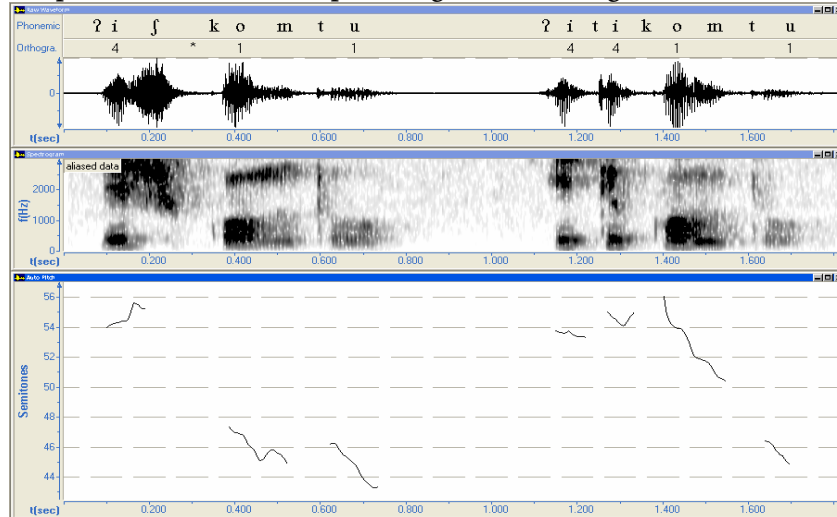
4.6 Post-lexical H-spreading

At morpheme boundaries, a tone 3 or 4 may spread over the next syllable (22b). In slow or careful speech this will create contour tones, as well as in whistled speech.

- (22) a. **íŋi-kòmtù** [?íŋkòmtù]
3PL.POSS-chief
'their chief'
- b. **ítí-kòmtù** [?ítíkòmtù]
2PL.POSS-chief
'your chief'

The graph below compares the third person plural **íŋi-** (22a), which has tones 4.1, with the second person plural **ítí-** (22b), which has tones 4.4 and whose tone spreads over the following syllable. Note that even though the second **i** of **íŋi-** is elided on this occasion, its tone still prevents the first high tone to spread.

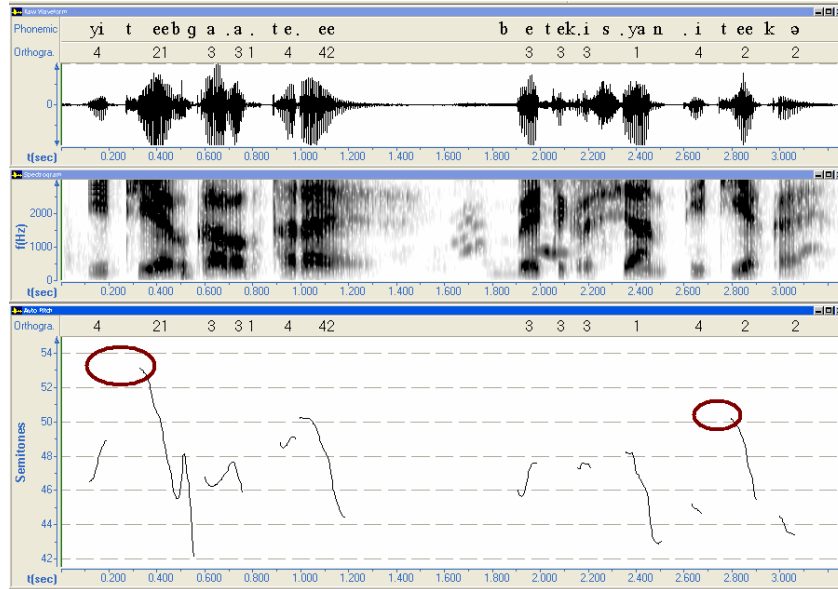
Graph 8. Post-lexical H-spreading and blocking.



In fluent speech, the phonemically high tone is often realised with a rising tone and the following syllable actually has a higher pitch than the phonemically high one, since the target point of the high tone is delayed in time. However, this does not occur in whistling. The “delayed” H peak is illustrated with the following sentence and corresponding graph. The two circles in the graph show where the highest pitch (tone 4 of the 3fs subject clitics **yí=** and **=í**) is realised on the following syllable instead of on the subject clitic.

- (23) **yí=teè-b** **gābā-k'à** **té-ré-e**
 3FS = go.NV-REL market-IN COP-NEG-STI
- bēytēkristiyàn** **t=í** **tee-k-ə**
 church(Amh) COP = 3FS go.NV-REAL-STI
- ‘She didn’t go to market, but to church’ (Lit: her going was not to market, it was to church she went.)

Graph 9. Realisation of H pitch with target point delayed in time.



The effects of this rule are not written in this thesis.

4.7 Distribution of tone

This section illustrates the distribution of tone in several word classes. The data is organised according to syllable type, and by comparison it is found that there is no correlation between syllable type and tone. There are no signs of depressor consonants leading to a phonological difference in height.

monosyllabic nouns

In monosyllabic nouns tone 1 is not attested.

- (24) CVC
- | | | |
|-------|---------------|---|
| éd | ‘mouth’ | 4 |
| gúb | ‘chest’ | |
| ts’ír | ‘clay’ | |
| iy | ‘house’ | 3 |
| şōw | ‘cold’ | |
| gob | ‘welkin, sky’ | 2 |
| kum | ‘neck’ | |

- (25) CVVC
ééz 'honey' 4
şóón 'heart'
ááb '1. eye; 2. fruit'
ēēd 'door' 3
şūūn 'life'
şāād 'well with water containing minerals'
faad 'body' 2
gooz 'tree sp.'
meen 'buffalo'
- (26) CCVC
t'yám 'breast' 4
?yāb 'fodder plant' 3
- (27) CCVVC
kyāāz 'lord' 3
- (28) CCVCC
?yārb 'tongue' 3

A few monosyllabic words have a contour tone, written here with the low tone mark on the semi-vowel if the vowel is short (29). It is assumed that they have a disyllabic origin. The words in (30) are also analysed disyllabic underlyingly, on the basis of their tonal behaviour when they are made definite. The definiteness marker carries tone 3 instead of tone 1, which would be the case if the noun was monosyllabic (see section 4.5, *MT 2*).

- (29) **baà** 'crow' < **ba.(?)à**
kāy 'god' < **kā.(?)ì**
bāy 'mother' < **bā.(?)ì**
byaà 'calf' < **bya.(?)à**
- (30) **bōw** 'belly' < **bō.(?)ū** or **ba.ʔu**
bīy 'feather' < **bī.(?)ī**

disyllabic nouns

All six tonal melodies (section 4.3) are found with frequent syllable structures and gaps are random with less frequent syllable structures. For each CV-shape in disyllabic nouns, four words have been given, if possible, with each of the vocoids which can occur word-finally, i.e. **u, a, i, ɲ**.

(31) CV.CV

4.4	bádá ‘tree sp.’	4.1	dúbà ‘maggot’
	bútʃí ‘wound’		mátì ‘clay cup’
	kútʃú ‘arm’		k’ámù ‘servant’
	úʃín ‘flower’		úgɲ ‘salt’
3.3	tōsā ‘story’	3.1	ʃūk’à ‘porridge’
	ēkī ‘money’		k’ūdì ‘lid’
	zēgū ‘ox’		bōdù ‘corm centre’
	ts’áp’m̄ ‘root’		tūkɲ ‘hole’
1.3	t’ètʃú ‘pebble’	2.1	karà ‘leaf’
	yàtín ‘fox’ (~ yàtíbe) (f)		uzì ‘firstborn’
			atʃ’ù ‘tooth’
			matɲ ‘tree sp.’

(32) CVV.CV

4.4	háára ‘knife’	4.1	séémà ‘tusk’
	zóófí ‘plant sp.’		tóórì ‘anklet’
	íírú ‘rain’		k’áátʃ’ù ‘ant sp.’
			ts’íík’ɲ ‘charcoal’
3.3	gōōbā ‘mud bed’	3.1	fāānà ‘fork (road)’
	tūūzì ‘door closing pole’		ʃōōdì ‘bag sp.’
	tāāmū ‘fire’		nūūtʃù ‘hyena’
	ēēkɲ ‘cabbage’		t’iisɲ ‘bird sp.’
1.3	dàādū ‘reciprocal labor’	2.1	baakà ‘tuber ssp.’
			kuurà ‘donkey’
			zaakɲ ‘noon’

(33) CVC.CV

- | | | | |
|-----|---------------------------------------|-----|---------------------------|
| 4.4 | gárgá ‘termite’ | 4.1 | órşà ‘cardamom’ |
| | zírbí ‘cotton’ | | bénti ‘snake sp.’ |
| | fúntʃú ‘chaff’ | | sínt’ù ‘nose’ |
| | zérkń ‘time’ (~ zírkń) | | ʃíʃkń ‘fingernail’ |
| 3.3 | hōmfā ‘canoe’ | 3.1 | kārkà ‘forest’ |
| | gērbí ‘armpit’ | | k’ēm̀tì ‘co-wife’ |
| | āškū ‘meat’ | | zūnkù ‘sheep’ |
| | ʃōrkń ‘grasshopper’ | | ʃəʃkń ‘snake sp.’ |
| 1.3 | ʃíʃtū ‘plant sp.’ | 2.1 | ts’ezgà ‘udder’ |
| | şòrt’ń ‘lungs’ | | dunkì ‘basket sp.’ |
| | | | ts’ertì ‘herb sp.’ |
| | | | ts’uykń ‘firefly’ |

(34) CCV.CV

- | | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------|-----|---------------------------|
| 4.4 | ʔyáts’ń ‘moon’ | 4.1 | kyáhà ‘hide stake’ |
| | | | myáwù ‘jackal’ |
| | | | zyátń ‘adultery’ |
| 3.3 | ʔyāfā ‘tongue wound’ | 3.1 | kyākà ‘border’ |
| | gyānū ‘coffee’ | | |
| | byāk’ń ‘spear’ | | |

(35) CCVC.CV

- | | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------------|-----|-----------------------------|
| 3.3 | ʔyāngā ‘ram’ | | |
| | myāngū ‘forefather spirit’ | | |
| 1.3 | k’yàntū ‘flower sp.’ | 2.1 | syangà ‘dried vines’ |
| | ʔyàrkń ‘perspiration’ | | |

(36) CCVV.CV

- | | | | |
|-----|--------------------------|-----|------------------------------|
| 4.4 | ʔyáaná ‘pot’ | 4.1 | tyáárà ‘gourd cup’ |
| | zyáámí ‘tree sp.’ | | |
| | myaak’ú ‘egg’ | | |
| 3.3 | gyāāsū ‘shield’ | 3.1 | ts’yāāts’ù ‘sunshine’ |

tri-syllabic nouns

Underived tri-syllabic nouns have one of four patterns.

(37) CV.CV.CV

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 4.4.1 téréjà ‘clay pitcher’ | 3.3.1 sēkiri ‘wattle’ |
| zúmatà ‘early morning’ | bākājà ‘stool’ |
| 1.3.1 dògāmà ‘dove’ | 2.1.1 gofàrà ‘toad’ |
| sùmīnì ‘50 cent coin’ | izàmà ‘hippo’ |

(38) CVC.CV.CV

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 4.4.1 kéngàjà ‘clay pipe’ | 3.3.1 dīngūrù ‘viper’ |
| búrgíjà ‘liver’ | sāmbārà ‘tree sp.’ |
| 1.3.1 yànk’ābà ‘red maize’ | 2.1.1 damtʃ’arà ‘ginger’ |
| mùkmūrì ‘top leaf of ensete’ | tamtàkà ‘tree sp.’ |

(39) CVC.CVC.CV

- 1.3.1 **gìngìngà** ‘milipede’

A fifth melody is only found with words ending in **-tsī** and these words are said to come from Benchnon.

(40) CV.CV.CV

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| 3.3.3 yērōtsī | ‘God’ |
| dēmētsī | ‘(name of spirit)’ |
| dēgōtsī | ‘(name of spirit)’ |

Tri-syllabic loan words from Amharic have often the 1.3.1 pattern.

- | | | |
|--------------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| (41) kùbāyà | ‘cup’ | < Amh kubbayya |
| dàgūsà | ‘grain sp.’ | < Amh dagussa |
| màǰīrà | ‘millet’ | < Amh maǰilla |
| k’òrk’òrò | ‘zinc sheet’ | < Amh k’ork’orro |
| mìsmārì | ‘nail’ | < Amh mismar |

numerals

The tone patterns of numerals are a subset of those in nouns. See section 7.3.1 for a list of numerals.

adjectives

Adjectives, derived by the definiteness-gender marking **-n-s** from verbs, display four tone patterns, namely 44, 41, 33 and 31. 44-toned adjectives are always derived from a H verb stem, but not all H stems have their adjective in 44. Since the tone of an adjective is unpredictable from the tone of the verb stem, a list is given in (42) and (43) with H and L verbs respectively.

(42)	k'éétɕ'	'be cold'	44	k'éétɕ'ńɕ	
	ʃáád	'be tall'		ʃáádńs ~ ʃādńs	
	ts'úbrń	'be narrow'		ts'úbrńs	
	tʃ'ír	'be green'		tʃ'írńɕ	
	tʃ'ór	'be finished'		tʃ'órńɕ	'last'
	wóók'	'be weak, flexible'		wók'ńs	
	ílk'	'be old'		ílkńs	
	kór	'be dry'		kōrńs	
	kyát	'be sour, stingy'		kyātńs	
	k'ázk'úz	'be sour'		k'āzk'ńɕ	
(43)	máɕ	'be patient'	31	māɕkńɕ	
	méér	'be fat'		mēērńs	
	t'éf	'be plump'		t'ēfńs	
	wúrń	'be turbid'		wūrńs	
	kááts	'be ripe'		kāātsńs	
	sár	'be hot'		sārķńs	
	3áá3	'be good'		3á3ńɕ ~ 3ééńɕ	
	dākń	'be dirty'		dākńs	
	fayt'	'be weak'		fāyt'ńs	
	gaar	'be ripe'		gāārńs	
(43)	karb	'be strong'	31	kārbńs	
	k'oz	'be strong, hard'		k'ō3ńɕ	
	ɕapk	'be thin'		ɕāpkńs	
	ɕeen	'be bad'		ɕēēńɕ	
	ɕiɕk	'be tasty'		ɕiɕkńs	
	ɕōōtń	'be sharply pointed'		ɕōōtńs	
	ɕōɕkń	'be light (load)'		ɕōɕkńɕ	
	t'yābń	'be grown together'		t'yābńs	
	ins	'be heavy'		ĩns	

fay	‘be saved’	33	fāykñs	‘alive, healed’
gōōtñ	‘be white’		gōōtñs	
sub	‘be red’		sūbñs	
ʃik’	‘be short’		ʃik’ñs	
ts’aw	‘be black’		ts’āāns	
hāṣkñ	‘be wide’	44	hāṣkñs	

Adjectives in attributive function have these tone patterns irrespective of whether they follow or precede their head. When used predicatively, they have tone patterns occur too. It is not known whether adjectives undergo a change in tone pattern, if they function as head and a modifier precedes them.

adverbs and ideophones

Next to the six patterns found in disyllabic nouns, adverbs and ideophones and quantifiers may have the following patterns:

- (44) **òòza** 1.2 ‘unstable, wobbly’
wúʃa 4.2 ‘much’
kétā 4.3 ‘all’

verbs

The lexical tone is H or L, see section 4.1 above or section 10.3.1. All verbs have a verbal noun with a 4.1 tone pattern, regardless of the lexical tone.

Although Sheko has four tones, it uses just six out of 16 logically possible patterns for disyllabic nouns. With tri-syllabic nouns and adjectives, just four patterns are used. Lexical tone of verb stems, which are normally monosyllabic, is restricted to two classes. If all word classes are included nine patterns are used in total: 4.4, 4.3, 4.2, 4.1, 3.3, 3.1, 2.1, 1.3, 1.2. Excluded are the patterns 3.4, 2.4, 1.4, 2.3, 3.2, 2.2 and 1.1. The latter two patterns are found on pre-modified nouns but do not occur on nouns in isolation. The restrictions in tone patterns can be seen as a trace of historical stages of the language during which it had fewer tone levels. At present, little is known about the processes and interactions between tones which led to the development of more tone levels.

5 Noun morphology

This chapter treats the inflectional morphemes of Sheko that attach to nouns, and give an overview of the categories of definiteness, gender and number in the language. Other inflectional markers like case attach to the right of the noun phrase and are treated in chapter 9. Furthermore, this chapter treats noun derivation and compounding.

5.1 Gender, definiteness and number

Definiteness, gender and number are interconnected. Although the morphemes for definiteness and gender are not port-manteau morphemes and one can recognise the individual morphemes, they are so closely linked together that discussing gender also involves speaking of number. Likewise, one cannot speak about definiteness without mentioning gender, since a definiteness marker always co-occurs with a gender marker.

The table below and the following of this section give an overview of morphemes concerned with gender, definiteness and number in Sheko. Sections 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4 treat gender, definiteness and number respectively in all the relevant word categories.

		M	F
definite noun	sg	-ñ-s -DEF-M	<i> -ñ <F> -DEF
plural noun	pl	(-ù)-s -m-PL	(-ì)-s -f-PL
demonstrative	sg	-z -M	-nì -F
	pl		
nominalizer	sg	bāāb father	bé mother
	pl		
relative clause	sg	-əb -REL	-əbe -REL.mother
	pl		
3 rd person pronoun	sg	áz 3MS	íʒ 3FS
	pl	íʃi 3PL	
3 rd person subject clitic	sg	há = 3MS =	yí = 3FS =
	pl	íʃi = 3PL =	

Table 1: Overview of gender, number and definiteness morphology

Definiteness marking and plural marking exclude each other in nouns. Definiteness is marked by the morpheme **-ñ** and always co-occurs with gender marking, which consists of an infix **<i>** for feminine and the default gender suffix **-s** for masculine. The combination of the definiteness marker and these gender markers is referred to as definiteness-gender marking. It is not obligatory, i.e. a form morphologically unmarked for definiteness may still refer to a known referent mentioned before. The definiteness-gender marking bears functional resemblance to the distal demonstrative (cf. section 5.2.2 and 7.1.2).

Gender is predominantly a category of the singular. However, gender suffixes appear in the plural as well with a small group of nouns: **-ù** for masculine and **-ì** for feminine nouns. **-ù** only occurs suffixed to monosyllabic words which are marked for plural. The suffix **-ì** is restricted to that environment as well. It is clearly linked with the infix **<i>** in definite nouns and **-nì** in demonstratives.

Furthermore, the default gender is non-feminine, as can be seen from the table. In other words, the feminine gender is singled out as opposed to masculine and plural, which are marked by the suffix **-s**. This default gender marker formally resembles the suffix **-z** in demonstratives. Note that in the nominalizers and in relative clause marking too, the feminine gender is singled out as opposed to masculine and plural, which are always marked identically. In other words, feminine is the marked and non-feminine the unmarked gender. The default gender can be called masculine, because gender agreement on verbs is with the third person singular masculine. In Diizi and Nayi too, masculine is the unmarked gender (Beachy 2005; Aklilu 1997).

Looking through the table, there are no morphemes which uniquely express number in nouns, demonstratives, relative clauses and the nominalizer **bāāb** ‘father’ / **bé** ‘mother’. For nouns, demonstratives and relatives, there is one morpheme which serves for masculine singular as well as plural (plural irrespective of gender). Thus, one could say that (except for 3rd person) the category of number is irrelevant or that it is reducible to gender. However, by the configuration of morphemes one can distinguish a plural form for most nouns, which has an **-u** / **-i** gender marker, and/or no definiteness marker. Plural marking in nouns is not obligatory, i.e. plural marking is only used in contexts where the speaker wants to refer explicitly to more than one referent. The referent of the plural noun may be known (“definite”) or unknown (“indefinite”). An unmarked noun can refer to one or more referents depending on the context, i.e. it is transnumeral (Biermann 1982). Definite nouns are also transnumeral.

In glossing, the default (masculine) gender marker **-s** is glossed **M** in the majority of cases, which is when it occurs together

with the definiteness marker **-ñ**_{DEF}; it is glossed _{PL} when occurring separately, or with the markers **-u**_M and **-i**_F. In demonstratives, the default (masculine) marker **-z** is glossed _M and the feminine marker **-ñ**_F; the relative clause marker **-àb**_{REL} is not glossed for gender, while its feminine counterpart **-àbe** is glossed _{REL.mother}.

5.2 Definiteness

Definiteness marking co-occurs with a gender marker. Since the two occur together obligatorily, the rest of this thesis speaks mostly of definiteness-gender marking for ease of reference. In nouns, definiteness marking excludes plural marking, and a definite form is interpreted as singular out of context, although the form is in fact transnumeral. The form of the definiteness-gender marking is discussed under section 5.2.1, while its function is discussed in section 5.2.2. The definiteness-gender marking refers anaphorically to nouns and derives adjectives from verbs.

5.2.1 Form of definiteness-gender marking

The basic form of the definiteness marker is **-ñ**. The terminal vowel of a noun is dropped before the syllabic nasal of the definiteness marker. The definiteness marker is always accompanied by a gender marker, which is a suffix **-s** for masculine and an infix **<i>** for feminine.

- | | | | | |
|-----|--------------|---------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| (1) | tóóz | ‘relative’ | tóóz-ñ-s | ‘the relative (m)’ |
| | t’árà | ‘injera’ | t’ár-ñ-s | ‘the injerra (m)’ |
| | tóóz | ‘relative’ | tóó<i>z-ñ | ‘the relative (f)’ |
| | ?yāgī | ‘grandmother’ | ?yā<i>g-ñ | ‘the grandmother’ |

Some (morpho-)phonological processes apply when the definiteness-gender marking is suffixed to a noun. These are repeated here in order to explain the surface forms of nouns with definiteness-gender suffixes. The processes themselves are described in detail in chapter 3.

The (morpho-)phonological processes involved in suffixing definiteness-gender marking are:

MP 1. Deletion of the terminal vowel preceding the definiteness marker

PR 13. Sibilant harmony

PR 9. Assimilation of alveolar nasals

MP 2. Deletion of internasal sibilants

PR 10. Nasal-nasal merging

PR 15. Simplification of affricates preceding a syllabic nasal

PR 20. Internasal stop reduction

In case of rapid or careless speech, *PR 20* is overruled by *PR 21. Internasal stop deletion in rapid speech.*

Rules specific to feminine nouns:

MP 3. Realisation of definiteness marker following r in feminine nouns

PR 18. Reduction of vowel to glide and contraction

The tonal side is captured in *MT 2. Deletion of tone of definiteness marker.*

The examples below serve to illustrate the application of the above rules. Note that the rules are ordered. Assimilation processes take place before the deletion of the element they assimilate to, i.e. sibilant harmony applies before simplification of affricates and assimilation of alveolar nasals applies before internasal stop deletion in rapid speech and before nasal-nasal merging. (2)-(4) are examples of masculine nouns and (5)-(7) of feminine nouns.

(2)	íntʃù	[ʔíntʃù]	‘wood’
	[ʔíntʃ-ù-s	- MP 1 Deletion of terminal vowel	
		- MT 2 Deletion of tone of def. marker	
	[ʔíntʃ-ù-ʃ	- PR 13 Sibilant harmony	
	[ʔíntʃ-ù-ʃ	- PR 9 Assimilation of alveolar nasals	
	[ʔínt-ù-ʃ	- MP 2 Deletion of internasal sibilants	
	[ʔínt-ʃ	- PR 10 Nasal merging	
	ínʃ	[ʔíntʃ]	‘the wood’

- (4) **umt'à** [ʔumt'à] 'food'
- [ʔumt'-n-s] - MP 1 Deletion of terminal vowel
- MT 2 Deletion of tone of def. marker
- [ʔum^h-n-s] - PR 20 Internasal stop reduction
- ([ʔum^h-m-s] - PR 9 Assimilation of alveolar nasals)
- ([ʔu^h-m-s] - PR 10 Nasal merging)

In rapid speech:

- ùm̀s [ʔùm̀s] ‘the food’

- (5) ?yants'à [?ʔants'à] 'bee'
- [?ʔa<i>nts'ə̀ - MP 1 Deletion of terminal vowel
- MT 2 Deletion of tone of def. marker
- [?ʔa<i>nə̀ - MP 2 Deletion of internasal sibilants
- [?ʔa<i>ɲ̃ - PR 10 Nasal merging
- [?ʔa<y>ɲ̃ - PR 18 Reduction of vowel to glide
- ([?eynè ~ ?eən and contraction)

ʔayən̩ [ʔ^yayən̩] ~ [ʔeyən̩] ~ [ʔ^yeən̩] ‘the bee’

- (6) **bāārā** [**bāārā**] ‘young woman’
- [**bāār-in** - MP 3 Realisation of def.-gender marker following **r** in feminine nouns
- MT 2 Deletion of tone of def. marker
- bāārīn** [**bāārīn**] ‘the young woman’
- (7) **zūnkù** [**zūŋkù**] ‘sheep’
- [**zū<i>ŋk-ŋ** - MP 1 Deletion of terminal vowel
- MT 2 Deletion of tone of def. marker
- [**zū<i>ŋ-ŋ** - PR 21 Internasal stop deletion
- [**zū<i>ŋ-ŋ** - PR 9 Assimilation of alveolar nasals
- [**zū<i>ŋ** - PR 10 Nasal merging
- [**zū<y>ŋ** - PR 18 Reduction of vowel to glide
- zūyŋ** [**zūyŋ**] ‘the sheep (ewe)’

One might wonder whether $\text{-}\dot{\mathbf{n}}_{\text{DEF}}$ can also be analysed as singulative. However, this was not volunteered by any of the language consultants (nobody said: “It means just one,” or the like). Moreover, definiteness-gender marking occurs with mass nouns, e.g. $\dot{\mathbf{u}}\mathbf{k}\dot{\mathbf{n}}\mathbf{s}$ ‘the milk’, and with nouns which may denote a plural referent, e.g. $\mathbf{y}\dot{\mathbf{a}}\mathbf{b}\dot{\mathbf{m}}\mathbf{s}$ ‘the people’.

The definiteness-gender marking is always suffixed to the head noun. It can co-occur with demonstratives (8)-(9) and possessives (10)-(11).

- (8) **é-ká** **fáád-k'à-bààb** **în-ʃ** **yis-ərá**
 there-LCT body-IN-father wood.DEF-M DIST.M-ACC.CONT
k'ödām-m̐-s **yīs** **há = gūsū-kōb-t = á**
 qodama-DEF-M DIST.M 3MS = pull-take-SS = 3MS
kēs-ā-m-ə
 go.out.CAUS-put-IRR-STI
 ‘that *qodama* pulls out the wood which is there in the body’

- (9) **ás-kh̄ ìy-k'à ūk'ū k̄i-n̄ ūk'-n̄-s yīs-əra**
 3MS-DAT house-IN milk exist-DS milk-DEF-M DIST.M-ACC
tò k'aabu-tə
 just pour-SS
 'There was milk in his house; pouring only that milk...'
- (10) **yí = zīn-n̄-s-kh̄ báátʃ-n̄-s-əra yí-bàtà**
 3FS = leopard-DEF-M-DAT¹¹ skin-DEF-M-ACC 3FS.POSS-on.LOC
siip'u-tə
 sew-SS
 'she sewed the skin of the leopard on her and...'
- (11) **k'ay-tə ɲ-uus-n̄-s-a ats-ə yí = ge-n̄**
 rise-SS 1SG.POSS-bone-DEF-M-ACC give-STI 3FS = say-DS
 'she rose and said: "Give my bone!"

Definiteness-gender marking does not occur on nouns in generic statements in my corpus.

- (12) **gárgá íntʃù-rà há = gyá-m-ə**
 termite wood-ACC 3MS = chew-IRR-STI
 'A termite eats wood.'
- (13) **ééz-kh̄ tēēmà-ka ūk'ū-ka**
 honey-DAT honey.liquid-COOR milk-COOR
ʃiʃk-n̄-s-əb tə-k-ə
 be.tasty-DEF-M-REL COP-REAL-STI
 'Honey and milk are sweet.'

The definiteness-gender marking does not occur with proper nouns like **Gaana** (male person's name) or **Kuki** (place name) in my sample. But it occurs on names which are used to denote a member of a group, see the first line in (14):

¹¹ On the use of the dative for possession see section 9.3.

- (14) **woffjǝtǝ** **góór-n-s-k'arà** **şók-n-s-k'arà** **faadù**
 both.side.LOC Amhara-DEF-M-INCL Sheko-DEF-M-INCL body
gúúru **íşǝ=kì-k** **íşǝ=kī-bàstà** **góóra** **dèd-n-s-ee**
 only 3PL = exist-REAL 3PL = exist-WHILE Amhara child-DEF-M-STI
há-bààb-kh **faad-n-s-a** **há=see-tə**
 3MS.POSS-father-DAT body-DEF-M-ACC 3MS = see.NV-SS
 '...both, the Amhara as well as the Sheko, were just naked. While they were (like this), as for the Amhara boy, he saw his fathers body and ...'

Synchronically, definiteness-gender marking is not ordered neatly, but involves a different order for feminine nouns, with the infix <i> preceding the definiteness marker **-n**. For masculine nouns, the definiteness marker is followed by the gender marker.

Although it is outside the scope of this thesis to work out the diachronical developments which led to the present situation of definiteness-gender marking in Sheko, a few comparative notes on definiteness and gender marking in Diizi and Nayi are given below.

Definiteness in Diizi is related to verbal subject clitics (Beachy 2005:58, but cf. section 15.3.1 for the use of subject clitics in Sheko in comparable clauses) as well as to demonstrative suffixes (2005:60). Interestingly, an element **-s** frequently follows these demonstrative suffixes **-a** PROX and **-e** DIST. Beachy (2005:67f) has analysed **-s** as an accusative case marker alongside **-n**, but perhaps an alternative analysis is possible, with **-n** as the accusative case marker (regular, cf. Sheko **-ra**, Gf. **-na**, Nayi **-na**) and **-s** as a demonstrative or other morpheme indicating definiteness (The distribution of **-s** in Diizi bears resemblance to the distal demonstrative **yis** in Sheko). Markers for feminine gender in Diizi include **-n** ~ **-ni** ~ **-eni** for nouns (Beachy 2005:62).

For Nayi, Aklilu (1997:603f) gives the definiteness suffixes **-s** for masculine and **-n** for feminine nouns. While the feminine definiteness suffix **-n** is accompanied by the gender infix <i>, the masculine definiteness suffix **-s** lacks a corresponding gender affix. Finally, the Nayi proximal demonstratives are

comparable to those in Sheko: **haa-s** ‘this/these M’, **haa-yin** ‘this/those F’, while the distal demonstratives are **nea-s** ‘that/those M’ and **ne-yin** ‘that/those F’ (Aklilu 1997:606).

As to the origin of the definiteness marker **-h** in Sheko, a demonstrative would be a logical source. Could it have been a distal feminine, which is suggested here on the basis of the Nayi distal? If so, was the default gender feminine in earlier times? (Another clue to the possibility of a switch in default gender is discussed in section 5.3.8.) In any case, this overview clearly hints at a demonstrative origin for the present-day Sheko morphemes **-s**_M and **-h**_{DEF}.

On the other side of the Sheko area, Benchnon has masculine/ feminine/ plural marking which is **ù/ èn/ ènd** in verb-final paradigms, which are ultimately derived from the distal demonstratives **ùç, èn, ènd** respectively (Rapold 2006:588).

5.2.2 Definiteness on nouns and anaphoric reference

The two major functions of the definiteness-gender marking are to refer anaphorically to referents of noun phrases, and to derive adjectives from a group of verbs denoting adjectival concepts. In addition, it occurs suffixed to a few other verb stems.

The main function of the definiteness marker is anaphoric reference to a previously mentioned entity. Thus, in examples (15) and (16) below, the first mention of a participant or entity is without, the subsequent with the definiteness marking. The anaphoric reference can also be associative (17)-(18).

- (15) **só** **ōtì** **hás-tà** **kì-b-tà**
 up.there cow PROX.M-LOC exist-REL-LOC
- ṇ = sāw-fñ-á-m-ə** **há = ge-ṇ** **ō <y> t-ṇ**
 1SG = arrive.NV-descend-put-IRR-STI 3MS = say-DS COW <F> -DEF
- datà** **íḡ = sàk-ṇ**
 near.LOC 3PL = arrive-DS
- ‘he said: “Up there where there is a cow I will arrive and descend.”
 They arrived near the cow; ...’

- (16) **ṇ-zègù** **bōy-tə** **ṇ-eez** **kōb-tə**
 1SG.POSS-ox drive-ss 1SG.POSS-honey take-ss
ṇ = tág-r̄n-bààb (...) **yīs** **n = kōb-tág-ṇ** **há-zègù**
 1SG = go-IRR-father DIST.M 1SG = take-go-DS 3MS.POSS-ox
bāāf-tə **ṇ-zèg-ṇ-s-a** **bāāf-tə**
 slaughter-ss 1SG.POSS-ox-DEF-M-ACC slaughter-ss
ṇ-eez-ṇ-s-a **dyāās-tə**
 1SG.POSS-honey-DEF-M-ACC immerse-ss
 ‘...having to go I drive my cow and take my honey; (for Badi, he is my ‘father’.) This I bring with me; he slaughters his ox and slaughters my ox and immerses my honey and...’
- (17) **há = ṣub-fi-ṇ** **há-baatf-n-s-əra**
 3MS = die-excrete-DS 3MS.POSS-skin-DEF-M-ACC
yí = baaḥ-tə
 3FS = slaughter-ss
 ‘...he died; she skinned his skin and...’
- (18) **m-bur3-yààb-ka** **daan** **k’áy-tə** **ń = yēē-t = ń**
 1SG.POSS-burzha-man-WITH together rise-ss 1PL = come.NV-ss = 1PL
īy-k’à **?yārdū-tə** **yowk’à** **gīz-ñ-s**
 house-IN enter-ss INTJ time(Amh)-DEF-M
tʃ’òr-ṇtə
 finish-COND
 ‘together with my assistant we will rise, come and enter the house and well, when the time is finished,...’ (Context: a specific period of four days in a certain ritual during which the leader and his assistant don’t leave the house.)

However, the use of the definiteness marking for anaphoric reference is basically pragmatic. While the second reference to an entity is often by a definite noun phrase, subsequent references may be unmarked for definiteness. In example (19), several parts of a story are put next to each other. The cock and the rat have been mentioned before. In the first line, the rat is referred to by a definite noun phrase. In the second line, the rat is referred to twice by an unmarked noun phrase. In the last line, the rat is again referred to by a definite noun phrase.

- (19) **íʃi=kōōb-m̄-s-ka** **uutn̄-s-ka** **t'āāgñ-bàb**
 3PL = cock-DEF-M-COOR rat.DEF-M-COOR two-father
kì-tə (...) **há=ʔuutn̄-əra** **maad-n̄**
 exist-SS 3MS = rat-ACC lie-DS
há=ʔuutn̄ **há=gàma** **tə-k-ə** **ge-tə** (...)
 3MS = rat 3MS = true COP-REAL-STI say-SS
há=mútʃ'à **sàw-tə** **há=ʔuutn̄-s-əra**
 3MS = bird.of.prey arrive.NV-SS 3MS = rat.DEF-M-ACC
kaw-n̄-s-ka **dàn-sù-tə** ...
 fat-DEF-M-WITH be.together-CAUS-SS
 'the cock and the rat were left together (...) he deceived the rat; the rat thought: "It is true," (...) a bird of prey arrived and (seizing) the rat with the fat...'

Definiteness-gender marking is often absent with body parts and locatives (20), perhaps because these are quickly taken for granted or accommodated associatively. Sometimes a demonstrative is used rather than definiteness-gender marking (21), although both can occur together. For the use of distal demonstratives in reference, see section 7.1.2.

- (20) **kyāān-s** **ás-kn̄** **gəri-ra** **ʔyáná-kn̄** **bōw-k'à**
 dog.DEF-M 3MS-DAT head-ACC pot-DAT belly-IN
tóorá **há=wùskù-tə** **há=bààs-n̄** **kááy**
 downward 3MS = insert-SS 3MS = want-DS be.not
 'the dog entered his head down in the pot and searched (but) it wasn't there.'
- (21) **túrù-kn̄** **bōw-k'à** **karà** **tʃēʃ-t-n̄**
 land-DAT belly-IN leaf stick?-PASS-DS
kara **yīs** **bàtà** **yéngí** **ān-t'-n̄**
 leaf DIST.M on.LOC firewood put-PASS-DS
 '... in the ground (hole) leaves will be placed, on the leaves firewood will be put,...'

Definiteness does not figure in immediate situation use, as illustrated in (22) and (23).

- (22) **ʃāʃā na-ŋ há=kì-ŋ na-ŋ ats-ə**
 shawl 1SG-DAT 3MS=exist-DS 1SG-DAT give-STI
 ‘Give me my shawl’ (Lit: there is a shawl to me (I have a shawl), give it.)

- (23) **háára na-ŋ ats**
 knife 1SG-DAT give
 ‘Give me the knife’ (Context: woman directs a child to give her the knife which lies outside her reach.)

5.2.3 Definiteness-gender marking on adjectives and verbs

Definiteness-gender marking derives adjectives from verbs, as illustrated in (24) with the verb **ʃik’** ‘become short’. These adjectives have a number of characteristics which set them apart from nouns. Adjectives are therefore discussed separately in section 7.2.

- (24) a. **dādū ʃik’-n̄-s**
 child be.short-DEF-M
 ‘a/the short child’
 b. **dā<y>g-n̄ ʃik’-n**
 child<F>-DEF be.short.F-DEF
 ‘a/the short girl’

Additionally, there are a few other occurrences where definiteness-gender marking is attested on the verb. This happens with the verbs **gé** ‘say’ and **ákár** ‘resemble’. After presenting the examples, the role of the definiteness-gender marking on verbs is discussed.

The construction with **gé** ‘say’ is likely used for the introduction of a topic. Example (25) is found at the beginning of a description of badgers. Compare the first clause with the final clause of the description (26). Example (27) introduces a certain tree whose bark was used to make sleeping mats and bags from.

- (25) **utʂà gè-t'-n-s kɪ-tə ɪs̃n-əṙā kēēs-tə**
 badger say-PASS-DEF-M exist-SS beehive-ACC go.out-SS
 'There is what is called a badger, and it climbs beehives and...'

- (26) **yīs tə-k utʂà ge-t'-àb**
 DIST.M COP-REAL badger say-PASS-REL
 'This is it, the badger.'

- (27) **tēngì gè-t'-n-s íntʃù ky=ǎ-k-ə**
 tengi say-PASS-DEF-M wood exist = 3MS-REAL-STI
tēngì-ra íʃ=k'yar-tə íʃi=ʃēēmā gōntʃi
 tengi-ACC 3PL = beat-SS 3PL = cloth SIMIL
sàskù-tə
 arrive.CAUS-SS
 'There is a tree called *tengi*. They pounded the *tengi* and produced something like cloth...'

The second environment in which definiteness-gender marking occurs on a verb is in constructions with the verb **ákár** 'resemble, be similar', although one time on the verb **ákár** itself (28) and the other time on the auxiliary verb **k'é** 'be left, remain' (29).

- (28) **kārka-kà yír-be sūrù akar-n-s kɪ-n**
 forest-IN what-mother Suru resemble-DEF-M exist-DS
íʃi=tēe bēk'n-ka tʂ'ad-tə íʃi=zìp'm-k
 3PL = go.NV spear-WITH pierce-SS 3PL = chase.away-REAL
 'whatever resembled a Me'en in the forest, they went and pierced it with a spear and chased it away.'

- (29) **kēēs-ār=á-k'é-n-s akar-k-ə**
 go.out-NEG = 3MS-remain-DEF-M resemble-REAL-STI
 'It seems it will not come up.'

Definiteness-gender marking is typically nominal inflection, and its occurrence on verb stems is unexpected. The adjectives in (24) as well as the usage in the examples with the verbs **gé** 'say' and **ákár** 'resemble' suggest that we have to do with relative clauses here.

Synchronically, the Sheko relative clause marker is **-əb** ~ **-əb**, and relative clauses marked by **-əb** cannot suffix definiteness-gender marking. Moreover, adjectives have a more limited distribution than relative clauses, since adjectives can only follow the noun they modify whereas relative clauses occur on both sides of the head noun (cf. section 7.2.1). Nevertheless, a relative clause marker may be combined with definiteness-gender marking on adjectives, but it is suffixed after the definiteness-gender marking (30).

- (30) **dəd-ñ-s** **ʃik'-ñ-s-əb** **hààz** **ʒéénʃ**
 child-DEF-M be.short-DEF-M-REL PROX.M well
há=kààs-kì-k
 3MS =play-exist-REAL
 'This short boy plays well.'

Thus, there are arguments against the analysis of adjectives as relative clauses. Sporadically, however, relative clauses without overt marker occur, and especially in the Guraferda variant zero-marked relative clauses are common. Therefore an analysis of adjectives as a different (older?) type of relative clause may be justified.

Turning to other Omotic languages, Beachy (2005:128ff) analyzes adjectives in Diizi as relative constructions as well. Interestingly, in Dime, adjectives and relative clauses are marked for gender whereas nouns are not, and they have a special plural marker which does not occur with nouns: masculine **-ub**, feminine **-ind** (< 'mother'), plural **-id** (Mulugeta 2008:81;154). The masculine and feminine markers resemble the relative clause markers in Sheko, which are **-əb**_{REL} and **-əbe**_{REL.mother} respectively.

The definiteness-gender marking is not the only nominal element in Sheko that occurs in verbal forms. The nominalizer **bāāb** 'father' (feminine **bé** 'mother') forms verb complements and relative clauses. In contrast to the definiteness-gender marking it does not attach directly to the verb stem but to an Irrealis verb form (see section 11.4.6).

5.3 Gender

Gender is distinguished morphologically in nouns, adjectives, demonstratives and relative clauses, as well as in third person pronouns, third person possessor prefixes on nouns and third person subject coindexing clitics on verbs. In terms of address (vocatives), a tonological distinction is made.

Leaving the gender distinction in the third person aside until section 5.3.9, the gender system in Sheko distinguishes feminine from ‘default’ or non-feminine, since marking for masculine is used for plural as well. The default gender morpheme is **-s**. Feminine gender morphemes are characterized by a vowel **ɪ**, namely <**ɪ**> in nouns and adjectives, and **-nɪ** in demonstratives; and masculine gender is characterized by **-u** in plural nouns. In relative clauses, **-àbe** is used for feminine gender; the last part **be** is probably derived from **bây** ‘mother’. The default gender can also be called masculine (as opposed to feminine, and given 3ms agreement on verbs).

In nouns, gender is expressed obligatorily when the noun is made definite. Like in most Omotic languages, gender is generally semantically motivated: gender is assigned according to the inherent gender of animate entities. That is, words like ‘ox’ and ‘cow’ have default (masculine) and feminine gender respectively. Most inanimate nouns have the default gender. A small group of inanimate nouns is feminine. Feminine gender agreement is also used to express smallness of the referent.

5.3.1 Default gender

There are several reasons to consider ‘masculine’ as the default gender in Sheko. These are listed below, with examples.

1. Most inanimate nouns have masculine gender

The majority of the nouns in the lexicon has masculine gender since they show masculine gender agreement. Only a small minority of nouns is feminine. A list of feminine nouns is found in section 5.3.3.

2. Verbal nouns have masculine gender agreement

Nouns which are cognate with verbs (31) have masculine agreement.

- (31) **kāāsù** **ʒaaʒ=á-k-ə**
 playing be.good = 3MS-REAL-STI
 ‘The game is good’
 cf. **kaas** ‘play’

3. A reference to states of affair is with masculine gender

- (32) **yī-s** **tə-k**
 DIST-M COP-REAL
 ‘That’s it.’ (Said e.g. when someone performs an action correctly during training.)

- (33) **ás-kñ** **wuʒku** **na-ŋ** **há=ʔintsù-k-ə**
3MS-DAT untying 1SG-DAT 3MS = be.heavy-REAL-STI
 ‘It is difficult for me to explain.’ Lit: its untying is heavy for me.
 (Context: refers to the words/meaning of a fable.)

- (34) **dād-ñ-s** **há=dùf-t’-àb** **ás-a** **há=yèf-sù-k-ə**
 child-DEF-M 3MS = hit-PASS-REL 3MS-ACC 3MS = cry-CAUS-REAL-STI
 ‘The beating of the child made him cry.’

4. Impersonal constructions

Impersonal constructions always are with masculine gender, irrespective of the gender of the subject in the embedded clause.

- (35) **ń=təg-ntà** **há=ʒaaʒ-k-ə**
 1PL = go-COND 3MS = be.good-REAL-STI
 ‘It is good if we go.’

- (36) **yí=yèg-àb** **(t=á)** **há=ʒaaʒ-k-ə**
 3FS = come-REL COP = 3MS 3MS = be.good-REAL-STI
 ‘That she came is good.’

Weather verbs have an overt lexical subject with masculine gender and cannot be used to determine the default gender (37)-(38).

- (37) **ííru k'yar=á-k**
rain beat = 3MS-REAL
'It rained.' (Lit: the rain beat.)

- (38) **gob kàtsā saats'=á-k-ə**
welkin yet lighten = 3MS-REAL-STI
'It has already become light'

Likewise, the following causative 'experiencer verbs' are used mostly without subject causer nouns (39)-(40), but these subject nouns are optionally expressed, as in (41), and have masculine gender. For a discussion of experiencer verbs see section 12.4.

- (39) **nata-ra wòsk'=á-k-ə**
1SG-ACC be.tired.CAUS = 3MS-REAL-STI
'I am tired.'

- (40) **nata há=kàz-ñ-s-kì-k-ə**
1SG 3MS = be.glad-MIDD-CAUS-exist-REAL
'I am glad'

- (41) **káázà nata há=kàz-ñ-s-kì-k-ə**
gladness 1SG 3MS = be.glad-MIDD-CAUS-exist-REAL-STI
'I am glad'

5. Subject clauses are masculine even if their subject is feminine

A subject clause, as exemplified in (42), is a headless relative clauses. Even if the subject of such a clause is feminine, the clause still triggers masculine agreement on the verb (43)-(42).

- (42) **nata ɲ=yəg-àb āngā-bààb bàzà**
1SG 1SG = come-REL much-father work
há=bàzù-fù-m-ə
3MS = work-CAUS-IRR-STI
'My coming could create a lot of work.'

- (43) **yí=yèg-àb bazà há=bàzù-f-k-ə**
 3FS = come-REL work 3MS = work-CAUS-REAL-STI
 ‘Her coming/that she came created work’

6. Ambi-gender words are treated as masculine when the sex of the referent is unknown or irrelevant.

- (44) **dādū yèg=á-k-ə**
 child come = 3MS-REAL-STI
 ‘A child came.’

If the referent should be identified as feminine, the verbal subject clitic has feminine agreement:

- (45) **dādū yèg=f-k-ə**
 child come = 3FS-REAL-STI
 ‘A girl came.’

The above are all reasons to analyse masculine as the default gender in Sheko.

5.3.2 Gender semantics

Feminine gender is associated with diminutive, as in (46b).

- (46) a. **kāntà jèn=á-k**
 basket bad = 3MS-REAL
 ‘the basket is bad’
 b. **kāntà jèn=f-k**
 basket bad = 3FS-REAL
 ‘the little basket is bad’

Masculine gender is neutral, i.e. it is not associated with bigness. However, masculinity is. In the compound in (47), **bāābū** ‘male, man’ refers to big size.

- (47) **tyārbū bààbù** ‘largest-sized drum’

The noun **ōtī** with feminine gender denotes ‘cow’, whereas with masculine gender it denotes ‘cattle’ (48).

- (48) a. **ō<y>t-ḥ** b. **ōt-ḥ-s**
 COW < F > -DEF COW-DEF-M
 ‘the cow’ ‘the cattle’

gender switch for a trickster

The example below comes from a trickster story, in which the cock, the main character, gets rid of several of his helpers in order to take the plunder of their trip for himself. Throughout the story the cock is referred to by ordinary masculine agreement, as shown in the first clause. In the final trick, he persuades the rat to stay on the front yard with a piece of fat on his head; and then a bird of prey seizes the fat and the rat. When he plots the trick to get rid of the rat, the cock is referred to by feminine agreement. The storyteller could not explain why he switched the gender.

- (49) **há=kōōb-m̄-s** **k’ay-tə ...** **yí=k’ay-tə** **yīn**
 3MS = cock-DEF-M rise-SS 3FS = rise-SS DIST.F
ḥ = bááj **ḥ = gya = ḥ** **sām-bàb** **kòb-tə**
 1PL = slaughter 1PL = chew = 1PL remain.IRR-father take-SS
ḥ = ʔín-á-m-ə **yí = ge-t = í** **maad-ḥ**
 1PL = go-put-IRR-STI 3FS = say-SS = 3FS deceive-DS
 ‘the cock rose and... she rose and saying “Let’s slaughter this one, let’s eat it and we will take the remaining ones and go,” she deceived (the rat);...’

5.3.3 Terminal vowel, gender and lexical gender

The final vowel of nouns is labelled terminal vowel. The term suggests that these vowels are not or were not part of the root. Indications for a special status of the terminal vowel include: 1) only a subset of the vowel qualities appear in this position; 2) there is variation in realisation of the terminal vowel; 3) the vowel is deleted in certain conditions; 4) the vowel is linked to functions such as gender marking; 5) it is impossible to reconstruct the terminal vowel (Hayward 2001).

Not all Omotic languages have nouns with terminal vowels. The well-known case of Benchnon shows a language in which almost all nouns are monosyllabic instead of having a

disyllabic shape with a terminal vowel. It is often suggested that Benchnon lost its terminal vowel and compensated for it by extra tonal contrasts (Breeze 1990; Wedekind 1985b).

With respect to the issue of terminal vowels, Bender (2000:215) has noticed that Majoid languages too have a large proportion of nouns ending in a consonant rather than a terminal vowel. Rapold (2006:202) remarks that this is an areal feature linking Benchnon and Majoid. Bender (2007:737) also names Oyda, Basketo, Ganjule and Dime as having part of the lexicon without terminal vowels. Mulugeta (2008:41) divides nouns in Dime into nouns with and without a terminal vowel. Some Dime nouns allow variation in the terminal vowel without a change of meaning. For Sheko, I estimate the number of nouns ending in a consonant around ten percent. The preferred structure for nouns in Sheko is disyllabic. I have not noticed doubt of speakers about the presence or absence of terminal vowels in isolation. In a few cases, there is some variation in the terminal vowel.

- | | | | |
|------|-----------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| (50) | wúrts'ú | ~ wúrtsá | 'tadpole' |
| | bā.ū (> bōw) | ~ bā.ā (Gf.) | 'belly, stomach' |
| | húmtʃà | ~ húmtʃi | 'midrib of ensete leaf' |
| | súmà | ~ súmù | 'name' (< Amh) |
| | góbsà | ~ góbsù | 'grain sp.' (< Amh) |
| | bāzī | ~ bāzū | 'monkey (Sykes' monkey?)' |

Furthermore, borrowings usually acquire an extra vowel at the end. This vowel is often -i, but the motivation for it is not known.

- | | | | |
|------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| (51) | mèngistì | 'government' | < mängist (Amh) |
| | mabtì | 'right' | < mäbt (Amh) |
| | kòmpùtērì | 'computer' | < (English/Amh) |
| | astadaderu | 'administrator' | < astädadär + ? -u DEF (Amh) |

In contrast to Sheko, more than half of the nouns in Diizi occurs without terminal vowel, but informants may pronounce or not pronounce a terminal vowel at different times, according to Beachy (2005:55-56).

The terminal vowel of nouns in Sheko is either **i**, **a** or **u** or **ŋ** (syllabic nasal).

- (52) **kūkī** ‘tree sp.’
ukà ‘hat’
kúkú ‘plant sp.’
tūkñ ‘hole’

It has been suggested that the terminal vowel bears a relation to gender. Aklilu (1988:51) stated that feminine nouns end in **i**, and masculine nouns in **u** or a consonant. This generalisation is indeed useful for kinship terms and other lexical gender pairs. An overview of lexical gender pairs and some kinship terms is given in (53)-(56) below. All feminine counterparts have a terminal vowel **i**, or final glide **y**, except **baara** ‘young woman’. For masculine nouns, the majority end in **-u**, but some end in **a**. Besides, the pattern **-u** for masculine and **-i** for feminine lexical gender pairs is attested in Nayi as well, according to Aklilu (1994a:602).

- | | | |
|------|-------------------------------|---|
| (53) | M | F |
| | bāābà ‘father’ | bāy, bēy, bāy ‘mother’ |
| | bāabū ‘male’ | bāy ‘woman, female’ |
| | nāánú ‘elder brother’ | níní ‘elder sister’ |
| | nyākū ‘young man’ | bāārā ‘young woman’ |
| | nāṣā ‘husband’ | bāyñ ‘wife’ |
| | bātjā ‘paternal uncle’ | ?yāmī ‘paternal aunt’ |
| | kōmtū ‘king’ | gēbe ‘queen’ ¹² |
| | zēgù ‘ox’ | ōtì ‘cow’ |
| | kōobū ‘cock’ | kútjì ‘chicken’ Gf. kōybñ |

Some words do not form pairs, but have inherent gender as well, such as **ūkā** ‘maternal uncle’ (cf. maternal aunt: **bāy** ‘mother’).

- (54) **k’ēmtì** ‘co-wife’
kóótjì ‘mother-in-law’
kāmdì ‘cow which has borne a calf often’

¹² Judging from the tone, this word is a compound with **be** ‘mother’ as the second part. According to one consultant, the basis for the derivation is **gibtì** ‘housewife’.

Other kinship terms are ambivalent for gender. The referent can be masculine or feminine. These nouns have default masculine gender agreement. Note that only some words have a terminal vowel **u**. **uzì** ‘firstborn’ even has a terminal vowel **i**.

- | | | |
|------|----------------|--|
| (55) | báádù | ‘younger sibling’ |
| | dādū | ‘child’ |
| | tʃʼāārù | ‘twin’ |
| | ākā | ‘grandparent’ cf. āygn̄ ‘the grandmother’ |
| | gōōmā | ‘age mate’ |
| | zyāāmà | ‘in-law’ |
| | tóóz | ‘relative’ |
| | uzì | ‘firstborn’ |

A gender distinction of animals can be indicated by placing **bāābū** ‘man, male’ or **bāy** ‘woman, female’ after the noun. (For the change in tone, see section 9.1.)

- | | | | |
|------|----|--------------------|------------------|
| (56) | a. | kyānū bààbù | ‘male dog’ |
| | | zīnà bààbù | ‘male leopard’ |
| | b. | kyānū bay | ‘female dog’ |
| | | zīnà bay | ‘female leopard’ |

When other feminine nouns outside the kinship terms or inherent gender pairs are taken into consideration, the generalisation that feminine nouns end in **i** does not hold. Example (58) illustrates the other nouns which trigger feminine agreement.¹³

- | | | |
|------|-----------------|---|
| (57) | ʔyants’à | ‘bee’ |
| | dēwā | ‘deer’ |
| | tītù | ‘vulture’ (female character in stories) |
| | bārkāȳ | ‘grivet’ (female character in stories) |
| | ʃūūn | ‘life’ |
| | túún | ‘spring’ |

¹³ The feminine words in this section are all the underived feminine words in my data set.

Even though the majority of feminine nouns has a terminal vowel *i*, as shown in (53) and (55), the reverse does not hold: many inanimate nouns with a terminal vowel *i* have not feminine gender but masculine gender (as is evident from verb agreement). A few examples are given in (59).

- (58) **tīitī** 'back'
góri 'head'
útsi 'fly'
tárti 'butterfly'
kátʃi 'yam'
fúrfi 'storm, hurricane'
gēēni 'gourd with long neck'

As the following table shows, masculine and feminine words have similar terminal vowels and can both end in a consonant. Only underived feminine words ending in a syllabic nasal have not been attested.

	M		F
-u	gōgū 'tortoise'	tīitù	'vulture'
-i	ʃótʔi 'maize'	níini	'sister'
-a	kūūrà 'donkey'	ʔyants'à	'bee'
-C	t'úúm 'mountain'	túún	'spring'
-ŋ	sekŋ 'bird sp.'		

Table 3. Terminal vowels for both genders

Some words have inherent feminine definiteness-gender marking, i.e. even when asking for isolated words in elicitation the definiteness-gender marking is not shed.

- (59) **ʃóyʃŋ** 'bird sp.'
kōybŋ 'eland'
dyāyp'ŋ 'tree sp.'
bāārŋ 'star'
káyŋ 'sun (disc)'

Outside the domain of terminal vowels, *-i* is generally associated with grammatical feminine gender in noun morphology and *-u* with masculine (in some plural nouns), as is shown in section 5.4.1.

5.3.4 Gender in terms of address

A group of twelve kinship terms has a special tone pattern when used as term of address. The tone pattern differs for male and female relatives. Usually, these ‘vocatives’ are accompanied by a first person possessor suffix. In this special environment, the possessor suffix carries the tone of the vocative rather than its own tone. Normally, the vocative is further followed by the indirect stance marker **-o**, although it is not obligatory (see section 10.2 on stance).

The common vocative tone pattern for male relatives is 4.1, as shown in example (61). The pattern for female relatives is 1.3, see example (62). Only **níní** ‘elder sister’ pairs with ‘elder brother’ and gets a 4.1 melody. The noun **zyāāmà** ‘in-law’ gets a pattern all of its own. In addition, a good friend can be called with the form found in (64), which patterns with female relatives.

- | | | | | |
|------|---------------|------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| (60) | ūkā | ‘maternal uncle’ | úkñ-o | ‘oh my uncle’ |
| | ākā | ‘grandfather’ | ákn-o | ‘oh my grandfather’ |
| | bātjā | ‘paternal uncle’ | bátjñ-o | ‘oh my uncle’ |
| | náánú | ‘elder brother’ | nánn-o | ‘oh my brother’ |
| | níní | ‘elder sister’ | nínñ-o | ‘oh my sister’ |
| | bāābà | ‘father’ | bábñ-o | ‘oh my father’ |
| (61) | ʔyāmī | ‘paternal aunt’ | ʔyāmñ-o | ‘oh my aunt’ |
| | báy | ‘mother’ | bây-o | ‘oh mother’ |
| | ʔyāgī | ‘grandmother’ | ʔyāgñ-o | ‘oh my grandmother’ |
| | k’emtì | ‘co-wife’ | k’emtā-o | ‘oh co-wife’ |
| (62) | zyāāmà | ‘in-law’ | zyāmā-o | ‘oh in-law’ |
| (63) | yááb | ‘person, man’ | yábñ-o | ‘oh my friend’ |

Apart from the above terms of address, there are two vocative pronouns: **ṇna** ‘you (m)’ and **ṇnya** ‘you (f)’, which are described in section 6.1.1 on pronouns. Other kinship terms, animals or other nouns have no special tone melody and keep their normal pattern. The indirect stance marker **-o** is normally suffixed.

- (64) **āāp'ū** 'nephew' **āāp'm̄-o** 'oh my nephew'
gēbe 'queen' **gēben-o** 'oh my queen'
yááb 'person, man' **yááb-o** 'oh man'
ōtì 'cow' **ōtì-o** 'oh cow'

Nouns modified by definiteness-gender marking prefix the possessor affix.

- (65) **báádù** 'younger sibling'
ṁ-baad-ñ-s-o
 1SG.POSS-younger.sibling-DEF-M-STL.ADDR
 'oh my sibling'

In addressing people by their name or title, one of the stance suffixes, **-o** 'indirect' or **-a** 'direct', is frequently added after nouns and proper names. On nouns it is **-o** (67)-(68). On proper names **-o** is common but sometimes **-a** is used (69). There is no gender distinction.

- (66) **ṁ-kòmt-o** **hāāy** **ṁ=ás-ka** **ííd-ñ-bàb**
 1SG.POSS-king-STL.ADDR water 1SG=3MS-WITH fetch-IRR-father
ṁ-dàtā **háák'àstā** **kááy-ə** **yí=ge-k-ə**
 1SG.POSS-near.LOC now be.not-STI 3FS=say-REAL-STI
 'She said: "Oh my lord, right now I haven't something with which I can fetch water."'

- (67) **fyáánú-o** **gúúrú** **íʃ=ge-tə** **íʃi=ʔòškù-k**
 frog-STL.ADDR only 3PL=say-SS 3PL=call-REAL
 'They only called saying 'Hey frog!'.'

- (68) **dāniyer-a** **p'èt'rōs-a** **yēg-ít**
 Daniel-STD Pexros-STD come-PL.ADDR
 'Hey Daniel! Hey Peter! Come!'

If someone calls for his/ her mother, when the first call does not lead to a reaction the second call is often without **-o**. This is less polite and the calling child may be impatient for a reaction.

- (69) **ṁ-bàȳ-o** ... **bàȳ**
 1SG.POSS-mother.VOC-STI.ADDR mother.VOC
 ‘Oh my mother... mother!’

5.3.5 Gender in nouns and adjectives

Gender is marked morphologically when a noun is made definite and when an adjective is derived from a verb by definiteness-gender marking. Definiteness-gender marking consists of the definiteness marker **-ṇ** and a gender affix. The terminal vowel of a noun is dropped before the syllabic nasal of the definiteness marker. Masculine (default) gender is indicated by a suffix **-s** and feminine gender by an infix **<i>**. Some examples of nouns are given in (71). Details of the processes involved in definiteness-gender marking can be found in section 5.2.1.

- | | | | |
|------|----------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| (70) | <i>noun</i> | <i>definite masc.</i> | <i>definite fem.</i> |
| | dādū ‘child’ | dād-ṇ-s ‘the boy’ | dā<y>g-ṇ ‘the girl’ |
| | sāzā ‘beetle’ | sāz-ṇ-s ‘the beetle’ | sā<y>z-ṇ ‘the beetle’ |
| | fyáánú ‘frog’ | fyáán-s ‘the frog’ | fyá<y>ń ‘the frog’ |

Adjectives are derived from verbs by suffixing the gender-definiteness marker to the verb stem (section 7.2.1). Feminine gender can be derived in exactly the same way as with nouns.

- | | | | |
|------|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| (71) | <i>verb</i> | <i>adjective (m)</i> | <i>adjective (f)</i> |
| | záz ‘be good’ | záz-ṇ-s ‘good’ | zā<y>z-ṇ ‘good’ |
| | sub ‘be red’ | sūb-ṇ-s ‘red’ | sū<y>b-ṇ ‘red’ |
| | ʃiʃk ‘be sweet’ | ʃiʃk-ṇ-s ‘sweet’ | ʃiʃk-ṇ ‘sweet’ |

In addition, a small group of nouns suffixes a gender marker when the noun refers to a plural referent. This group consists of nouns ending in a consonant. Masculine is indicated by the suffix **-ṇ** (73) and feminine by the suffix **-i** (74), followed by the default gender marker **-s**. Note that there is no morpheme which indicates plurality per se. If the noun ends in a terminal vowel, only the default gender marker **-s** is suffixed (75). The great majority of nouns ends in a terminal vowel, but there are some nouns which end in a consonant.

- | | | | | |
|------|--------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|
| (72) | ááb | ‘fruit’ | ááb-ù-s | ‘fruits’ |
| | yááb | ‘man, person’ | yááb-ù-s | ‘men’ |
| | şóóz | ‘snake’ | şóóz-ù-ş | ‘snakes’ |
| (73) | túún | ‘spring’ | túún-ì-s | ‘springs’ |
| | şūūn | ‘life’ | şūūn-ì-s | ‘lives’ |
| (74) | bāārā | ‘young woman’ (f) | bāārā-s | ‘women’ |
| | nyākū | ‘young man’ (m) | nyākū-s | ‘young men’ |
| | báádù | ‘younger sibling’ (m) | báádù-s | ‘siblings’ |
| | kátşí | ‘yam’ (m) | kátşí-s | ‘yams’ |
| | uutñ | ‘rat’ (m) | uutñ-s | ‘rats’ |
| | | | (def. sg. formally identical) | |

5.3.6 Gender in demonstratives

In demonstratives, default gender is marked by **-z** (for masculine and plural referents) and feminine gender is marked by **-nì** (for feminine referents).

- | | | | | |
|------|---------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| (75) | hàà-z | ‘this, these M’ | yī-z | ‘that, those M’ |
| | hàà-nì | ‘this, F’ | yī-nì | ‘that F’ |

Here are two sentential examples:

- | | | | |
|------|-----------------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| (76) | gōōsū | hàà-z | wùt = á-k-ə |
| | calabash | <u>PROX-M</u> | fall = 3MS-REAL-STI |
| | ‘This calabash has fallen.’ | | |

- | | | | | |
|------|---------------------------------|------------------|-----------|-----------|
| (77) | bây | é-k-ī-nī | īñ | tə |
| | woman | there-LCT-DIST-F | who | COP[Q] |
| | ‘Who is that woman over there?’ | | | |

5.3.7 Gender in relative clauses

Relative clauses are marked by the relative clause marker **-əb** ~ **-àb** when the referent of the clause is masculine (79) or plural (80). In relative clauses with a feminine referent, the marking is **əbe** ~ **àbe** (81). Because of the tone 2 on the final syllable, it is assumed that **be** derives from ‘mother’.

- (78) **şóóʒ nata tə-k-ə há-ge-b sàm**
 snake 1SG COP-REAL-STI 3MS-say-REL remain:DS
 ‘The snake who said “It’s me” remained behind;...’
- (79) **akn sàm-àb fyāānū-s-kn zéenʃ kī-ít-ə**
 here remain-REL frog-PL-DAT well exist-PL.ADDR-STI
ge-tə...
 say-SS
 ‘(she) said “stay well!” to the frogs who remained there and...’
- (80) **gōnà íʃ-ka dààn-tə há = ?àʔ-əbe**
 yesterday 3FS-WITH be.together-SS 3MS = dance-REL.mother
bààrn-əra ha = see-kì
 maiden.F.DEF-ACC 2SG = see.NV-exist. [Q]
 ‘Do you see the girl with whom he danced yesterday?’

Relativised adjectives are marked identically:

- (81) **ʃād-ŋ-s-əb-əra na-ŋ ats-ə**
 be.long-DEF-M-REL-ACC 1SG-DAT give-STI
 ‘Give me the long one(s) (m/pl)!’
- (82) **túún hàà-nì zéen-be**
 spring PROX-F be.good.F.DEF-REL.mother
 ‘This spring is a good one (f)!’

5.3.8 A gender mismatch in compounds

bāāb ‘father’ and **bé** ‘mother’ are frequently used as second element of compounds. Among others, they form ‘possessor of’ nouns (section 5.5.5). The ‘mismatch’ between masculine (default) and feminine gender appears when constructions with **bāāb** ‘father’ and **bé** ‘mother’ as second element are made definite. When **bāāb** ‘father’ is made definite, the compound becomes ungrammatical; instead, **bé** ‘mother’ plus masculine definiteness-gender marking is used. Thus in (84) below the odd one out is the masculine definite form in (b).

- (83) a. **ēkī bàāb** money father
 ‘rich man’
- b. **ēkī bey-ŋ-s** money mother-DEF-M
 ‘the rich man’

- | | | | |
|----|---|----|--|
| c. | ēkī be
money mother
‘rich woman’ | d. | ēkī bey-ñ
money mother.F-DEF
‘the rich woman’ |
|----|---|----|--|

Below, two sentential examples are given. Sentence (85) illustrates definiteness with feminine gender, sentence (86) with masculine gender. Evidently, the meaning of **bé** ‘mother’ is sufficiently bleached in this context to allow masculine gender agreement.

- (84) **íntfù hà-ñ tūrà bey-ñ tə-k-ə**
 wood PROX-F shadow mother.F-DEF COP-REAL-STI
 ‘This tree here is shadow-giving.’
- (85) **āftù bey-ñ-s kōm-s-əra há = gasku-k-ə**
 dinking mother-DEF-M chief.DEF-M-ACC 3MS = insult-REAL-STI
 ‘The drunkard insulted the chief.’

The case given above is the only place in the Sheko language where feminine gender (**bé** ‘mother’) is used with both feminine and masculine nouns. Is it a trace of a historical shift from feminine to masculine as the default gender? Alternatively, the gender mismatch could just be an ideosyncrasy in compounding. On the other hand, compounds may keep old morphological possibilities which are lost or regularized elsewhere in the languages, due to their conceptualization as single word constituents. Another possible trace for such a shift is reported for Benchnon, the geographical neighbor of Sheko. In Benchnon, the present-day default gender is masculine, but the plural demonstratives are more similar to the feminine gender than to the masculine (Rapold 2006:389). While it may be imprudent to draw conclusions from such small facts, they may contribute to the discussion about gender in (Proto-)Omotic. The gender situation for Proto-Omotic is not clear, since present-day Omotic languages vary in their treatment of gender. For some languages, gender is reported to be non-grammatical, i.e. only some words display inherent gender based on biological distinctions (Bender et al. 1976:36). Other languages have feminine gender as a default gender, e.g. Maale (Azeb 2001a:45) and Zayse (Hayward

1990b:248), whereas yet others, like Sheko, have masculine gender as default gender.

5.3.9 Third person gender distinction

In this section, pronouns and other referential suffixes are discussed in relation to gender only. For the full picture see chapter 6.

The independent subject pronouns are given in (87).

- | | | | | |
|------|-------------|-------|-------------|----------------|
| (86) | nata | ‘I’ | náta | ‘we’ |
| | yeta | ‘you’ | ítí | ‘you (plural)’ |
| | áz | ‘he’ | íñi | ‘they’ |
| | íʒ | ‘she’ | | |

From the above list, it is clear that gender is only distinguished in the third person singular. However, it is possible to express gender with a second person singular by using an additional demonstrative (88). Furthermore, the vocative pronouns distinguish gender (89).

- (87) **hà-nì yeta fíkàb-tà yəg-ə**
 PROX-F 2SG podium-LOC come-STI
 ‘You here (female) come to the podium!’

- (88) **ɲna** ‘hey you (m)
ɲnya ‘hey you (f)’

In possessor prefixes and in subject coindexing clitics on verbs, gender is again only distinguished in the third person singular. The examples below illustrate both. For more information, see section 6.1.1.

- (89) **há-ʃèèmà bàrtʃ’ùʃ = á-k-ə**
3MS.POSS-cloth wash = 3MS-REAL-STI
 ‘He has washed his clothing.’

- (90) **yí-ʃèèmà bàrtʃ’ùʃ = í-k-ə**
3FS.POSS-cloth wash = 3FS-REAL-STI
 ‘She has washed her clothing.’

5.4 Number

Number is partially marked on nouns. When the default gender marker **-s** occurs without definiteness marker, reference is made to a plural referent. The marker **-s** occurs with gender suffixes **-ù** (m) and **-ì** (f) in some cases. Plural formation excludes definiteness marking. Nouns can also suffix the associative plural marker **-onka**, which occurs mostly with kinship terms.

Demonstratives do not mark number, as the default gender marker serves for masculine singular as well as for plural referents. The same is true for the nominalizer **bāāb** ‘father’. Neither do relative clauses mark plurality of the referent. A relative clause with a referent which is masculine or plural is marked with **-əb**, (allomorphs **-àb** ~ **-b**) and a relative clause with a feminine referent is marked by **-əbe** (allomorphs **-àbe** ~ **-be**). This is illustrated in (92)-(94). Thus, relative clause marking does not distinguish number.

- (91) **ŋ-noogù-ra** **t’ùùs-əb** **yaab** **tə-ŋ**
 1SG.POSS-word-ACC know-REL man COP-DS
 ‘it is a man who knows my issues...’
- (92) **sāāyà** **mààk-əbe** **dèyg-ŋ** **yəg=í-k-ə**
 fable tell-REL.mother child.F-DEF come = 3FS-REAL-STI
 ‘The girl who told a story has come.’
- (93) **màndār-k’à** **kāās-kì-b** **dàws** **gókú-ka**
 village(Amh)-IN play-exist-REL children Sheko-WITH
íŋi=nòn-kì-k-ə
 3PL=talk-exist-REAL-STI
 ‘The children who play in the village speak Sheko.’

Adjectives can indicate plurality of referents by reduplication.

Furthermore, 1PL, 2PL and 3PL persons are distinguished in the paradigms of pronouns, verbal subject clitics and possessor affixes on nouns.

Indication of plurality of a referent is pragmatic in nouns and adjectives, i.e. plural marking is only used in contexts where the speaker wants to refer explicitly to more than one referent. An unmarked noun or adjective can refer to one or more referents depending on the context.

5.4.1 Number and gender in nouns

The relation between gender and number is discussed immediately above as well as in section 5.1. To reiterate what has been said so far, the ‘singular’ definite form as well as the unmarked form are in fact transnumeral, i.e. these forms can refer to one or more referents (Biermann 1982).

Example (95) gives some nouns referring to single entities. Evidence for transnumerality is given in examples (96)-(97) and (98), where it is clear from the context that there are several stones involved, since they are piled, and many feathers. The examples show that unmarked as well as definite nouns can refer to more than one referent.

- (94) **yí=tòs-àb** **tòsà** **náánú-ka**
 3FS = storytell-REL story elder.brother-COOR
báádù-ka **èjntà** **há=mààkù-k-ə**
 younger.brother-COOR MOTIVE 3MS = tell-REAL-STI
 ‘The story that she told tells about an elder and a younger brother.’
- (95) **ʃēʔi-ra** **haaku-tə** **yéb-m-s** **ʔyan-ŋ-s-k'à**
stone-ACC pick-ss man-DEF-M pot-DEF-M-IN
goom-tə
 pile-ss
 ‘she picked stones and stacked them in the man’s pot...’
- (96) **ʃēʔ-ñ-ʃ** **báákù-tà-bàb** **yis** **dufu-tə**
stone-DEF-M firestones-LOC-father DIST.M hit-ss
ás-a **gyèw-bàr-ñ**
 3MS-ACC chew-throw.away-DS
 ‘... those stones above the fire struck and finished him off;...

- (97) **íʒ** **háánháánùbe** **bìy-əra** **yaafu-tə**
 3FS bird.of.prey.mother feather-ACC find-ss
p'úć'a **kòy-tə** ... **háánháánùbe**
 many.ELAT bring-ss bird.of.prey.mother
bìy-ñ-s-a **ás-kh** **àts-ñ**
feather-DEF-M-ACC 3MS-DAT give-DS
 'she found feathers of a *haanhaanube* bird and brought a lot and (...) and gave the bird's feathers to him;...'

The word **òtì** 'cow' can also refer to 'cattle' and **yááb** 'man, person' likewise can refer to 'men' or 'people'.

- (98) **ń-òtì-ra** **há = wùnk'-ùt'-ùb** **èsñtà**
 1PL.POSS-cow-ACC 3MS = steal-PASS-REL MOTIVE
há = ts'yast'u-k-ə
 3MS = tie.PASS-REAL-STI
 'He was imprisoned because of his stealing our cattle.'
- (99) **yááb** **màndār** **kaarì** **íʃi = k'òr-t'-ā-m-ə**
man village(Amh) towards 3PL = beg-PASS-put-IRR-STI
 'People/men from the neighborhood will be asked.'

Plurality of referents can be indicated in the following way:

To form a plural, the default gender marker for nouns **-s** is suffixed to the noun (due to sibilant harmony rules it may change to **-ʃ** or **-ʂ**). If there is no definiteness marker, the noun refers to a plural referent. Thus, definiteness marking and plural marking exclude each other. N.B. If the noun ends in a syllabic nasal, the distinction between a definite masculine and a plural form disappears.

- | (100) <i>unmarked</i> | <i>plural</i> | <i>definite</i> |
|----------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| ?yants'à 'bee' (f) | ?yants'à-s 'bees' | ?yayh 'the bee' |
| kóbtʃ'à 'roof beam' | kóbtʃ'à-ʃ 'roofbeams' | kóbtʃ'ñʃ 'the roofbeam' |
| gōydù 'guereza' | gōydù-s 'guerezas' | gōyd-ñ-s 'the guereza' |
| kōʂñ 'field' | kōʂñ-ʂ 'fields, the field' | |
| gúʃá 'porcupine' | gúʃá-ʃ 'porcupines, the porcupine' | |

In addition, a small group of nouns ending in a consonant takes a gender suffix when the noun refers to a plural referent. Masculine (default) is indicated by the suffix **-ù** and feminine by the suffix **-i** (102), followed by the default gender marker **-s**.

(101)	<i>unmarked</i>	<i>plural</i>	<i>definite</i>
	tóóz ‘relative’	tóóz-ù-s ‘relatives’	tóózùs ‘the relative’
	bây ‘mother’	bây-i-s ‘mothers’	bâyù ‘the mother’

Morphologically, Sheko makes a three-way distinction, where logically there are four possibilities (singular indefinite and definite as well as plural indefinite and definite referents). The glosses in (101) and (102) reflect only the first intuitive translation. In context, however, different translations may be possible, since definiteness and number are not obligatorily marked. This is illustrated for definiteness in section 5.2.2 (see example (19)) and for number in this section (see examples (96)-(98) above). Thus, the unmarked form covers all four logically possible referents, the form marked for definiteness covers all definite referents and the third form covers all plural referents.

Mass nouns can form a plural like other nouns. In the case of mass nouns, reference is made to a quantity of X or a number of containers full of X.

(102)	ūk’ū ‘milk’	ūk’ū-s ‘some litres/tins of milk’
	tākā ‘mead’	tākā-s ‘some litres/bottles of mead’
	yéngí ‘firewood’	yéngí-s ‘some bundles of firewood’

The noun ‘child’ has an irregular plural **dāws** ~ **dōōs** ‘children’, next to a regular plural form **dadu-s**. ‘child’ has also slightly irregular definite forms: **dād-ñ-s** ~ **dēd-ñ-s** ‘the boy’ and **dāygñ** ~ **dēgñ** ‘the girl’.

Plurality is not indicated on the noun when a quantifier follows the noun.

- (103) **dādū p'útʃá ɲ=nyààs-ɲ**
 child many 1SG = give.birth-DS
 'I have given birth to many children;...'

The other Majoid languages Diizi and Nayi have some plural markers with a **k** formative, unlike Sheko. Diizi has an optional plural marker **-(a)ke** as well as a marker **k'anɲkaz** (Beachy 2005:60f). In Nayi, there is a plural marker **-kis**, which is suffixed to nouns and adjectives when the referent is plural (105). Furthermore, **-kis** is part of pronouns with plural referents (106), (Aklilu 1994a:602-607).

- (104) a. **dòdò** 'boy' **dòdù-kis** 'boys'
 yä:b 'person' **yä:b-kis** 'persons'
- b. **got'n-is-kis**
 white-DEF-PL
 'the whites (m)'
- cf. **got'n** 'become white'
- (105) **nà** 'I' **nákis** 'we'
 yeta 'you' **ítíkis** 'you (pl)'
 isi 'he' **?uʃkuʃ** 'they'
 ifi 'she'

5.4.2 Associative plural

There is an associative plural suffix **-onka**. An epenthetic glide **w** is inserted if the suffix follows a terminal vowel. Some speakers have a variant **-(n)onko**. The suffix is mainly used with kinship terms.

The last syllable **-ka** of the associative plural marker **-onka** is formally similar to the coordinator **-ka** 'and'. It may be dropped when (dative) case marking is suffixed.

- (106) **íʃ-àkù-won-kɲ** **gātsɲ-kì-b**
 3PL.POSS-grandfather-ASS-DAT help-exist-REL
- náán-onka** **tə-k-ə**
 ELDER.BROTHER-ASS COP-REAL-STI
- 'Those who help their grandparents are the elder brothers.'

Semantically, **-onka** can denote plurality, i.e. two or more of the entity, but also ‘acquaintance’ i.e. the entity and those associated with it (108)-(109). The associative plural can also be attached to the question word **ĩtĩ** ‘who’ (110).

- (107) **m-bayd-ñ-onka-ra** **ñ-see-k-ə**
 1SG.POSS-younger.sibling.F-DEF-ASS-ACC 1SG-see.NV-REAL-STI
 ‘I saw my little sisters.’
 ‘I saw my little sister(s) and those associated with her.’

- (108) **m-bayñ-onko yí-datà** **tee-feej-tə**
 1SG.POSS-wife-ASS 3FS.POSS-near.LOC go.NV-spend.day-SS
 ‘My wife and her friends spent the day with her and...’
 ‘My wives...’

- (109) **p’et’ros-onka ĩtĩ-wonka** **kááy=ĩfĩ-k-ə**
 Pexros-ASS who-ASS be.not = 3PL-REAL-STI
 ‘Peter and his companions, who else, they were not present.’

Younger people seem to be more liberal in their use of **-onka**; it may be suffixed to nouns that do not refer to human beings (e.g. **géék’ùwonka** ‘goats’). This was not accepted by elder language consultants. Nevertheless, one youngster said even **wuk’yanos-onka** ‘oceans’ spontaneously when talking about names of countries, rivers and oceans on a globe (< Amh **wuk’yanos** ‘ocean’).

According to some speakers, **-s** and **-onka** can be combined after some nouns as shown in the last line of (111). However, the language consultants did not agree on what difference in meaning it could give, neither for which words the combination is possible.

- (110) **báádù** ‘younger sibling’
báád-onka ‘younger siblings’
báádù-s ‘younger siblings’
báádù-s-onka ‘younger siblings’

5.4.3 Adjectives and plurality

Adjectives can indicate plurality by reduplication. Either the initial CV or the stem is reduplicated (112). Furthermore, adjectives can add the relative clause marker **-əb** and then either follow the pattern of relative clauses or reduplicate for plural reference (113).

(111)	masculine	feminine
SG	sūb-ṁ-s be.red-DEF-M 'red, red one'	sū<y>b-ṁ be.red<F>-DEF 'red, red one'
PL	sū-sūb-ṁ-s PLUR-be.red-DEF-M 'red, red ones' ~ sūb-sūb-ṁ-s	sū-sūyb-ṁ PLUR-be.red.F-DEF 'red, red ones' ~ sūyb-sūyb-ṁ

(112)	í-ʔíík-ń-s-əb <u>PLUR</u> -be.old-DEF-M-REL oti-ra cow-ACC 'It's those old people who tying them were keeping cattle.'	yaab man k'iits'u-an-ki-b tie.cattle-put-exist-REL	yīs DIST.M tə COP
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Reduplication is also used with other word categories, denoting pluractionality (see section 3.3). Here is an example of verb reduplication:

(113)	ḍimbērì boundary(Amh)	sàskù-tə arrive.CAUS-SS	íntfù wood	dàrk'ùs-dàrk'ùs-tə <u>PLUR</u> -chop.off.CAUS-SS
	às-tà PROX.M-LOC	kaarì toward	íntfù wood	bùtù-tə throw-SS
	'...making a boundary, they chopped branches into pieces and threw the wood towards it...'			

One day I asked a language informant how you could know whether someone meant a single or multiple referents when uttering (115). He said: 'By looking, of course.' Reduplication is not frequent and is probably only used when it is judged important in a certain context.

- (114) **fād-n̄-s-əb-əra** **na-ŋ** **ats-ə**
be.long-DEF-M-REL-ACC 1SG-DAT give-STI
‘Give me the long one(s)’

5.4.4 Number and person

Regarding number in pronouns, possessor affixes and subject clitics, it is noteworthy that the difference between first person singular and first person plural is purely tonal. The full independent pronouns are given here for convenience. For the affixes and clitics, see section 6.1.1.

- (115) **nata** 'I' **náta** 'we'
 yeta 'you' **ítí** 'you plural'
 áz 'he' **íʃi** 'they'
 íʒ 'she'

Additionally, there is a plural addressee marker **-ít**, which is clearly related to the second person plural morpheme. It occurs on imperatives:

- (116) a. **dúf**
hit
'Hit!'
- b. **dúf-ít**
hit-PL.ADDR
'Hit (pl)!'

5.5 Noun derivation and compounding

5.5.1 Verbal nominal

A verbal nominal form can be derived from all verbs by a final vowel **-a** and a characteristic 4.1 tone pattern.

- (117) **fin** 'descend' **finà** 'to descend'
kees 'ascend' **kéésà** 'to ascend'
tág 'go' **tágà** 'to go'
duf 'hit' **dúfà** 'to hit'
óótʃ 'ask' **óótʃà** 'to ask'
bángár 'return' **bángàrà** 'to return'
fin-s 'lower' (caus) **fínsà** 'to lower'

The verbal nominal is used mostly to emphasize the activity denoted by the verb. It is provisionally glossed *INF* for infinitive, but its status awaits further research. Examples (119)-(122) all have a cognate object construction with the verbal nominal. Note that some verbs have a cognate noun as well, e.g. **óskú** ‘call’. These cognate nouns are discussed in section 5.5.2 below.

- (118) **óskà** **ɲ=òsk-ɲ** **há=nata-ra** **òy-k-ə**
call.INF 1SG = call-DS 3MS-1SG-ACC deny-REAL-STI
 ‘I rang and rang but it refused me’ (Context: the phone was out of order.)

- (119) **īsñ-ērā** **ha=kààf-mtǎ** **k’éét’à** **gúúrú**
 beehive-ACC 2SG = build-COND swallow.INF only
t=á **k’ēēt’ū-tə** **há=tʃ’ōr-f-ā-m**
 COP = 3MS swallow-SS 3MS = finish-CAUS-put-IRR
 ‘if you build beehives (in a forest where a badger lives), he will only eat and finish.’ (Lit:...only eating it is that he eats and finishes.)

- (120) **tógà** **ɲ=téé-m** **há=ge-ɲ**
go.INF 1SG = go.NV-IRR 3MS = say-DS
 ‘“I will go,” he said;...’ (Context: although warned not to go, a boy wants to go.)

- (121) **nat-nâ** **bóózà** **ɲ=bòòs-kì-k-ə**
 1SG-or.Q walk.INF 1SG = walk-exist-REAL-STI
 ‘Me? I am just walking/taking a stroll.’ (Context: response to the question ‘Where are you going to?’)

Example (123) has a nominal with an object. However, its tone implies it is a noun rather than a verbal nominal like the ones illustrated in this section. There is partial overlap between verbal nominals and cognate nouns, since some cognate nouns ending in **a** have a 4.1 tone pattern as well, (as illustrated in section 5.5.2 immediately below).

- (122) **kútʃi** **búutʃá-rā** **út-ér=í-kì-k-ə**
 chicken plucking-ACC like-NEG = 3FS-exist-REAL-STI
 ‘She doesn’t like the plucking of a chicken.’ / ‘...to pluck a chicken?’

5.5.2 Cognate verbs and nouns

Nouns which have cognate verbs may end in any of the attested terminal vowels, **a**, **i**, **u**, and syllabic nasal. They have one of the following tone patterns: 4.1, 4.4, 3.1, 3.3 or 2.1, and thus look like other ‘ordinary’ nouns, with the exception that pattern 1.3 is not attested so far. From the data available it is not possible to say which way the derivation goes. It is also not possible to predict the tone of the verb from the noun or the tone of the noun from the tone of the verb, although for H verbs, the corresponding noun does only rarely have 3.1 or 2.1 patterns.

Example (124) lists nouns with a terminal vowel **a**, example (125) those with **i**, example (126) those with **u** and example (127) those with a syllabic nasal.

(123)	<i>noun</i>		<i>verb</i>
	gábà	‘gossip’	gab ‘gossip’
	kéwà	‘shout’	kyaw ‘shout’
	k’ófà	‘value’	k’of ‘guess, estimate’
	údǵà	‘darkness’	udǵ ‘darken (of night)’
	ǵáskà	‘insult’	ǵásk ‘insult’
	kááǵà	‘joy’	kááǵ ‘be happy’
	kóbtǵà	‘roof beam’	kóbtǵ ‘make roofbeams’
	ǵáánà	‘baldness’	ǵán ‘become bald’
	ǵú?à	‘rest, chapter’	ǵú? ‘rest’
	árà	‘brains, thought’	ár ‘think’
	íríǵà	‘ululation’	íríǵ ‘ululate’
	búúǵǵá	‘plucking’	búúǵǵ ‘pluck (a chicken)’
	dúúfá	‘blow’	dúf ‘hit’
	káámá	‘flame’	káám ‘be lit’
	k’íǵá	‘drink’	k’íǵ ‘drink’
	nííná	‘kiss’	nín ‘kiss’
	óótǵá	‘question’	óótǵ ‘ask’
	órá	‘wet dung’	ór ‘urinate’
	ǵúúfá	‘smell’	ǵúúf ‘smell (of flowers)’
	ǵúúmá	‘thirst’	ǵúm ‘be thirsty’
	wóóts’á	‘bite’	wóóts’ ‘bite’
	ááǵá	‘standing’	ááǵ ‘stand’

	bāārā	‘young woman’	bārm	‘become adult (f)’
	bōtā	‘mortar’	bōtñ	‘pound’
	k’ēdā	‘oath’	k’ed	‘swear’
	ḡāārà	‘song’	ḡaar	‘sing’
	tōsā	‘fable’	tos	‘storytell’
	āynā	‘desire, wish’	āyñ	‘ponder, worry’
	oorà	‘snare’	oor	‘set a snare’
(124)	<i>noun</i>		<i>verb</i>	
	ṭṣ’át’i	‘top ring on grass roof’	ṭṣ’ád	‘pin, nail’
	fáádí	‘number’	faad	‘count’
	nááší	‘honor, praise’	naaş	‘thank, honor’
	bórí	‘curse’	bór	‘curse (revocable)’
	ḡáání	‘judgment’	ḡaan	‘judge’
	k’ūdi	‘stop’	k’ud	‘cover’
	ḡēēnī	‘gourd sp.’	geen	‘pour with cup’
	t’ūūsī	‘knowledge’	t’uus	‘know’
	zūḡī	‘infertile’	zūḡñ	‘become infertile’
	māādī	‘lie, deceit’	mád	‘deceive’
	ūtī	‘love’	út	‘love’
	ayì	‘dance’	ay	‘dance’
(125)	<i>noun</i>		<i>verb</i>	
	bégù	‘payment’	beg	‘pay’
	fáádù	‘hunger’	fādūs	‘make hungry’
	ḡútù	‘strangling’	ḡūtñ	‘strangle’
	nóógù	‘matter, word’	noḡ	‘talk’
	kárbú	‘strength’	karb	‘be strong’
	hárkú	‘taboo’	hark	‘respect a taboo’
	ṭṣ’údú	‘saliva’	tṣ’ud	‘spit’
	óşkú	‘call’	oşk	‘call’
	íntsú	‘heavyness’	ints	‘be heavy’
	óórú	‘urine’	ór	‘urinate’
	şúşkú	‘weed’	şuşk	‘weed’
	şónk’ú	‘lie’	şonk’	‘lie’

gātsù	‘start’	gad	‘start’
gēēt̚sù	‘laughter’	geet̚s	‘laugh’
kāāsù	‘game’	kaas	‘play’
tūūt̚sù	‘knot’	tuut̚s	‘knot’
ts’āfù	‘writing’	ts’af	‘write’ (< Amh)
bēēzū	‘sprout’	bez	‘sprout, grow’
nāārū	‘wind’	nārbm̄	‘blow’
nyākū	‘young man’	nyākñ	‘become adult (m)’
šūbū	‘death’	šúb	‘die’
tāāfū	‘skirt of grass’	taaf	‘wear a <i>taashu</i> ’
wūnk’ū	‘theft’	wunk’	‘steal’
īnsū	‘pregnancy’	ins	‘be pregnant’
daabù	‘creation’	daab	‘create’
diik’ù	‘ointment’	diik’	‘anoint, paint’
dookù	‘roasting’	dook	‘roast (uncooked)’
gaap’ù	‘roasting’	gap’	‘roast with stones’
koosù	‘divination’	koos	‘divinate’
yiiǰù	‘pulling’	yiiǰ	‘pull out’
ziitù	‘cross’	ziit	‘hang, crucify’
p’ēep’ù	‘prayer’	p’ēép’	‘pray’
(126) <i>noun</i>		<i>verb</i>	
gīb̄m̄	‘struggle’	gibm	‘struggle’
kúys̄n̄	‘drizzle’	kuysn	‘drizzle’
t̚ʃ’əb̄m̄	‘stake, post’	t̚ʃ’əbm̄	‘plant a post’
t̚ʃ’ád̄n̄	‘war’	t̚ʃ’ádñ	‘fight’
		(t̚ʃ’ád	‘pierce’)
ʒáp’m̄	‘lamp’	ʒap’m̄	‘shine’
ʃáádñ	‘length’	ʃád	‘be long’
ʃúfñ	‘smell’	ʃúúf	‘give off smell’
ʔyázñ	‘ability’	ʔyáz	‘be able’
dōr̄n̄	‘race’	door	‘run’
ʃōr̄n̄	‘fear’	ʃor	‘be afraid’

kōṣṇ	‘farmland’	kooṣ	‘farm, till’
sīp’ṁ	‘awl’	siip’	‘sew’
ʔyarkh	‘sweat’	ʔyārkh	‘sweat’

Some nouns are built on the passive stem (128), some others on the causative stem (129).

(127)	furt’ā	‘order’	furt’	‘obey’ ¹⁴
	kít’ñ	‘life’	ki	‘exist, live’
	mánt’á	‘braid’	mán	‘braid hair’
	umt’ā	‘food’	úm	‘eat’
(128)	atnsì	‘exercise’	ātñ	‘get used to’
	góygn̄sì	‘decoration’	gōygn̄	‘decorate’
	k’ábūs.ì	‘order’	k’ābūs	‘make obey, order’
	t’ép’sú	‘load’	t’ép’	‘carry’
	āysū	‘gestation’	ày	‘be covered’

Here are a few example sentences with some of the listed nouns:

- (129) **ñ-kòòsù** **yīs**
 1PL.POSS-divination DIST.M
 ‘This is our divination, these are our traditional practices.’

- (130) **wūnk’-ñ-s-əra** **há=gòtñ-s-k-ə**
theft-DEF-M-ACC 3MS-be.far.MIDD-CAUS-REAL-STI
 ‘He condemned the theft.’

- (131) **bāārā** **batà** **óótʃ’á** **na-ñ** **kì=á-k-ə**
 young.woman on.LOC question 1SG-DAT exist=3MS-REAL-STI
 ‘I have a question about young women.’

5.5.3 Compound nouns

Most compounds involve nouns. The second part of the compound undergoes the same tonal alternation as a head preceded by its modifier (section 9.1).

¹⁴ cf. **fuur** ‘trade’. Conceptually equal to Amh. **gāzza** ‘buy’ **tāgāzza** ‘obey’.

The examples (133) and (134) illustrate compounds of which both elements are known. The words in (134) are compounds whose parts are not neatly separated anymore. Long vowels have become short and the terminal vowel of the first word has been dropped.

- (132) **bōw kuṭṣu** 'hand palm' (**bōw** 'belly' & **kúṭṣú** 'hand')
bōw àṣkù 'liver' (**bōw** 'belly' & **āṣkū** 'meat')
yārbm̄ suku 'vein' (**yārbm̄** 'blood' & **súkú** 'rope')
gāātṣū kàfà 'bird sp.' (**gāātṣū** 'teff' & **kafà** 'bird')
ṣūbū bambù 'grave' (**ṣūbū** 'death' & **bambù** 'pit')
tyārbū bààbù 'largest-sized drum' (**tyārbū** 'drum' & **bāābū** 'male person')
ts'yāāts'ù bèngì 'hot season' (**ts'yāāts'ù** 'sun' & **bēngī** 'year')
ííru bèngì 'rainy season' (**ííru** 'rain' & **bēngī** 'year')
- (133) **kumusù** 'nape of neck' (**kum** 'neck' & **úúsù** 'bone')
 also **kum zira** (**zira** 'bottompart')
bazyaab 'neighbor' (**bazà** 'work' & **yááb** 'person')
gék'uku 'plant sp.' (**géék'ù** 'goat' & **kúkú** 'plant sp.')
būdày 'squash' (**būdà** 'pumpkin' & **haay** 'ear')
báydefà 'tree sp.' (**báy** 'mother' & **deefà** 'nut tree')

Example (135) illustrates compounds of which one or both parts are unknown elements.

- (134) **kaas aab** 'pupil' (? & **ááb** 'eye')
 also **ááb ts'āy-n-be** eye be.black.F-DEF-mother
gúgn̄ kàrà 'plant sp.' (? & **karà** 'leaf')
tyārbū tingi 'middle-sized drum' (**tyārbū** 'drum' & ?)
tyārbū tepà 'drum indicating the rythm' ('drum' & ?)

írñ?iṣà 'tree sp.' (? & ?)
k'árñkafà 'plant sp.' (? & ?)
bírkafà 'tree sp.' (? & ?)

Compound nouns can be distinguished from possessive noun phrases, such as **kúṭṣú k'ùmù** 'elbow (knee of the arm)', since possessive noun phrases can be paraphrased by the 'possessor

ascension construction’, with a dative case marker (136), (section 9.3); compound nouns cannot (137). Additionally, compound nouns consist of maximally two members, whereas possessive noun phrases may involve more than two members. Moreover, compounds are often semantically opaque (e.g. the meaning of the compound is more specific than its parts would suggest).

- (135) **kúťsú-k̀h** **k’ũmũ**
 hand-DAT knee
 ‘elbow’

- (136) ***bōw-k̀h** **kúťsú**
 belly-DAT hand
 ‘hand palm’

5.5.4 Compounds with **dādũ** ‘child’

Compounds with **dādũ** ‘child’ are nouns indicating members of a group.

- (137) **ǰāārà dādũ** ‘choir member’ (**ǰāārà** ‘song’)
 ŋ-tuurũ dādũ ‘fellow villager (**ŋ-tuurũ** ‘my-land’)
 šókú dādũ ‘Sheko (person)’
 yááb dādũ ‘human being’ (**yááb** ‘man, person’)

5.5.5 Compounds with **bāāb** ‘father’ and **bé** ‘mother’

bāāb ‘father’ and **bé** ‘mother’ are used in compounds and function frequently as nominalizer. **-bāāb** ‘father’ has an allomorph **-bāb** and **-bé** ‘mother’ has an allomorph **-bay** ~ **-bey**. These nouns nominalize a wide range of words, even case-marked NPs, and they form Irrealis relative clauses and verb complements. Interesting is the gender mismatch when the compounds are made definite. Nominalizations (at least relative clauses and verb complements) cannot be made definite. It is not clear whether adverbs, quantifiers and other modifiers can take the definiteness-gender marking. For the present, they are included under nominalizations.

Sheko is not the only Omotic language showing the grammaticalization of the terms for ‘father’ and ‘mother’. For

instance, the cognate forms of Sheko **baab** / **bé** show a similar behavior in the Omotic languages Dime and Bench. In Dime, agentive nominals are derived by **-bab** (with a H tone). The word for ‘father’ in Dime is **bábe** (Mulugeta 2008:58). In Benchnon, the geographical neighbor language of Sheko, **-bày** occurs in names of plants and animals, **bāb** and **bày** are used with the semantics of ‘owner’, and nouns and adjectives can be bases for a nominalisation process that suffixes **.u-bāb**, **u.bày** (Rapold 2006:213ff).

Compounds

bāāb ‘father’ and **bé** ‘mother’ form ‘possessor of’ nouns, denoting a person or entity characterized by what is mentioned in the first part of the compound (Elders 2006). ‘Possessor of’ nouns can be used to express ownership. Some examples are given in (139)-(141). Since there are many ‘possessor of’ nouns, and formation of these nouns appears to be productive, **bāāb** ‘father’ and **bé** ‘mother’ can also be viewed as derivational nouns.

- | | | | | |
|-------|--------------------|----------------|---------------|------------------------------|
| (138) | āftù bààb | ‘drunkard’ | āftù | ‘drunkenness’ |
| | íitʃi bààb | ‘sorcerer’ | íitʃi | ‘sorcery’ |
| | gági bààb | ‘enemy’ | gági | ‘revenge’ |
| | koosù bààb | ‘trad. leader’ | koosù | ‘divination’ |
| | wūnk’ū bààb | ‘thief’ | wūnk’ū | ‘theft’ |
| | ēkī bààb | ‘rich man’ | ēkī | ‘domestic animals,
money’ |

- (139) **íntʃù bààb dātà ɲ = téé-tə ɲ = á-s-a**
 wood father near.LOC 1SG = go.NV-SS 1SG = 3MS-ACC
óótʃ-á-m-ə
 ask-put-IRR-STI
 ‘I’ll go to the owner of the wood and ask him.’

- (140) **yī-nì úʃn be tə-k-ə**
 DIST-F flower mother COP-REAL-STI
 ‘This one has flowers.’ (Lit: this is a mother of flower.)

Furthermore, many plant and animal names are compounds with **-bé** ~ **-báy** as the second element. In most cases, the first

half does not occur without **-bé**, therefore the names are written as a whole.

- (141) **kúfɛ́mbe** ‘ant, sp. (tiny)’
háánháánùbe ‘bird of prey, sp.’
sántàbe ‘bird, sp.’
tʃíntʃíúbe ‘fly, sp.’
wōp’ɛ́mbe ‘chameleon’
ʃibe ‘water taro’
zúngúbey ‘plant sp. (with blue flowers)’
írkùbe ‘yam sp.’
óngúbay ‘yam sp.’

Gender mismatch

Noun phrases with **bāāb** ‘father’ or **bé** ‘mother’ as second element can be pluralized. Just like other nouns, the masculine (default) takes the suffixes **-ù-s** -m-PL and the feminine the suffixes **-ì-s** -f-PL.

- (142) a. **ēkī** **bààb-ù-s**
money father-m-PL
‘rich men’
b. **ēkī** **be-ì-s**
money mother-f-PL
‘rich women’

However, when masculine (default gender) noun phrases with **-bààb** are made definite, they take the feminine **bé** instead of **bāāb** but still add the masculine marker **-s** after the definiteness marker. Gender is evidently not straightforward in this type of definite noun phrases. Thus, in (144) below the odd one out is the masculine definite form in (b).

- (143) a. **ēkī** **bààb** b. **ēkī** **bey-ù-s**
money father money mother-DEF-M
‘rich man’ ‘the rich man’
c. **ēkī** **be** d. **ēkī** **bey-ì**
money mother money mother.F-DEF
‘rich woman’ ‘the rich woman’

Sentence (145) illustrates ‘the odd one out’. Evidently, the meaning of **bé** ‘mother’ is sufficiently bleached in this construction to allow non-feminine gender agreement. This phenomenon is discussed at length in section 5.3.8.

- (144) **āftù bey-ñ-s t=á gar-kì-kh**
 drinking mother-DEF-M COP = 3MS sing.drunkenly-exist-KNOWN
 ‘It’s the drunkard who is singing.’

5.5.6 Nominalizations with **bāāb** ‘father’ and **bé** ‘mother’

bāāb ‘father’ and **bé** ‘mother’ as nominalizers are attested following adverbs (146), time adverbials (147)-(148), quantifiers (148), numerals (149), manner ideophones (150), and question words (151).

- (145) **kōrù-bāāb-is kob**
 empty-father-DIST.M take
 ‘Take this empty one.’
- (146) **gōnà-bey-ra fey-bàr-kì=à**
 yesterday-mother-ACC forget-throw.away-exist = 2sg.Q
 ‘Did you forget yesterdays’?’
- (147) **únà-bàb-kh góri-tà āngā-bàb**
 long.ago-father-DAT head-LOC much-father
yaab kāy-ñ-s íñi = ?aman-k-ə
 man god-DEF-M 3PL = believe(Amh)-REAL-STI
 ‘Many more people than before believed in God.’
- (148) **ás-kh t’āāgñ-bàb yír-tə**
 3MS-DAT two-father what-COP[Q]
 ‘What is the second one?’
- (149) **dāfa-bāāb**
 slowly-father
 ‘a slow, careful one’

(150) **yírà-bààb**

what-father

‘what type, which one’

Only **-be** is acceptable after question words in negative sentences (152). This might be due to the semantics of the feminine gender, which can be used as a diminutive. The use of the feminine/diminutive form emphasizes that even the least of what might be expected did not take place.

(151) **yír-be-ra āts-ār = á-kì-k**

what-mother-ACC give-NEG = 3MS-exist-REAL

‘He didn’t give anything whatsoever.’

Intensifying ideophones and forms derived from adjectival verbs cannot enter this nominalization (153). The forms derived from adjectival verbs are already nominalized by the definiteness-gender marking and function as adjective. The particle **to** ‘only’ also cannot enter this nominalization.

(152) ***óŋŋoŋ-bààb**

IDEO[look.intently]-father

***ts’aans-bààb,**

be.black-DEF-M-father

***ts’áwà-bààb**

be.black-INF-father

Furthermore, **bāāb** ‘father’ and **bé** ‘mother’ function as nominalizers of case-marked NPs, such as for example (154)-(156). In (157), the word **yīstà** ‘at that’ without **-bààb** would be interpreted as referring to time (158) instead of location; the nominalization makes it possible to function as modifier of **ínŋ** ‘the tree’.

(153) **yàtñ-kñ-bààb ééz fòòt-ñ**

fox-DAT-father honey become-DS

‘the one of the fox had become honey;...’

- (154) **ʃē?-n-ʃ** **báákù-tà-bàb** **yīs** **dufu-tə**
 stone-DEF-M firestones-LOC-father DIST.M hit-SS
ás-a **gyèw-bàr-n**
 3MS-ACC chew-throw.away-DS
 ‘... those stones above the fire struck and finished him off;...’

- (155) **bazà-k’-à-bààb-a** **síís-ára** **kì-tə**
 work-IN-father listen-NEG exist-SS
 ‘not having heard what had happened at work,...’

- (156) **yīs-tà-bààb** **ínf-ŋ** **ááb-ara**
 DIST.M-LOC-father wood.DEF.M-DAT fruit-ACC
há = ʔum-t = á **kùʃù-k-ə**
 3MS = eat-SS = 3MS be.ill-REAL-STI
 ‘He ate berries of that tree and became ill.’

- (157) **yī-s-tà** **ínf-ŋ** **ááb-ara**
 DIST.M-LOC wood.DEF.M-DAT fruit-ACC
há = ʔum-t = á **kùʃù-k-ə**
 3MS = eat-SS = 3MS be.ill-REAL-STI
 ‘Then he ate berries of the tree and became ill.’

In addition, **bāāb** ‘father’ and **bé** ‘mother’ form verb complements of Irrealis clauses (159) as well as relative clauses (160)-(161). The semantics of the Irrealis can give a strong sense of obligation, as in (162).

- (158) **há-dēygñ** **támár-ñ-bààb-ara** **út-ára**
 3MS.POSS-child.F-DEF learn(Amh)-IRR-father-ACC like-NEG
há = kù-k-ə
 3MS = exist-REAL-STI
 ‘He doesn’t want his daughter to study.’

- (159) **hāāy-əra** **áz-k’-à** **ŋ = wōg-ūs-ñ-bàb** **ʔyaana**
 water-ACC 3MS-IN 1SG = sit-CAUS-IRR-father pot
 ‘a pot in which I can store water’

- (160) **dāws yīs-əra k'áám-m-bààb kááy**
 children DIST.M-ACC raise-IRR-father be.not
 'There is no one who will raise up the children.'

- (161) **hāāy-k'à ha = zut-ntà jēŋi batà**
 water-IN 2SG = trample-COND stone on.LOC
zút-ára ha = k'é-m-bààb-ee
 trample-NEG 2SG = remain-IRR-father-STI
 'If you step in the water, you must not step on the stone anymore'
 (Context: warning to use the right way to enter a magical house.)

6 Pronouns

Chapter 6 describes the personal pronouns and other pronominal forms found in Sheko, with the inclusion of pronouns of the Guraferda variant. Furthermore, this chapter treats reflexivity.

6.1 Personal pronouns

Personal pronouns distinguish number and gender. Gender is differentiated only in the third person singular. A logophoric pronoun has not been found. Hayward (2009:92) comments that South Omotic languages differ from North Omotic languages in not having such a pronoun.

6.1.1 Pronominal forms of Sheko

The first column of the table below illustrates the personal pronouns. All pronouns clearly have a basic form to which case markers can be added, as is evidenced by columns two (accusative **-əra**), three (instrumental **-ka**) and four (dative **-kñ**). For comparison, the last columns show the clitics used as person markers on verbs and the possessive prefixes on nouns, which are formally identical.

	S	DO	Instr	IO	subj. cl.	poss. pr.
1sg	nata	nata-ra	nata-ka	na-ŋ	ŋ =	ŋ-
2sg	yeta	yeta-ra	yeta-ka	ye-kñ	ha =	ha-
3ms	áz	ás-əra ~ ás-a	ás-ka	ás-kñ	há =	há-
3fs	íʒ	íʒ-əra	íʒ-ka	íʒ-kñ	yí =	yí-
1pl	náta	náta-ra	náta-ka	ná-ŋ	ń =	ń-
2pl	ítí	ítí-ra	ítí-ka	ítí-kñ	ítí =	ítí-
3pl	íʃi	íʃi-ra	íʃi-ka	íʃi-kñ	íʃi =	íʃi-

Table 1. Pronominals

Remarks on the table: first, the difference between 1sg and 1pl is purely tonal, as is the distinction between 2sg and 3ms in the clitic and possessive prefix.

Secondly, the sibilant in the third person pronouns is voiceless in non-nominative cases. The voicelessness could be explained as a result of a regular devoicing process preceding a voiceless stop in case of the dative **-kɪ** and instrumental **-ka** (see section 3.1). However, devoicing between two vowels in the accusative is inexplicable. Therefore, a non-nominative form **ás** / **íʃ** may be posited next to the form for the nominative.

Thirdly, the last syllable **ta** of the first person pronouns and the second person singular is omitted when the dative case is suffixed. I have no explanation why **-ta** is omitted with the dative case **-kɪ** and not with the accusative case **-əra**. A possible factor is that the accusative case marking is not obligatory (section 9.2.2), whereas the dative marking is obligatorily present. Bender (2000: 146; 200) already remarked that **-ta** in 1sg/pl and 2sg is possibly an old copula. The tone pattern supports this analysis because disyllabic nouns never end in tone 2. The other pronouns have tone patterns also found with nouns, whereas the pronouns with **-ta** do not fit.

Furthermore, the forms for 2pl and 3pl are also used as honorifics. Example (1) was uttered by an informant to a **kōmtū** traditional leader.

- (1) **yīs-əra** **ít = see-bàstà** **kaarì** **sáántà (...)**
 DIST.M-ACC 2PL = see.NV-WHILE toward front.LOC
 túúrù-ra **hāy-s-ṁ-bààb** **ítí** **gōntʃi**
 land-ACC hear-CAUS-IRR-father 2PL SIMIL
 fōōt-ṁ-bààb **ky = â**
 become-IRR-father exist = 3MS.Q
 ‘When you (polite) consider this, will there be someone like you (polite) in the future, who will ... govern the land?’

In texts, shorter forms of pronouns have been observed, without final vowel and lacking case markers. In (2) and (3), the pronouns are syntactically objects, but they are not suffixed with the accusative markers. In (4), the pronouns are in a coordinate construction and subject.

- (2) **há=k'ay-tə** **hàyn** **yet** **ɲ=gyā-m-ə** **na-ŋ**
 3MS = rise-SS IDEO 2SG 1SG = eat-IRR-STI 1SG-DAT
ats-ə **há=ge-ŋ**
 give-STI 3MS = say-DS
 'he rose and said: "Grr, I will eat you. Give (it) to me,"...'
- (3) **nat** **dāwā** **ge** **bútà** **nat** **zìfñ-tə**
1SG deer say outside 1SG chase-ss
 'calling me a deer you chased me outside...'
- (4) **yet-ka** **nat-ka** **t'āāgñ-àb** **tò**
2SG-COOR 1SG-COOR two-REL just
sam-a
 remain-IMPLC?
 'just the two of us are left...'

No investigation has been done on the differences between normal and shortened forms. These forms could be short just because of elision in connected speech, or they could constitute a separate set with its own distribution and semantics.

In addition to the pronouns given in table 1, two vocatives are attested (5), which are distinguished for gender. They can be used e.g. to call a person over a distance or, if not at a distance, to call a friend.

- (5) a. **ɲ-na**
 1-VOC.M
 'hey you (m)'
- b. **ɲ-nya**
 1-VOC.F
 'hey you (f)'

Vocatives consisting of names or titles are optionally marked by the form of the stance suffix. Moreover, a small group of kinship terms has a special vocative tone pattern. The vocative is discussed in section 5.3.4.

6.1.2 Guraferda pronouns

Some pronouns in the Guraferda variant are markedly different from the pronouns in table 1. These pronouns may be of interest for historical-comparative research and are therefore presented here. (Tone marking is only partly indicated, i.e. absence of tone marks means that the tone is not known in this section.)

(6)	Nom.	Accusative	Dative subj. clitic
1sg	yín	yinan(a) (yinn)	yíʔŋ ŋ =
2sg	yeta	yetana	yetn a =
3ms	ás	ásána	áskn á =
3fs	íʃ	íʃána	íʃkn í =
1pl	yín	yínán(a) (yinn)	yíʔn ń =
2pl	ítí	ítína	ítúk'n ít(í) =
3pl	ínì	ínàna	íník'n ín(í) =

The first person pronoun forms in the Guraferda variant resemble the Diizi pronouns **yínu** (1sg), **ínú** (1pl) as given in (Beachy 2005:53), rather than those in Sheko. In addition, the Guraferda 3pl form **ínì** resembles neither the Sheko nor the Diizi 3pl form, which is **íʃí** for both languages¹⁵.

The accusative marker in Guraferda Sheko is **-ana** (7a). For first person, shorter forms are attested, probably because of haplology (7b). Note the plural marker on the Imperative, which is **-nt**, as opposed to Sheko **-ít**.

- (7) a. **ás-ána ínì = k'yan-ase**
 3MS-ACC 3PL = beat-DECL
 'They hit him'
- b. **yín-án ʃey-aʃa** **k'é-nt**
 1PL-ACC forget-NEG remain-PL.ADDR
 'Don't forget us!'

¹⁵ The Diizi set of verbal person suffixes contains an **n** element for most persons, e.g. 3pl **-níʃo** (and allomorphs), but it is at present not clear whether / how to relate these forms. The Guraferda 3pl form **ínì** may also possibly relate to a feminine demonstrative, as the origin of other third person pronouns is often related to demonstratives (e.g. Bender (2000:4)).

The dative case marker is **-kn** or **-k'n**. The glottal element is preserved in the first person, while the 2sg person apparently only preserved the **-n** (8).

- (8) **yet-n n=ts'af-aka yeta yi?n**
 2SG-DAT 1SG=write(Amh)-COND 2SG 1SG:DAT
 a=ts'af-en-ky-a
 2SG=write-put-exist-Q
 'If I write you, will you write me?'

6.1.3 Enlivening quotative construction

In some texts, there is a sudden switch to first person, for example in (9) where the dog, which is disguised as a sheep, is first referred to by 3ms **há**= (second line) and subsequently by 1sg = **ŋ** (third line). This use of the first person is to dramatize or enliven part of a text. The presence of the verb **ge** 'say' points towards an analysis as quotative construction.¹⁶ **ge** 'say' is also present in example (10)-(11).

- (9) **yí=zūnkù te-k-e ge-t=í bōy-kòb-tə**
 3FS=sheep COP-REAL-STI say-SS=3FS drive-take-SS
 kōōkñ-tà sāw-b-tà há=wúwúwúw
 road-LOC arrive.NV-REL-LOC 3MS=IDEO
 ge-tə íŋ-èra wóóts'=ń ge-ñ
 say-SS 3FS-ACC bite=1SG say-DS
 'she drove (the dog), saying: "It is a sheep," and when she reached the road, he barked and wanted to bite her;...'

¹⁶ A normal quotative clause is different. Cf. **yeta-ra ŋ=wóóts'-á-m-ə há=ge-ñ** (2SG-ACC 1SG=bite-put-IRR-STI 3MS=say-DS) 'he said: "I will bite you." ' or **ŋ=wóóts'-ə há=ge-ñ** (1SG=bite-STI 3MS=say-DS) 'he said: "Let me bite." '

- (10) **k'òrk'òrò** **kì-ntà** **k'òrk'òrò**
 corrugated.iron exist-COND corrugated.iron
- ha = kōb-téé-tə** **ha = ?ínʃ** **bàtà** **dìnga**
 2SG = take-go.NV-SS 2SG = wood.DEF.M on.LOC round
- mìsmāri** **?án-t = a** **k'yár-á-m**
 nail put-SS = 2SG beat-put-IRR
- há = kēēs-ñ** **gé-k-bààstá** **há = ?ás-kn** **ʃíʃk-ñ-ʃ**
 3MS = go.out-1SG? say-exist?-WHILE 3MS = 3MS-DAT claw-DEF-M
- āāt-ārā** **k'é = n** **gé-m-ś**
 hold-NEG remain = 1SG say-IRR-STI.CONT
- há = fāyt'ū-t = á** **bángár-á-m**
 3MS = be.weak-SS = 3MS return-put-IRR
- 'If there are corrugated iron sheets, you bring them and nail them round on the tree. While he (the badger) thinks he can ascend, his claws say 'I can't hold' - he will be defeated and will return.'
- (11) **kōōk-ñ-s** **tʃór-ń-k'é = n** **ge-ñ** **fáádu**
 road-DEF-M finish-NEG2-remain = 1SG say-DS hunger
- íʃi-ra** **fādù-s-ñ**
 3PL-ACC be.hungry-CAUS-DS
- 'the road was endless and they got hungry;...' (Lit: the road said 'I am not ending'; hunger hungered them.)

6.2 Possessive pronouns

The last column in table 1 above shows the possessive affixes. These are commonly prefixed. They refer to the possessor.

- (12) **yí-naanu-ra** **dùùf = í-k-ə**
 3FS.POSS-elder.brother-ACC hit = 3FS-REAL-STI
- 'She hit her brother.'

Suffixation of the first person pronoun possessive takes place in vocative expressions (13).

- (13) **báb-m-o**
 father-1SG.POSS-STI.ADDR
- 'Oh my father'

Body parts and some other nouns usually do not prefix a possessive pronominal. Instead, a dative personal pronoun is used to denote the possessor. The difference between constructions with a possessive prefix and a personal pronoun is discussed in section 9.3.

- (14) **na-ŋ̃ āṣū ʃan=á-k-ə**
 1SG-DAT leg break = 3MS-REAL-STI
 ‘My leg is broken.’

There is no independent possessive pronoun form, but to express ‘mine’, ‘yours’ etc. the nominalizer **bāāb** ‘father’ / **bé** ‘mother’ is used after the dative pronoun.

- (15) **kòmpùtērì ye-kh-bàāb t̃ə**
 computer 2SG-DAT-father COP.Q
 ‘Is the computer yours?’

- (16) **yī-nì na-ŋ̃-bey**
 DIST-F 1SG-DAT-mother
 ‘That one (f) is mine.’

6.3 Reflexivity and ‘oneself’

To express reflexivity Sheko makes use of a personal pronoun. The pronoun is often accompanied by an intensifying noun phrase with **g̃erì** ‘head’ and the appropriate possessive prefix. **g̃erì** ‘head’ is not a reflexive pronoun itself. Evidence for this is the obligatory occurrence of an accusative personal pronoun, next to the intensifying **g̃erì** ‘head’ in examples (17) and (18).

- (17) **ha-g̃erì yəta-ra ha=k’ùts’ù-k-ə**
 2SG.POSS-head 2SG-ACC 2SG = cut-REAL-STI
 ‘You cut yourself.’

- (18) **bāābà há-gerì íj-kh gyābtà yīs-tà**
 father 3MS.POSS-head 3FS-DAT front.yard DIST.M-LOC
ás-a gùtù-t=á ʃub-m̃
 3MS-ACC hang-SS = 3MS die-DS
 ‘...the father hung himself there on her front yard and died,...’

góri ‘head’ is not necessary to express reflexivity, but without it a sentence may be ambiguous between a reflexive and non-reflexive reading. Sentence (19) can signify that the subject hangs himself or that he hangs somebody or something else.

- (19) **há = ʔás-a gùtù-k-ə**
 3MS = 3MS-ACC hang-REAL-STI
 ‘he hung himself’ / ‘he hung him/it’

A possessive reflexive is illustrated in (20):

- (20) **t’ùrēfà um-tə ífì-kh góri-k’à-bààb òtì um-tə**
 dowry(Amh) eat-SS 3PL-DAT head-IN-father cow eat-SS
 ‘... and ate the dowry and ate their own cow and ...’

The noun **gori** ‘head’, modified by the appropriate possessive prefix, occurs in non-reflexive contexts as well. Examples are given in (21)-(24).

- (21) **nata ɳ-gəri-k’erà ɳ = òšk-ntà éná**
 1SG 1SG.POSS-head-INCL 1SG = call-COND later.today
há = yēē-k’yán-á-m-ə
 3MS = come.NV-beat-put-IRR-STI
 ‘Even as I myself called, it would rain the same day.’

- (22) **ífi-gəri íf = bàzù-sàsk-àb tə-ñ**
 3PL.POSS-head 3PL = work-go.out.CAUS-REL COP-DS
 ‘it was what they made and produced themselves...’

- (23) **umt’à yí = kàtsù sàsk-ntà yí-gəri tò**
 food 3FS = cook arrive.CAUS-COND 3FS.POSS-head just
um-tə ás-kh tò am-peeʃ-tə àts-ñ
 eat-SS 3MS-DAT just put-spend.day-SS give-DS
 ‘... when she cooked food and brought it out she only ate herself and gave only to him (the father).’

- (24) **ha-gerì** **arà-k'a** **hààs-tà**
 2SG.POSS-head thought-IN PROX.M-LOC
ṛ = hāāy-ā-m-ə **ha = ge-ntà**
 1SG = spend.night-put-IRR-STI 2SG = say-COND
 ‘if you think by yourself “I’ll spend the night here”, ...’

The ‘intensifying’ **góri** ‘head’ is also used in contexts with a reciprocal reading. The verb is marked by the middle for reciprocity (see section 12.3.3).

- (25) **ánk'à** **íŋi-gerì** **íŋ = tʃ'ádñ-kì-k-ə**
 each.other 3PL.POSS-head 3PL = fight.MIDD-exist-REAL-STI
 ‘They fought among themselves’, ‘they themselves fought each other.’
- (26) **ítí-gərì** **ítí = t'ùs-ùs-ñ-kì**
 2PL.POSS-head 2PL = know-CAUS-MIDD-exist[Q]
 ‘Do you know each other?’, ‘Did you introduce yourselves to each other?’

7 Nominal and verbal modifiers

This chapter describes modifiers of nouns and verbs, namely demonstratives, adjectives, numerals, quantifiers and adverbs. Relative clauses are subsumed under complex clauses in section 11.4.

7.1 Demonstratives

This section treats basic, locational and directional demonstratives and the manner deictic together. The basic distinction is between proximal ('this', 'here') and distal ('that', 'there'), which are neutral with respect to elevation. In addition, elevation plays a role ('up there', 'downwards', etc.). The elevational deictics are adverbial but may semantically modify the noun. The manner deictic is adverbial as well. Furthermore, the non-deictic use of the basic demonstratives in temporal clauses and in anaphoric/ cataphoric referencing is exemplified.

7.1.1 Basic demonstratives

The basic distinction for locational deictics is between proximal **hàà** 'this' and distal **yī** 'that'. The demonstratives are inflected for gender. There is one form **-z** for the default gender (M), which refers to masculine as well as plural referents; the feminine form is **-ni**.

(1)		PROX	DIST
	M	hààz	yīz
	F	hààni	yīni

The demonstratives occur as free pronominal forms, but also as suffixes. If they are suffixed, the initial consonant is dropped (2). Impressionistically, suffixation is found mostly with the more grammaticalised (non-spatial) uses of the demonstratives, see section 7.1.2 immediately below. If not deictic spatial, the proximal occurs in some subordinate verb forms, and the distal is important in anaphoric/ cataphoric reference and indefinite specific reference.

- (2) -ààz ~ -ààs ~ -às -ààni
 -īz ~ -īs -īni

The next examples show the proximal and distal demonstrative forms used independently (3)-(6) as well as modifying nouns (7)-(9).

- (3) **yī-z** **yír-tə** **há = ge-ntà ...**
 DIST-M what-COP 3MS = say-COND
 ‘What this says is that...’

- (4) **yī-nì** **ʃík’ñ-be**
 DIST-F be.short.F.DEF-REL.mother
 ‘This is a short one (f).’

- (5) **há = nata** **gask-òb** **hààs** **sóg-ə**
 3MS = 1SG insult-REL PROX.M see-STI
 ‘Let who insulted me look at that.’

- (6) **hàà-nì-o**
 PROX-F-STI.ADDR
 ‘What about this one?’ (Context: commentary of a player on his good shot in a game of marbles.)

- (7) **gōōsū** **hàà-z** **wut = á-k-ə**
 calabash PROX-M fall = 3MS-REAL-STI
 ‘This calabash has fallen.’

- (8) **túún** **hà-nì** **zényz-ñ-be** **hàày** **tə-k-ə**
 spring PROX-F good.F-DEF-REL.mother water COP-REAL-STI
 ‘This spring is (gives) good water.’

- (9) **yīs-k̀n** **ādi-k'̀à** **é-ká**
 DIST.M-DAT footprint-IN there-LCT
faad-k'̀à-bààb in-j **yīs-ərá** **k'̀ōdām-m̄-s**
 body-IN-father wood.DEF-M DIST.M-ACC.CONT? qodama-DEF-M
yīs **há = gīṣū-kōb-t = á** **kē-s-ā-m-ə**
 DIST.M 3MS = pull-take-SS = 3MS go.out-CAUS-put-IRR-STI
 'After that, the *qodama* ointment pulls this wood which is there in the body and takes it out.'

When two items are set off against each other with respect to proximity, often the locational demonstrative **é-ká** 'over there' is used with a distal suffix instead of only the basic distal demonstrative **yīz** (10)-(11).

- (10) **hà-z** **kōōbū tə-k** **é-k-ī-z** **kútʃi te-k-ə**
 PROX-M cock COP-REAL there-LCT-DIST-M chicken COP-REAL-STI
 'This is a cock. Those there are hens.'
- (11) **dēygñ hàà-nì ...** **dēygñ é-k-ī-nì ...**
 girl PROX-F girl there-LCT-DIST-F
 'this girl... that girl over there...'

A demonstrative used deictically may be accompanied by a gesture such as pointing with a hand, or pursed lips and head slightly lifted in the pointing direction.

7.1.2 Non-deictic use of basic demonstratives

First the uses of the proximal are described and then the uses of the distal.

The proximal occurs in the following verb form: following a relative clause marked by **-(à)b**, the masculine proximal demonstrative **-ààs** and the general locative case marker **-tà** are suffixed. This form is used in stories to describe a setting or background for the main storyline events. It is frequently translated as 'while' or 'when'. Therefore, the whole of **-(à)b-ààs-tà** REL-PROX.M-LOC is glossed WHILE for ease of understanding and to avoid clumsy glossing. **-bààstà** WHILE has an allomorph **-bàstà** with a short vowel.

- (12) **íʒ yòk'a òrā-tà yí = tee-kootu-kī-bààstà**
 3FS INTJ garden-LOC 3FS = go.NV-wait-exist-WHILE
há = zūyñ-əra bààf-gyò-tə
 3MS = sheep.F.DEF-ACC slaughter-chew-SS
 'while she went and was waiting in the garden, he slaughtered and ate the ewe and ...'
- (13) **yí = k'aab-k-bààstà áz sàw-tə**
 3FS = pour-exist?-WHILE 3MS arrive.NV-SS
 'while she poured, he arrived and...'
- (14) **há = ?áz-k'à āngā zérkí hàày-tə**
 3MS = 3MS-IN much day spend.night-SS
há = kī-bàstà yí = bārkāy bààz-ʔum-tee-kī-t=í
 3MS = exist-WHILE 3FS = monkey search-eat-go.NV-exist-SS = 3FS
hàs-tà sàk-n
 PROX.M-LOC arrive-DS
 'when he had spent a long time in it (a pit), a monkey foraging for food reached the place...'

A few instances have been noticed where the distal suffix **-is** is used instead of the proximal.

- (15) **sagñ ʔyats'n há = sàw-àbààstà ás-kñ tááʒí**
 nine moon 3MS = arrive.NV-REL.WHILE 3MS-DAT beer
íʃi = k'íʃ-k-əb-is-tà sar = á-k íʃi = géé-m-ə
 3PL = drink-exist?-REL-DIST.M-LOC be.hot = 3MS-REAL 3PL = say-IRR-STI
 'While the ninth month arrives, when they drink its beer, they say: "It is hot." '

NB. The locative case **-tə** may also be suffixed directly to a relative clause, without intervening demonstrative. I analyse **-tə** in the context of 'while'-clauses as the locative case marker (and **-ààs** as demonstrative) analogous to other temporal adverbial clauses which employ relative clauses followed by locational noun phrases, as treated in section 11.5.1.

As for the distal demonstrative, in the time frame it denotes a sequence, i.e. that a certain event or state is over and a new one begins.

- (16) **yī-s-t=á** **yówk'a** **ééz-ñ-s-əra** **kéta**
 DIST-M-LOC = 3MS INTJ honey-DEF-M-ACC all
k'ēēt'-bār-ā-m
 swallow-throw.away-put-IRR
 'and then, well, he eats up all the honey'

Furthermore, the distal is used to refer anaphorically. The anaphoric reference can be associative (17). The distal can also refer to the previous in general (18).

- (17) **íntfù** **ky=ǎ-k-ə** ... **ínf** **yīs**
 wood exist = 3MS-REAL-STI wood.DEF.M DIST.M
íñi=sāskū-t=íñi **tēngì** **íñ=k'yar-àb-ís**
 3PL = arrive.CAUS-SS = 3PL tree.sp 3PL = beat-REL-DIST.M
ás-ka **íñi=kāf-tū-t=íñi** **dèb-t'-àb**
 3MS-WITH 3PL = cover-PASS-SS = 3PL bury-PASS-REL
 'There is a tree... They brought this tree and the *tengi* (bark) which they beat (was) what they were covered in and buried.'

- (18) **ǰát'ì** **kōš-t-ñ-bàb** **baakà** **āš-t-ñ-bàb**
 maize farm-PASS-IRR-father taro plant-PASS-IRR-father
kát'í **yān-t'-ñ-bààb** **yīs-ər=á** **səg-ñtā-ee**
 yam plant.yam-PASS-IRR-father DIST.M-ACC = 3MS see-COND-STI
 '...maize must be cultivated, taro must be planted, yam must be planted. Regarding this,...

The distal can refer to indefinite specifics (19) and generics (20).

- (19) **mizē** **gè-t'-àb-yīs** **nán** **mākā**
 best.man(Amh) say-PASS-REL-DIST.M 1PL-DAT best.man
tə-k-ə
 COP-REAL-STI
 'The one called *mize* is for us *maka*.' (Context: talking about best men and mediators in marriage customs.)

- (20) **gōmfā yīs háák'ástà há = gàngù-kì-k-ə**
 gomfa DIST.M now 3MS = fly-exist-REAL-STI
 'this *gomfa* bird is flying around now.' (Context: reference to the species, not to a specific bird.)

In addition, the distal is used in first-mentions, i.e. it refers cataphorically. The following examples come from the beginnings of two texts.

- (21) **háák'ástà ṁ = māāk-ñ-bààb-is únà hàs-kh**
 now 1SG = tell-IRR-father-DIST.M long.ago PROX.M-DAT
gātsù mārff kááy kī-b-tà hààkīm
 start needle lack exist-REL-LOC doctor
t'ūūs-t-ērē kī-b-tà há = gōmfā-ka
 know-PASS-NEG-STI exist-REL-LOC 3MS = gomfa-WITH
yàp-tù-kì-b k'ōdāmà ge-t'u-b-is
 find-PASS-exist-REL qodama say-PASS-REL-DIST.M
áás-ʔáás-t = á é-tù-t = á há = yááb
 PLUR-how-COP = 3MS do.NV-PASS-SS = 3MS 3MS = man
fāy-kìy yí = ge-b-is-əra yí = báđìgñ
 be.healthy-exist[Q] 3FS = say-REL-DIST.M-ACC 3FS = Badign
ootʃ-ṁ ṁ = māāk-ā-m-ə kī-b-is
 ask-DS.1SG 1SG = tell-put-IRR-STI exist-REL-DIST.M
 'What I will tell now, "long ago when there were no injections, when a doctor was not known, how did this which is called *qodama* which is found by a *gomfa* bird heal people?" Badign asked; I will tell that.'
- (22) **yòhānīs wòngèlì ás-kh şúʔà k'oy**
 Yohanis gospel(Amh) 3MS-DAT rest one
fyáádí kādū bātà-bààb-is ṁ = māāk-ā-m
 number three on.LOC-father-DIST.M 1SG = tell-put-IRR
 'I will talk about the gospel of John, chapter 1 verse 3.'

This use of the distal in Sheko could be related to a marker **-is** in Benchnon, which is glossed TOPIC, the role of which remains unexplained (see e.g. Rapold (2006:512) example 130, and Appendix 1, text 1).

Since the functions of **yīs** are diverse, there are some examples where two demonstratives occur in the same clause. In example (23), the first **yīs** modifies the noun **kōōṣṇ** ‘farm, field’ and the second is suffixed to the whole clause. In example (24), the proximal and distal are even used together.

- (23) **kōōṣṇ yīs há=kōṣ-t-ùb-is-ee tūrētà-kṇ**
 farm DIST.M 3MS = farm-PASS-REL-DIST.M-STI Tureta-DAT
há=kōṣ-t-ā-m-ə
 3MS = farm-PASS-put-IRR-STI
 ‘As for those fields which were farmed, for Tureta would be farmed.’

- (24) **hàz yī-s kētā sàm=á-k**
PROX.M DIST-M all remain = 3MS-REAL
 ‘All this is gone.’ (Context: Sentence is said after describing the use of *ṣaad*, a well where cows used to drink mineral water. The well was ritually cleaned every year, but has fallen into disuse.)

The distal shares the function of anaphoric reference with the definiteness-gender marking (see section 5.2.2). While the definiteness-gender marking occurs on (head) nouns, the referring distal occurs on NPs and relative clauses.

7.1.3 Locational demonstratives

The locational demonstratives are given in (25). Of the four locational demonstratives, **só** ‘up there’ is morphologically simple. For **akṇ** ‘here’ it is not clear whether it is one simple word or whether the dative case **-kṇ** is part of the word. **wó-** ‘down there’ occurs with **-ká** and the locative case marker **-tā**. **é-** ‘there’ occurs only with **-ká** in my data. The suffix **-ká** is restricted to these locational demonstratives. It is glossed LCT for ‘locative suffix’.

- (25) **akṇ** ‘here’
é-ká ‘there’
wó-ká ‘down there’
só ‘up there’

The locational demonstratives may occur independently or modifying a head noun. The following examples show the independent use.

- (26) **āts akñ**
give here
'Give here!'
- (27) **akñ hàà-z-tà yəg**
here PROX-M-LOC come
'Come here!'
- (28) **káfú é-ká bar-ə**
garbage there-LCT throw.away-STI
'Throw the garbage over there.'
- (29) **yeta fín-tə ha = ?é-k-ís-tà sak-ə**
2SG descend-SS 2SG = there-LCT-DIST.M-LOC arrive-STI
'you go down and arrive over there.'
- (30) **yí = tēē-bààstà wó-ká órá-tà téé-kī-n**
3FS = go.NV-WHILE down.there-LCT garden-LOC go.NV-exist-DS
'While she went, (he said:) "go and be down there in the garden; ..."'
- (31) **wó-tà há = yāf-t-ā-m-ə**
down.there-LOC 3MS = find-PASS-put-IRR-STI
'It will be found down there.'
- (32) **nyāās-t=a āng-ūs-t=a só ki-ee**
give.birth-SS = 2SG? be.big-CAUS-SS = 2SG up.there exist-STI
'...settle up there, giving birth and increasing.' (Context: the Sheko live in the hills rather than in the lowlands.)

The examples (33)-(35) illustrate the locational demonstratives **éká** and **akñ** modifying a noun. In this function, they prototypically follow the noun and carry a basic demonstrative suffix. (In)visibility does not play a role in the use of the locational demonstratives.

- (33) **kóóká é-k-īs dōngī-ka bóytà-ka**
 valley there-LCT-DIST.M Donzhi-COOR Boyta-COOR
kyākà tə-k-ə
 border COP-REAL-STI
 ‘That river over there (located at the lowest point of the valley) is the border between Donzhi and Boyta.’ (Context: Donji and Boyta are two qebeles, small administrative areas, near Sheko-town.)
- (34) **bây é-k-ī-nì itī-tə**
 woman there-LCT-DIST-F who-COP.[Q]
 ‘Who is that woman over there?’
- (35) **iy akñ-ààs-tà**
 house here-PROX.M-LOC
 ‘this house over here’

The combination **éká akñ** ‘hither and thither’ occurs in literal (36) and figurative sense (37).

- (36) **um-m-s-a íjī = é-k-ákñ ùkūrì**
 food-DEF-M-ACC 3PL = there-LCT-here equal(Amh)
bèskù-kì-bàstá
 divide-exist-WHILE.CNTD
 ‘while they were dividing the food equally here and there...’
- (37) **é-ká àkñ gè-t’-àb**
 there-LCT here say-PASS-REL
út-ár = íj-kì-k-ə
 like-NEG = 3PL-exist-REAL-STI
 ‘they don’t like to gossip/ mutter’

The elevational demonstratives **só** ‘up there’ and **wó-** ‘down there’ do not occur following a noun but only preceding it (38)-(39).

- (38) **íjī wó-ká hāāy geeza-tà sàk-n**
 3PL down.there-LCT water middle?-LOC arrive-DS
 ‘they arrived down there at the middle of the lake...’

- (39) **só** **íntjù-k'a** **há=sàmù-k-ə**
 up.there wood-IN 3MS = remain-REAL-STI
 'It is left behind up there in the trees.'

Next to its use in the spatial domain, **wótà** is used to refer to a non-specific time in the future. Other forms, e.g. **wóká**, cannot be used for time reference.

- (40) **wó-tà** **n=ye-kh** **māāk-ā-m-ə**
 down.there-LOC 1SG = 2SG-DAT tell-put-IRR-STI
 'I will tell you someday.'

The locational demonstratives are supplemented by directional adverbs (41). Some sentential examples are provided for each of them.

- (41) **wó-** 'down there' **tóórá** 'downward'
só 'up there' **ábsì** 'upward'
(é-ká 'there') **kaarì** 'toward'

- (42) ... **két=a** **kóbtj'ú-bār-ñ** **há=wó-ká**
 all = 2SG make.roofbeam-throw.away-DS 3MS = down.there-LCT
ábsì **kēēs-tée-tə** **há-fátà** **há=sāk-ñ** **èjntà**
upward go.out-go.NV-SS 3MS.POSS-on.LOC 3MS = arrive-PURP MOTIVE
há=?ás-ārā **gāydū-s-ñ** **há=sām-ā-m**
 3MS = 3MS-ACC problem-CAUS-DS 3MS = remain-put-IRR
 '...you make all the roofbeams; it will cause him problems to climb from down upwards and reach on it (a beehive); he will remain.'

- (43) **kyān-s** **tóórá** **áz-k'à** **tiit-ñ**
 dog.DEF-M downward 3MS-IN look-DS
 'The dog looked down into it...'

- (44) **íntjù** **kaarì** **fyááyí** **yí=kī-m** **yí=ge-tə**
 wood toward frog.F.DEF 3FS = exist-IRR 3FS = say-SS
yí=bààs-kī-bààstà **fyááyí** **kááy**
 3FS = want-exist-WHILE frog.F.DEF be.not
 '...while she searched saying 'the little frog will be in the tree' the little frog was not there.'

- (45) **támú-k̀n** **kaarì** **t'āāg̃n** **tamu-k̀n** **kaarì** **dādū**
 ten-DAT toward two ten-DAT toward child
fyadi **íŋi = t'uus-k-is** **kááy-ə**
 count 3PL = know-exist?-DIST.M be.not-STI
 'towards ten, twenty they didn't know a child's age (number) anymore.'
- (46) **...úŋt̀à** **túúrù** **batà** **kaarì** **bāās-kì-bààstà**
 down.LOC land on.LOC toward search-exist-WHILE
 'while he searched the ground'

Furthermore, there are two locational nouns which point out the level of elevation (47). In **wóŋi** the base **wó-** is followed by an unknown element **ŋi** (cf. **wó-ká** 'down there'). **hayk'à** is made up of two elements, the last of which is the inessive case marker **-k'à**.

- (47) **wóŋi** 'down'
hayk'à 'up'
- (48) **dĩm̀ts'ĩ-k̀n** **hayk'à-ka** **wóŋi-ka**
 sound-DAT up.IN-COOR low-COOR
 'the up and down of sound (i.e. tone)'
- (49) **íŋ** **hayk'à** **íntŋ̀-̀k̀n** **góri-k'à**
 3FS up.IN wood-DAT head-IN
kèès-tə ... **yí = kī-bààstà** **kafà** **hayk'à ás-k̀n**
 go.out-SS 3FS = exist-WHILE bird up.IN
but̀sà-ka-kī-b **íŋ-əra** **k'yaaf = á-k**
 3MS-DAT nest-WITH?-exist-REL 3FS-ACC kick = 3MS-REAL
 'She climbed up to the top of the tree and (...) while she was there a bird which had its nest up there kicked her.'

For completeness, three nouns denoting location with respect to elevational information are given in (50).

- (50) **sáákù** 'ravine, downward slope'
gérá 'hill, upward slope'
óón 'plain, more or less even location'

7.1.4 Manner deictic

The manner deictic is **yē(ē)** ‘like this/ that’. Its vowel may be long or short.

- (51) **t’ūūs-ār = a-kì-b-ìjñtà** **ha = nata-ra** **yē**
 know-NEG = 2SG-exist-REL-MOTIVE 2SG = 1SG-ACC like.this
gee-k-ə
 say-REAL-STI
 ‘You spoke to me like this because you don’t know.’

The form of the manner deictic may be based on the distal (**yī-**), and/ or the verb **eg** ‘to do’, more specifically the non-velar stem **ee-**. This suggestion is based on the way in which Wolaitta expresses ‘like that’: a distal followed by a converb form of the verb **?oot-** ‘do’ or the verb **han-** ‘happen, be(come)’ (Azeb Amha p.c.), as illustrated in (52)-(53).

- (52) **yaá-t-ádá** **wottá**
 there-do-CNV put:2SG.IMP
 ‘set (it) like this’
- (53) **yaá-n-ádá** **?úttá**
 there-happen-CNV sit:2SG.IMP
 ‘sit like this’

The use of the manner deictic in Sheko is further illustrated in example (54)-(56). The first two examples show the adverbial use of **yēē**; the third example shows that **yēē** can also be used to quantify a noun.

- (54) **éés-kñ-àstà** **kōōs-tə** **umt’à** **gāār-m̄-bààb**
 honey-DAT-3MS.COP? divine-SS food ripen-IRR-father
ń-kōōs-tə **umt’à** **múr-ń-bààb** **ń = kōōs-tə**
 1PL-divine-SS food ripen(tuber)-IRR-father 1PL = divine-SS
yē **ta = ń** **ń = kiy-k**
like.this COP = 1PL 1PL = exist-REAL
 ‘we were divinating for honey and we were divinating for grains to ripen and for tubers to ripen, like this we lived.’

- (55) **kār-k'ā** **há=téé-ki-k-bààstà** **ás-kh** **góri**
 forest-IN 3MS=go-exist-REAL-WHILE 3MS-DAT head
yēē **yēē** **gé-te** **há=?án-t=á** **ás-kh** **haay**
like.this like.this say-SS 3MS=put-SS=3MS 3MS-DAT ear
k'oy **tóórà** **túr-k'à** **ás-kh** **haay** **k'oy**
 one downward land-IN 3MS-DAT ear one
ábsì **sā-k'à** **yēē** **t=á** **án-ki-t=á** **īn-ā-m**
 upward sky-IN like.this COP=3MS put-exist-SS=3MS go-put-IRR
 'while he goes through the forest, he puts his head like this¹⁷, with
 one ear downward to the ground and one ear upward to the sky,
 putting (his head) like this he goes.'
- (56) **yēē** **éts'ń** **yí=sàw-tə** **yí=gààr-k-ə**
like.this moon 3FS=arrive.NV-SS 3FS=bear.fruit-REAL-STI
íŋ=gēe-m-ə
 3PL=say-IRR-STI
 'they would say: "she reached so many months and has become
 ripe."'

The manner demonstrative can be used to resume a discourse after a diversion, as in (57)-(58).

- (57) **yēē** **kì-n** **yí-bey-ka** **yí-bààb-ka**
like.this exist-ds 3FS.POSS-mother-COOR 3FS.POSS-father-COOR
bóysú **um-mtà**
 dowry eat-COND
 'it being like that, if her mother and father accept (eat) the dowry,...'
- (58) **yēē** **kì-a-a** **zaba** **burzi** **wó-ká**
like.this exist-IMPLC-STD Zheba Burzh down.there-LCT
sàm=a **koynəb** **yèè-k** **egità**
 remain=3MS? Koynəb come.NV-REAL Egita
 'Thus it was. The Jeba Burzh stayed down there; Koynəb came, to
 Egita.'

The form **yěéstà** is often used just before the culmination of a story. It probably consists of **yēē** 'like this' with an elative,

¹⁷ The storyteller held his head sideways, realised it could not be recorded and added an explanation of **yēē yēē** in words.

extra high tone, and an ‘emphasizing part’ containing the copula element **-ta** (see section 15.5.1). Here are two examples:

- (59) **yě́-é-sta** **bààs-feef-t = íʃi**
like.this.ELAT-3MS.COP? want-spend.day-SS = 3PL
báy-ì-s-è-ka **bāāb-ū-s-è-ka** **bēētà**
 mother-f-PL-DAT-COOR father-m-PL-DAT-COOR middle
yí-dàd-è-s-əra **fyayn-a** **yaafu-tə**
 3FS.POSS-child-DEF-M-ACC frog.F.DEF-ACC find-SS
 ‘...they searched all day like this and among the females and the males they found her friend the little frog...’

- (60) **dòòr-tə** **dòòr-tə** **yě́-é-stà**
 run-SS run-SS like.this.ELAT-3MS.COP?
dòr-s-ùs-è-tabeeʃ-tə **íʃi = sáák’ù-k’à**
 run-CAUS-CAUS-MIDD-go.spend.day-SS 3PL = ravine-IN
wutu-tə **íʃ = ʃub-k-ə**
 fall-SS 3PL = die-REAL-STI
 ‘ran and ran and kept on chasing each other like this and they fell into a ravine and died.’

N.B. Sheko has also a simulative case marker **gōntʃi**, which is discussed in section 9.2.7.

- (61) **háák’àstà** **hà-z** **gōntʃi té-rée**
 now PROX-M SIMIL COP-NEG.STI
 ‘Now it is not like this.’

7.2 Adjectives

Adjectives are derived from verbs, or sometimes from another base, by definiteness-gender marking, as shown in (62).

- (62) **k’oʒ** ‘be strong’
 a. **k’ōʒ-è-ʃ**
 be.strong-DEF-M
 ‘strong (M), the strong one’

- b. **k'ō<y>ɜ̀-ñ**
 be.strong<F>-DEF
 'strong (F), the strong one'

The analysis of derivation by definiteness-gender marking may be unexpected, but is supported by the masculine-feminine alternations, which are the same as for nouns. Note that the verb is not derived from the adjective by an inchoative suffix, but the verb is unmarked for any derivation and the adjective is morphologically complex. Section 7.2.1 describes adjectives as a lexical category. For more discussion and a possible analysis of adjectives as a type of relative clauses, see section 5.2.3.

Most adjectives have a corresponding verb, which denotes a state or change of state (63). The derivation is partly idiosyncratic in the sense that the tonal pattern of the adjective (44, 41, 33 or 31) is not predictable from the lexical tone of the verb, although pattern 44 always occurs on adjectives derived from a H verb stem with only one exception. For a full list of adjectives and verbs with their tonal patterns, see section 4.7.

- | | | | | |
|------|--------------|-------------------|---------------------|----------|
| (63) | íík' | 'be old' | ííkńs (4.4) | 'old' |
| | ɜ́ááɜ | 'be good' | ɜ́éénɲ (4.1) | 'good' |
| | kór | 'be dry' | kōrńs (3.1) | 'dry' |
| | sub | 'be red' | sūbńs (3.3) | 'red' |
| | k'oy | 'be strong, hard' | k'ōɜńɲ (3.1) | 'strong' |

The adjective **'yáátńs** 'big' has no corresponding verb (cf. **āngūt** 'increase, be big'). Two adjectives correspond to an adverb:

- | | | | | |
|------|--------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|----------|
| (64) | kóta | 'little, few' | kótńs | 'little' |
| | k'ará | 'freshly (nearly ripe maize), newly' | k'árńs | 'new' |

The derivation of **k'oy-s-ñ** 'other, different, special' is probably from **k'oy** 'one' plus causative **-s**.

- (65) **k'oy-s-àb** **yírsi-k'à** **úftà**
 other-DEF-M-REL artefact-IN down.LOC
ān-t'ū-t=á **há=bōs-t-ā-m**
 put-PASS-SS = 3MS 3MS = filter-PASS-put-IRR
 '...it will be put in another jug on the ground and it will be filtered.'

The adjective can be suffixed by the relative clause marker **-àb** (**~-àb**), or **àbe** (**~-àbe**) for feminine as illustrated in (66). For details on **-àb** see section 11.4.

- (66) a. **k'ōz-ñ-f-àb**
 be.strong-DEF-M-REL
 'strong (M), the strong one'
 b. **k'ō<y>z-ñ-be**
 be.strong <F> -DEF-REL.mother
 'strong (F), the strong one'

The grammatical rules concerning adjectives and greater distributional possibilities of the adjectives in (66) as against simple adjectives are outlined in section 7.2.1. Section 7.2.2 offers a list of adjectives, with comments on the semantics of adjectives, following Dixon (2004).

7.2.1 Adjectives as a lexical category

Aklilu (1988:66) stated: 'Sheko adjectives do not stand alone. They are derived from verbs of becoming by the suffixation of the definite marker **ñ** and the gender marker... .' While adjectives can stand on their own and function as head of a noun phrase, most adjectives do have a corresponding verb. Since adjectives are derived with gender-definiteness marking which typically occurs with nouns, the question arises whether they are not simply nouns. Although on the surface nouns and adjectives may look similar, adjectives are distinguished from nouns by at least two criteria:

1. Adjectives are morphologically definite, and always overtly marked for gender, since they are derived by definiteness-gender marking. Nouns, although having inherent gender, are not obligatorily marked by an overt gender marker. In other words, nouns can occur

without the definiteness-gender marking and adjectives cannot.

2. Adjectives and nouns differ in the way they indicate plurality. Nouns take the suffix **-s** to indicate plurality (section 5.4.1). Adjectives reduplicate the initial CV of the stem or the complete stem. The reduplicated part is glossed PLUR (following section 3.3 on reduplication). Example (67) illustrates this for the adjectives derived from the verb **sub** ‘become red’ and from the adverb **kóta** ‘little, few’.

(67)	masculine	feminine
SG	sūb-ṁ-s be.red-DEF-M	sū<y>b-ṁ be.red<F>-DEF
PL	sū-sūb-ṁ-s PLUR-be.red-DEF-M ~ sūb-sūb-ṁ-s	sū-sūyb-ṁ PLUR-be.red.F-DEF ~ sūyb-sūyb-ṁ
SG	kót-ṁ-s little-DEF-M	kó<y>t-ṁ little<F>-DEF
PL	kó-kót-ṁ-s PLUR-little-DEF-M ~ kót-kót-ṁ-s	kó-kóyt-ṁ PLUR-little.F-DEF ~ kóyt-kóyt-ṁ

A third difference is that adjectives may be suffixed by **-əb**, which marks relative clauses.

Adjectives can be used attributively, modifying a noun in a noun phrase (68). When used attributively, they occur following the noun. They cannot precede the head noun. Adjectives can also be used predicatively, or more precisely, they function as the copula complement of a copula sentence. Sentence (69a) shows a noun in copula complement position and (b) an adjective.

- (68) **geyk'-n** **sūyb-ṁ** **syaaf=í**
 goat.F-DEF red.F-DEF bear.young = 3FS[Q]
 ‘Has the red goat borne young?’

- (69) a. **dād-ñ-s** **hàà-z** **àstàmār-ñ-s**
 child-DEF-M PROX.M teacher(Amh)-DEF-M
(tə-k-ə)
 COP-REAL-STI
 ‘This guy is the teacher.’
- b. **dād-ñ-s** **hààz** **ʃík-ñ-s** **(tə-k-ə)**
 child-DEF-M PROX.M be.short-DEF-M COP-REAL-STI
 ‘This guy is short.’
- (70) **umt’à** **k’ár-ñ-s** **tə ...**
 food freshly-DEF-M COP
 ‘is it raw food which...’

The predicate of an intransitive sentence is a verb form and therefore the adjective is excluded in this function.

- (71) **ás-kh** **ááb** **ʃík=á-k-ə**
 3MS-DAT fruit be.sweet = 3MS-REAL-STI
 ‘Its fruit is/ was sweet.’

An adjective can function as the head of an NP. In this function, it can be modified by e.g. possessive pronouns, numerals, and relative clauses, just like any noun. This is indicated in (72). The adjective can be modified by an intensifying ideophone as well (73). Note that the ideophone occurs before the adjective. Ideophones modifying verbs likewise occur before the verb.

- (72) **ñ-k’ár-ñ-s-a** **na-ŋ** **ats-ə**
 1SG.POSS-new-DEF-M-ACC 1SG-DAT give-STI
 ‘Give me my new one(s)!’
- (73) **doddo** **sūb-m̃-s**
 IDEO be.red-DEF-M
 ‘very bright red’

As previously noted in Aklilu (1988:67), adjectives can be modified by the relative clause marker/ complementizer **-əb** (**~əb**), or **-əbe** (**~əbe**) for feminine. Impressionistically, these

relativised forms are more frequent than the simple adjective as described above.

- (74) **dād-ñ-s** **há-bààb** **ʃík'-ñ-s-əb-əra** **ń = gōōmā**
 child-DEF-M 3MS.POSS-father be.short-DEF-M-REL-ACC 1PL = equal
tə-k-ə **há = ge** **há = gè-t'ù-k-ə**
 COP-REAL-STI 3MS = say 3MS = say-PASS-REAL-STI
 ‘ “The child says to his short father: ‘We are *gooma*.’ ” it is said.’
 (Proverb. People are *gooma* when born within three months from
 each other. They can insult each other without consequences and are
 seen as equals.)

- (75) **báy** **k'oy-s-ñ-be** **há = bòysù-kòb-yəg-ñ**
 wife other,F-DEF-REL,mother 3MS = wed-take-come-DS
 ‘...and he wedded another wife and brought her;...’

Plurality of referents is usually not indicated for modified adjectives (76), similar to relative clauses which only distinguish third person singular feminine from the rest. However, it is possible to use reduplication, exactly like indicated in (67) above for simple adjectives. An example is given in (77). Aklilu (1988:67) has some relativised adjectives with the plural marking (-u)-s, which is used for nouns, but my informants rejected any such forms.

- (76) **ʃád-ñ-s-əb-əra** **na-ñ** **ats-ə**
 be.long-DEF-M-REL-ACC 1SG-DAT give-STI
 ‘Give me the long one(s)!’
- (77) **umt'à** **kā-kāāt-ñ-s-əb-kñ** **zər-ñ** **sàm-àb**
 food PLUR-be.ripe-DEF-M-REL-DAT spill-NMLZ? remain-REL
às-əra **às-k'à** **zər-s-ə** **há = ge-ñ**
 PROX.M-ACC 3MS-IN spill-CAUS-STI 3MS = say-DS
 “Drop these left-overs of cooked food which remain in it,” said he;...’

In contrast to simple adjectives, which only follow the head noun, the ‘relativised adjectives’ can both precede (78) and follow (79)-(80) the head noun, like relatives.

- (78) **ṣād-ñ-s-əb sàà y íṣi-ra há = wòsk'ù-k-ə**
be.long-DEF-M-REL fable 3PL-ACC 3MS = be.tired.CAUS-REAL-STI
 'The long story tired them.'
- (79) **túúrú kōr-ñ-s-əb bità há-k'am-s**
 land be.dry-DEF-M-REL on.LOC 3MS.POSS-slave.DEF-M
há = tuun-kì-b-tana
 3MS = lead-exist-REL-RESUL
 'He leads his servant through the desert land and...' (from a song)
- (80) **há-gəri tṣ'āārū ʔyáát-ñ-s-əb tə-k-ə**
 3MS.POSS-head medicine big-DEF-M-REL COP-REAL-STI
 'he himself is a big medicine.' (Context: refers to the *gomfa* bird from which a medicine is extracted.)

Here are examples of relativised adjectives functioning as head and as copula complement respectively:

- (81) **íṣi = k'ay-t = á kót-ñ-s-əb tàftù-t = á**
 3PL = rise-SS = 3MS little-DEF-M-REL pat-SS = 3MS
 'they awoke and the small one patted (the beehive) and...'
- (82) **túún hàà-nì zéén-be**
 spring prox-F be.good.F.DEF-REL.mother
 'This spring is a good one!'

For parameter of comparison, I have only (relative) verbs in my examples, and some relativised adjectives. Compare (83a) and (b) as well as (84) and (85) with each other. It is not clear from my data whether 'simple' adjectives (i.e. without -əb) are ungrammatical in this context.

- (83) a. **gurma gaana-kñ ṣád-ñ-s-əb tə-k-ə**
 Gurma Gaana-DAT be.long-DEF-M-REL COP-REAL-STI
- b. **gurma gaana-kñ ṣad-àb tə-k-ə**
 Gurma Gaana-DAT be.long-REL COP-REAL-STI
 'Gurma is longer than Gaana.'

- (84) **kéta-bààb-kh** **gór-tà** **ʃad-àb** **nata**
 all-father-DAT head-LOC be.long-REL 1SG

tə-k-ə

COP-REAL-STI

‘I am the longest of all. (Who is longer than everyone is I.)’

- (85) **mēēr-n-s-əb** **áz** **tə-k-ə**
 be.fat-DEF-M-REL 3MS COP-REAL-STI

‘He is the fattest.’ (Lit: the one who is fat is he.)

7.2.2 Semantic notes on adjectives

The group of adjectives in my corpus consists of some 40 members. As the Sheko group of adjectives is medium-sized, we expect next to the core semantic types of DIMENSION, AGE, VALUE and COLOR, also the types PHYSICAL PROPERTY, HUMAN PROPENSITY and SPEED. The types AGE, VALUE and COLOR are small groups, DIMENSION is a somewhat larger group with six members (adjectives are in masculine form here):

- | | | | |
|------|-----------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| (86) | AGE | ílkns | ‘old’ ¹⁸ |
| | VALUE | ʒééhʃ | ‘good’ ~ ʒáʒhʃ |
| | | ʃēéhʃ | ‘bad’ |
| | COLOR | gōōtñs | ‘white’ |
| | | ts’āāns | ‘black’ |
| | | sūbñs | ‘red’ |
| | | tʃ’íríʃ | ‘green, unripe, raw’ |
| | DIMENSION | háʃkñs | ‘wide’ |
| | | ts’úbrñs | ‘narrow’ |
| | | ʔyáátñs | ‘big’ |
| | | kótñs | ‘little’ |
| | | ʃáádñs | ‘tall’ ~ ʃādñs |
| | | ʃík’ñs | ‘short’ |

The largest group is formed by PHYSICAL PROPERTY and HUMAN PROPENSITY, see (87). Other notions in these categories tend to be expressed with verbal forms.

¹⁸ **kótñs** ‘little’ come closest to the antonym ‘young’ with respect to age (of human beings). **k’árñs** ‘fresh, raw, new’ was also mentioned as antonym.

(87)	k'éétɕ'ńɕ	'cold'
	sārkn̄s	'hot'
	k'ōɕn̄ɕ	'strong, hard, rigid'
	wók'ńs	'weak, flexible'
	kārbn̄s	'strong, sound'
	fāyt'ńs	'weak, frail'
	ɕōɕkn̄ɕ	'light'
	ĩn̄s	'heavy'
	mēēr̄n̄s	'fat'
	ɕāpk̄n̄s	'thin'
	ɕĩɕkn̄s	'tasty'
	kyāt̄n̄s	'sour, stingy'
	k'āɕk'ńɕ	'sour'
	k'ār̄n̄s	'fresh, raw, new'
	kāāts̄n̄s	'ripe (ready to eat)'
	gāār̄n̄s	'ripe (grain), slender (people)'
	múr̄n̄s	'ripe (tubers)'
	kōr̄n̄s	'dry'
	ɕōōt̄n̄s	'sharply pointed'
	t'yāb̄n̄s	'grown together'
	dāk̄n̄s	'dirty'
	wūr̄n̄s	'turbid'
	fāyk̄n̄s	'alive, healed'
	māɕk̄n̄ɕ	'patient, courageous'
	t'ēf̄n̄s	'plump'

The formation of adjectives by adding the definite-gender marking to the verb stem is hardly productive other than with the adjectives listed here. There might be some more HUMAN PROPENSITY verbs of which speakers accept the adjective derivation. Therefore, it seems justified to speak of a semi-closed class of adjectives.

There are no adjectives for SPEED. Concepts for SPEED are expressed through an adverb or ideophone.

As for the relative order of adjectives, this is not relevant for Sheko, because people hardly ever use two adjectives in the same phrase. In recorded texts, even the use of one adjective is rare. In elicitation, people are hard pressed to produce sentences with two adjectives (let alone more); and some

informants cannot or will not give judgements on sentences with many adjectives either. (The only three sequences for which my elicitation data give a hint are AGE < PHYSICAL PROPERTY, COLOR < AGE and DIMENSION < AGE, as in **yááb ík'ns** **ḡāpk̀ns** 'a slim old man' or **ōti sūyb̄m ík'ń** 'an old red cow'.)

To summarize, we can say that adjectives in Sheko are a semi-closed class, derived by the definiteness-gender marking which otherwise mainly occurs with nouns. Lexically, there are no separate adjective roots. That the derived forms are different from nouns is shown by e.g. the different strategy for indicating plurality. The place of attributively used adjectives is after the head noun, in contrast to relative clauses which occur at either side of the head noun. Adjectives can also function as head of an NP. Furthermore, adjectives are frequently suffixed by the relative marker/ nominalizer **-əb** (**-əbe**). This extended form takes on the characteristics of relative clauses and can occur both before and after the head noun.

To give a characterization of adjectives, Dixon (2004) has set up two parameters. The primary division is between verb-like adjectives, which can function as intransitive predicate and take some or all of the processes applicable to intransitive verbs on the one hand, and non-verb-like adjectives, which can function as copula complement on the other hand. Furthermore, there is a distinction between noun-like adjectives, which take some or all of the processes applicable to nouns when they function within the NP, and non-noun-like adjectives, which do not take any of these processes (Dixon 2004:14-15).

Adjectives in Sheko are derived from verbs, may take the same relative clause marker/ nominalizer as relative verb forms and are modified by ideophones in the same way as verbs. The corresponding verb can function as intransitive predicate, but the derived adjective functions as copula complement. Since the derivation of adjectives in Sheko is by means of the definiteness-gender marking, they are noun-like. They can function as head of an NP, but do not take the same plural formation as nouns. The noun-like-ness can account for the use

as copula complement as well. Thus, Sheko adjectives are both verb-like and noun-like.

7.3 Numerals

Numerals are distinguished from quantifiers like **kéta** ‘all’ (section 7.4) by their position vis-à-vis case marking: given the fact that case markers attach to the right end of the noun phrase, numerals can be said to be ‘inside’ the NP and quantifiers ‘outside’ the NP, as shown in (88a,b).

- (88) a. **kyānū kāddū-ra** **há = wuṣ-k-ə**
 dog three-ACC 3MS = kill-REAL-STI
 ‘he killed three dogs’
- b. **kyānū-ra** **kéta** **há = wuṣ-k-ə**
 dog-ACC all 3MS = kill-REAL-STI
 ‘he killed all dogs’

A numeral undergoes a tone change when it is modified by another numeral (shown in the first section below). A numeral can be made definite as well (89), and have a possessive prefix, as shown in (90), although in specific contexts only. In these respects, numerals resemble nouns. Numerals are however unlike nouns in that their basic function is to modify (quantify) a head noun.

- (89) **ás-khè t’āāg-ṇ-s dādū wutu-t=á há = ʃan-ṇtà**
 3MS-DAT two-DEF-M child fall-SS = 3MS 3MS = break-COND
 ‘Its second: if a child falls and breaks something,...’ (Context: talking about the uses of a medicine called *qodama*.)

The numeral **k’oy** ‘one’ occurs with a possessive prefix in the following context:

- (90) **ha-k’òy** **ha = tóg-á**
 2SG.POSS-one 2SG = go-put[Q]
 ‘Do you go on your own/ alone?’

7.3.1 Cardinal numbers

Sheko has a decimal numerical system. The cardinal numbers are the following:

(91)	1	k'oy	6	yākū
	2	t'āāgñ	7	tūbsū
	3	kādū	8	zeed
	4	kūbñ	9	sagñ
	5	úṭṣú	10	támú
			100	bāàrà (k'oy bààrà)

The word for 1000, **jí**, is borrowed from Amharic.

From twenty onwards, tens, hundreds and thousands are preceded by a modifier and undergo tone changes following the rule for nouns preceded by a modifier (see section 9.1). Tone 4 changes to tone 2 and tone 3 changes to tone 1.

(92)	20	t'āāgñ tamu	100	k'oy bààrà
	30	kādū tamu	300	kādū bààrà
	50	úṭṣú tamu	500	úṭṣú bààrà
	90	sagñ tamu	900	sagñ bààrà
			1000	k'oy jí

When adding units to a decimal, in careful speech the conjunction **-ka** 'and' is suffixed to both elements, although the last one, suffixed to the single unit, is optional. In quick counting both **-ka**'s are dropped, as shown in example (93). In longer composite numbers **-ka** 'and' is used after hundreds and tens, and optionally after thousands. After the last number **-ka** is always optional, as illustrated in (94).

(93)	11	támú(-ka) k'oy(-ka)
	12	támú(-ka) t'āāgñ(-ka)
	15	támú(-ka) úṭṣú(-ka)
	21	t'āāgñ tamu(-ka) k'oy(-ka)
	95	sagñ tamu(-ka) úṭṣú(-ka)
(94)	654	yākū bààrà-ka úṭṣú tamu-ka kūbñ(-ka)
	839	zeed bààrà-ka kādū tamu-ka sagñ(-ka)
	830	zeed bààrà-ka kādū tamu(-ka)

- 7125 **tūbsū ji(-ka) k'oy bààrà-ka t'āāgñ tamu-ka**
úṭṣú(-ka)
 7120 **tūbsū ji(-ka) k'oy bààrà-ka t'āāgñ tamu(-ka)**

7.3.2 'Ordinal' numbers

Sheko has no morphological means to derive ordinal numbers, but makes use of other constructions, such as possessive constructions and nominalization.

Ordinal numbers are frequently preceded by a possessive noun phrase (the dative case in Sheko also marks possession, see section 9.3). This noun phrase refers to the set to which the referent of the cardinal expression belongs. The noun phrase often consists only of an anaphoric expression, while the set is not described explicitly.

- (95) **yīs ás-kḥ k'oy**
 DIST.M 3MS-DAT one
 'This is the (its) first.' (Context: explaining ways to prevent a badger from taking honey.)
- (96) **ás-kḥ támú ʔyats'n s̄aw-bààstà taaf=á-k-ə**
 3MS-DAT ten moon arrive.NV-WHILE be.cold = 3MS-REAL-STI
íṣi = géé-m-ə
 3PL = say-IRR-STI
 'when the tenth month arrives, they say: "It has cooled down." '
- (97) **fāykñ noog-ñ-s ṣúʔá t'āāgñ tamu ás-kḥ**
 life word-DEF-M rest two ten 3MS-DAT
fyáádí k'oy-tà ky-ààb-a ṇ = ʔítí-kḥ māāk-ā-m-ə
 number one-LOC exist-REL-ACC 1SG = 2PL-DAT tell-put-IRR-STI
 'I will tell you what is in the gospel (of John), chapter twenty, its first verse.'

The numeral itself can have definiteness-gender marking (98), or be nominalized by **bāāb** 'father' (99). Furthermore, **bāāb** 'father' is attested to nominalize the numeral plus locative case marker (100). This latter manner is reminiscent of the way Benchnon forms cardinal numerals, namely by a verbless,

headless relative clause in which the numeral has locative case (Rapold 2006:415).

- (98) **yīs ás-kḥ k'oy tə-k-ə ás-kḥ t'āāg-ñ-s**
 DIST.M 3MS-DAT one COP-REAL-STI 3MS-DAT two-DEF-M
dādū wutu-t=á há=jan-ñtā
 child fall-SS=3MS 3MS=break-COND
 'This was its first. Its second: if a child falls and breaks something,...'
 (Context: talking about the uses of a medicine called *qodama*.)

- (99) **ūtī-ka yí=ʔyatʃu-tee-k-àb ás-kḥ**
 love-WITH 3FS=hide-go.NV-exist?-REL 3MS-DAT
t'āāgñ-bàb út-ír=í-kì-t=í
 two-father love-NEG=3FS-exist-SS=3FS
yí=giddī-ka gış-tù-tee-k-àb
 3FS=duty(Amh)-WITH pull-PASS-go.NV-exist-REL
 'One who goes into hiding out of love; second, one who does not love but goes being kidnapped by force,...' (Context: enumerating the ways a girl could get married.)

- (100) **ás-kḥ kādū-tà-bààb / kādū-tà-bààb dādū**
 3MS-DAT three-LOC-father three-LOC-father child
 'its third one' / 'third child'

Compare **kādū-tà-bààb** 'third' in (100) with the non-numeral expressions in (101) and (102), which also contain a locative (or inessive) case.

- (101) **úʃtā-bàb bèrgù-k'à**
 down-LOC-father year-IN
 'last year'

- (102) **ādī-k'à-bàb / tʃórí-tà-bàbdādū ɳ=òʃkù-k-ə**
 footprint-IN-father end-LOC-father child 1SG=call-REAL-STI
 'I call the next / last child.'

In one example in my corpus, the numeral is followed immediately by the relative clause marker.

- (103) **yet-ka** **nat-ka** **t'aagn-ab** **to**
 2SG-COOR 1SG-COOR two-REL just
sàm-a
 remain-IMPLC?
 'just the two of us are left...'

Finally, **t'āāgñ** in example (104) and **támú-ka t'āāgñ-ka** in example (105) contain no marking to signal that the number is ordinal.

- (104) **t'āāgñ ás-ka** **hà = daan-t = à**
 two 3MS-WITH 2SG = be.together-ss = 2SG
ha = nòn-kì-n **ṛ = yaaf-ntà** **báánà ha-batà**
 2SG = talk-exist-DS 1SG = find-COND matter 2SG.POSS-on.LOC
sāā-m-ə
 arrive.NV-IRR-STI
 'if I find you talking with him a second time, you'll be in problem.'

- (105) **háák'àstà** **k'oy** **t'āāgñ gè-t'ù-tə** **támú-ka**
 now one two say-PASS-SS ten-COOR
t'āāgñ-ka **ets'n** **bēngī** **há = fādù-t'ù-kì-k-ə**
 two-COOR moon year 3MS = count-PASS-exist-REAL-STI
 'now, "one, two,..." being said, twelve months is being counted a year.'

To express an approximation, **kaarì** 'until' follows the numeral.

- (106) **t'āāgñ tamu-kñ** **kaarì dādū fyadi**
 two ten-DAT until child number
íñi = t'uus-k-is **kááy-ə**
 3PL = know-exist-DIST.M be.not-STI
 'towards twenty, they didn't know the age of a child.'

7.3.3 Uses of the numeral 'one'

The numeral one functions as an indefinite pronoun roughly meaning 'a certain'. **k'oy** 'one' as indefinite pronoun follows the noun it modifies (107)-(108). Sentence (109) is from the beginning of a story and (110) start a new cycle in other

stories, introducing a new participant. **k'oy** as a number, i.e. attributive, usually precedes the head noun (111).

- (107) **íŋi=kóókí** **sàw-t=íŋi** **īy** **k'oy** **yaaf-ñ**
 3PL=place arrive.NV-SS=3PL house one find-DS
 '... they reached a place and found a house; ...'

- (108) **ás-kh** **haay** **k'oy** **tóórá** **túr-k'à** **ás-kh**
 3MS-DAT ear one downward land-IN 3MS-DAT
haay **k'oy** **ábsì** **sā-k'à** **yēē** **t=á**
 ear one upward sky-IN like.this COP=3MS
án-ki-t=á **īn-ā-m**
 put-exist-SS=3MS go-put-IRR
 'one ear down to the ground and one/ the other ear up to the sky,
 putting (his head) like this he goes.'

- (109) **náánú** **k'oy-ka** **báádù** **k'oy-ka**
 elder.brother one-COOR younger.sibling one-COOR
íŋi=daan-t ...
 3PL=be.together-ss
 'An elder and a younger brother were living together...'

- (110) **yááb** **k'oy** **yèg-ñ**
 man one come-DS
 'a certain man came;...'

- (111) **k'oy** **?yaana** **şub=á-k-ə**
 one pot die=3MS-REAL-STI
 'One pot broke.' (Lit: ...died.)

k'oy can be nominalized by **bāāb** 'father'/ **bé** 'mother', as in (112). It refers to an indefinite, specific participant; compare **k'o-bààb** in (113), which refers back to someone (indefinite) who asked for milk, with **yááb** 'man, someone' in (114).

- (112) **k'oy** **bààrà zùnkù-kh** **bastn-tà** **k'o-bey**
 one hundred sheep-DAT middle-LOC one-mother

kááy-ntà

be.not-COND

‘if one among a hundred sheep is lost,...’ (NB. use of feminine gender here may be related to smallness (‘lamb’) gender (‘ewe’) or possibly to endearment.)

- (113) **súk'ú** **ás-kh** **kum-kà** **an-t=á** **wóntfí**
 rope 3MS-DAT neck-IN put-SS=3MS grass

an-t=á

put-SS=3MS

k'o-bààb-kh

one-father-DAT

há=ʔāts-ā-m

3MS=give-put-IRR

‘... and would put a handle around its neck and put grass (around it) and give it to that person.’ (Context: describes the way a Sheko gave away milk in a gourd; grass could signal that the milk is of good quality.)

- (114) **yááb-kh** **há=ʔāts-ā-m**
 man-DAT 3MS=give-put-IRR
 ‘he will give it to somebody.’

The expression **k'obààb ... k'obààb** stands for ‘the one... the other’ or ‘one... another’. (The form is **k'oy-bààb** in (115).) According to one informant, it is possible to contract **k'obaab** to **k'oob**, but in my corpus I have no examples.

- (115) **bàlàbātì** **k'oy-bààb-ka** **k'oy-bààb-ka**
 trad.leader(Amh) one-father-COORD one-father-COORD

há=ʔādn-kì-k

3MS=fight.MIDD-exist-REAL

‘...one traditional leader would fight with another.’

- (116) **k'obààb** **ūk'-n-s** **kòb-m k'obààb**
 one.father milk-DEF-M take-DS one.father

ééz-n-s

honey-DEF-M

kòb-m

take-DS

‘one took the milk, the other took the honey; ...’

- (117) **k'o-bààb** **ás-kh̃** **ááb** **baru-k-ə** **ge-tə**
 one-father 3MS-DAT eye be.blind-REAL-STI say-SS
há=kóókí-tà **woog-ñ** **k'o-bààb** **kār-k'à**
 3MS = road-LOC sit-DS one-father forest-IN
ʔyatʃ-ñ
 hide-DS
 'the one sat down on the road pretending he was blind, the other hid
 in the forest;...'

Finally, **k'oy k'oy** literally 'one one' can quantify NPs, as in (118). It is not clear whether **k'oy k'oy** can also be adverbial. In (119), **nóógù** 'word, language' may be understood.

- (118) **yááb** **k'oy** **k'oy** **to** **yèg-ñ**
 man one one just come-DS
 'Only some people came;...'
- (119) **k'oy** **k'oy** **ɲ=siis-kì-k-ə**
 one one 1SG = hear-exist-REAL-STI
 'I hear/ understand a little.'

7.4 Quantifiers

Sheko has the following quantifiers:

- (120) **kétā** 'all'
 p'útʃá 'many, much'
 āngā 'much'
 k'oy k'oy 'some, several, a little bit' (**k'oy** 'one')
 gúúrú 'only'
 to 'only' (glossed just)
 kóta 'a little, few'

Some quantifiers have the same meaning but a different distribution. For instance, **p'útʃá** quantifies entities, whereas **āngā** quantifies events. Accordingly, **p'útʃá** modifies the NP **kújímbe** 'ant(s)' in (121) and **āngā** modifies the relativized verb in (122).

- (121) **toora** **kì-b-kh** **éd-k'à** **kúfmbé**
 hole exist-REL-DAT mouth-IN ant.mother

p'útʃá n=see-k-ə

many 1SG = see.NV-REAL-STI

'I saw many ants at the holes opening.'

- (122) **āngā** **m=bàg-àb** **ìjntà** **nata**
much 1SG = work-REL MOTIVE 1SG

há=wosk'u-k-ə

3MS = be.tired.CAUS-REAL-STI

'I feel tired from working much.'

The difference between **to** 'just' (123)-(124) and **gúúrú** 'only' (125)-(126) is not so clear. However, **to** differs from the other quantifiers in that it cannot be nominalized. It may be a particle rather than a true quantifier.

- (123) **fyáánú bay-ka** **bààbù-ka** **to** **kì-ñ**
 frog mother-COOR father-COOR just exist-DS

'there were just a father and a mother frog;...'

- (124) **umt'à** **yí=kàtsù-sàsk-ntà** **yí-gərì** **to** **um-tə**
 food 3FS = cook-arrive.CAUS-COND 3FS.POSS-head just eat-ss

'when she cooked food, she only ate herself...'

- (125) **fērā** **án-āḡ-kì-b-ìjntà** **t'ép'à** **gúúrú**
 horn put-NEG.1SG-exist-REL-MOTIVE carry-INF only

ṇ=t'ep'u-kì-ñ

1SG = carry-exist-DS

'because I have not put horns, I only carry loads;...'

- (126) **háák'àstà** **màndērì-k'à** **íṣì=kāās-kì-b** **dàws**
 now village(Amh)-IN 3PL = play-exist-REL children

kéta **góórà-ka** **gúúrú** **íṣì=nòn-kì-k-ə**

all Amhara-WITH only 3PL = talk-exist-REAL-STI

'Now all the children who play in the neighborhood talk only in Amharic.'

Here are illustrative sentences for the other quantifiers. **kētā** ‘all’ is exemplified in (127)-(129). Its opposite ‘no one’ can be expressed by **k’oy** ‘one’ plus a negated verb (130).

- (127) **ōtī kētā há = fàr-t’ù-k-ə**
 cattle all 3MS = snatch-PASS-REAL-STI
 ‘All the cattle were raided.’

- (128) **há-mèèd-às-tà kētā gyānū**
 3MS.POSS-plain(Amh)-PROX.M-LOC all coffee
às-t = á-k-ə
 plant-PASS = 3MS-REAL-STI
 ‘On all its field coffee has been planted.’ (Context: refers to an area around a well which was in the past inundated for part of the year.)

- (129) **ñ-dàdù-ka ñ-?ààp’ù-ka kētā**
 1SG.POSS-child-COOR 1SG.POSS-nephew-COOR all
ñ-turù-k’à há = kī-ntà
 1PL.POSS-land-IN 3MS = exist-COND
 ‘if all my children and sister’s children are in our land,...’

- (130) a. **k’óy k’erà tēē-r = á-k’y-á-m-ə**
 one.ELATINCL go.NV-NEG = 3MS-remain-put-IRR-STI
 ‘Not even one will go.’
 b. **k’oy yaab yēē-r = á-k’y-á-m-ə**
 one man come.NV-NEG = 3MS-remain-put-IRR-STI
 ‘Nobody will come.’ (*‘A man will not come’.)

k’oy k’oy literally ‘one one’ can quantify NPs, as in (131). It is not clear whether **k’oy k’oy** can also be adverbial. In (132), **nóógù** ‘word, language’ may be understood.

- (131) **yááb k’oy k’oy to yèg-ñ**
 man one one just come-DS
 ‘Only some people came;...’

- (132) **k’oy k’oy ñ = siis-kī-k-ə**
 one one 1SG = hear-exist-REAL-STI
 ‘I hear/ understand a little’

kóta ‘a little, few’

- (133) **gé=ɲ** **ɲ=kóta** **or-ə** **há=ge-ɲ**
 say = 1SG 1SG = little cry.animal-STI 3MS = say-DS
 ‘“Hey, let me bray a little,” he (the donkey) said;...’

- (134) **kóta** **āts-ēr=a-k’y-â**
 little give-NEG = 2SG-remain-put.Q
 ‘Won’t you give a little?’

Quantifiers are not within the NP. This can be seen in (135)-(136), where the quantifiers **kétā** ‘all’ and **gúúrú** ‘only’ occur after the case marking.

- (135) **náta-ra** **kétā** **wúśú-bārū-tə**
 1PL-ACC all kill-throw.away-ss
 ‘he will finish us all off...’

- (136) **ɲ-naanu-won-ɲ-ka** **ɲ-nini-won-ɲ-ka**
 1SG.POSS-elder.brother-ASS-DAT-COOR 1SG.POSS-elder.sister-ASS-DAT-COOR
gúúrú **íʃi=begu-k-ə**
 only 3PL = pay-REAL-STI
 ‘They paid only to my elder brothers and sisters.’

Furthermore, all quantifiers (except **to** ‘only’) can be nominalized by **bāāb** ‘father’/ **bé** ‘mother’. This is illustrated for some quantifiers below.

- (137) **kétā-bāāb** **fòòtù-kì-b** **noogù ás-ka**
 all-father become-exist-REL thing 3MS-WITH
t=á **fòòtù-kì-k**
 COP = 3MS become-exist-REAL
 ‘all things which exist, exist through him.’

- (138) **yīs-kñ** **ādī-k'à** **únà-bàb-kñ**
 DIST.M-DAT footprint-IN long.ago-father-DAT
góri-tà **āngā-bààb** **yaab** **kāy-ñ-s**
 head-LOC much-father man god-DEF-M
íñi = ?aman-k-ə
 3PL = believe(Amh)-REAL-STI
 'after that, many more people than before believed in God.'

- (139) **p'út'á-bààb** **na-ñ** **há = jèèn-k-ə**
many-father 1SG-DAT 3MS = be.bad-REAL-STI
 'I didn't like the one having many (members)' (Context: comparing two choirs.)

7.5 Adverbs

In this section, adverbs of time and manner are presented. In general, adverbs modify a verb or verb phrase.

Sheko adverbs share some properties with ideophones: both modify verbs and some of each occur with the verb **gé** 'say'. For the sake of semantic coherence, adverbs relating to distance and elevation are discussed in section 7.1.3 on demonstratives. Adverbs relating to time are presented together with some nouns and nominal expressions referring to time.

7.5.1 Time adverbs

Time adverbs relative to the moment of speech include the following:

- (140) **háák'àstà** 'now' (< **haak'a** 'so then' + **-àstà** 3MS.LOC?)
kàtfā 'yet, already'
má 'earlier today'
gōnà 'yesterday'
únderkñ 'day before yesterday' (-**kñ** dative?)
únà 'in the past, long ago'

énà	‘later today’
byārñ	‘tomorrow’
ṣimà	‘day after tomorrow’
ṣírà	‘two days after tomorrow’
ṣínṣin	‘in the future’

A week is referred to by the compound form **tūbsūhàykñ** (from **tūbsū** ‘seven’ and **haay** ‘to spend the night’) or by **gābā** ‘market’. Other time expressions refer to the time of day:

(141) gōōtà	‘midnight’
zúmátà	‘before dawn’
sáátítà	‘morning’
zaakñ	‘noon, afternoon’
gyāāmū	‘evening’

Here are some time adverbs nominalized with **bāāb** ‘father’:

(142) únà-bàāb-kñ	góri-tà
long.ago-father-DAT	head-LOC
‘more than before’ (‘above the past one’)	
(143) sáátítà-bàāb-era	tʃor-ʃ-t=â
morning-father-ACC	be.finished-CAUS-PASS-3MS.Q
‘Is the one of the morning finished?’	

Time adverbs can occur in combination with demonstratives (144)-(145). It is not clear whether the adverbs of time are modified by demonstratives, or whether the use of demonstratives here must be linked to the way Sheko forms ‘ordinal’ expressions (146), cf. section 7.3.2 on ‘ordinal’ numbers.

(144) bārkày-o	yəg=ń	ń=énà	hàs-ərə
monkey-STI.ADDR	come = 1PL	1PL = later.today	<u>PROX.M</u> -INCL
na-ṇ	īy-tà	təg-ə	
1SG-DAT	house-LOC	go-STI	
‘Hey monkey, come, let’s go to my house today (immediately).’			

- (145) **háák'ástà** **ṁ-māāk-ñ-bààb-īs** **únà** **hàs-kñ**
 now 1SG-tell-IRR-father-DIST.M long.ago PROX.M-DAT
gātsù **márfi** **kááy** **kī-b-tà**
 start needle be.not exist-REL-LOC
 'What I will tell (is what happened) long ago in the beginning when there were no injections...'

- (146) **áskñ** **byārñ-bààb-tà**
3MS-DAT tomorrow-father-LOC
 'the next morning...'

There are two nouns for 'day' in the language: **bókñ** 'day' (glossed time), and **zirkū** ~ **zērkn** 'day'. The use of **bókñ** and **zirkū** in stories gives the impression that **zirkū** is used for a specific day or time (147)-(148), while **bókñ** is used for a non-specific day or period of time without a particular duration (149).

- (147) **yí=byáású** **bàày-ñ** **k'ay-tə** **yí=zērkn**
 3FS = crocodile wife.F-DEF rise-SS 3FS = day
k'oy (...) **ge-ñ**
 one say-DS
 'The crocodile's wife rose and one day she said: ... '

- (148) **zērkn** **k'oy** **oot'i** **bààb** **ééná** **bààb** **dàdù-kñ**
 day one Ooxi father wealth father child-DAT
há=mààk-ñ **há=dēg-ñ-əra** **gùṣù-kòb-tə**
 3MS = tell-DS 3MS = child.F-DEF-ACC pull-take-SS
 'On a certain day, the father of Ooxi told the rich man's son; he abducted the girl and...'

- (149) **boori** **bey-ka** **boori** **bààb-ka** **k'oy** **bokñ**
 Boori mother-COOR Boori father-COOR one time
gābā-k'à **íṣi=tee-k-ə**
 market-IN 3PL = go.NV-REAL-STI
 'The father and mother of Boori went to market one day.'

The position of **k'oy** 'one' correlates with the semantics of **zirkū** and **bókñ**: **zirkū** is typically followed by the modifier, (five

occurrences against one), while **bókí** is preceded by the modifier (unfortunately just a single occurrence). Recall that **k'oy** 'one' yields a specific reading when it follows a head noun, cf. **yááb k'oy yègè** 'a certain man came' vs. **k'oy yaab yègè** 'a man came' (section 7.3.3). Furthermore, **bókí** is used for a long period in example (150) and it is used in **néfabokn** 'always' (153).

- (150) **yí=kòyg-è wúfa bokn ífi=ʔúm-ki-bààstà**
 3FS=bring-DS IDEO time 3PL=eat-exist-WHILE
 'she brought it; while they ate it for a long time,...'

The following examples support the above explanation.

- (151) **má hàmbūs zīrkā/ *bókí tə-k-ə**
 earlier.today Thursday(Amh) day time COP-REAL-STI
 'Today is Thursday.'

- (152) **gōnà rōb zīrkā/ bókí tə-k-ə**
 yesterday Wednesday day time COP-REAL-STI
 'Yesterday was Wednesday/ a Wednesday.' (?)

néfa 'always' usually occurs in combination with **bókí** 'time' (153). Asking for the opposite, I obtained the form **k'oy bokn-àstà** one time-3MS.COP? 'a single day'; in combination with negation the meaning becomes 'not a single day, never' (154).

- (153) **néf-bokn ástà ŋ=təg-əb tīmhirt iy**
 always-time 3MS.COP? 1SG=go-REL lesson house
háák'astà ísà-ka tə-k-ə
 now close.INF-WITH COP-REAL-STI
 'The school I always went to is now closed.'

- (154) **k'oy bokn-àstà yēē-rā**
 one time-PROX.M.LOC come.NV-NEG
 '(she) didn't come a single day'

7.5.2 Manner adverbs

Manner adverbs are listed in (155) and (156). The manner adverbs listed in (156) have a 1.2 tone pattern, which is not

found with nouns, numerals or other modifiers, except some ideophones, cf. (157).

- (155) **syàttā** ‘quietly’
nèfā ‘firmly’
moyi ‘quickly’ (time, speed)
zōōtā ‘crookedly’
níkí ‘right, correct’ (< Amh. **līkk**)
- (156) **òòza** ‘balancing, in equilibrium’
dàtʃa ‘right, correct’
dīnga ‘round, in a circle’
gàma ‘truly, truthfully’
kòòha ‘quietly (slipping off from a gathering)’
şòtta ‘at a great distance’
zàga ‘straightly’

- (157) **zùngàra** ‘turn halfway’ (with **gé** ‘say’)

A few manner adverbs are illustrated in sentential context.

- (158) **īsā-s-ārā** **néʃfā** **t=a**
 beehive.DEF-M-ACC firmly.ELAT COP = 2SG
ha=ts’yááts’-ń-bààb **tə-k-ə**
 2SG = tie-IRR-father COP-REAL-STI
 ‘you have to tie the beehive very firmly.’
- (159) **ha-gàtʃi-ra** **nèfā** **gé-tə** **tór**
 2SG.POSS-stick-ACC firmly say-SS stick.into.ground
 ‘plant your stick firmly in the ground!’
- (160) **ha=yòwk’a** **hayk’à fāākà-k’à** **ʃēʔi-n-s-ara**
 2SG = INTJ up.IN beehive.half-IN stone-DEF-M-ACC
òòza **án-tə**
balancing put-SS
 ‘well, you put the stone balancing on the upper half of the beehive
 and, well, you come down;...’

- (161) **k'òrk'òrò** **ha = kōb-téé-tə** **ha = ?ínʃ** **bàtà**
 corrugated.iron 2SG = take-go.NV-SS 2SG = wood.DEF.M on.LOC
ḍìnga **mìsmārì** **án-t = a** **k'yár-á-ṛ**
round nail put-SS = 2SG beat-put-IRR
 'you take the corrugated iron sheets and nail them round on the tree.'

- (162) **íʃi-kh** **bastà** **īsī-əra** **ʒàga** **sosku-tə**
 3PL-DAT middle beehive-ACC straight sleep.CAUS-SS
 'he laid down the beehive straightly between them and...'

Adverbs can be nominalized by **bāāb** 'father' / **bé** 'mother', as is evident from (163) (cf. (162) above) and (164)-(165).

- (163) **ʒàga-bàāb** **sòskù-tə**
 straight-father sleep.CAUS-SS
 'he laid down the straight one'
- (164) **gàma-bàāb-a** **ná-ṛ** **maak-ə**
 truly-father-ACC 1PL-DAT tell-STI
 'Tell us the truth.'
- (165) **gàma** **ha = mààkù**
 truly 2SG = tell[Q]
 'Did you tell it truthfully?' / 'really?'

8 Ideophones and interjections

This chapter describes ideophones, which are divided into intensifying and predicative ideophones; and interjections, grouped into expressive, conative and phatic interjections as well as greetings.

8.1 Ideophones

Ideophones are marked words that vividly depict sensory events (Dingemanse 2009). They are marked among others by special phonotactics and morphological structure. They may have a different syntactic status in different languages, but have in common that they “evoke sensory perceptions” or feelings in a more direct, expressive way than a paraphrase would.

The list of ideophones in Sheko that I compiled is just the tip of the iceberg. Unfortunately, the tone of ideophones is unknown in most cases. Following Amha (2001), ideophones in Sheko can be divided into two groups, based on the constructions in which they occur: the first group consists of “intensifying ideophones” which have a strong collocation with an adjective or verb (or verbs). The second group, called “predicate ideophones”, consists of ideophones which occur with the verb *gé* ‘say’ to form a predicate.

Before describing the syntactic properties of each group, some recurring (morpho-)phonological structures are discussed.

8.1.1 Prosodical and morphological markedness

In contrast to other vocabulary in Sheko, ideophones contain a lot of geminated consonants. Furthermore, consonants may be lengthened a great deal to add intensity (1). In the example sentences the ideophones are glossed *IDEO*, while the free translation indicates the meaning.

- (1) a. **dód::o sub-m-s**
 IDEO be.red-DEF-M
 ‘very red’

- b. **as** **git::gita** **wòsk' = á-k-ə**
 3MS IDEO be.tired.CAUS = 3MS-REAL-STI
 'He is very tired'

In addition, there are several patterns of reduplication. These are listed below. They occur with intensifying as well as with predicative ideophones (with **gé** 'say').

1. Ideophones that reduplicate the whole.

- (2) **gawagawa** 'be damp, becoming dry' (with **gé** 'say')
 zik'nzik'n 'very green/blue'
 wiiniswiinis 'be soft and smooth (hair that is easily combed)'
 burgufburguf 'be slippery, refuse to break in pieces (e.g. of taro)' (with **gé** 'say')

2. Ideophones that reduplicate the whole but drop an **a**. The last consonant of the first syllable is often lengthened as indicated in example (1) above.

- (3) **gitgita** 'very tired'
 bírbira 'quick (running)'
 fetʃfetʃ'a 'very tender (meat)'
 irk'ʔirk'a 'be damp, becoming wet' (with **gé** 'say')
 zerp'zerp'a 'rough (hair that is difficult to comb)'

3. Ideophones consisting of one syllable which may be repeated quite often, see (4). Some ideophones consist of two syllables, but they typically repeat the first syllable often (5), unlike the ideophones under point 2. The (perceived) word boundaries in the examples below may be due to the CV-structure (closed syllables).

- (4) **kakaka** 'become red-hot on the fire'
 papapa 'rippling water'
 duş duş duş 'running/walking of a heavy animal'
- (5) **kub kub kuba** 'fall, bounce (of something heavy)'
 kor kor kora 'fall, bounce (of something light)'

So far, the only ideophone that reduplicates the last syllable is **bek'p'ak'p'ak'** 'very white'.

4. Ideophones with an alternating vowel.

- (6) **dirk'adark'a** 'breaking into pieces, crumbling easily
(of injera), patched/scattered (of color)'
kindarkondər 'contaminate, fall sick' (with **gé** 'say')
zendazanda 'stretching to the utmost (muscles)'

5. The fifth process of reduplication is also found with other word categories, see section 3.3.2. The initial CV is reduplicated.

- (7) **ḡō-jonkū** **gé-tə** **ts'af-ə**
 PLUR-IDEO say-SS write-STI
 'Write quickly.'

- (8) **dà-dàfa** **gé-ə**
 PLUR-IDEO say-STI
 'slowly/carefully!'

8.1.2 Intensifying ideophones

This group of ideophones is characterised by a strong collocation to an adjective or verb. For instance, color ideophones intensify an adjective (9) or verb (10) denoting color. The color ideophones are listed here:

- | | | | |
|-----|------------------------|------------------|---------|
| (9) | <i>ideophone</i> | <i>adjective</i> | |
| | bek'p'ak(p'ak') | gōōts'ñs | 'white' |
| | ziizi | ts'āāns | 'black' |
| | doddo | sūbṁs | 'red' |
| | zik'nzik'n | tʃ'írɨʃ | 'green' |

Syntactically, an ideophone modifying an adjective occurs preceding the adjective.

- (10) **nata** **ziizi** **ts'aan-s** **ɲ-dàws** **bek'p'ak'p'ak'**
 1SG IDEO be.black.DEF-M 1SG.POSS-children IDEO
goot-n-s
 be.white-DEF-M
 'I am very black, my children very white' (Riddle. Answer: Amharic
 coffeepot and cups.)

Some variation in color ideophones has been found. For 'white' as e.g. a new sheet of paper, **bek'a** is also attested:

- (11) **bek'a** **há = gààtḥ-k-ə**
 IDEO 3MS = be.white-REAL-STI
 'It is very white.'

In Guraferda, the ideophones for 'white' and 'black' are **buk'abuk'a** and **ziiziya** respectively, and for 'red' it is **ʃooʃooʔa**, as is illustrated by the following riddle:

- (12) **kār-k'à** **ɲ = ʃooʃooʔa** **subu-kì-tə**
 forest-IN 1SG = IDEO become.red-exist-SS
úm-t-sen-kis **ots'u**
 eat-PASS-NEG.1SG-exist.DEM.M serti(Amh)
 'I am very red in the forest and I am a *serti* plant that is not eaten.'
 (Answer: a huge plant which resembles *eemu* (another type of *serti* plant) and has bright red fruits which are inedible.)

Other intensifying ideophones always occur in collocation with a verb. They precede the verb (Sheko is strictly verb-final). Here is a list of ideophones and verbs:

(13)	<i>ideophone</i>		<i>verb</i>
	ofof	‘look intently’	tít ‘look, stare’
	sírsíra	‘listen intently’	ays ‘listen’
	gitgita	‘be very tired’	wosk’ ‘tire’
	fetʃfetʃ’a	‘be very tender (of meat)’	śúb ‘be tender’
	faakfaaka	‘be very light, shine brightly as at noon’	ʒapm ‘shine’
	ʃippa	‘be very dark (at night)’	udg ‘be dark’
	keka	‘be very ill’	kuʃ ‘be ill’
	k’ap’p’a	‘hold firmly’	kob ‘take’
	k’ats’a	‘catch a cold’	aat ‘hold’
	(with úúfú ‘common cold’)		

Some ideophones likewise denoting intensity are apparently not restricted to one verb, but may occur with a set of verbs and in this respect look more like normal adverbs.

(14)	<i>ideophone</i>		<i>verbs</i>
	ʃiip’a	‘refuse strongly’ ‘flatly refuse’	oy ‘deny, refuse’ tááf ‘cool down’
	ʒiifa	‘be very crazy’ ‘be very painful’ ‘be very satisfied’ ‘tire very much’ (also with gitgita)	tʃ’óy ‘be crazy’ yamz ‘be painful’ ts’ěskñ ‘be satisfied’ wosk’ ‘tire’
	wuʃa	‘be very talkative’ ‘stay for a long time’	noŋ ‘talk’ haay ‘spend the night’

Intensifying ideophones cannot be nominalized by **bāāb** ‘father’/ **bé** ‘mother’.

(15) ***ziizi-bààb**, ***sirrsira-bààb**, ***k’appa-bààb**, ***ʒiifa-bààb**

The ideophones listed in (16) are like intensifying ideophones in being collocated with a verb and occurring without **gé** ‘say’. However, they share some properties with predicative ideophones. Semantically, they are manner ideophones and they can (more or less easily) be nominalized (17). Note in particular the tonal minimal pair of ideophones **ts’arts’arra**

‘pour with a thin straight flow of liquid’ vs. **ts’arts’arra** ‘scream hysterically’.

- (16) **k’ááb** ‘pour’ **ts’arts’arra** ‘pour with a thin straight flow’
kyaw ‘shout, bark’ **ts’arts’arra** ‘scream hysterically’
door ‘run’ **birbira** ‘run quickly (light)’
sár ‘to be hot’ **bukbukbuk** ‘be ablaze (of fire)’
sár ‘to be hot’ **tʃ’iigtʃ’iiga** ‘be hot and stingy (e.g. your tongue)’
tʃ’it ‘stretch’ **zendzanda** ‘stretch to the utmost (muscles)’
mook ‘break off’ **dirk’adark’a** ‘crumble easily (of sorghum injera)’
- (17) **ts’arrts’arra-bààb**, **dirk’adark’a-bààb**
 IDEO-father IDEO-father
 ‘One who screams hysterically, one which crumbles easily’

8.1.3 Predicative ideophones

Ideophones which occur with **gé** ‘to say’ occur as predicate, as shown in examples (18)-(20). The verb carries inflection like any other verb. The examples show that in this way the ideophones are well integrated into the clause structure of Sheko. Semantically, predicative ideophones denote manner and the ideophone, not the verb, carries the meaning of the predicate. (In contrast, intensifying ideophones can be described as ‘more of V’, where the verb carries most of the meaning.)

- (18) **ṣāād-k’à** **n = kòb-tee-b-tà** **yí = kindarkondər**
 mineral.well-IN 1SG = take-go.NV-REL-LOC 3FS = IDEO
ge-t = í **yí = wutu-ṣub-m̃** **m = bààṣ-k**
 say-SS = 3FS 3FS = fall-die-DS 1SG = slaughter-REAL
 ‘When I brought her (a cow) to the water, she got contaminated/fell ill and died; I slaughtered her.’ (line from a well-known story)

- (19) **ás-kh̃** **éd-k'à** **yí = bàr-ñ** **twèètweè**
 3MS-DAT mouth-IN 3FS = throw-DS IDEO
ás-kh̃ **fōōrī-k'à** **há = gé-bààstà**
 3MS-DAT throat-IN 3MS = say-WHILE
 '... she threw [the hot pebble] in his mouth, and while it said *tweetwee* in his throat (while his throat burned)...'
- (20) **ʔyāb-m̃-s** **kōʃkōʃ** **há = ge-ñ** **fáádù** **íʃ-əra**
 grass-DEF-M IDEO 3MS = say-DS hunger 3FS-ACC
há = fààd-ùs-əb-əʃñtà **hĩ** **yí = ge-ñ**
 3MS = be.hungry-CAUS-REL-MOTIVE IDEO 3FS = say-DS
 'The grass said 'koshkosh' (the wind rustled through the grass); and because she (a calf) was hungry she mooded...'

The construction with **gé** 'say' can also be used to adverbialize properties (21). In addition, some 'say'-items lack the typical vividness and have no special phonetic properties displayed in ideophones. In these cases, it is difficult to draw the line between adverbs and ideophones. For example, **dafa** and **fook'** in examples (22)-(23) would not be good candidates for ideophones, except for the occurrence of **gé** 'say'. **gābbā gé** 'to bow down' (24), is not very expressive either, but it does still have a geminated consonant. Some ideophones may be in the process of 'normalization', i.e. their shape adjusts to that of common vocabulary. To put it another way, they are more descriptive and less evocative. Furthermore, in example (25), the usual reduplication is not present. Especially in the case of reduplication, a speaker can choose how expressive he wants to be by varying the number of reduplications.

- (21) **ʃík'ū** **gə-tə** **k'iits'**
 shortly say-ss tie.cattle
 'tie close up, tether with a short line'
- (22) **dàfa** **gé**
 IDEO say
 'Be careful! Slowly!'

- (23) **fóók' há=na-ŋ ge-k-ə**
 IDEO 3MS = 1SG-DAT say-REAL-STI
 'I suddenly remembered it.' (Lit: It said *fóok'* to me.)
- (24) **yí=tūtù gābbā ge-t=í hāāy k'íṣ-kì-bààstà**
 3FS = vulture IDEO say-SS = 3FS water drink-exist-WHILE
 'while Vulture, bowing down, was drinking water,...'
- (25) **há=ṣēŋi-n-ṣ-əra āāt'ū-k-bààstà há=ṣēŋ-ŋ**
 3MS = stone-DEF-M-ACC hold-exist-WHILE 3MS = stone-DEF-M
bùrgùṣ gé-t=á yòwk'a ás-əra k'yár-n
 IDEO say-SS = 3MS INTJ 3MS-ACC beat-DS
 'When he clutches the stone, the stone slips and well, hits him...'

Some ideophones occur with and without **gé** 'to say' (26). In (27), the last line of a well-known children's song contains a verbless clause, which is the culmination of the song. In (28), the verb **gé** 'to say' is left out; the verb **t'ər** 'roll, roll over' matches semantically with the ideophone.

- (26) **ṣōnkū yəg ~ ṣōnkū gé-tə yəg**
 quickly come quickly say-ss come
 'come quickly!'
- (27) **wóybí tèèr-ŋt-oo kōṣkōṣkōṣ kúfú-k'à**
 Bako swell-COND-STL.ADDR IDEO tree.sp-IN
 'What if the Bako river floods? [moving through the leaves] in the *kushu* tree.'
- (28) **íṣi=sáákù-k'à t'èrk-ùs-bār-ùb-tà**
 3PL = ravine-IN move.forward-CAUS-throw.away-REL-LOC
yí=yàtñ-bey kùb kùb kùbà t'èr-n
 3FS = fox-mother IDEO IDEO IDEO roll-DS
 'when they threw them down the slope, the mother of the fox rolled down with heavy thuds;...'
 also possible: **kùb kùb kùbà getə t'èr-n**

The list below records other members of the group of ideophones occurring regularly with **gé** 'to say'.

- (29) **naap'naap'a gé** 'carefully, nimbly (stepping)'
irk'irk'a gé 'be damp (getting wet)'
gawagawa gé 'be damp (getting dry)'
burgufburguf gé 'be slippery, slimy, hard to grip;
 refuse to break in pieces (e.g. of taro)'
kongufkonguf gé 'hopscotch'
k'ink'in gé 'be lukewarm, not cold, not hot'
işuf gé 'be warmed up'
burra gé 'tumble head over heel'
gont'a gé 'be blunt (of knife)'
tʃii (gé) 'be silent'
taaa gé/ fer 'sound (of horn)' (cf. **fer** 'blow')
tabʃa gé 'be thin (of drinks)'
yiiʃa gé 'be bent down'
berera gé 'orange colored'
buşuf gé 'beige/sand colored'
duş duş duş gé 'walk/run heavily'
kor kor kora gé/ t'er 'roll down (bouncing) lightly'
 (cf. **t'er** 'roll over')

8.2 Interjections

Ameka (1992, 2006) classifies interjections into three groups. "Expressive interjections" reflect the mental state and emotions of the speaker. "Conative interjections" are used to request something from the hearer. It can be a request for attention, a verbal response, or an action. "Phatic interjections" support the process of communication. One can think of muttering assenting noises to encourage a speaker to continue telling; as well as formulaic utterances in greetings and leave-taking which establish contact, although the latter may be morphologically complex and have inflecting forms, in contrast to prototypical interjections.

8.2.1 List of interjections

This section includes some of the more common interjections in Sheko. Class membership is not absolute, i.e. an interjection may belong to more than one category. Some expressive interjections are listed in (30). The last two are terms of address used as interjectional phrases.

- (30) **waah** conveys pain
yííá conveys distress (see (31) below)
o conveys surprise, be taken aback
ata conveys surprise, disbelief
bəəʔa conveys rejection (tongue may be protruded)
ày conveys anger
wòtōo conveys astonishment or bewilderment
also (wo)wówóow
yēro/ kāyo lit. ‘oh god!’, functions more like ‘really’
mbààbo lit. ‘oh my father’, conveys sympathy or understanding of the situation, but can also be used (ironically?) for the reverse. Gf. **bábm̩ bábm̩**

- (31) **yííá** **ŋ = gee-tə** **nata** **tʃʔíí-stà** **ky = á**
INTJ 1SG = say-SS 1SG IDEO-3MS.COP? exist = 3MS?
há = kēēs-à
3MS = go.out-put.Q
‘Voicing my sadness, me staying quiet - would it appear?’

The following interjections are classified as conative:

- (32) **haʔ** command to take/hold something
wàʔ warning not to do something (for children)
yáee asks for attention (at start of conversation)
batʔ ‘go out of my way’ cf. **báátʔ** ‘turn away’

Also, verb forms of **síís** ‘to listen’ are used expressively or conatively. The imperative **síís** ‘listen!’ used at the end of an utterance, i.e. ‘mark my words’, conveys that the speaker considers important what he just said; and also asks for acceptance of the interlocutor. An interrogative form is used to demand attention, typically as a tag at the end of a sentence:

- (33) **màndērì-k’à** **ha = ki-ə** **siis = à**
village-IN 2SG = exist-STI listen = 2SG.Q
‘You should stay in the neighborhood. Do you hear/understand?’

Furthermore, calls for animals are included under conative ideophones (tone not indicated):

- (34) **bitbitbit** call for chicken
kutʃkutʃkutʃ call to chase away chicken (Gf.) ¹⁹
rrru /rururu call for a cat
ru k'yaas call to chase away a cat (**k'yaas** 'to leave')
kiskis call to chase away goats
sst ~ ust incentive for a dog to be on the alert

The items in (35) belong to the group of phatic interjections.

- (35) **woy** response to a call (same as in Amharic),
also possible: **hàáh**
àhee 'yes' (Gf. **yee**)
à?àà 'no'
ha... ha... conveys consent, understanding, attention
(especially used a lot during storytelling; also
expected from children after **iya**-imperatives,
section 10.2.2)
noor 'be welcome, join us', said when a newcomer
approaches a group of people (< Amh.)
hánts'e said when someone sneezes
gé Imperative of 'say', introduces a request (see
(36) below)
bate (Gf.) introduces polite request
yok'a 'well', used as filler phrase, or may signal
conclusion
hàáh conveys that the speaker did not understand,
request to repeat. Also used to respond to **yáee**
when at a distance.
yee conveys that the speaker has been understood
(especially common at the end of a
conversation at a distance) 'OK, fine, I heard
you' (Gf. 'yes')

¹⁹ In the Guraferda variant: **koobu** 'cock', **koybm** 'chicken'. In the Sheko variant **kutʃi** has become the word denoting 'chicken'. In Sheko the conative calls for chicken are less used.

- (36) **gé=n** **ye-k̀n̩** **kum-k'̀à** **k'̀ork-ñ-t=n**
 say = 1SG 2SG-DAT neck-IN wind-MIDD-SS = 1SG
n=gáámtà **sak-ə**
 1SG = far.side.LOC arrive-STI
 'Say, let me curl around your neck and reach the other shore.'

Finally, there is a special call to signal that **ótʃí** 'mushrooms' have been found in the forest. People will try to locate the place where the call came from and go there with a basket to get a share.

- (37) **ótʃí kúkúú kúkúú**

8.2.2 Greetings

Example (38) lists some possibilities to start greeting someone. The greetings in (b) and (c) can be modified for person, to address a plural addressee or to continue greeting by asking about third persons.

- | | | |
|------|---|---|
| (38) | <i>question</i> | <i>answer</i> |
| a. | ʒáʒ-tə
good-COP.Q
'Is it well?' | ʒáʒá
good |
| b. | ʒáʒ=a-k̀
good = 2SG-exist[Q]
'Are you well?' | ʒáʒá
good |
| c. | ha=karbu-k̀
2SG = be.strong-exist[Q]
'Are you strong?' | ɲ=karbu-k-ə
1SG = be.strong-REAL-STI
'I am strong.' |
| d. | fāyk̩n̩-tə
life-COP.Q
'Is it life/healthy?' | fāyk̩n̩ ɲ=k̀-ə
life 1SG = exist-REAL-STI
'I am alive/ healthy.' |

The following greeting and its answer is probably a calque from Amharic **īndet näw? - alläñ**.

- (39) **áás-tə** **ŋ = kya**
 how-COP[Q] 1SG = exist.?
 ‘How is it?’ ‘I am there.’

Here are greetings which refer to the time of day:

- (40) a. **zázá hàày = à**
 good spend.night = 2SG.Q
 ‘did you spend the night well?’ (greeting in the morning)
- b. **zázá = a feej**
 good = 2SG spend.day[Q]
 ‘did you spend the day well?’ (greeting in the afternoon)

Leave-taking expressions are illustrated in (41). The return answer can be **zázá**, **ʒéénʃə** or **àmin**.

- (41) a. **zázá kī-ee**
 good exist-STI
 ‘stay well’
- b. **zázá fééj / zázá hāāy**
 good spend.day good spend.night
 ‘have a nice day’ / ‘goodnight’
- c. **zázá tóg-ə**
 good go-STI
 ‘Have a nice visit/ go in peace.’
- d. **zázá bángár-ə**
 good return-STI
 ‘return well’

9 The noun phrase

Chapter 9 discusses three topics with regard to the noun phrase. First, word order in the noun phrase is treated. The unmarked order appears to be head - modifier, as opposed to the order modifier - head, in which the head is tonally marked. Secondly, case marking is treated. Lastly, possessive constructions are treated comparing their syntactic and semantic properties.

9.1 Noun phrase and word order

Sheko predominantly follows an SOV typology, as described in section 10.9. The language is verb-final, main clauses follow dependent clauses and most affixes are suffixal. But at the level of the noun phrase, the language partly deviates from this pattern.

Of the various modifiers, some occur in a fixed position in relation to the head noun, while others may both precede or follow the head noun. Possessor affixes always precede the head noun, except in a few terms of address. Numerals and relative clauses occur on either side of the head noun, as well as demonstratives, although the preferred place for demonstratives is following the head noun. Adjectives must follow the head noun, unless they are marked by the relative clause marker. If a noun is used as a modifier, it precedes the head noun, e.g. in noun-noun compounds.

	preceding head	following head
adjective	no	yes
demonstrative	few	yes
numeral	yes	yes
relative clause	yes	yes
'relativised' adjective	yes	yes
possessive	yes	few
modifying noun	yes	no

Table 1. Position of modifiers

When the head noun is followed by a modifier, there are no tonal or other changes in the construction. This is illustrated for numerals (1a), demonstratives (b), and relative clauses (c).

- (1) a. **há = ʔōtì** **k'oy** **sàṁ**
 3MS = cow one remain.DS
 ‘one cow remained;...’
- b. **ūk'ū** **hàz** **ītī-k = ɲ** **daan** **úm-o**
 milk PROX.M who-WITH = 1SG together eat-STL.ADDR
 ‘Together with whom shall I eat this milk?’
- c. **umt'à** **báákù-tà** **há = ʔan-àb** **āškū**
 food firestones-LOC 3MS = put-REL meat
 tə-k-ə **ge-tə**
 COP-REAL-STI say-SS
 ‘thinking that the food he had put on the firestone was meat,...

When a modifier precedes the head noun it is modifying, the tonal pattern on the head noun changes. This modifier can be a possessor prefix, numeral, relative clause, adjective with relative clause marker, or modifying noun. The following table shows the tonal changes in disyllabic nouns for all six tonal patterns. The numbers in brackets indicate the tone level of the two syllables of the noun. Tone 4 is replaced by tone 2 and all other tones are replaced by tone 1. Note that four of the six contrastive patterns are neutralized by this replacement.

noun in isolation	pre-modified noun
wúra (44) ‘fly whisk’	há-wura (22) ‘his fly whisk’
dúmà (41) ‘amulet’	há-dumà (21) ‘his amulet’
gātʃi (33) ‘stick’	há-gàtʃi (11) ‘his stick’
ōtì (31) ‘cow’	há-òtì (11) ‘his cow’
batʃà (21) ‘bed’	há-bàtʃà (11) ‘his bed’
bòbì (13) ‘sorghum sp.’	há-bòbì (11) ‘his sorghum’

Table 2. Tone on pre-modified nouns

Below, the tonal modification in head nouns is illustrated for numerals, demonstratives, relative clauses and modifying nouns. In example (2a), the numeral **t'āāgñ** ‘two’ precedes the head noun **ʔyáts'ń** ‘moon, month’, and the tone pattern on the head noun changes. Likewise, in (2b) a relative clause precedes **umt'à** ‘food’; in (2c) a demonstrative precedes **koosù** ‘traditional

practice, wisdom’ and in (2d) the head **dādū** is preceded by a noun.

- (2) a. **yí=yòw’ka t’āāgñ ʔyats’n-kñ ādī-k’à**
 3FS=well two moon-DAT footprint-IN
kàšt’=f-k-ə gē-t’-n
 cut.straight.PASS=3FS-REAL-STI say-PASS-DS
 ‘well, after two months she is said to be ritually clean’ (Lit: ‘...it is said: “She has been cut” ’.)
- b. **kyāz úm-kì-b ùmt’à**
 king eat-exist-REL food
 ‘food which a king eats’
- c. **kaarì sáántà yīs kòòsù-ra**
 until front.LOC DIST.M divination-ACC
ītə māāk-o
 who.COP tell-STI.ADDR
 ‘who will tell this traditional practice in the future?’
- d. **kōmtū dādù**
 chief child
 ‘son of a/ the chief’

An interesting case in discussing modifiers in Sheko is the adjective. The adjective is formed by adding definiteness-gender marking to an adjectival verb stem (see section 7.2.1). Example (3) illustrates the adjective ‘red’ derived from the verb **sub** ‘be red’. These adjectives can only appear following a head noun; they are not allowed to precede a head noun (4)-(5).

- (3) a. **sūb-m-s** b. **sūyb-m**
 red-DEF-M red.F-DEF
 ‘red (m)’ ‘red (f)’
- (4) a. **ʃēemā sūb-m-s**
 cloth red-DEF-M
 ‘red cloth’
- b. ***sūb-m-s ʃèemà**

- (5) a. **dādū t'ēyf-m bádìghn yí = gè-t'ù-k-ə**
 child little.F-DEF Badign 3FS = say-PASS-REAL-STI
 'the plump girl is called Badign'
- b. ***t'ēyf-m dādū bádìghn yí = gè-t'ù-k-ə**

Remarkably, the relative clause marker **-əb ~ -àb** can be suffixed to the adjective. When this morpheme is present the relativized adjective can appear preceding and following the head noun, just like relative clauses (6).

- (6) a. **há-dàws-kh gəri-k'à hāāy**
 3MS.POSS-children-DAT head-IN water
k'éétɕ-ń-s-əb k'aabu-tə fāy-sù-tə
be.cold-DEF-M-REL pour-SS be.saved-CAUS-SS
 'poured cold water on his children's heads and saved them and...'
- b. **ás-kh zéé-ń-ɣ-əb noogu án-ń-bààb-is**
 3MS-DAT good-DEF-M-REL thing put-IRR-father-DIST.M
bàsù-s-kì-b tə-k-ə
 want-CAUS-exist-REL COP-REAL-STI
 'It is necessary to arrange good things for him.'

Case markers are suffixed to the rightmost element of the NP:

- (7) **[yáb-m-s nata tə-k-ə gè-b]-əra**
 man-DEF-M 1SG COP-REAL-STI say-REL-ACC
wuɕ-ùb yis
 kill-REL DIST.M
 'the one who killed [the man who said "It's me"]'

- (8) **haak'àstà [koos-ń-s hààs]-əra**
 now divination-DEF-M PROX.M-ACC
óótɕ'ú-síís-ér = íɿ-kì-k-ə
 ask-hear-NEG = 3PL-exist-REAL-STI
 'Nowadays they don't ask after [this traditional wisdom].'

- (9) [báákù-tà àn-t'-àb yīs]-k'à hāāy ān-t'ū-tə
 firestones-LOC put-PASS-REL DIST.M-IN water put-PASS-SS
 'in [this (thing) which has been put on the firestones] water is put
 and...'

By virtue of the tonal behaviour of modified NPs, it is possible to formally distinguish between an NP with a modifier (10a)-(11a) and two NPs (10b)-(11b), or decide to which NP a modifier belongs (12a,b). Thus, in (12a) the modifier ík'nsəb 'old' modifies géék'ù 'goat', whereas in (12b) 'old' modifies yááb 'man', which in the example has tone 2 because the modifier precedes it. For completeness, (12c,d) give alternative sentences with a different word order.

- (10) a. nūūtšù íf-ara wuṣ-àbe òyt-ñ tə-k-ə
 hyena 3FS-ACC kill-REL.mother cow.F-DEF COP-REAL-STI
 'It was [the cow which the hyena killed].'
 b. nūūtšù íf-ara wuṣ-àbe òyt-ñ tə-k-ə
 hyena 3FS-ACC kill-REL.mother cow.F-DEF COP-REAL-STI
 '[The one which the hyena killed] was [the cow].'
- (11) a. gūrmā zyààmà datà ìn = á-k-ə
 Gurma in.law near.LOC go = 3MS-REAL-STI
 'He has gone to Gurma's in-law(s)'
 b. gūrmā zyāāmà datà ìn = á-k-ə
 Gurma in.law near.LOC go = 3MS-REAL-STI
 'Gurma has gone to an in-law/ in-laws'
- (12) a. géék'ù ík'-ń-s-əb yááb-ka
 goat be.old-DEF-M-REL man-WITH
 fòsk'ù-t' = á-k-ə
 skin-PASS = 3MS-REAL-STI
 'The old goat was skinned by the man.'
 b. géék'ù ík'-ń-s-əb yaab-ka
 goat be.old-DEF-M-REL man-WITH
 fòskù-t' = á-k-ə
 skin-PASS = 3MS-REAL-STI
 'The goat was skinned by the old man.'

- c. **íík'-ń-s-ə̀b** **geek'ù** **yááb-ka**
 be.old-DEF-M-REL goat man-WITH
 fòskù-t' = á-k-ə̀
 skin-PASS = 3MS-REAL-STI
 'The old goat was skinned by the man.'
- d. **géék'ù yááb** **íík'-ń-s-ə̀b-ka**
 goat man be.old-DEF-M-REL- WITH
 fòskù-t' = á-k-ə̀
 skin-PASS = 3MS-REAL-STI
 'The goat was skinned by the old man.'

From the perspective of the noun phrase, the unmarked order is head - modifier. In contrast, the order modifier - head is marked by a tonal permutation. The unmarked order on NP level is thus contrary to the order on clause level, which is clearly head-final. Sheko could thus be subsumed under type D2 in Heine's classification, i.e. SOV languages with head-initial NP's (Heine 1976). However, as we saw, the order of head and modifiers in the Sheko NP is rather free, and both orders are frequently attested. Therefore, it might not make much sense to classify the NP in Sheko as either head-initial or head-final. In the Omotic family, which is known at large as verb-final, languages differ with respect to flexibility in constituent order on the clause level as well as basic order on the NP level (Dimmendaal (2008); cf. his comments on interaction of constituent order with other subsystems of grammar and its value for language typology).

9.2 Case

In Sheko, case is a property of the noun phrase. The case marker attaches to the rightmost constituent of the noun phrase. The case markers of Sheko are enumerated in table 3:

	<i>basic form</i>	<i>allomorphs, variants</i>
Nominative	-	
Accusative	-əra	-ra; -a; Tepi & Gf. -ana
Genitive	(tone)	
Dative	-kḥ	-ḥ
Inessive	-k'ā	-kā
Locative	-tā	
Instrument/ Coordinative	-ka	
Similative	gōntjī	Tepi gomà
Motive	èjḥtā	yìjḥtā, -èjḥtā

Table 3. Case markers

The nominative case is unmarked. The case system in Sheko is thus different from (nominative-absolutive) marked nominative-systems such as found in some other branches of Omotic. E.g. Wolaitta (Lamberti and Sottile 1997) and Benchnon (Rapold 2006) have a marked nominative system.

There is no segmental genitive case, but in juxtaposition the head noun has a special tone pattern, as all head nouns which are preceded by a modifier (see section 9.1). Other possessive phrases have a dative case. The analysis of -kḥ as dative in possessive expressions is discussed in section 9.2.3.

Furthermore, the dative patterns with oblique rather than core cases. The dative is marked obligatorily, whereas accusative is not obligatory marked (and nominative unmarked); in addition, dative-marked roles in relative clauses use the resumptive pronoun strategy and cannot use the gap strategy, whereas the gap strategy is preferred for accusative-marked roles (section 11.4.4).

The similative and motive are not proper case markers: they are less clearly suffixal than the case markers and their morphological structure is also different from the other cases. Especially the make-up of èjḥtā is of interest in the view of subordinate clause marking. This is discussed in section 9.2.8, cf. section 11.3 on adverbial clauses.

The next subsections discuss the case markers. In describing their range of use I make informal use of roles, without claiming that these roles are a reality for Sheko speakers.

9.2.1 Nominative

The nominative in Sheko is the unmarked form of the noun. It is the form used in isolation, and the form on which the other cases are built by adding a suffix. Syntactically, the nominative is the prototypical subject case. The typical semantic function of the nominative is Actor (Agent-like roles), such as in (13)-(14). Since the language has a passive, Undergoers can also be in the nominative. Furthermore, Experiencers may be in the nominative, although others are accusative. Experiencer verbs are discussed in section 12.4.

- (13) **kōōbū** ‘cock’; **kōōb-m̄-s** ‘the cock’

há=ge-t=á	kōōb-m̄-s	tīt-ñ-əra
3MS=say-SS=3MS	cock-DEF-M	vulture.F-DEF-ACC
zèèr-ñ		
advise-DS		
‘the cock advised the vulture, saying ...’		

- (14) **údú** ‘ensete, false banana’

údú	ts’òg=á-k-ə
ensete	bear.fruit.banana = 3MS-REAL-STI
‘The ensete bears fruit.’	

9.2.2 Accusative

The accusative marker is **-əra** ~ **-ara** (15a). Around Tepi and in Guraferda the basic form is **-ana**. The first vowel of the accusative marker is dropped following a vowel (15b). The accusative optionally changes to **-a** after **s** (15c) and after the nominalizer **-bààb** ‘father’.

- (15) a. **dēygn̄** **yí-fyááyñ-əra** **kòb-tə**
 girl.F.DEF 3FS.POSS-frog.F.DEF-ACC take-SS
 ‘The girl took the frog and...’

- b. **kútʃi-ra** **há = buutʃ'u-k-ə**
 chicken-ACC 3MS = pluck-REAL-STI
 'He plucked a chicken'
- c. **yí = ás-a** **gask-ñ**
 3FS = 3MS-ACC insult-DS
 '...and she insulted him;...'

Accusative marking is not obligatory. It occurs on definite as well as indefinite noun phrases (15a,b above). Impressionistically, accusative marking occurs more frequently with definite noun phrases, but definiteness is not a sufficient condition, see e.g. **ūk'ñs** 'the milk' without accusative in (16). Other factors such as discourse recoverability may play a role in triggering accusative marking. When the object precedes the subject (OSV order), the object is nearly always marked (17).

- (16) **dād-ñ-s** **ūk'-ñ-s** **gōōsū-ka** **há = kōb-m̄**
 child-DEF-M milk-DEF-M gourd-WITH 3MS = take-DS
 'the boy would take the milk in a gourd;...'
- (17) **há = ʃóóʃ-ñ-ʃ-ara** **yááb-m̄-s** **dufu-t = á**
 3MS = snake-DEF-M-ACC man-DEF-M hit-SS = 3MS
wuʃ-ñ
 kill-DS
 'the man hit the snake and killed it;...'

Syntactically, the accusative is the prototypical object case. Semantically, Undergoer roles are typically marked by the accusative, such as the Patient in (17) above. It is possible to have two accusative-marked constituents in one clause, when the verb is causative (18). Experiencers of causative experiencer verbs may be in the accusative case as well (19).

- (18) **íʃ-əra** **iy-ñ-s-əra** **há-dir-su-k-ə**
 3FS-ACC house-DEF-M-ACC 3MS = sweep-CAUS-REAL-STI
 'He had her sweep the house.'
- (19) **nata-ra** **wosk' = a-k-ə**
 1SG-ACC be.tired.CAUS = 3MS-REAL-STI
 'I am tired.' (Lit: It tired me.)

The short form **-(ə)ra** of the inclusive marker **k'ərà** 'also, even' is formally similar to the accusative marker. See section 9.6.2.

9.2.3 'Genitive' and dative

In Sheko, there is a large overlap between 'genitive' and dative, in form and also in function, although the core role of the dative is Recipient/ Benefactive. A typical genitive and dative relation are given in (20). This overlap between 'genitive' and dative calls for a closer look at the marking of genitival relations.

- (20) a. **ás-kh** **āṣū**
 3MS-'GEN'?' leg
 'his leg'
- b. **kábí** **ás-kh** **ats-ə**
 axe 3MS-DAT give-STI
 'give the axe to him'

Sheko has various constructions which express a genitival (or associative) relation between two noun phrases in Sheko. First, two NPs can be juxtaposed (21a). The head is marked tonally since it is preceded by a modifier (see section 9.1). Secondly, the marker **-kh** can be suffixed to the modifier (i.e. the possessor), as in (21b). This marker is formally identical to the dative case marker **-kh**, as in the existential possessive construction in (22).

- (21) a. **ōtì** **baatʃi**
 cow skin
 'cow hide'
- b. **ōtì-kh** **báátʃí**
 COW-DAT skin
 'skin of a cow, cow hide'

- (22) **gurma-kh** **gyānū** **ky=ǎ-k-ə**
 Gurma-DAT coffee exist = 3MS-REAL-STI
 'There is coffee to Gurma.' i.e. 'Gurma has coffee.'

These three constructions differ syntactically and semantically. In (21a), the emphasis lies on the whole (here, the possessor), whereas in (21b) the emphasis lies on the part (here, the possessed) and the construction is typically used for inalienable possession. The question rises whether this construction has a ‘genuine’ genitive marker or contains a possessor which is marked by a dative. The only difference with the dative NP in (22) is that in the latter the subject NP and dative NP can occur in any order in the sentence, while the construction in (21b) has a fixed order NP-**kñ** NP. Note that the construction used with inalienable possession is segmentally marked while the construction used with alienable possession is not. This is the reverse of how inalienable and alienable possession are coded cross-linguistically (Payne 1997:105). The reversal in markedness has been recognized by Claudi and Serzisko (1985:134) for Diizi, and they claimed that Diizi employs ‘possessor promotion’. If that is the case, the dative would be a logical choice for the possessor NP.²⁰

Apart from the above, constructions like that in (22) are widespread in the world’s languages, showing that the dative in general is used to express possession (Heine 1997; Heine and Kuteva 2002:103ff). Furthermore, Rapold (2006:484f) mentions a possible (and possibly older) variant of the dative case **-ñ** in Benchnon, namely **k’ñ**.²¹ Hayward and Tsuge (1998) suggest ***-n** as dative/ benefactive for South Omotic languages. Therefore, it is reasonable to analyse **-kñ** as a dative case marker.

While in Sheko the dative is also used in marking genitival relationships, this is not so in the other Majoid languages. Examples (23) and (24) show for Diizi that **-kñ** is used in genitival relations with body parts (similar to Sheko), but that there is a marker **-is** for dative (unlike Sheko).

²⁰ For comments on the notions of ‘inalienability’ and ‘possessor promotion’ see section 9.3. To make myself clear, I do not claim that the NP NP and NP-**kñ** NP constructions in Sheko mark (in)alienability. They emphasize the whole (initial NP) and the part (last NP) respectively. See further section 9.3.

²¹ In Sheko, there are traces of **-k’ñ**, most notably in the Guraferda variant. See section 6.1.2.

- (23) **iti-kɿ** **gɛli-g a-wu-ŋ**
 you.PL-GEN head-IN 3SM-enter-PAST/PRES.Q
 ‘Do you understand?’ (cited from Beachy 2005:72)

- (24) **saagu dad yɛsus yɛt-is ʃub-ki-go**
 God child Jesus you.S-DAT die-PERF-3SM
 ‘God’s child, Jesus, has died for (on behalf of) you.’ (Beachy 2005:69)

Nayi too has **-kɿ** for (inalienable) genitival constructions and **-iʃ** ~ **-itʃ** for dative (Aklilu 1997:603f). A sibilant is widespread in North Omotic for dative/ benefactive case marking (Hayward and Tsuge 1998:31).

Possessive constructions are further discussed in section 9.3.

9.2.4 Dative

The dative marker is **-kɿ**, except for first person pronouns, which suffix **-ŋ**.

- (25) a. **ítí-kɿ** b. **ná-ŋ**
 2PL-DAT 1PL-DAT
 ‘for you (pl)’ ‘for us’

The core roles marked by the dative are Recipient and Benefactive. Some examples are given below.

- (26) **íʒ áʒ-kɿ ũk’ũ hàày yí = ʔätsù-bààstà**
 3FS 3MS-DAT milk water 3FS = give-WHILE
 ‘while she gave milk to him’ (Note: ‘milk water’ i.e. liquid, not curds.)

- (27) **yír = ŋ ŋ = ye-kɿ mīt’ñ-o**
 what = 1SG 1SG = 2SG-DAT witness-STL.ADDR
 ‘What could I say in favour of you?’

- (28) **bāndū íſi-k̀n̄ ʒaʒ-àb kookn-k'à**
 Bandu 3PL-DAT be.good-REL place-IN
íſ = kī-m-ə
 3PL = exist-IRR-STI
 'The Bandu live at the place which is convenient for them'

- (29) **íſ-àkù-on-k̀n̄ gātsñ-kì-b**
 3PL.POSS-grandfather-ASS-DAT help-exist-REL
 'those who help their grandparents'

The dative in (30) is ambiguous between 'tell to me' and 'tell for me, in my stead'.

- (30) **na-ŋ̄ maak-ə**
 1SG-DAT tell-STI
 'tell me' / 'tell for me'

The interlocutor may be referred to by a dative-marked phrase as well as by an accusative marked phrase. Example (31) gives an example of both in the same story. Impressionistically, the accusative is used when the relation is asymmetric and the one talked to is conceptualised as a Patient, as in the last line of (31) where the father warns his daughter.

- (31) **há = mār̄tā-k̀n̄ ʒáʒá ha = k̀i há = ge-ñ ...**
 3MS = Marta-DAT peace 2SG = exist[Q] 3MS = say-DS
há-dèg̃n̄-əra ... há = gə-ñ
 3MS.POSS-child.F.DEF-ACC 3MS = say-DS
 '[her friend] said to Marta: "How are you?" (and while they talked, her father saw them together and he got angry and) he said his daughter: ("If I see you a second time with him, you will have a problem!")'

The dative case also marks the Possessor when possession is expressed with an existential predicate (32) and in possessive constructions emphasizing the part (33). Since some locative and temporal adverbial clauses use body parts, the construction is used frequently (34). See section 9.3 for a discussion on possessive constructions.

- (32) **bazà na-ŋ kɪ-ntà, ...**
 work 1SG-DAT exist-COND
 ‘If I have work,...’ (Lit: if there is work to me.)
- (33) **íŋ-kh kum-k’à gyādū an-tə**
 3FS-DAT neck-IN rope put-SS
 ‘and put a rope round her neck...’
- (34) **há = nàr-t’-àb-kh ādī-k’à**
 3MS = dry-PASS-REL-DAT footprint-IN
há = kūmṣū-ŋ-tū-tə
 3MS = be.pulverized-CAUS-PASS-SS
 ‘after it is dried, it is pulverized and...’ (Lit: in the footprints of being dried...)

9.2.5 Inessive and locative

Cases locating referents in the spatial domain are **-k’à**, glossed IN for inessive, and **-tə**, glossed LOC for locative.

In order to illustrate the semantics of both case markers, they are contrasted first in examples with a stative interpretation (35)-(37). The inessive **-k’à** involves contact and/ or containment in the space denoted by the noun phrase, whereas the more general locative **-tə** does not involve contact or containment. It rather expresses a space in the proximity of and/ or around the denoted place.

- (35) a. **īy-k’à kɪ = íŋ-k-ə**
 house-IN exist = 3PL-REAL-STI
 ‘They are in the house’ (Context: speaker knows that the referents are inside the house.)
- b. **īy-tə kɪ = íŋ-k-ə**
 house-LOC exist = 3PL-REAL-STI
 ‘They are home’ (Context: speaker doesn’t know the exact location, the referents can be somewhere around the house.)
- (36) a. **íntŋ t’úúm-kh góri-k’à**
 wood mountain-DAT head-IN
 ‘The tree is on top of the mountain.’

- b. **gíbù** **t'úúm-kh** **góri-tà**
 cloud mountain-DAT head-LOC
 'The cloud is above the mountain.'
- (37) a. **kārbm̄** **īy-kh** **ʃíʃú-k'à** **(tə-k-ə)**
 fence house-DAT side-IN COP-REAL-STI
 'The fence is around the farm.'
- b. **yáb-m̄-s** **tāāmū-kh** **ʃíʃ-tà** **(tə-k-ə)**
 man-DEF-M fire-DAT side-LOC COP-REAL-STI
 'The man is near the fire.'

In example (38), **-tà** and **k'à** are on words referring to the same place/ space, i.e. the forest. The first word, **áztà** 'in it', is used with respect to a badger. It is not known where the badger is all the time, he might just frequent the place where the beehive is. The second **kàrkàk'a** 'in the forest' is used with respect to the location of a beehive, which is situated within the forest.

- (38) **utʂà** **áz-tà** **ky-aà-b** **kàrkà-k'a** **īsñ-ōrā**
 badger 3MS-LOC exist-REL forest-IN beehive-ACC
 ha = kààf-m̄tǎ
 2SG = build-COND
 'if you build a beehive in a forest where a badger lives,...'

Secondly, **-k'à** and **-tà** are contrasted with motion predicates. In (39), the case markers create opposite directions of movement in combination with the other elements in the sentence. In (40), the difference is not so big, but the (a) example makes immediately clear that the inside of the house is concerned, whereas in (b) this is less evident.

- (39) a. **íntʃù-k'à** **há = yèè-kì-k-ə**
 wood-IN 3MS = come.NV-exist-REAL-STI
 'He is coming from (from in) the wood.'
- b. **íntʃù-tà** **há = yèè-kì-k-ə**
 wood-LOC 3MS = come.NV-exist-REAL-STI
 'He is coming to the wood.'

- (40) a. **īy-k'à** **ʔyàrd = á-k-ə**
 house-IN enter = 3MS-REAL-STI
 ‘He entered into the house’
- b. **īy-tà** **ʔyàrd = á-k-ə**
 house-LOC enter = 3MS-REAL-STI
 ‘He entered the house (the compound?)’

In the following pair of sentences, the directional contrast is lost, but the notions of ‘contact/ containment’ of **-k'à** _{IN} versus ‘vicinity’ of **-tà** _{LOC} remain. In (41), person A follows person B, taking the same path. He walks thus literally in the others’ footsteps. In (42), a dog looks behind him, i.e. in the direction of his footprints, to a beehive that he caused to fall.

- (41) **ás-kḥ ãdī-k'à** **bangar-tə**
 3MS-DAT footstep-IN return-SS
 ‘he returned after him and...’ (Lit: (he) returned in his footsteps.)
- (42) **áz** **ãdī-tà** **bangar-tə** **īsñ-əra**
 3MS footstep-LOC return-SS beehive-ACC
há = tíítú-kì-bààstà **īsñ-kì-bàb** **ʔyànts'à**
 3MS = watch-exist-WHILE beehive-exist-father bee
múúró **két-ààst** **zìip'm-yèè-tə**
 all(Amh) all-3MS.COP? chase-come.NV-SS
 ‘While he turned/ looked back and watched the beehive, all the beehive bees came chasing him...’

However, there are also some idiosyncrasies when it comes to motion to or from a place. **gābā** ‘market’ always suffixes **-k'à**, even in case one merely indicates the event of going to town on market day, without intending to enter the field where the market is held (43). **betakristyan** ‘church’ is preferably used with **-tà**, even if the event entails entering the church compound and the church (44). Compare also (45).

- (43) **gābā-k'à** **ha = tóg-á**
 market-IN 2SG = go-put[Q]
 ‘Will you go to the market?’

- (44) **bērn** **bètàkrìstyán** **ìy-tà** **ń = tág-á-m-ə**
 tomorrow church(Amh) house-LOC 1PL = go-put-IRR-STI
 ‘Tomorrow we will go to church.’

- (45) **gābā-k’à** **té-ń-kì-t = í** **bètèkrìstyán**
 market-IN COP-NEG-exist-SS = 3FS church(Amh)
ìy-tà **yí = tee-k-ə**
 house-LOC 3FS = go.NV-REAL-STI
 ‘She went not to the market but to the church.’

Example (39) illustrated how motion to and from a place were indicated by respectively locative **-tà** and inessive **-k’à**. Since **gābā** ‘market’ always occurs with **-k’à**, motion ‘to’ and ‘from’ are expressed with other means. This is illustrated in (46). When only the case marker is present, direction to the market is understood (a). When a medial verb is employed the referent is in the first clause presented as being at the market and thus logically cannot return to it, so that the second clause must be interpreted as returning from being at the market (b).

- (46) a. **gābā-k’à** **bangar = í-k-ə**
 market-IN return = 3FS-REAL-STI
 She returned to the market.’
 b. **gābā-k’à** **kì-tə** **bangar = í-k-ə**
 market-IN exist-SS return = 3FS-REAL-STI
 She returned from the market.’

In order to express ‘here’, example (47) uses both **-k’à** and **hàs-tà**, meaning something like ‘here in the city (as opposed to in the countryside)’. But if one uses ‘here’ in the sense of ‘at this very spot’, one can use **hàzk’à**, with the inessive case, as in sentence (48). In contrast, ‘(up) there’ goes well together with the more general locative case **-tà** (49).

- (47) **kàtām-k’à** **hàs-tà** **na-ŋ** **gùlbātà**
 city(Amh)-IN PROX.M-LOC 1SG-DAT strength
tʃ’ór-ára
 finish-NEG
 ‘Here in the city my strength doesn’t run out.’

- (48) **hàz-k'à-kì-b** **yerikàn-s-əra** **íʃ-kh** **ats-ə**
 PROX.M-IN-exist-REL jerrycan.DEF-M-ACC 3FS-DAT give-STI
 'give her the jerrycan which is here'

- (49) **só** **ōtì** **ás-tà** **kì-b-tà**
 up.there cow 3MS-LOC exist-REL-LOC
ɲ = sāw-ffin-á-m-ə
 1SG = arrive.NV-descend-put-IRR-STI
 'Up there where that cow is I will arrive and descend.'

Furthermore, there are several words denoting locations, which almost always suffix a case marker, to the point where the case marker becomes an inherent part of the word. The following is meant to enumerate such words, while also illustrating part of the Sheko material culture.

Sheko houses are traditionally situated with their door crosswise to the slope, and the dung outlet at the side where the hill slopes down, so that the manure can flow towards the home garden (**ōrātà**), which is situated mainly downwards from the house. The place in front of the house is flat and part of it (**gyābt'à**) is kept free from grass to use as a threshing ground and place for drying coffee and grain. There is an open space with an outside fireplace at the back side of the house (**kándatà**). In addition, the following words denoting places have the same final syllable **-tà**:

- (50) **gēʃtà** 'lower part of field'
éd-tà 'upper part of field'
gáámtà 'other side, far side, bank of river'
úʃtà 'on the ground, down'
buta 'outside'

Some of these words are presented in context in the examples (51)-(52).

- (51) **yeta àngùt' = a-k-ə gáámtà kees-ə**
 2SG grow.PASS = 2SG-REAL-STI far.side.LOC go.out-STI
só kī-ee
 up.there exist-STI
 'You are grown up. Go to the other shore and live up there.'

- (52) **ísń-às-tà újtà wut = á-k**
 beehive-PROX.M-IN down.LOC fall = 3MS-REAL
 '... the beehive fell to the ground.'

Likewise, **k'ank'à** 'under, below' and **hayk'à** 'up' do not occur without the inessive case marker **-k'à**.

- (53) **kéta-bàb-kh k'ank'à íſi-ra an-àb**
 all-father-DAT under.IN 3PL-ACC put-REL
 'what put(s) them below all others'

- (54) **íz hayk'à íntſù-kh góri-k'à kèès-tə**
 3FS up.IN wood-DAT head-IN go.out-SS
 'She climbed up to the top of the tree and ...'

Place names often include a locational case marker as well. (Tone is not indicated.)

- (55) **boyta, durita, gizmareta, komata, samərta**
badik'a, bardik'a, fažak'a, gayziyk'a, fajak'a

Other nouns form locational expressions when suffixed by a locational case marker. These nouns are mostly body part nouns. (56) lists locative and temporal expressions based on body part nouns together with two other nouns which function structurally the same, forming a locative expression, although a lexical source is not available.²²

²² Mulugeta (2008:56) likewise notes that some relational nouns in Dime have no simple counterpart while their last vowel is analysable as a locative case. Cf. also Rapold (2006, section 10.5) for similar words in Benchnon.

(56)	<i>locational expressions</i>	<i>source</i>
	ādi-k'à behind, after	ādi footprints
	bōw-k'à in, under	bōw belly
	góri-k'à on top of	gori head
	gér-tà above	gori head
	jíj-tà near, close to	jíjú side
	sáán.tà before, in front of	san forehead
	da.tà close to, near	?dáán be together
	ba.tà on, about	?

Note that in the case of **gori** 'head', there are two possibilities: **gori-k'à** 'on top of' with the inessive and **gor-tà** 'above' with the locative case, which correspond to the difference found with stative verbs in denoting contact vs. vicinity. In other instances, such as **batà** 'on' there is no variation and the contact/ vicinity parameter does not seem to play a role. In (57), a board has to be hammered firmly onto a beehive, thus implying contact; nevertheless **-tà** is used.

- (57) **ha = ?isn-hn éd batà mismāri-ka k'yár-á-m**
 2SG = beehive-DATmouth on.LOC nail-WITH beat-put-IRR
 'and hammer it with nails on the opening of the beehive'

The usual way of expressing motion to a person is with **datà**.

- (58) **yí=yááb-ù-s datà téé-kì-bàstà**
 3FS = man-m-PL near.LOC go.NV-exist-WHILE
 'while she was going to her family, ...'

Locational expressions metaphorically function in the temporal domain. A few examples are given in (59) and (60), where the (a) clauses are locational and the (b,c) clauses are temporal. Section 11.5.1 on adverbial clauses provides more information on the use of **-k'à** and **-tà** case in the formation of locational and temporal clauses.

- (59) a. **úftà woog-ít-ə**
 down.LOC sit-PL.ADDR-STI
 'sit down on the ground' (said to children)

- b. **úftà-bààb sàmìnt**
 down.LOC-father week
 ‘last week’
- (60) a. **ás-kh ādī-k’à bangar-tə**
 3MS-DAT footprint-IN return-SS
 ‘After him he returned and...’ (Lit: (he) returned in his footsteps.)
- b. **yīs-kh ādī-k’à tāāmū**
 DIST.M-DAT footprint-IN fire
há = ?ùn-t’ù-tə
 3MS = ignite-PASS-SS
 ‘after that, the fire was lit and...’
- c. **yīs-tà yí = tee-t = í**
 DIST.M-LOC 3FS = go.NV-SS = 3FS
 ‘then she went and...’

Lastly, noun phrases with the inessive case **-k’à** may be used to refer to places where a specific activity takes place. The speaker of (61) is not literally going into a goat, but going to the place where the goats are herded. Another common expression is **bažà-k’à** ‘at work’ (62). The examples referring to **gābā** ‘market’ above may be connected with this use of the inessive case. Alternatively, the nouns may be used non-literally.

- (61) **géék’ù-k’à ɲ = ?ín-á-m-ə kī-k-ə**
 goat-IN 1SG = go-put-IRR-STI exist-REAL-STI
 ‘I am on the point of going to the goats.’
- (62) **bažà-k’à ás-ka ɲ = kyàm-m**
 work-IN 3MS-WITH 1SG = meet-DS
 ‘I met him at work;...’

9.2.6 Instrument and coordination

The morpheme **-ka** marks Instrumental roles as well as Comitative and coordination. It is glossed **WITH** as a cover term for Instrumental and Comitative roles and **COORD** where it occurs in coordination.

The role of Instrument is marked by **-ka**. Here are some examples:

- (63) **būtj-ñ-s** **karà-ka** **há = k'ūd-ūt'-ā-m-ə**
 wound-DEF-M leaf-WITH 3MS = cover-PASS-put-IRR-STI
 'The wound is covered with leaves.'
- (64) **āšū-ka** **há = tee-k-ə**
 leg-WITH 3MS = go.NV-REAL-STI
 'He went on foot.'
- (65) **zēgū-ka** **yí = kààs-kì-k-ə**
 ox-WITH 3FS = play-exist-REAL-STI
 'She plays with the oxen.' (Context: commentary of men who saw a woman ploughing.)
- (66) **hàs-kà** **bángár-ee** **ha-kyàkà-ka** **kī-ee**
 3MS-IN return-STI 2SG.POSS-border-WITH exist-STI
 'Return from here. Abide by your border'. (Context: idiomatic phrases for a ritual to ward off sickness.)

In passivization, when the object is raised to subject position, the original subject may be expressed in an Instrumental phrase marked by **-ka**, as in (67).

- (67) **géék'ù** **ífk-ń-s-əb** **yaab-ù-s-ka**
 goat be.old-DEF-M-REL man-m-PL-WITH
há = fàkùs-t'ù-k-ə
 3MS = split.CAUS-PASS-REAL-STI
 'The goat was dissected by the old men.'

The role of causee may be marked by **-ka**, as in (68). However, the causee may also be marked with accusative case (69).

- (68) **aftu** **beyñs** **dādū-ka** **kōm-s**
 drinking mother.DEF.M child-WITH chief.DEF-M
há = gàsk-ùs-k-ə
 3MS = insult-CAUS-REAL-STI
 'The drunkard had the chief insulted by a child.'

- (69) **yí-bààbíŋ-əra gyānū há = ʔìts-ùs-k-ə**
 3FS.POSS-father 3FS-ACC coffee 3MS = cook-CAUS-REAL-STI
 ‘Her father had her make coffee.’

The sister role of Comitative is also marked by **-ka** (70)-(72). Instrument and Comitative are only marked once, whereas in coordination, the marker usually occurs on all of the coordinated noun phrases (see below).

- (70) **dēyg-ñ yí-fyááyñ-əra kòb-tə**
 child.F-DEF 3FS.POSS-frog.F.DEF-ACC take-SS
yí-kyāān-s-ka daan-tə yí = bangar-k-ə
 3FS.POSS-dog.DEF-M-WITH be.together-SS 3FS = return-REAL-STI
 ‘The girl took her little frog and returned together with her dog.’

- (71) **ás-ka ñ = daan-kì-ntà náta-ra**
 3MS-WITH 1PL = be.together-exist-COND 1PL-ACC
kéta wúŋú-baru-tə
 all kill-throw.away-SS
 ‘If we stay with him, he will finish us all off...’

- (72) **há = ʔūūtn-s-əra kaw-ñ-s-ka dàn-sù-tə**
 3MS = rat.DEF-M-ACC fat-DEF-M-WITH be.together-CAUS-SS
há = bòò-kòb-tə há = dòòr-ñ
 3MS = carry-take-SS 3M = run-DS
 ‘... he seized the rat together with the fat and flew away;...’

The morpheme **-ka** also coordinates noun phrases. If there are two NPs, usually the coordination is marked on both of them, as in (73)-(75), but not always (76).

- (73) **tūūtù-ka ūūtn-ka gyābt’a aas-ñ**
 vulture-COOR rat-COOR yard stand-DS
 ‘Vulture and Rat stood still in the front yard;...’

- (74) **yīs-ee** **náánú-ka** **báádù-ka**
 DIST.M-STI elder.brother-COOR younger.sibling-COOR
íſ = daan-t = íſi **koynəb-ka** **ʒababurʒ-ka**
 3PL = be.together-SS = 3PL Koynəb-COOR Jeba.Burzh-COOR
 ‘As for that, the elder brother and younger brother were together
 and they, Koynəb and Jeba Burzh, ...’
- (75) **íſi-dàdù-ka** **íſi-ka** **daan-tə**
 3PL.POSS-child-COOR 3PL-COOR be.together-SS
kóókí k’oy-tà **dúbà** **kì = íſi-k**
 place one-LOC gather.NMLZ exist = 3PL-REAL
 ‘...their children and they being together were gathered in one
 place.’
- (76) **batʃa-ka** **deebm̃** **há = sās-k-ā-m**
 anger-COOR beating 3MS = arrive.CAUS-put-IRR
 ‘It caused irritation and fighting.’

The coordinator may be present (77) or absent (78) on the last of a series of more than two NPs.

- (77) **duk’ùf-ka** **bèrbēr-mit’i-ka** **bìsbíri-ka**
 garlic-COOR pepper(Amh)-pepper-COOR basilicum-COOR
ts’artì-ka **úgn-ka** **yīs** **ān-t’u-t = á**
 rue-COOR salt-COOR DIST.M put-PASS-SS = 3MS
 ‘... garlic and pepper and basilicum and rue and salt, this is added
 and...’
- (78) **íſi = tītù-ka** **kób-m̃-s-ka** **uutñ-s**
 3PL = vulture-COOR cock-DEF-M-COOR rat-DEF-M
daan-tə **íſi = yēē-bàstà**
 be.together-SS 3PL-come.NV-WHILE
 ‘vulture and the cock and the rat were together and while they
 came...’

Other case marking precedes the coordinator **-ka** (79)-(80). However, there is probably no double marking of Instruments which are coordinated, as in (81).

- (79) **báy-ì-s-ṇ-ka** **bááb-ù-s-ṇ-ka** **bēētṭà**
 female-f-PL-DAT-COOR male-m-PL-DAT-COOR middle.LOC
yí-fyayn-a **yaafu-tə**
 3FS.POSS-frog.F.DEF-ACC find-SS
 ‘in the midst of the females and the males she found her little frog...’
- (80) **yí=dòòr-yèè-tə** **yí=simoon** **p’et’ros-ṇ-ka**
 3FS = run-come.NV-SS 3FS = Simon Pextros-DAT-COOR
ás-ka **daan ky-àb** **yēsūs tàmààrì**
 3MS-WITH together exist-REL Jesus education
dàd-ṇ-kṇ **yí=mààkù-k-ə**
 child-DEF[M]-DAT 3FS = tell-REAL-STI
 ‘she came running and she told it to Simon Peter and to the disciple of Jesus who was with him.’
- (81) **byāk’ṇ-ka** **gyāāsū-ka** **ń=tɕ’ədṇ-kì-k**
 spear-COOR shield-COOR 1PL = fight.MIDD-exist-REAL
 ‘We were fighting with spear and shield.’

Another coordinating marker is the inclusive marker **k’ərà** ~ **k’arà** ‘also, even’. It also occurs on two coordinated noun phrases (82).

- (82) **únà gatsu šókú-ka** **góórà-ka** **t’āāgṇ-bàb**
 long.ago start Sheko-coor Amhara-coor two-father
íṣi=dáán-kì-bàstà **wòffíṣtà** **góór-ṇ-s-k’arà**
 3PL = together-exist -WHILE both.side.LOC Amhara-DEF-M-INCL
šók-ń-s-k’arà faadù gúúrú íṣi=kì-k
 Sheko-DEF-M-INCL body only 3PL = exist-REAL
 ‘In the beginning, long ago, when the Sheko and Amhara were living together, both, the Amhara as well as the Sheko, were naked.’

In Dime, a formally similar instrumental case marker **-ka** is attested with exactly the same distribution for Instrumental, Comitative and Coordinative (Mulugeta 2008:51). In Maale, the morpheme **-na** marks the same roles (Azeb 2001a:79).

9.2.7 Similative

The similative marks the reference point to whose characteristics/ actions those of another referent are likened. Around Sheko town the form **gōntʃi** is used, in the Tepi variety **gomà**. The similative differs from the other cases which are short suffixes, and it might go back to a nominal form (**goma**) plus case marker **-tʃi**, cf. dative **-tʃi** in related Omotic languages, such as Nayi (Aklilu 1994a).

- (83) **yí-bààb** **gōntʃi** **té-ré** **yí=kì-k-ə**
 3FS.POSS-father like COP-NEG.STI 3FS = exist-REAL-STI
 ‘She is not like her father.’

- (84) **ŋ = téé-t = ŋ** **zēgū** **gōntʃi** **fērā**
 1SG = go.NV-SS = 1SG ox like horn
ŋ = bēz-ā-m-ə
 1SG = sprout-put-IRR-STI
 ‘I will go and produce horns like the ox.’

- (85) **íhŋ** **úndí-k'à** **ha = ʔíhŋ-ara**
 wood.DEF.M.DAT bottom-IN 2SG = wood.DEF.M-ACC
kóbtʃ'-á-m **iy** **kāf-tū-k-ùb** **gomà**
 make.roofbeam-put-IRR house build-PASS-exist?-REL like
 ‘you can make roofbeams at the trunk of the tree, like in building a house.’²³

- (86) **kyāāz-ŋ-s-o** **yeta** **gōntʃi** **kì-b**
 lord-DEF-M-STI.ADDR 2SG like exist-REL
ĩtĩ **tə-kn-o**
 who COP-KNOWN-STI.ADDR
 ‘Oh Lord, who is like you?’ (from a song)

9.2.8 Motive

The ‘motive’ marker **əʃntà** occurs on noun phrases denoting the point of reference of a comparative construction or a motive (‘for’, ‘about’), as well as on adverbial clauses, namely reason clauses and purpose clauses. The ‘motive’ marker **əʃntà** is

²³ The speaker speaks the Tepi dialect. **úndí** : Tepi variety. In Sheko use of **úndí** is considered impertinent. **āṣū** ‘foot, leg’ would be used in this context.

included here, although it is not a canonical case marker, neither in form nor in function. However, part of the form might be related to case markers.

Phonetically, **èsǹtà** varies a little bit in pronunciation: \sim **(y)ǹǹtà** \sim **-yèsǹtà**. The morphological make-up and its occurrence in reason and purpose clauses suggest that **èsǹtà** consist of two morphemes. It formally differs from the other case markers. The first element, **èsǹ**, does not occur elsewhere in Sheko. However, Benchnon has a Benefactive marker **èsǹ**, which next to Benefactives marks motives and the point of reference in a comparative construction (Rapold 2006:506). In contrast, the Sheko **èsǹtà** does not mark Benefactives, but it does mark motives extensively (i.e. purpose clauses and reason clauses) as well as the point of reference, as is shown below.²⁴ The second element **-tà** can be analysed as the locative case marker **-tà** or perhaps be related to the **tə** copula (**.ta** on pronouns). An equally possible analysis is to split up **èsǹtà** in **-èsǹ** and the adverbial clause marker **-ǹtà** (see section 11.3).

Semantically, **èsǹtà**, glossed MOTIVE for lack of a better cover term, marks the reference point in a comparative construction (87). In (88), it marks the reference point in relation to a state of affairs. Furthermore, it is found in the sense of ‘about’ (89). More abstractly, **èsǹtà** marks a motive, as in (90).

- (87) **ōtì ǹǹtà zēgū há=ʒaaz-k-ə**
 cow MOTIVE ox 3MS = good-REAL-STI
 ‘An ox is better than a cow.’

²⁴ Looking for other possible sources of the first element **èsǹ**, one could speculate about **ye** copulas in some Omotic languages; cf. Zargulla past copula **yef** ‘was’ (Azeb 2007) and Aari **ye** (Hayward 1990:462). Furthermore, Wolaitta employs a noun **gissha** ‘cause’ with a dative case marker in reason clauses (Lamberti & Sottile 1997:235).

- (88) **néf-bokɲ** **ɲ = woog-àb** **èʃntà** **ɲ = tee-t = ɲ**
 always-time 1SG = sit-REL MOTIVE 1SG = go.NV-SS = 1SG
k'oy bokɲ **ɲ = wut-àb** **ɲ = wog-àb-kh gér̩ti**
 one time 1SG = fall-REL 1SG = sit-REL-DAT head.LOC
tə-k-ə **tógá** **èʃn-tà** **ɲ = mààkù-k-ə**
 COP-REAL-STI mud MOTIVE 1SG = tell-REAL-STI

'It is better to go and fall than to sit all the time. (Lit: from always sitting, my going and falling one time is above my sitting.) I told it with regard to the mud.' (Context: refers to the muddy roads in rainy season.)

- (89) **mātk-ār = á-kì-b** **tòsà** **tʃ'ádɲ** **yìʃntà**
 tell.PASS-NEG = 3MS-exist-REL story war MOTIVE
tə-k-ə
 COP-REAL-STI

'The story that was not told was about war.'

- (90) **túrú** **kyàkà** **yìʃntà** **há = tʃ'ádɲ-kì-k**
 land border MOTIVE 3MS = fight.MIDD-exist-REAL
 'He would fight because of/ about/ for land borders.'

As mentioned before, the 'motive' marker also occurs on adverbial clauses. First, it occurs in reason clauses, which are marked with the relative clause marker **-àb** (91). Characteristically, the word translated as 'therefore', used for example when reaching a conclusion in discourse, is made up of the distal demonstrative plus **èʃntà** (92). Secondly, it marks purpose clauses, which have the purpose marker **-ɲ** (93). Reason and purpose clauses are further exemplified in section 11.5 on adverbial clauses.

- (91) **k'ámù-ra** **há = útú-kì-b-ìʃntà**
 slave-ACC 3MS = like-exist-REL-MOTIVE
há = ūm-s-kì-b-ìʃntà **ás-kh** **bəndū**
 3MS = eat-CAUS-exist-REL-MOTIVE 3MS-DAT Bandu
ky = ǎ-k-ə
 exist = 3MS-REAL-STI

'he has Bandu because he loves the servants and because he feeds them.'

- (92) **yīz-īṣṇà** **ṣókú-ra** **īṣ=je-tə** **góóra-ka**
 DIST.M-MOTIVE Sheko-ACC 3PL = forget-SS Amhara-WITH
gúru **īṣ=nòn-kì-k-ə**
 only 3PL = talk-exist-REAL-STI
 ‘Therefore they forget Sheko and talk only in Amharic.’

- (93) **yí-bèngi-ra** **yí-nàṣà-k**
 3FS.POSS-year-ACC 3FS.POSS-husband-WITH
yí=daan-tə **yí=tʃ’ōr-ṣ-ṇ-īṣṇà** ...
 3FS = be.together-SS 3FS = finish-CAUS-PURP-MOTIVE
yīs **kòòsù-ra** **ītə** **māāk-o**
 DIST.M divination-ACC who:COP tell-STL.ADDR
 ‘who will tell this traditional practice ... so that she will finish her
 years together with her husband ...?’

9.3 Possessive constructions

This section compares possessive constructions in detail. For ease of reference the different constructions are labelled ‘attributive’ in case of juxtaposed nouns or noun phrases, and ‘case-marked’ or ‘ascension’ in case of the construction with the dative-marked possessor. Predicative possession is shortly mentioned here for the sake of comparison and semantic coherence; it is treated more extensively in the section on existential clauses.

NP NP	attributive (juxtaposed)	ōtī baatṣi ‘cow hide’
NP-DAT NP	case-marked (ascension)	ōtī-kh báatṣi ‘skin of a cow’
existential	predicative (existential)	with ki ‘exist’

9.3.1 Attributive possession

In attributive possession, the possessor always precedes the possessum. Both can be expressed in an NP (94)-(95), or the possessor can be expressed anaphorically by a possessor prefix, as is shown in (96). The relation between the possessor and the possessum is not necessarily one of ownership, and one could also call this construction an associative or genitive construction.

- (94) **há=mārtà** **màts'áf-ñ-s-a** **jàar-kòb-t=á**
 3MS = Marta book(Amh)-DEF-M-ACC rob-take-SS = 3MS
 'he snatched away Marta's book and he...'
- (95) **há=fáádù** **byàrgù** **sak-ñtà**
 3MS = hunger year arrive-COND
 'if a period of hunger arrives,...'
- (96) **há-byàk'ñ** **kès-tə**
 3MS.POSS-spear go.out.CAUS-SS
 'bringing out his spear and...'

The head of the NP is marked tonally, as is every head which is preceded by a modifier. It is of course possible to put more than two NPs together, in which case each modified head undergoes the change in tone. In example (97) the nouns **bāāb** 'father' and **náánú** 'elder brother' are modified.

- (97) **dād-ñ-s** **bàāb** **naanu-ra** **ošk-ít-ə**
 child-DEF-M father elder.brother-ACC call-PL.ADDR-STI
 'Call the elder brother of the boys' father.'

Juxtaposed possessive noun phrases may use **bāāb** 'father' and **bé** 'mother' as the second element. **bāāb/ bé** form 'possessor of' nouns, which denote an owner or entity characterized by what is mentioned in the first element (see section 5.5.5). Some 'possessor of' nouns are illustrated in (98)-(100). **bāāb** 'father' and **bé** 'mother' also function as nominalizers, see section 5.5.6.

- (98) **íntjù** **bàāb** **dàtà** **ɲ=téé-tə** **ɲ=ás-a**
 wood father near.LOC 1SG = go.NV-SS 1SG = 3MS-ACC
óótʃ-á-m-ə
 ask-put-IRR-STI
 'I'll go to the owner of the wood and ask him.'
- (99) **yī-nì** **úfín** **be** **te-k-ə**
 DIST-F flower mother COP-REAL-STI
 'That one has flowers.' (Lit: that is a mother of flower.)

- (100) **gáydu bààb kì-tə**
 problem father exist-ss
 ‘being a poor person,...’

9.3.2 Predicate possession

In Sheko, the predicate possessive clause best compares with an existential clause. Existentials make use of the verb **ki** ‘to be present, exist, live’, as in (101).

- (101) **gyānū** **kì=á-k-ə**
 coffee exist=3MS-REAL-STI
 ‘There is coffee.’

In a possessive predicate, the possessor NP is in the dative case and the possessum NP occurs as the subject of the predicate 'be present, exist'.

- (102) **baɣà yí-nàɣà-k̀n k̀i-̀ntà, ...**
 work 3FS.POSS-husband-DAT exist-COND
 ‘If her husband has work,...’ (Lit: if there is work to her husband.)

In the predicative possession construction, only the possessum can be the grammatical subject. The subject cannot be marked for definiteness, as shown in example (103). The systematic absence of definiteness marking on the subject constituent is related to the type of construction and its function. Possessive predication typically asserts possession, in contrast to attributive possession which typically presupposes possession (Heine 1997:26).

- (103) [?]***gyān-n-s** **m-baad-n-s-kh** **kì=á-k**
 coffee-DEF-M 1SG.POSS-younger.sibling-DEF-M-DAT exist=3MS-REAL
 int. ‘The coffee is to my brother’, i.e. ‘the coffee belongs to my brother.’

If one wants to present the possessor as the grammatical subject, it is possible to use a copula-construction, with which it is possible to have either the possessor (104) or the possessum (105) as subject. In this equational construction, the subject is easily marked as definite, hence it can refer to

known, topical referents. The copula complement, i.e **gyanu bààb** or **mèngistik̀ǹbààb** involves an NP expressing a possessive relation. This type of NP is discussed in section 9.3.1 and 5.5.5.

- (104) **m-baad-n-s** **gyānū bààb** **tə-k-ə**
 1SG.POSS-younger.sibling-DEF-M coffee father COP-REAL-STI
 ‘My brother is a coffee-owner/ owns coffee’

- (105) **gyān-ñ-s** **yīs** **kéta** **mèngistì-k̀ǹ-bààb**
 coffee-DEF-M DIST.M all government-DAT-father
tə-k-ə ²⁵
 COP-REAL-STI
 ‘All this coffee belongs to the government’ (Lit: ... is father of ‘to the government’.)

9.3.3 The case-marked construction and inalienability

The third construction which is used to express possession consists of the possessor NP with a dative case marker followed by the possessum NP. Body parts most often occur in the case-marked construction, as illustrated in the examples (106)-(109).

- (106) **yí-nàṣwà-k̀ǹ** **ááb-a** **sée-r=i-k'y-á-m**
 3FS.POSS-husband-DAT eye-ACC see.NV-NEG = 3FS-remain-put-IRR
 ‘She didn’t see her husbands’ face.’ (Context: talking about old marriage customs.)

- (107) **ye-k̀ǹ** **kúṭṣú-k’a** **k̀i-b** **gēb̀ǹ**
 2SG-DAT hand-IN exist-REL how.much[Q]
 ‘How much (money) do you have in hand?’

- (108) **yí=ṣóóṣ-k̀ǹ** **kum-ǹ-s-əra** **k’ùts’ù-bàr-ǹ**
 3FS = snake-DAT neck-DEF-M-ACC cut-throw.away-DS
 ‘she cut off the neck of the snake’

²⁵ Without **-bààb** one gets a Benefactive/Recipient reading:

gyān-ñ-s **yīs** **kéta** **mèngistì-k̀ǹ** **tə-k-ə**
 coffee-DEF-M DIST.M all government-DAT COP-REAL-STI
 ‘All this coffee is for the government’ (e.g. to be given as a form of taxes)

- (109) **ás-kḥḥ** **éd-k'à** **yí=bàr-n̄** **twèèt-wèè**
 3MS-DAT mouth-IN 3FS=throw-DS IDEO
ás-kḥḥ **fōōrī-k'à** **há=gé-bààstà**
 3MS-DAT throat-IN 3MS=say-WHILE
 'she threw it (a hot pebble) in his mouth, and while it said
 'tweetwee' in his throat (while his throat got burned)...

The case-marked construction is grammatically different from the predicative possession construction, in that the order possessor-possessum may not be reversed, as illustrated in (110b), cf. the grammaticality of the predicative (111b).

- (110) a. **gaana-kḥḥ** **āṣū** **ʃan=á-k-ə**
 Gaana-DAT leg be-.broken = 3MS-REAL-STI
 'Gaana's leg is broken.'
 b. ***āṣū** **gaana-kḥḥ** **ʃan=á-k-ə**
 leg Gaana-DAT be.broken = 3MS-REAL-STI
 intended: 'Gaana's leg is broken.' (possible with benefactive interpretation 'a leg has been broken for Gaana')
- (111) a. **baasà-kḥḥ** **ēkī** **kì=á-k-ə**
 Baasa-DAT money exist = 3MS-REAL-STI
 'Baasa has money/ cattle.' (Lit: to Baasa there is money.)
 b. **ēkī** **baasà-kḥḥ** **kì=á-k-ə**
 money Baasa-DAT exist = 3MS-REAL-STI
 'Baasa has money/ cattle.' (Lit: to Baasa there is money.)

There are basically two contexts in which body parts occur in attributive possessive noun phrases. The first context is where the body part is alienable, i.e. there is no part-whole relation between the possessor and the possessum, but a different one, e.g. a relation of ownership. Thus, the bone in (112) is not part of the body of the speaker, but it is an animal bone which the subject had given to the addressee to eat. Another example is (113), which tells about a tanned cow hide, not about the skin of a living cow.

- (112) **ɲ-uus-ɲ-s-a** **ats-ə** **yí=ge-ɲ**
 1SG.POSS-bone-DEF-M-ACC give-STI 3FS=say-DS
 ‘“Give my bone,” she said...’

- (113) **ōtì** **baatʃi** **án-ɲ-kì-b** **tēngì** **bàtà**
 cow skin put-NEG2-exist-REL tree.sp on.LOC
íʃi=sōk'ū-kì-b-ís
 3PL=sleep-exist-REL-DIST.M
 ‘those who didn’t use a cow hide, what they were sleeping on was *tengi*.’

The second context in which an attributive construction is used is one which places emphasis on the possessor. Example (114) below makes this very clear: only clause (b) can follow (a) as an explanation, (c) cannot. It is of course possible to use a case-marked construction, but then again the semantics change (115).

- (114) a. **wōsā** **hàz** **ɲ-kuʃu-ka** **ɲ=ts'áfù-k-ə**
 letter PROX.M 1SG.POSS-hand-WITH 1SG=write-REAL-STI
 ‘I wrote this letter by my (own) hand.’
 b. **ts'áhāfi-ɲ-s** **na-ɲ** **ts'áf-ār=á-kì-k-ə**
 clerk-DEF-M 1SG-DAT write-NEG=3MS-exist-REAL-STI
 ‘The clerk didn’t write it for me.’
 c. ***ɲ-kòmpùtèrì-ka** **ts'áf-ēn-kì-k-ə**
 1SG.POSS-computer-WITH write-NEG.1SG-exist-REAL-STI
 ‘I didn’t write it on the computer.’

- (115) **wōsā** **hàz** **na-ɲ** **kúʃú-ka** **ɲ=ts'áfù-k-ə**
 letter PROX.M 1SG-DAT hand-WITH 1SG=write-REAL-STI
 ‘I wrote this letter by (my) hand.’ (not on the computer)

Another example is given in (116).

- (116) **íʃ-gayd-n-s** **ʔyáát-ɲ-s-əb** **há=fòòt-àb-əra**
 3PL.POSS-problem-DEF-M big-DEF-M-REL 3MS=become-REL-ACC
ɲ-ʔaab-ka **ɲ=see-k-ə**
 1SG.POSS-eye-WITH 1SG=see.NV-REAL-STI
 ‘I saw with my own eyes that their problem is enormous.’

The two possessive constructions are contrasted in examples (117)-(118) as well. In (117), a possessor prefix and the noun for ‘head’ are used to form the intensifying noun phrase **ha-gərì** ‘yourself’. (More examples of ‘oneself’ are presented in section 6.3.) The idiomatic utterance in (118) is used as a warning for unruly children.

- (117) **ha-gərì** **kóót-ə**
 2SG.POSS-head watch-STI
 ‘Watch (it) yourself’/ ‘Look after it yourself’

- (118) **ye-k̀̀n** **gəri** **kóót**
 2SG-DAT head watch
 ‘Watch your head!’ (i.e. ‘Beware’)

In Sheko, as in many other languages, most spatial terms (locational nouns) are related to body parts. Spatial terms (locational noun phrases) occur in the case-marked construction.²⁶ Examples are given in (119)-(121).

- (119) **kyān-s** **ás-k̀̀n** **gəri-ra** **?yááná-k̀̀n**
 dog.DEF-M 3MS-DAT head-ACC pot-DAT
bōw-k’à **tóórá** **há = wùskù-tə**
 belly-IN downward 3MS = enter-SS
 ‘The dog entered his head down in the pot and he...’
- (120) **téréf-̀̀n-s-a** **tāāmū-k̀̀n** **ʃíʃ-tà** **tóót-ə**
 coffeepot-DEF-M-ACC fire-DAT side-LOC erect-STI
 ‘Put the coffee pot next to the fire’

²⁶ Since spatial terms are often derived from body parts, it is plausible that a language treats both the same, but not necessarily so: Ewe distinguishes the two, treating spatial terms as ‘inalienable’ and body parts as ‘alienable’ (see Ameka (1996:810ff) for an explanation).

- (121) **íʃ = ts'yaats'u-t = íʃi** **tʃ'òr-ʃ-àb-kh** **ādi-k'à**
 3PL = tie-SS = 3PL finish-CAUS-REL-DAT footprint-IN
p'ēēt'à **búútsú-tə**
 thatch mow-SS
 'after they finish tying they cut the thatch and...' (Lit: in the
 footprints to their finishing...)

Likewise, inherent parts of a location may be treated as a body part.

- (122) **hààz** **kyāān-s** **kàtʃa** **wó-ká** **ʃēʔi-kh**
 PROX.M dog.DEF-M still up.there-LCT stone-DAT
kōp'arà-k'à **há = bààs-kì-k**
 open.space.in.forest.or.stone-IN 3MS = want-exist-REAL
 'Here the dog is still searching over there at the rock's crevices.'

Recapitulating, it appears that the construction with a case-marked possessor is the unmarked way to talk about possessed body parts, whereas the attributive construction with body parts puts emphasis on the possessor or indicates that the body part is alienable.

A similar situation with regard to body parts occurs in the other Majoid languages. For Diizin, a discussion arose in which Alan (1976) claimed that Diizin shows inalienable possession, whereas Claudi and Serzisko (1985) argued that the Diizin possessive constructions involving body part nouns represent the phenomenon of 'possessor promotion'.²⁷ However, the idea of possessor promotion or possessor ascension has come under attack itself. More precisely, the underlying assumption that an alienable ('normal') construction and an inalienable ('promoted') construction have the same meaning appears not to hold (Chappel and McGregor 1996:7). I have shown for

²⁷ Inalienable constructions are morphologically less marked than alienable constructions cross-linguistically. The 'markedness' of the inalienable construction in Diizin was one of the reasons why Claudi and Serzisko analysed it as possessor promotion (1985:134). However, their analysis of possessor promotion to a locative case is equally not in line with what one usually finds in languages: possessors are commonly "promoted to" a direct object or an indirect object, not to a locative, cf. (1985:141). The Diizin case marker in question is **-kɲ**. Beachy (2005) gives **-kɲ** as a genitive, not a locative, and **-is** as a dative case.

Sheko that the case-marked construction basically centralises the part (here, the possessed), in opposition to a possessive noun phrase, which more or less focuses on the whole (here, the possessor). Since the semantics are different, both constructions are equal and a speaker can describe a situation with regard to the whole or the part by choosing one or the other. In other words, discourse features play a role in the choice between the two constructions. The (in)alienability readings in the Majoid languages arise from the semantics of the constructions.

There are more Omotic languages that have two ways to form 'genitival' relations, one which employs juxtaposition and one which has a case marker. Interestingly, the Maale language (Azeb 2001a:63) has a construction NP-**ko** NP which contrasts with simple juxtaposition exactly in singling out the part.

10 Simple clauses

This chapter describes the verbal morphology of affirmative final (main) verb forms in Sheko, as well as copular and verbless sentences. Furthermore, word order of simple clauses is discussed. Non-final verbs such as medial verbs and dependent verbs are discussed in chapter 11. Morphology associated with verb derivation is discussed in chapter 12. Negation is treated in chapter 14. The CV-structure of verb roots is treated in section 2.5.2.

10.1 Overview of main verb morphology

The final (main) verb comprises the following elements: a subject clitic, a main verb stem, an expletive vowel **-u** for some verbs, an optional element denoting aspect, a modal marker and a stance marker. An example is given in (1). A main verb form forms a complete sentence by itself.

- (1) **íſi = bàʒ.ù -k'e -k -ə**
 3PL = work -remain -REAL -STI
 clitic = stem.expletive vowel -aspect -modal -stance
 'they have worked (and are not longer working)'

Most final verb forms fit the above pattern, but there are three paradigms in which the subject clitic follows the verb stem. These are the Realis, Obvious and Optative.

- (2) **gāār = á -s -ə**
 bear.fruit = 3MS -OPT -STI
 stem = clitic -modal -stance
 'may it bear fruit'

Starting from the right end, each structural slot is briefly presented here and discussed in detail in its respective section, beginning with stance markers and finishing with subject clitics as in (1).

Stance markers are discussed in section 10.2 below. A stance marker may be attached to the rightmost element of an utterance to indicate how the speaker relates to the utterance.

The direct stance marker **-a** makes an utterance more direct and less polite, while the indirect stance marker **-ə** signals a certain distance between the speaker and the utterance, which is used for e.g. politeness and reported speech.

Modal markers are described in detail in section 10.3. After a short discussion of the system, it is shown that all paradigms can be grouped into three groups on the basis of the tone on the verb stem. Furthermore, the function of each modal marker is discussed. The following markers are presented in detail:

label	marker	gloss
Imperative-Jussive	-	-
Optative	-s	OPT
Irrealis	-m	IRR
Realis	-k	REAL
Obvious	-kn	KNOWN
Viewpoint	-s	VIEWP
Implicative	-a	IMPLC

The interrogative and negative are discussed elsewhere. Chapter 13 resumes the discussion of modal markers and sentence type, expanding on how the sentence types are distinguished, especially the strategy of ‘subtractive’ morphology for interrogatives.

label	marker	gloss
negative	-ara	NEG
interrogative	-ø (sometimes intonation)	Q

Section 10.4 treats the aspectual slot. There are two verbs denoting aspectual distinctions, such as **ki** ‘exist, live’, marking Imperfective, **k’é** ‘be left, remain’ marking Perfective, and a suffix **-a** (possibly from the verb ‘put’) which is restricted to Irrealis verb forms. These aspectual markers are suffixed to the main verb stem (incl. expletive vowel, if present), as shown with the verb **baʒ** ‘work’ in examples (3)-(4)).

- (3) **há = bàzù-kì-k-ə**
 3MS = work-exist-REAL-STI
 ‘he is/ was working’
- (4) **há = bāz-ā-m-ə**
 3MS = work-put-IRR-STI
 ‘he will work’

Section 10.5 on verb stems concentrates on verb stem alternation, with reference to other Omotic languages. A small group of verb stems occurs with and without a velar element. This alternation is for the most part morphologically determined, although there are a few places where the velar stem can be associated with a stronger assertion and the non-velar stem with a weaker assertion, or no assertion.

The expletive vowel **-u**, which occurs after some verb stems, is obligatorily present in some forms, generally when a stop follows the verb stem. It copies the tone of the preceding verb stem. Synchronically, it does not have any discernible meaning or function. It is not epenthetic, since it occurs where clusters of consonants are possible. Furthermore, it occurs in stem derivation (chapter 12). It is not glossed separately in this thesis, but it is easily recognizable since there are no stems ending in **-.CV**.

Lastly, section 10.6 describes the forms of the subject clitic. Its function is described separately in chapter 15, because the placement of the subject clitic is dependent on information structure (salience, focus) and syntax.

10.2 Stance

A stance marker is used to indicate how the speaker relates to his utterance, i.e. it signals the presence or absence of distance between the speaker and his utterance, and may thereby convey the attitude of the speaker towards his utterance. Rapold (2006) has used the term mediativity for comparable markers in Benchnon.

In Sheko, there are indirect and direct stance markers. The indirect stance marker is **-ə**, which signals a certain distance between the speaker and the utterance, and makes the utterance less direct. For instance, it may add a layer of politeness, and indicate the reporting of speech. For questions and vocative utterances, the indirect stance marker is **-o**. The direct stance marker is **-ya ~ -a**, which signals the absence of distance and makes the utterance more direct and less polite.

The stance markers may be phonetically lengthened. This is generally not indicated in the examples, except for the long form **-ee** of the indirect stance marker **-ə** in some instances (schwa does not occur as a long vowel). Stance markers are glossed STI (stance marker, indirect) or STD (stance marker, direct).

Stance markers are not obligatorily present, but they are common. I have not investigated which pragmatic factors trigger the occurrence of the stance markers in Sheko, but likely they correspond to the factors suggested by Rapold (2008): distance (spatial boundary); addressing a superior or crowd, speaking in an official situation (social boundaries); surprise, reported speech (cognitive boundaries); end of major text unit (textual boundary). The Sheko data suggest that another textual boundary exists, namely topic, i.e. a constituent which mentions what the sentence or paragraph is about. In example (5), a stance marker follows the topical constituent.

- (5) **ń-kòòsù-ee** **náta** **kōynāb** **dàdù** **tə-k-ə**
 1PL.POSS-tradition-STI 1PL Koynāb child COP-REAL-STI
 ‘As for our tradition, we are the children of Koynāb.’

A stance marker appears at the rightmost end of a clause and attaches to all word categories except ideophones. Example (6) below illustrates this with a dependent verb (in a topic clause), a demonstrative and an interjection.

- (6) a. **yīs-əra** **há = səg-ñtə-ə**
 DIST.M-ACC 3MS = see-COND-STI
 ‘as regards this,...’

- b. **hààz-o**
 PROX.M-STI.ADDR
 ‘What about this one?’
- c. **haʔ-ə**
 [presentational]-STI
 ‘here it is, take it’

10.2.1 Indirect stance

The indirect stance marker **-ə** ~ **-ee** signals that there is a certain distance between the speaker and the utterance. Example (7) contrasts an Imperative with and without the indirect stance marker. Example (8) illustrates the use of the stance marker in reporting of speech. Included is the reporting of one’s own speech (8b).

- (7) a. **yəg**
 come
 ‘Come!’
- b. **yəg-ə**
 come-STI
 ‘Come!’ (less direct order as in (a), or shouting at a distance)
- (8) a. **fín-ə** **há = ge-ñ**
 descend-STI 3MS = say-DS
 ‘he said: “Descend!” ...’
- b. **kááy** (...) **kááy-ə**
 be.not be.not-STI
 ‘It is not there. (...if someone continues searching...) It is not there (as I said).’

In the interrogative, the form of the indirect stance marker is **-o**. The form **-o** is found on vocatives as well (section 5.3.4). Therefore, one can say that the stance marker **-o** is used to signal that there is expectation of (or opportunity for) a verbal response of the addressee.

- (9) **kaarì sáántà yīs koosù-ra ìtə**
 toward front.LOC DIST.M tradition-ACC who:COP
māāk-o
 tell-STL.ADDR
 ‘Who will tell this traditional wisdom in the future?’ (Context: polite question to a chief.)

In addition to politeness, the use of **-o** can convey other feelings. When (10) is compared to (11), the first is a simple inquiry, whereas the second is a more desperate question. Compare this to the rhetorical question in (12), which also is marked by an **-o**. In both questions, no answer is expected. It might be that the dramatic effect is caused by using **-o**, which explicitly signals that there is room for a response, while the context makes clear that actually there is no answer.

- (10) **yír=ŋ ēg-ā**
 what = 1SG do-put[Q]
 ‘What shall I do?’ (inquiring)
- (11) **yír=ŋ eg-o**
 what = 1SG do-STL.ADDR
 ‘What shall I do?’ (confusion, helplessness)
- (12) **àbēt kyāāz-ŋ-s-o yeta gōntŋi**
 INTJ(Amh) lord-DEF-M-STL.ADDR 2SG SIMIL
kì-b ìtī tə-kn-o
 exist-REL who COP-KNOWN-STL.ADDR
 ‘Oh Lord, who is like you?’ (from a church song)

10.2.2 Direct stance

In contrast to the indirect stance marker, the second stance marker **-a** signals the absence of distance, i.e. the utterance is made more direct and/or less polite. In my corpus it occurs only with the Viewpoint (13), Implicative (14), Obvious (15), and with the imperative for children (examples (16)-(17) below). The direct stance marker has the form **-ya** in the latter two cases.

- (13) **t'ōōzì-kh-bààb** **tə-s-a**
 Xoozi-DAT-father COP-VIEWP-STD
 'It is Xoozi's, if I'm right.'
- (14) **íŋi-ra** **yí=k'áám-á-m** **ŋ=ge-tə** **ŋ=íŋ-əra**
 3PL-ACC 3FS = bring.up-put-IRR 1SG = say-SS 1SG = 3FS-ACC
kòy-k'y-a-a
 bring-remain-IMPLC-STD
 'Saying "She will raise them," I brought her, (would you believe!)'
 (Context: Said by a father after he discovers that the stepmother does not raise the children as she should, and does not give them food.)
- (15) **baak-n-s** **ŋ=fyààn-kì-kn-ya**
 yam-DEF-M 1SG = peel-exist-KNOWN-STD
 'But I am peeling the yams!' (Context: father asked teenage daughter to do something for him, but she refused.)

The imperative for children is only used for children and younger siblings, i.e. when the person is younger in age and familiar. It is used in order to persuade them to do something, and to hold their attention. The indirect stance marker **-ya** occurs with the non-final verbs in a clause chain, whereas the last verb of the chain is a normal imperative (16). The children addressed in (17) were expected to say **haa**, an expression of consent and agreement, after every clause.

- (16) **yeta** **gáám-tà** **kees-tée-t-ya** **ábsì** **şókú**
 2SG shore-LOC go.out-go.NV-SS-STD up Sheko
footu-t-yà **myāngū** **úm-ə**
 become-SS-STD spirit eat-STI
 'Go to the other shore and become Sheko up there and eat a spirit (i.e. become independent by establishing a contact with the spirit world).' (Context: elder brother sends younger brother away.)

- (17) **yá-ee** (haa)
 INTJ-STI
- hāāy-k'à** **téé-t-ítí-ya** (-)
 water-IN go.NV-SS-PL.ADDR-STD
- ítí = siis-kì** (haa)
 2PL = listen-exist[Q]
- hāāy-k'à** **ítí-kh** **faad** **bárt'ús-t-ítí-ya** (haa)
 water-IN 2PL-DAT body wash-SS-PL.ADDR-STD
- ítí-shèm-m-s-ra** **bárt'ús-t-ítí-ya** (haa)
 2PL.POSS-clothing-DEF-M-ACC wash-SS-PL.ADDR-STD
- ...
- 'Listen, go to the water and - are you listening? - wash your bodies at the water and wash your clothes...'

10.3 Mood

Palmer (2001) notes that many languages combine 'typical mood' categories like declaratives and interrogatives with 'typical modal system' elements, like possibility and epistemicity. Realis and irrealis may function in the middle ground. The distinction between 'mood' and 'modality' (or 'modal systems') is often not maintained. Languages somehow view these domains as one, perhaps because they all have to do with the status of a proposition in some way or another (cf. Palmer 2001:160; Payne 1997:244). The Sheko modal system as presented below indeed involves about everything from sentence type to viewpoint marker. The Irrealis includes all 'weaker' modalities such as indicated in English by 'could' and 'should', whereas the opposite notion of strong assertion falls under Realis. Realis and Irrealis are in complementary distribution with Interrogative, Imperative-Jussive, Optative, Viewpoint etc. However, the language does make a distinction between modal marking and stance, (i.e. the relation between speaker and utterance, see section 10.2). The table below gives an overview of all the modal markers.

	marker	tone on “L” stem	tone on “H” stem	gloss	stance
Imperative sg & Jussive	-∅	2	4	-	-ə
Imperative pl	-∅	3	4	-	-ə
Optative	-s	3	4	OPT	-ə
Irrealis	-m	3	4	IRR	-ə
Negative	-ara	3	4	NEG	-ə
Realis	-k	1	2	REAL	-ə
Obvious	-kn	1	2	KNOWN	-ya
Viewpoint	-s	1	2	VIEWP	-a
Implicative	-a	1	2	IMPLC	-a
Interrogative	-∅ (intonation)	varies	varies	Q	-o

Table 1. Modal markers.

Interestingly, there are two paradigms which seem to have zero marking: the Imperative-Jussive and the Interrogative, but the two are different. While the Imperative is formed simply by the verb stem, the formation of the Interrogative employs ‘subtractive’ morphology. This point is taken up again in chapter 13 on interrogatives.

There are no morphemes which specifically (exclusively) mark declarative or imperative. These are distinguished by the presence or absence of some morphemes, viz. modal markers and subject clitics, and also partly by tone. Likewise, the interrogative distinguishes itself from declarative counterparts partly by a final intonational fall (this phonological clue may be absent) and partly by the absence of modal markers. A reason for the absence of modal markers in these two sentence types could be the following: imperative as well as interrogative are the types of utterance in which modal distinctions are least required. With an interrogative, one asks for information on a constituent or on the modal status of the proposition, instead of giving this information. With an imperative, one also does not evaluate a proposition but one gives a directive for the addressee to follow up. Both types of

utterance are directed at an addressee and a reaction of the addressee is expected.

Of course, there are many differences between imperative/jussives and interrogatives as well. The interrogative, asking for information, has corresponding ‘declaratives’ which can provide that information, while the imperative asks for action rather than a verbal response. Furthermore, there are various clues which make the distinction between the sentence types evident in actual speech. These clues are either not obligatorily present, e.g. an aspect marker or indirect stance marker (which varies between -ə and -o), or not restricted to one sentence type, e.g. tonal height and the absence of subject clitics (absent in imperatives as well as negatives).

The next section gives an overview of paradigms from the point of view of tone on the verb stem. In sections 10.3.2 to 10.3.8, all final (main) paradigms except negative and interrogative are discussed and illustrated in turn. Section 10.3.9 demonstrates that the notion of imminence is expressed by a combination of Realis and Irrealis.

10.3.1 Overview of paradigms from a tonal point of view

On the basis of the tone of the verb stem, paradigms can be divided into three groups. The terminology that I use to distinguish these three shows the correlation between the categorization and mood. Note however that this correlation is not absolute and the groups are defined purely on the basis of tonal behaviour.

1. The Basic paradigms are the Imperative singular and Jussive. Verb stems classified as “H” have tone 4 and verb stems classified as “L” have tone 2.

2. In Non-Factual paradigms, verb stems classified as “H” have tone 4, while verb stems classified as “L” have tone 3. The Non-Factual paradigms include

- Irrealis
- negative
- Imperative plural
- Optative

Furthermore, Irrealis complement clauses and purpose clauses fall into this group.

3. Factual paradigms are paradigms in which “H” stems take tone 2 and “L” stems tone 1. These include

- Realis
- Obvious
- Viewpoint
- Implicative

In addition, conditional clauses (if-clauses), reason clauses and Realis complement clauses belong to this group.

Medial verbs do not have a mood marker, but the tone of the verb stem shows whether the final (main) verb is Factual or Non-Factual/ Basic. In other words, the height of the tone on a medial verb stem corresponds with the tone height, representing the mood, of the final main verb.

The tone on verb stems in relative clauses has only been investigated cursorily. Tone on verb stems in relative clauses varies in height as well, depending on the context and/or the construction. In example (18), the tone on the stem **fuur** ‘trade’ is on level 1 (as with Factual paradigms), whereas in example (19) the tone on the stem **k’eets** ‘catch fire’ is on level 3 (as with Non-Factual paradigms). Both verb stems belong to lexical tone class “L”.

- (18) **túúrù** **ɲ=fùr-àb-khè** **ādi-k'à**
 land 1SG = trade-REL-DAT footprint-IN
 ‘after I will have bought land,...’

- (19) **tāāmū** **ūn-t'ū-t=á** **āngā** **k'eets'ū-bààstà**
 fire ignite-PASS-SS = 3MS much catch.fire-WHILE
 ‘the fire is ignited and while it burns well,...’

10.3.2 Imperative-Jussive

The Imperative and Jussive paradigms are complementary. The Imperative is only for the second person and consists of the stem. A stance marker may be added. The Jussive comprises all other persons and is formed by a subject clitic, stem and

optional stance marker. Table 2 below shows the Imperative-Jussive for the two verb classes in Sheko with **síís** ‘listen’ and **kaas** ‘show’.

	Jussive	Imp.	Jussive	Imp.
	“H”		“L”	
1sg	ɲ-síís ‘let me listen’		ɲ-kaas ‘let me play’	
1pl	ń-síís ‘let us listen’		ń-kaas ‘let us play’	
2sg		síís ‘listen!’		kaas ‘play!’
2pl		síís-ít ‘listen (pl)!’		kāās-ít ‘play (pl)!’
3ms	há-síís ‘let him listen’		há-kaas ‘let him play’	
3fs	yí-síís ‘let her listen’		yí-kaas ‘let her play’	
3pl	íñi-síís ‘let them listen’		íñi-kaas ‘let them play’	

Table 2. Imperative-Jussive.

The Imperative singular and the Jussive form the Basic paradigm. Note that the Imperative plural has tone 3 on a L verb stem, therefore the Imperative plural is taken as belonging to the Non-Factual paradigms. It is formed by the verb stem plus the plural addressee marker **-ít**. This is illustrated in (20).

- (20) **é-ká** **kāās-ít**
 there-LCT play-PL.ADDR
 ‘play over there!’

In the Jussive, the indirect stance marker **-ə** is commonly present. (Stance markers are discussed in section 10.2.)

- (21) **īi-k’ à** **há = ʔyard-ə**
 house-IN 3MS = enter-STI
 ‘Let him enter the house.’

- (22) **nā há=kì sē-s-ít ní=sāg-ə**
 where 3MS = exist[Q] see.NV-CAUS-PL.ADDR 1PL = see-STI
 ‘... where is he? Show him, let us see him.’

When a series of commands is expressed in medial clauses, the first verb is a medial verb without a subject clitic. An example is the first verb form in (23).

- (23) **téé-tə ye-kì básín-tà ha=fáru-kí-ñ**
 go.NV-SS 2SG-DAT doorstep-LOC 2SG = clear.ground-exist-DS
múri mugara kì-be hà-yaaf-ñtà
 pebble ? exist-REL.mother 2SG = find-COND
yīs-tà ha=yēē-tə
 DIST.M-LOC 2SG = come-SS
 ‘Go and clear the ground around your doorstep and when you find a smooth(?) pebble then come and...’

In addition, there is a special series of command for addressing children, see section 10.2.2.

10.3.3 Irrealis

The Irrealis marker is **-m**. The Irrealis depicts situations as not ‘actual’, i.e. they are potential (24), hypothetical or counterfactual (25), habitual (26) or generic (27). Some languages also mark questions, imperatives and negatives as irrealis (Palmer 2001:11, Payne 1997:245). However, these sentence types all have their own marking in Sheko.

- (24) **ʔyááná m=fūūr-ā-m-ə**
 pot 1SG = trade-put-IRR-STI
 ‘I will buy a pot.’
- (25) **dād-ñ-s má há=yēē-m-ə**
 child-DEF-M earlier.today 3MS = come.NV-IRR-STI
 ‘The boy would have come today.’

- (26) **támú kòntāri há = hāātk-ā-m**
 ten 100.kg(Amh) 3MS = pick.PASS-put-IRR
 ‘It usually yields ten sacks of 100 kg.’ (Lit: ten *kòntari* are picked.
 Context: talking about a plot of coffee in the forest.)

- (27) **gárgá íntfù-ra há = gyá-m-ə**
 termite wood-ACC 3MS = chew-IRR-STI
 ‘Termites eat wood.’

Note that past habituals are also marked by Irrealis. Sentence (28) tells about traditional marriage customs.

- (28) **yí = ʔyàr-s-ùb-kh gātsù yí-nàṣà**
 3FS = enter-CAUS-REL-DAT start 3FS.POSS-husband
sée-r = í-k’y-á-m-ə
 see.NV-NEG = 3FS-remain-put-IRR-STI
 ‘Before she married, she didn’t see her husband.’

Furthermore, the Irrealis marker **-m** implies a weak commitment to the truth of the proposition, i.e. the situation cannot be fully asserted. Any modal attitude can be captured by it, such as epistemic (29), deontic (30) and circumstantial/dispositional modality (31).

- (29) **íntfù kārì fyááyn yí = kī-m yí = ge-tə**
 wood toward frog.F.DEF 3FS = exist-IRR 3FS = say-ss
yí = bààs-kì-bààstà fyááyn kááy
 3FS = want-exist-WHILE frog.F.DEF be.not
 ‘While she searched, saying “the frog will/ could/ might be in the tree”, the frog was not there.’

- (30) **dāws-kh màtkù-kì-b hamsu-s ʒéénf-èb**
 children-DAT tell.PASS-exist-REL parable-PL good-REL
há = fōōtū-kī-m-ə
 3MS = become-exist-IRR-STI
 ‘Parables told to children should be good.’

- (31) **mìstēri-ka ḥ = daan nòn-k-ə íʒ**
 secret(Amh)-WITH 1PL = together talk-REAL-STI 3FS
- k'at'aro yí = kabar-tə k'at'aro k'oy**
 appointment(Amh) 3FS = appoint-ss appointment one
- yí = ?àts-əb-ka yēē-r = í-k'y-á-m-ə (...)**
 3FS = give-REL-IN come.NV-NEG = 3FS-remain-put-IRR-STI
- màt'ērēʃà-k'a yí = yirsì bàrù-t = í**
 end(Amh)-IN 3FS = things throw.away-ss = 3FS
- gābā-k'à (...) nata-ka daan màkìni-ka**
 market-IN 1SG-WITH together car-IN
- ?yàrdù-tə yí = yèè-k-ə**
 enter-ss 3FS = come.NV-REAL-STI
- ‘We talked together in secret. She made an appointment (but) on the first appointment she gave, she wouldn't come. (...) In the end, she abandoned her things and entered a car with me on the market and she came.’
- cf. yēē-r = í-kì-k-ə**
 come.NV-NEG = 3FS-exist-REAL-STI
- ‘she didn't come’

10.3.4 Optative

The Optative paradigm is defective and only exists for 3rd person. For other persons, Imperative-jussive is used. The Optative consists of a stem followed by a subject clitic, then the Optative marker **-s** and usually a stance marker. Example (32) illustrates a “H” verb stem and example (33) a “L” verb stem. The 3pl form is as a rule contracted to **-íʃ-ə** after the verb stem, as in (34). The **-ʃ** in the 3fs form may be a case of paradigmatic leveling; it is not phonologically conditioned.

- (32) 3ms **síís-á-s-ə** ‘may he listen’
 3fs **síís-í-ʃ-ə** ‘may she listen’
 3pl **síís-íʃi-ʃ-ə** ‘may they listen’
- (33) 3ms **kāās-á-s-ə** ‘may he play’
 3fs **kāās-í-ʃ-ə** ‘may she play’
 3pl **kāās-íʃi-ʃ-ə** ‘may they play’

- (34) **syáák'-ára k'é-yj-ə**
 give.birth-NEG remain-3PL.OPT-STI
 'may they not give birth'

The Optative is mainly used for blessing and cursing. Here are two more examples featuring the Optative:

- (35) **ítí=kòòş-əb bēz=á-s-ə ítí=nyààs-əb**
 2PL=farm-REL sprout=3MS-OPT-STI 2PL=give.birth-REL
āngūt'=á-s-ə ŋ=ge-tə ŋ=wōōm-m̄
 grow.PASS=3MS-OPT-STI 1SG=say-SS 1SG=dismiss-DS
 'saying "May what you cultivate be fertile, may what you birthed grow up," I blessed them;...'

- (36) **únà-bààb sām=á-s-ə íſi=ge-t=íſi**
 long.ago-father remain=3MS-OPT-STI 3PL=say-SS=3PL
háák'àstà bāāb há=kì-n̄ dēd-n̄-s
 now father 3MS=exist-DS child-DEF-M
há-dèyg-n̄-əra bōysū úm-kì-b tə-k-ə
 3MS.POSS-child.F-DEF-ACC dowry eat-exist-REL COP-REAL-STI
 'Saying: "May the past be gone," they now, the father being there, the son is the one who is eating the dowry of his daughter.'

10.3.5 Realis

The Realis marker is **-k**. It denotes situations which are 'actual' as opposed to hypothetical, potential etc. In other words, the Realis is used to assert that a state of affairs holds. Thus, the Realis marker, which in itself is unspecified for time, will not be used for future events, since these are not yet realised and cannot be asserted, however probable they may be. Non-future situations can be marked for Realis whether they denote past (37) or present (38) situations.

- (37) **gàt'ār-k'à íſi=kì-bàstà şókú**
 countryside(Amh)-IN 3PL=exist-WHILE Sheko
íſi=nòn-kì-k
 3PL=talk-exist-REAL
 'While they were in the countryside, they were speaking Sheko.'

- (38) **háák'àstà** **gōōrā-ka** **íſi=nòŋ-kì-k**
 now Amharic-WITH 3PL=talk-exist-REAL
 'Now they are talking in Amharic.'

When the emphasis lies on the truth value of the predicate or of the utterance, the subject clitic follows the verb stem, as in (39). This point is taken up in chapter 15 on subject clitics.

- (39) **şókú** **nòŋ=ŋ-k-ə**
 Sheko talk = 1SG-REAL-STI
 'I do speak Sheko.'

The copula **tə-** most often takes the Realis marker; it cannot take the Irrealis marker. This is due to the nature of the copula. The function of the copula is to assert that the subject and copula complement are equatable and/or identify the same referent. See further section 10.7.

- (40) **ń-kòòsù-ee** **náta** **kōynāb** **dàdù** **tə-k-ə**
 1PL.POSS-tradition-STI 1PL Koynāb child COP-REAL-STI
 'As for our tradition, we are the children of Koynāb.'

10.3.6 Obvious

In several interactive contexts, the suffix **-kn** was encountered. It is used to point out something which is considered obvious, as in the examples (41)-(42).

- (41) **yīs** **tə-ŋ** **ŋ=ye-kñ** **mààkù-kì-kñ**
 DIST.M COP-DS 1SG=2SG-DAT tell-exist-KNOWN
 '(But) that is what I have told you/ That is just what I told you.'

- (42) **àbēt** **kyāāz-ñ-s-o** **yeta** **gōntſi**
 INTJ(Amh) lord-DEF-M-STI.ADDR 2SG like
kì-b **itī** **te-kñ-o**
 exist-REL who COP-KNOWN-STI.ADDR
 'Oh Lord, who is like you?' (from a church song)

It often conveys feelings such as surprise (43) or indignation (44). It can also be used by the speaker to observe that

something is as he expected it to be, e.g. a machine which has been fixed that works properly again (45).

- (43) **áz ábsì yeta-ra bààs-ìn = á-kn-ya**
 3MS upward 2SG-ACC want-go = 3MS-KNOWN-STD
 ‘But he just went up searching you!’ (Context: said when the addressee, coming down the hill, asked whether we had seen his friend.)

- (44) **baak-ñ-s m = fyààn-kì-kn-yà**
 yam-DEF-M 1SG = peel-exist-KNOWN-STD
 ‘But I am peeling the yams!’ (Context: father asked teenage daughter to do something for him. Similar situations rendered piqued or obstinate responses ending in **-kn-ya**.)

- (45) **bàʒ = á-kn**
 work = 3MS-KNOWN
 ‘It works.’

The use of **-kn** suggests that a speaker considers his proposition as generally known (or known by the addressee) rather than as new information, hence the gloss ‘KNOWN’. The feelings of surprise or indignation probably originate from the mismatch between the expected knowledge of the speech participants and their words or actions which are not along the lines of expectation.

10.3.7 Viewpoint

The Viewpoint marker is **-s**. By uttering (46), the speaker says that he thinks, believes or takes the viewpoint that something is a problem. The combination of copula, Viewpoint marker and direct stance marker convey that the speaker perceives something as a problem.

- (46) **gáydí tə-s-a**
 problem COP-VIEWP-STD
 ‘It is a problem’

Thus, one does not use **təsa** to state a fact. Rather, the proposition is presented as a judgment or viewpoint of the speaker. One could say that the speaker finds it justified even

though it is not an objectively verifiable fact. The few examples in my corpus are all with the copula. It is always followed by the direct stance marker **-a**.

- (47) **myāng-ñ-s** **tə-s-a**
 ancestral.spirit-DEF-M COP-VIEWP-STD
 ‘It is an ancestral spirit’ (Context: said by a traditional leader. Belief in ancestral spirits is contested in the context of the story as well as by christianity, to which some of the audience have converted.)

- (48) **...yē** **tə** **ń=kīs** **tə-s-a**
 like.this COP 1PL=exist.DIST.M COP-VIEWP-STD
 ‘... this is how we are/ were.’ (Context: said by traditional leader after having told part of the Sheko history.)

The Viewpoint marker could be related to the Optative maker, since it is formally similar. Because of the limited data, this line of thought is not pursued further.

10.3.8 Implicative

There is one paradigm which came to my attention only when I could follow interactive conversation better. It ends in a lengthened **-a**. My language consultants, however, could hardly ever repeat a sentence with it. Luckily it is used in some of the transcribed stories. I have analysed it as a modal marker **-a** followed by a direct stance marker **-a**. Discussing these forms was very hard. I can only say that use of this form seems to bear unspoken implications, hence the label Implicative.

- (49) **yòwka** **ń-kày-ñ-s** **yīs-a**
 INTJ 1PL.POSS-god-DEF-M DIST.M-ACC
ń=kōy-sē-s-ñ **íñ=sāg-ñ-gy-á-a**
 1PL=bring-see-CAUS-DS 3PL=see-MIDD?-say-IMPLC-STD
 ‘After all, how can they tell us to bring and show our god to let them see it?’

- (50) **íʃi-ra yí=k'áám-á-m ɲ=ge-tə ɲ=íʃ-əra**
 3PL-ACC 3FS = bring.up-put-IRR 1SG = say-SS 1SG = 3FS-ACC
kòy-k'y-a-a áás ɲ=bāɟ-o
 bring-remain-IMPL-STD how 1SG = work-STL-ADDR
 'Saying "She will raise them," I brought her (would you believe!).
 What can I do?' (Context: Said by a father after he discovers that the
 stepmother does not raise the children as she should, and does not
 give them food.)

- (51) **wōs ɲ=bāɟ-o máá=ń-kì-k-ə**
 how(Bench) 1SG = work-STL-ADDR eat.NEG = 1PL-exist-REAL-STI
íʃi=ge-t=íʃi na-ɲ māāk-m-bààb-a
 3PL = say-SS = 3PL 1SG-DAT tell-IRR-father-ACC
íʃi=ɟòr-a-a
 3PL = fear-IMPLC-STD
 'What can I do? They are afraid to tell me that they haven't eaten.'
 (Context: idem.)

10.3.9 Imminence

To express the notion of imminence, Sheko uses a combination of Realis and Irrealis, as in example (52), where the Irrealis verb form is followed by **kì** 'be, exist, live' and the Realis marker **-k**.

- (52) **géék'ù-k'à ɲ=ʔin-ā-m-ə kì-k**
 goat-IN 1SG = go-put-IRR-STI exist-REAL
 'I am on the point of going to the goats'

The addition of **kìk(ə)** asserts that what is still unreal (marked by **-m**) and thus not asserted, is actually happening now, giving a sense of imminence to the utterance. (See Bhat (1999:164) on how languages tend to express complex notions in terms of their prominent categories, i.e. as a combination of tenses, or of aspects or of moods respectively.)

10.4 Aspect

In the aspectual slot in final (main) verbs, a restricted set of auxiliary verbs occurs. The first two auxiliary verbs described in this section are **ki** 'exist', which indicates Imperfective

aspect, and **k'é** 'be left, remain', indicating Perfective aspect. These occur with several modal markers. Furthermore, the form, meaning and distribution of the suffix **-a** is discussed, which occurs only in Irrealis contexts. In the negative, it combines with **k'é** 'remain'.

Other aspectual distinctions are expressed through serial verb constructions, such as Completive and Durative aspect (section 11.2.1).

10.4.1 Imperfective aspect

The verb **ki** 'exist, live, stay' is used as a main verb and as an auxiliary indicating Imperfective aspect. Its use as main verb is illustrated twice in (53).

- (53) **bəndū íŋi-k̀n̄ ʒaʒ-àb k̀òòk̀n̄-k'̀à**
 Bəndu 3PL-DAT be.good-REL place-IN
íŋ=k̄i-m-ə (...)íŋi-k̀n̄ gaatsa kááy k̀i-̀n̄t̀à
 3PL=exist-IRR-STI 3PL-DAT help be.not exist-COND
k̄i-r=íŋi-k'y-á-m-ə
exist-NEG = 3PL-remain-put-IRR-STI
 'The Bandu live at a place which is convenient for them. ... If there is no help for them, they won't stay.'

Imperfective aspect is characterized as presenting a state of affairs as 'having internal structure' and being 'temporally unbounded' (cf. Comrie 1976; Bybee 1994; Dahl 1985 a.o.) The use of **ki** as an indicator of Imperfective aspect in Sheko is exemplified below. Its main function is to present a state of affairs denoted by the main verb as ongoing.

- (54) **bēk'̀n̄-ka gyāāsū-ka ń=tɕ'̀àd̀n̄-k̀i-k**
 spear-COOR shield-COOR 1PL=fight.MIDD-exist-REAL
 'We were fighting with spear and shield.'

- (55) **gàt'ār-k'à** **íſi=kì-bàstà** **şókú**
 countryside(Amh)-IN 3PL = exist-WHILE S'oku
íſi=nòn-kì-k **háák'àstà** **gōōrā-ka**
 3PL = talk-exist-REAL now Amharic-WITH
íſi=nòn-kì-k
 3PL = talk-exist-REAL
 'While they lived in the countryside, they were speaking Sheko. Now (living in town) they are talking in Amharic.'

ki 'exist' as indicator of Imperfective aspect occurs also with cognition verbs to indicate the state:

- (56) **ŋ=t'ùùs-kì-k-ə**
 1SG = know-exist-REAL-STI
 'I know'
- (57) **nát** **aru-kì-b-kh** **k'ōys-ñ-s**
 1PL think-exist-REL-DAT different-DEF-M
 'it is different from what we think'
- (58) **bāār-in-ə** **únà** **yááb** **yí=şòrù-kì-k-ə**
 maiden-F.DEF-STI long.ago man 3FS = be.afraid-exist-REAL-STI
 'A girl, in the past she was afraid of men.'

10.4.2 Perfective aspect

Perfective aspect is characterized as presenting as state of affairs as 'a single unanalysable whole' and 'temporally bounded' (cf. Comrie 1976; Dahl 1985; Bybee 1994). In Sheko, the verb **k'é** 'be left, remain' is used to portray a state of affairs as discontinuous, i.e. (one of) its boundaries is important. In the examples below, it indicates that the state of affairs held in the past but does not hold anymore (59), or not yet (60).

- (59) **únà** **àwrājà** **k'oy** **ń=kì-k'e-k-ə**
 long.ago awraja(Amh) one 1PL = exist-remain-REAL-STI
 'Long ago we lived in one *awraja* (administrative region which does not exist anymore).'

- (60) **yēsūs há=šúb-t=á há=k'áy-á-m-ə**
 Jesus 3MS = die-SS = 3MS 3MS = rise-put-IRR-STI
gè-t'ù-ky-àb noog-ñ-s yīz íñ-kñ árà-k'à
 say-PASS-exist-REL thing-DEF-M DIST.M 3PL-DAT thought-IN
kááy há=k'e-k-ə
 be.not 3MS = remain-REAL-STI
 'the word saying 'Jesus will die and rise,' was not in their mind yet.'

Aklilu (1988) has analysed **k'é** 'be left, remain' as a remote past marker. Some examples, such as (61), agree with that analysis. However, **k'é** also occurs with future time reference as shown in examples (62)-(63) below.

- (61) **yeta únà náta-ra kār-k'à**
 2SG long.ago 1PL-ACC forest-IN
ha=bàrù-k'e-k-ə
 2SG = throw.away-remain-REAL-STI
 'Long ago, you have left us in the forest.' (Context: the abandoned children who say this, have now established a prosperous home.)
- (62) **iy yòwk'a t'òsk'ñ-ārā há=k'é-m-ə**
 house INTJ leak-NEG 3MS = remain-IRR-STI
ííru-ástà ás-k'à ?yārd-ārā há=k'é-m-ə
 rain-3MS.COP? 3MS-IN enter-NEG 3MS = remain-IRR-STI
 'Well, the house will not leak. The rain will not enter it' (Context: text about how to build a house. This sentence is said immediately after the part on thatching the roof.)
- (63) **tááf-ár=á-k'é-ñ k'íş-ə**
 cool.down-NEG = 3MS-remain-DS drink-STI
 'Drink before it cools down!'

k'é 'be left, remain' is only used as an auxiliary verb.²⁸ The backtranslation of my language consultants into Amharic is **qärra**. In the Amharic dictionary of Leslau (1976) **qärra** is described with "be left, remain, be missing, be absent, absent oneself, stay away, be cancelled (meeting), be omitted, be no

²⁸ In Guraferda, **k'e** is used more frequently than in Sheko and it may occur as main verb.

longer in existence, go out of use, die out (of custom), be called off". The semantic component 'be no longer in existence, remain (behind)' may be pertinent for its use as Perfective and contrasts with Imperfective **ki** 'exist, live'. The semantic component 'remain, continue to be' may be particularly noticeable in the use of **k'e** in prohibitives. Prohibitives or negative imperatives consist of a negative followed by an imperative verb form of **k'é** 'be left, remain'. In order to form a prohibitive, use of **k'é** is mandatory.

- (64) **kōb-ārā** **k'é-ə**
 take-NEG remain-STI
 'Don't take!'

- (65) **na-ŋ** **haay-k'à** **kēw-ārā** **k'é-ít**
 1SG-DAT ear-IN shout-NEG remain-PL, ADDR
 'Don't shout in my ear (pl)!'

The two verbs **ki** 'exist' indicating Imperfective and **k'é** 'be left, remain' indicating Perfective aspect are the only two verbs which can occur after a negative verb. As the negative verb itself never suffixes modal or clausal markers, these markers are attached to the auxiliary verb, e.g. the conditional marker (66) or Irrealis marker (66)-(67).

- (66) **yéntʂ'a** **há = āāt-ārā** **kì-ntà** **m-ára**
 avoidance 3MS = hold-NEG exist-COND eat-NEG
há = k'é-m-ə
 3MS = remain-IRR-STI
 'If he was not avoiding sexual contact, he could not eat (the milk at that time).'

- (67) **kááy** **yí = kī-m-ə**
 be.not 3FS = exist-IRR-STI
 'She is probably not there/ She might be absent.'

10.4.3 The suffix -a in Irrealis forms

The suffix **-a** is a marker which occurs preceding the Irrealis marker **-m**, and it can be analysed in several ways. It has no

inherent tone but copies the tone of the preceding verb stem. It is glossed *put*, since it possibly derives from the verb **án** ‘put’.

- (68) **há-bààb** **katfi** **há=yáán-á-m-ə**
 3MS.POSS-father yam 3MS = plant.yam-put-IRR-STI
 ‘He would plant his fathers’ yams.’ (Context: talking about behavior of young men in a traditional setting.)

The suffix **-a** usually occurs together with the Irrealis marker, but both do occur separately. In questions, the Irrealis marker **-m** is dropped, but the **-a** remains (69b). Furthermore, the Irrealis marker occurs alone in other contexts such as in Irrealis complements (70).

- (69) a. **ás-ka** **há=fāy-ā-m-ə**
 3MS-WITH 3MS = heal-put-IRR-STI
 ‘he will be healed with it’
 b. **ás-ka** **há=fāy-ā**
 3MS-WITH 3MS = heal-put[Q]
 ‘will he be healed with it?’

- (70) **há=tég-m-bààb**
 3MS = go-IRR-father
 ‘that he will go’

With a small number of verbs, a semantic contrast is found between verb forms with and without the **-a** suffix (71). However, these verbs all have a non-velar stem, and the change in verb stems is concomitant with the presence or absence of the suffix. Given the semantics of both forms, the meaning difference likely derives from the velar : non-velar stem opposition. As section 10.5 demonstrates, velar stems are associated with (stronger) assertion.

- (71) a. **ń=séé-m-ə**
 1PL = see.NV-IRR-STI
 ‘we will see’ (less likely)
 b. **ń=ség-a-m-ə**
 1PL = see-put-IRR-STI
 ‘we will see’ (more likely)

Furthermore, in negative verb forms, the suffix **-a** can only be combined with the Perfective marker **k'é** 'remain' and the Irrealis marker **-m**. An example is given in (72).

- (72) **há-bààb katfi yáán-ará há=k'y-á-m-ə**
 3MS.POSS-father yam plant.yam-NEG 3MS = remain-put-IRR-STI
 'He will (would) not plant his fathers' yams.'

For contexts like (72) and (73), my language consultants said on various occasions there was no meaning difference between forms with **k'yá** and forms with **k'é** 'be left, remain'. It might be that **k'é** is a shorter form of **k'yá**, but note that in e.g. prohibitives only **k'é** is acceptable and it is not interchangeable with **k'yá**. Also, my language consultants never substituted the one for the other when we went through the process of transcribing a text or when they had to repeat a sentence.

- (73) a. **yēē-r=í-k'y-á-m-ə**
 come.NV-NEG = 3FS-remain-put-IRR-STI
 'she would not come'
- b. **yēē-r=í-k'é-m-ə**
 come.NV-NEG = 3FS-remain-IRR-STI
 'she would not come'

As the suffix **-a** does not noticeably add meaning, the first question is whether it is not part of the Irrealis marking itself. This analysis is problematic because it allows the allomorphs **-am** ~ **-m** ~ **-a**, and poses the question why the Irrealis **-am** would become **-m** in one environment and **-a** in another. In addition, other modal markers do not have the form **-VC**, nor do they display such variation.

Since the Imperfective and Perfective markers **ki** and **k'é** are verbal, it is logical to assume a verbal origin for the suffix **-a** as well. There are two candidates. First, the Diizi verb **am** 'to become', which is used in Diizi as a lexical verb (Beachy 2005) as well as in a construction meaning 'to be on the point of, going to do something' according to Tamrat (1988:27f). In Nayi, **am** is used as 'Present/Future' marker (Aklilu 1997:610). In

Sheko, **am** ‘become’ as a lexical verb is only used in the idiomatic expression in (74); otherwise the root **foot** ‘become, happen’ is used.

- (74) **yír=a** **àm**
 what = 2SG become[Q]
 ‘What have you become?’ i.e. ‘are you crazy?’

It is evident that **am** ‘become’ grammaticalizes in the Majoid languages. A sign of grammaticalization could be the loss of lexical tone of the suffix **-a** in Sheko. In spite of the problem mentioned above, the verb **am** ‘become’ could have given rise to the Irrealis marking by **-am** ~ **-m** ~ **-a**.

Secondly, the suffix **-a** could originate in the verb **án** ‘put’, which is a full lexical verb in Sheko (75), and is furthermore used as a future/ imperfect auxiliary in the Guraferda variant. **án** in Guraferdan Sheko often co-occurs with **ki** ‘exist’ (76a, d), but not always (b, c); following a vowel, however, its own vowel **a** is dropped rather than the vowel of the preceding verb (c, d). Being used in Guraferda, the verb **án** ‘put’ is a bit “closer to home” than the Dizoid verb **am** ‘become’.

- (75) **yí=kóy-tə** **yí=tāāmū-k’à** **an-tə**
 3FS = bring-SS 3FS = fire-IN put-SS
 ‘she brought it and she put it on the fire...’

- (76) a. **byana** **saaya** **gants-an-ki** **dyan-s**
 tomorrow fable tell-put-exist child.DEF-M
 ‘the child who will tell a story tomorrow’
- b. **3eenʃ** **há=faar-an-s-ə**
 good 3MS = become-put-DECL-STI
 ‘It will become nice.’
- c. **m=boru-saku-te-n-s-ə**
 1SG = finish-arrive-go-put-DECL-STI
 ‘I will move to him.’ (Context: a dog leaves a lion to go and live with an elephant.)
- d. **ín=ye-n-ki-s**
 3PL = come-put-exist-DECL
 ‘they will come’

In this thesis the last solution is followed, without claiming it is more likely than the other.

As for the negative verb forms, such as in (77), it is possible to take the sequence **k'yá** as a whole, and relate it to the Diizin verb **k'ya** 'leave'. However, this verb has no apparent grammatical function in Diizin or Nayi. In Sheko, **k'yá** 'leave' is not found as a lexical verb (cf. **sam** 'leave behind'). If this suggestion would be followed, polarity becomes an issue in the description of aspect markers: **k'yá** would occur only in negative utterances, while the suffix **-a** would only in non-negative utterances. Since there is no evidence in Sheko itself for this line of thought, it is discarded and **k'yá** is always glossed as **k'y-á** remain-put in this thesis.

- (77) **há-bààb katji yáán-ará há = k'y-á-m-ə**
 3MS.POSS-father yam plant.yam-NEG 3MS = remain-put-IRR-STI
 'He will (would) not plant his fathers' yams.' (= (72))

10.5 Verb stem alternation

10.5.1 Stem alternation in Sheko

In some paradigms, the verb root of a number of verbs is obligatorily changed. The change involves a final velar consonant. An example is given in (78) below. For ease of reference, the stems are called velar and non-velar respectively; the non-velar stem is glossed NV. These segmental alternations of the root do not affect the inherent lexical meaning of the verb. Note that only a small subset of verbs have two stems.²⁹

- (78) b. **yèg = íŋi-k-ə**
 come = 3PL-REAL-STI
 'they came'
- c. **íŋi = yēē-tə**
 3PL = come.NV-SS
 'they will come and...'

²⁹ These verbs are listed in (86)-(88) below.

The selection of the velar or non-velar stem is determined mostly by the morphological environment. Factors which play a role in the selection are the TAM paradigm, the position of the verb stem (i.e, whether it occurs as the final or non-final stem in a series), and the structural position of subject clitic. The use of the velar and non-velar stem does not correspond to the tonal division of paradigms. The non-velar stem is used

- before the negative **-ara**
- before the same subject converb **-tə**
- as first member in verb-verb compound stems
- in Realis forms if the subject clitic precedes it
- in Irrealis forms if the Irrealis marker **-m** follows directly

Example (79) illustrates the non-velar stem in negatives.

- (79) a. **íy-tà** **sā-ārā**
 house-LOC arrive.NV-NEG
 ‘he didn’t arrive home’
 cf. **sak** ‘arrive, reach’
- b. **tée-rá** **k’é**
 go.NV-NEG remain
 ‘don’t go!’
 cf. **tóg** ‘go’

The two examples below show that the velar stem is employed preceding a different subject marker, whether the final (main) verb has Realis or Irrealis marking or whether the state of affairs is more or less likely to occur (80). In contrast, the non-velar stem is always employed preceding the same subject marker (81).

- (80) a. **íŋi = tæg-ŋ** **há = íŋi-kh** **àtsù-k**
 3PL = go-DS 3MS = 3PL-DAT give-REAL
 ‘they went; he gave it to them.’
- b. **íŋi = tæg-ŋ** **há = íŋi-kh** **gātsn-ā-m-ə**
 3PL = go-DS 3MS = 3PL-DAT help-put-IRR-STI
 ‘they will go; he will help them’

- (81) a. **éná ha = téé-t = a ha = bángár-â**
 later.today 2SG = go.NV-SS = 2SG 2SG = return-put.Q
 ‘will you go and return today?’
- b. **ɲ = tee-t = ɲ ɲ = ás-a òşkù-k**
 1SG = go.NV-SS = 1SG 1SG = 3MS-ACC call-REAL
 ‘I went and called him’

Here are two examples from stories featuring the velar and non-velar stems of **koyg** ‘to bring’.

- (82) **íʃ = kì-ɲ yí = kòyg-ɲ wúʃa bokɲ**
 3PL = exist-DS 3FS = bring-DS IDEO time
íʃi = ʔúm-kì-bààstà
 3PL = eat-exist-WHILE
 ‘...they lived there; she brought (the milk); while they were eating it for many days,...’
- (83) **íʒ háánháánùbe bìy-əra yaafu-tə**
 3FS bird.of.prey.sp feather-ACC find-ss
p’útʃ’a kòy-tə yí = sàskù-tə
 many.ELAT bring.NV-SS 3FS=arrive.CAUS-SS
 ‘...she found feathers of a *haanhaanube* bird and brought a lot and displayed them and...’

With some moods, however, there is a slight difference in meaning between verb forms with a velar or non-velar stem. The two sentences in example (84) have both the Irrealis marker, but when sentence (b) is uttered, it is less likely to happen (soon). In this sentence the Irrealis marker immediately follows the verb stem.

- (84) a. **ítí-datà ɲ = yēg-ā-m-ə**
 2PL.POSS-near.LOC 1SG = come-put-IRR-STI
 ‘I will visit you’
- b. **ítí-datà ɲ = yēē-m-ə**
 2PL.POSS-near.LOC 1SG = come.NV-IRR-STI
 ‘I will visit you’

With the Realis marker (85), the non-velar stem is obligatorily used when the subject clitic precedes it, whereas the velar stem must be used when the subject clitic follows it. The latter form can be used for polarity focus on the verb/ predicate. Thus, it seems that there is a slight preference for the velar stem to be used in states of affair which are more asserted.

- (85) a. **ń=see-k-ə**
 1PL-see.NV-REAL-STI
 ‘we saw it’
- b. **səg=ń-k-ə**
 see = 1PL-REAL-STI
 ‘we saw it, we *did* see it’

The following verbs have alternating stems³⁰:

(86)	<i>velar stem</i>	<i>non-velar stem</i>	
	sak	sā	‘arrive’
	koyg	kōy	‘bring’
	eg	ēē	‘do’
	yəg	yēē	‘come’
	səg	sée	‘see’
	təg	tée	‘go’

A velar -k also appears in the following derived adjectives:

(87)	sár	‘become hot’	sārkñs	‘hot’
	fay	‘be saved’	fāykñs	‘healed, well’
	máj	‘be brave’	mājkñs	‘courageous’

The following list contains all verb stems in my corpus which end in CC with the last consonant being a velar. A non-velar stem is not recorded for them, but because of the last consonant (some of) these verb stems might be frozen velar stems.

³⁰ The verb **kob** ‘take’ probably also has a non-velar stem too, which is **koo**, but it is attested sporadically in Irrealis verb forms only, not in other verb forms. Example:
há-fòòt-ńtà fōòt-ərá há=kì-ńtà k’arà ń=kōō-m-ə 3MS=happen-COND happen-NEG
 3MS=exist-COND INCL 1SG=take.NV-IRR-STI ‘Whether it happens or not, I will accept it.’

- (88) **udg** 'become night'
yádk 'stir'
tufk 'collide'
şóóp'k 'yawn'
dark' 'be cut into pieces'
hark 'respect a taboo'
kírk' 'bend'
k'árk 'wrap around'
ork' 'peel'
p'urk' 'be uprooted'
járk' 'bring maize into the house'
t'erk 'shove, push forward'
besk 'divide'
dyask 'relocate goods'
fisk 'spatter'
fosk' 'skin'
gásk 'insult'
kásk 'be cheerful'
k'éşk 'stab with a finger/ knuckles'
oşk 'call'
şışk 'be tasty'
wusk 'enter'
wuşk 'untie'
bonk' 'burn (intr.)'
dónk' 'dip into'
gink' 'doze, nod off'
núnk' 'suck'
şonk' 'lie'
şónk 'mince, crunch'
wunk' 'steal'
yánk' 'be angry'

Finally, the verb 'to go' has a suppletive stem **in**. The stems **in** and **təg** can be used interchangeably in most cases.

- (89) Basic **in**
Non-Factual **tée**
Factual **təg**

10.5.2 Velar alternation in other Omotic languages

The velar alternation in Sheko resembles the situation in Benchnon, although there are differences as well. A comparison on this point between the two languages can contribute to the research of the velar stems in Omotic.

In Sheko, the velar stem occurs in the Basic paradigm (Imperative singular and Jussive) as well as Factual paradigms such as Realis. The non-velar stem occurs among others in the negative paradigm. The division of paradigms into three groups, Basic, Factual and Non-Factual, is based on tone. All Factual paradigms are underlined and all Non-Factual paradigms in *italic*. If the form does not differ from the Basic stem, it is in normal font.

(90) Sheko verb classes and stems

	L	H		
Basic	kaas	sak	síís	sóg
Non-Factual	<i>kāās</i>	<i>sā</i>	<i>síís</i>	<i>séé</i>
Factual	<u>kààs</u>	<u>sàk</u>	<u>siis</u>	<u>sog</u>
	'play'	'arrive'	'listen'	'see'

In Benchnon, the Basic stem is mainly used in Imperative singular. (If a form does not differ from the Basic stem, it is unmarked.) The velar stem is called Factual stem and occurs among others in the Perfective and on the story line in clause chains, but also in Imperfective compound paradigms (they are underlined in verb class 2 and 4). The other derived stem is called Non-Factual and occurs mainly in negatives and the Future (the *italic* stems in class 3 and 4). The division into three groups of paradigms in Benchnon is based on the segmental-tonal alternations.

(91) Benchnon verb classes and stems³¹

	1	2	2a	3	4	4a
Basic	kīt	háys	dúb	sōt	hām	sīp
Non-Factual	<i>kīt</i>	<i>háys</i>	<i>dúb</i>	<i>sót</i>	<i>hám</i>	<i>síp</i>
Factual	kīt	<u>háys-k</u>	<u>dúg</u>	sōt	<u>hānk'</u>	<u>sīk</u>

³¹ Data taken from Rapold (2006: 265ff). **kīt** 'draw water'; **háys** 'plait'; **dúb** 'tread, dance'; **sōt** 'suspend'; **hām** 'go'; **sīp** 'sew'. I have left out two additional small classes with exceptions to class 3 and 4 for the sake of clarity.

An important difference is that Benchnon has a large class of verbs (class 1), which has just one unchanging stem. Also, tone changes take place only in two classes (3,4), in the Non-Factual stem. In contrast, Sheko has tone changes across the board, in the Non-Factual as well as the Factual stem. (This is why the division in groups of paradigms is based purely on tone in Sheko, but on segmental-tonal alternations in Benchnon.)

The two languages are similar in that Non-Factual (if present) has a higher tone than Factual. Furthermore, in both languages the segmentally more complex stems have a final velar consonant, i.e. the velar is added.

Irregular stem-final velars have been reported for several Omotic languages. Hayward (1996) proposed that the ideosyncratic velars are traces of an old perfective marker. Azeb (2001:100) states for Maale that the velar ‘seems to be a relic of a once productive derivational morpheme’, linked to (the degree of involvement in) causation. Rapold (2006: 274-282), writing on Benchnon, suggests a ‘very close link between middle verb semantics and the distribution of the velar stem extension’, but leaves open ‘whether it is a Perfective marker restricted to middle verbs or rather a derivation marker (...) for middles’ (281-282).

In Sheko, the causative can be built on a velar stem, as in (92) on the stem **sak** ‘arrive, reach’ (metathesis applies). However, not all causatives are built on the velar stem: **se-s** ‘show’ is built on the non-velar stem **sée** ‘see’ (velar stem **ség**). No decisive arguments can be given for an analysis of the velar as a derivational marker or a perfective (inflectional) marker.

- (92) **há=sàk-ṇ** **íṣi=má** **íṣi=für-t’-àb-a**
 3MS = arrive-DS 3PL = earlier.today 3PL = trade-PASS-REL-ACC
- sàsk-ṇ**
 arrive.CAUS-DS
 ‘He arrived; they brought out what they had just bought,...’

10.6 Subject clitics

The subject clitics are given in (93) below, with for each person a proclitic and enclitic form. The only difference between these is that the proclitic forms have an initial (albeit weak) consonant where enclitics have an initial vowel. Thus, the observation is reinforced that in Sheko, word-initially CV is obligatory³² (cf. section 2.5.1).

(93)	1sg	ṇ=	=ṇ	1pl	ń=	=ń
	2sg	ha=	=a	2pl	ítí=	=ítí
	3ms	há=	=á	3pl	íñ=	=íñ
	3fs	yí=	=í			

The subject clitics are co-referent with the subject of the clause. The subject clitic can co-occur with a subject noun phrase (94) or pronoun (95) (rare). A subject clitic is sufficient in itself without explicitly mentioned subject. E.g. example (96) is a complete sentence.

(94)	yí=bārkāy-ñ	k'ay-tə
	3FS = monkey.F-DEF	rise-SS
	'...the monkey rose and...'	

(95)	ha=yeta	yòwk'a	fín-yēg-ñ	há=?áz
	<u>2SG=2SG</u>	INTJ	descend-come-DS	<u>3MS=3MS</u>
	kēēs-tée-t=á			
	go.out-come.NV-SS=3MS			
	'... and well, you come down; he climbs up and he...'			

(96)	ʃét'i-ra	yí=gààm-àtsù-k-ə
	maize-ACC	3FS = roast.ripe-give-REAL-STI
	'She roasted maize and gave it.'	

The subject clitic may cliticize to any constituent in relation to information structure. This topic is discussed at length in chapter 15, along with other observations on subject clitics. The label 'clitic' is chosen because the element cannot be uttered on its own, but is dependent on another element for its

³² Following chapter 2, glottal stop is not written word-initially. Hence, **ítí=** stands for [**ʔítí=**]. Initial syllabic nasals allow variation [**ʔṇ**] ~ [**ṇ**].

pronunciation; and it appears at both edges of the verb word and many other types of words. Its position is not determined by syntax but by (syntactic-)pragmatic considerations. No theoretical claims are intended by the use of the term clitic.

10.7 Copula

The copula verb in Sheko is **tə**. As a final verb, it occurs with modal markers belonging to the Factual paradigms, such as the Realis (97), Obvious (98) and Viewpoint (99) modal markers, as well as with negation (100). It cannot occur with the modal markers from the Non-Factual paradigms. This is obviously due to the nature of the copula. The copula is used for equation or identification, and it asserts that the subject and copula complement are equatable and/or identify the same referent.

- (97) a. **ha-naanu** **gēbērì** **tə**
 2SG.POSS-elder.brother farmer(Amh) COP[Q]
 ‘Is/ was your brother a farmer?’

- b. **ŋ-naanu** **kōmtū tə-k-ə**
 1SG.POSS-elder.brother chief COP-REAL-STI
 ‘My brother is/ was a chief.’

- (98) **yīs** **tə-kn**
 DIST.M COP-KNOWN
 ‘This is it (obviously)’

- (99) **gáydí** **tə-s=a**
 problem COP-VIEWP-STD
 ‘It is a problem (according to me)’

- (100) **háák’astà** **ha-datà** **kì-b-ee**
 now 2SG.POSS-near.LOC exist-REL-STI
ha-nàṣà **té-rée**
 2SG.POSS-husband COP-NEG.STI
 ‘The one which is with you now, it is not your husband.’

Example (101) illustrates that the copula cannot be followed by the Irrealis marker. If one wants to express an equation with

Irrealis reference, one uses the verb **foot** ‘to become, to happen’, as in (102).

- (101) ***ha-nini** **gēbe** **tə-m-ə**
 2SG.POSS-elder.sister queen COP-IRR-STI
 (intended ‘Your sister will/ could be a queen’)

- (102) **yeta** **kyāz** **ha = fōōt-ā-m-ə**
 2SG king 3MS = become-put-IRR-STI
 ‘You will/ could be (become) king.’

Here are examples of the copula as a medial verb.

- (103) **şóóz** **tə-t=á** **há = téé-kì-bààstà**
 snake COP-SS = 3MS 3MS = go.NV-exist-WHILE
 ‘There was a snake and while he went along,...’ (Lit. ‘It was a snake... Context: first sentence of a fable.)

- (104) **íŋ = bàžù-sàsk-àb** **tə-ñ** **k’oys-ñ-s**
 3PL = work-arrive.CAUS-REL COP-DS other-DEF-M
íŋ = óóf-ín-bààb **kááy**
 3PL = dress-IRR-father be.not
 ‘it is what they made; there was nothing else which they could wear’

The copula is not obligatorily present.

- (105) **yīz** **bádìgñ ìy**
 DIST.M Badign house
 ‘This (is) Badign’s house.’

- (106) **maaya ge-t’-àb** **ts’ēts’i-ka** **bàž-t’ù-kì-b**
 maaya say-PASS-REL grass.sp-WITH work-PASS-exist-REL
 ‘The (thing) called *maaya* (was) something made of grass’ (Context: a cape used as a raincoat)

The stance marker may attach to the predicate nominal, as in (107)-(108). The stance marker can attach to all utterance final elements (see section 10.2).

(107) **t'yáárà-ə**

gourd.half-STI

'(It is) a gourd half.' (Context: answer to the question 'What is it?'.
Formerly, men drunk from a type of gourd cups, while the women
used clay cups.)

(108) **ŋ-sumà bádìgè-ə**

1SG.POSS-name Badign-STI

'My name (is) Badign.' (Context: The interlocutor didn't understand
properly; the speaker repeats her name.)

The same-subject marker is formally identical to the copula. However, they are very different structurally, at least synchronically: the copula can be considered a verb and occurs where verb stems occur, whereas the same-subject marker always occupies a slot following the verb stem (109). The two morphemes can follow each other (110).

(109) **há=sàw-tə kéta kòb-tə**

3MS = arrive.NV-SSall take-SS

'he arrived and took everything and...'

(110) **kútʃi bay tə-tə yí-nàʃà kòòbù-ra**

chicken mother COP-SS 3FS.POSS-husband cock

gasku-tə

insult-ss

'There was (Lit: It was) a hen and she insulted her husband the cock
and...' (Context: first sentence of a story.)

The copula is also used in cleft constructions (111)-(113). The following verb is not relativised. Cleft constructions are discussed in section 15.5.1.

(111) **yááb t=á kūf-ā-m-ə wōbā**

man COP = 3MS

be.sick-put-IRR-STI

malaria(Amh)

há-gərì

3MS.POSS-head

kūf-ērēe

be.sick-NEG.STI

'A PERSON becomes sick. Malaria itself doesn't become sick.'
(Context: The Sheko of the researcher was corrected.)

- (112) a. **áás=ɲ** **ɲ=ēg-o**
 how = 1SG 1SG = do-STI.ADDR
 ‘what shall I do?’
- b. **áás-t=ɲ** **ɲ=ēg-o**
 how-COP = 1SG 1SG = do-STI.ADDR
 ‘what shall I do?’
- (113) **ōtì** **k’íṣ-kì-b-īs** **hāāy** **tə** **há=ge-t’ù**
 cow drink-exist-REL-DIST.M water COP 3MS = say-PASS.Q
 ‘Is this what the cows drink called WATER?’ (Context: talking about
 water containing minerals called *ṣaad*)

10.8 Existential

This section briefly touches upon existential, locative and possessive predication. The existential verb in Sheko is **ki** ‘exist, live, be’. It functions as main verb (114) and as Imperfective aspect marker (see section 10.4.1). Existential clauses assert the presence of something and can be used to introduce referents (101). Existential main clauses often have 3ms agreement, also for plural referents, as in (116) and (117).

- (114) **haz-k’a** **yí=kì-k’e-k-ə**
 PROX.M-IN 3FS = exist-remain-REAL-STI
 ‘She has been here.’/ ‘She lived here.’
- (115) **gyānū** **kì=á-k-ə**
 coffee exist = 3MS-REAL-STI
 ‘There is coffee.’
- (116) **sīnì** **kūbṁ** **kì=á-k-ə**
 cup(Amh) four exist = 3MS-REAL-STI
 ‘There’s four cups.’
- (117) **dādū** **t’āāgṁ** **íṣ-kṁ** **kì=á-k-ə**
 child two 3FS-DAT exist = 3MS-REAL-STI
 ‘She has two children.’ (Lit: there’s two children to her.)

Locative and Possessive predication appears to be modeled on existential predication. A locative clause also uses the verb **ki**

‘exist’ and contains a noun phrase marked by the inessive case marker **-k’à** (for ‘containment’) or the locative case marker **-tà** (for a more general location).

- (118) a. **kūrfi** **boṭṣà-k’à** **kì = á-k-ə**
 key(Amh) mud.shelf-IN exist = 3MS-REAL-STI
 ‘The key is on the shelf.’
- b. **k’áátṣ’ù** **ēēd-k̀n b́ásn-tà** **kì = á-k**
 army.ant door-DATdoorstep-LOC exist = 3MS-REAL
 ‘There are ants near the door.’
- c. **gōydù kār-k’à** **há = k̀iy-n**
 guereza forest-IN 3MS = exist-DS
 ṇ = see-k-ə
 1SG = see.NV-REAL-STI
 ‘I saw a guereza monkey in the forest.’ (Lit: there was a
 guereza in the forest; I saw it.)

In possessive predication, the possessor NP is in the dative case and the possessum NP occurs as the subject of the predicate. In the predicative possession construction, only the possessum can be the grammatical subject. It is possible to change the order of possessor and possessum, but this does not affect the grammatical marking (119)-(120).

- (119) **gyānū íṣi-k̀n** **kì = á-k-ə**
 coffee 3PL-DAT exist = 3MS-REAL-STI
 ‘They have coffee.’ (Lit: there is coffee to them.)
- (120) **ṇ-baad-n-s-k̀n** **gyānū p’útṣ’á** **kì = á-k**
 1SG.POSS-younger.sibling-DEF-M-DAT coffee many exist = 3MS-REAL
 ‘My brother has a lot of coffee.’

Interestingly, the subject cannot be marked for definiteness, as shown in example (103). Asymmetry in definiteness between possessor and possessum is to be expected (cf. Heine 1997:30).

- (121) **?*gyān-ñ-s** **ṇ-baad-n-s-k̀n** **kì = á-k**
 coffee-DEF-M 1SG.POSS-younger.sibling-DEF-M-DAT exist = 3MS-REAL
 int. ‘The coffee is to my brother’, i.e. ‘the coffee belongs to my
 brother.’

The systematic absence of definiteness marking on the subject constituent in possessive predication is related to the type of construction and its function. Possessive predication typically asserts possession, whereas in attributive possession the possession is typically presupposed (Heine 1997:26). Thus, in possessive predication the possessum is presented as existing in relation to a referent (the possessor). Likewise, existential predication characteristically introduces a referent and is not normally used to predicate about a given or known referent. Inessive and locative case are treated in section 9.2.5. Possession is further treated in section 9.3.

10.9 Verb phrase and word order

Sheko is strictly verb-final in dependent as well as in main clauses. Regarding clauses with full NPs, the dominant word order is SOV (122), but OSV is possible too (123). Word order varies for Direct and Indirect Object (124)-(125), as well as for the place of oblique constituents (126).

- (122) **bārkāy-ṇ** **tāām-m̄-s** **kòb-tə**
 monkey.F-DEF fire-DEF-M take-SS
 ‘the monkey took the fire and...’

- (123) **há=ṣóóz-ń-s-ara** **yáb-m̄-s** **dufu-t=á**
 3MS = snake-DEF-M-ACC man-DEF-M hit-SS = 3MS
wuṣ-ṇ
 kill-DS
 ‘the man hit the snake and killed it;...’

- (124) **yí=fārā-n-s-əra** **ás-kṇ** **àtsù-tə**
 3FS = horse-DEF-M-ACC 3MS-DAT give-SS
 ‘she gave the horse to him and...’

- (125) **ás-kṇ** **fāāfā-ka** **áámà-ka** **k’áfù** **àts-ṇ**
 3MS-DAT papaya-COOR yam.sp-COOR hanging.fruit? give-DS
 ‘and gave him papaya and *aama* yams and tree-fruits,...’

- (126) **íʃ-k̀̀n** **báátʃí-ra** **kyānū** **batà** **sìip'ù-tə**
 3FS-DAT skin-ACC dog on.LOC sew-SS
íʃ-k̀̀n **kum-k'à** **gyādū** **an-tə**
 3FS-DAT neck-IN rope put-SS
 'sewed her skin on the dog and put a rope around her neck and...'

In the few instances that a constituent follows the verb, it is best analysed as an afterthought, as it is preceded by a pause. In (127), the afterthought clarifies to which place the first Sheko chief Koynəb came. This place was already mentioned in the preceding discourse.

- (127) ... **koynəb** **yèè-k** | **egità**
 Koynəb come-REAL Egita
 '... and Koynəb came, to Egita.'

Other typological traits common to verb-final languages are: dependent clauses preceding main clauses (128), and the use of suffixes rather than prefixes. Sheko confirms to this picture, although there is one set of prefixes as well (possessive prefixes).

- (128) **íʃ=ʃub-̀̀nà** **ēkī** **há=sàskù-àtsù-kì-k-ə**
 3PL= die-COND money 3MS= arrive.CAUS-give-exist-REAL-STI
 'If they die, he donates money.'

Word order in the NP is variable; the unmarked order appears to be head-initial. See section 9.1 for examples and discussion.

11 Complex clauses

This chapter discusses medial verbs and switch-reference in Sheko, as well as serial verb constructions, subordinated clauses and conjunctions.

11.1 Medial verbs

11.1.1 Formal and syntactical properties

Medial verbs form clause chains in which one or more medial verbs precede a final (main) verb. Formally, medial verbs consist of a stem and a switch-reference marker at the minimum (1); a subject clitic may be present as well (2). Examples with aspect markers are sparse - only **ki** ‘exist’ in my sample - and describe a state rather than an ongoing activity (3), i.e. **ki** ‘exist’ does not denote Imperfective aspect here, but is the last verb of a verb-verb sequence.

- (1) **um-tə bārkāy-ka gúúrú daan feej-tə**
 eat-SS monkey-WITH only together spend.day-ss
 ‘ate and spent all the day with the monkey and...’
- (2) **há=tee-tə**
 3MS=go.NV-SS
 ‘he went and...’
- (3) **bāāyā bāmbú-k’à wutu-kì-tə há=nata-ra**
 lion pit-IN fall-exist-ss 3MS=1SG-ACC
bútà gīṣū-kēs-ə ge-t=á k’òr-n
 outside pull-go.out.CAUS-STI say-ss=3MS beg-DS
 ‘Having fallen in a pit, Lion begged saying “Pull me out”...’

Syntactically, medial verbs are dependent on final verbs; this type of clause combination is regarded as co-subordination (cf. Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:454, following Olson 1981). The term ‘medial verb’ is preferred here above ‘converb’, since the latter is defined as subordinated in cross-linguistic typological work (Givón 1990; Haspelmath 1995:20-27), although in Otopic studies the term ‘converb’ is used for

dependent-but-not-subordinated verb forms as well (e.g. Azeb and Dimmendaal 2006).

The medial verb depends on the final verb for modal (and aspect) marking. However, the tonal height on the medial verb stem indicates whether the final verb belongs to one of the Factual paradigms or not, cf. section 10.3.1. Here is an example:

- (4) a. **gābā-k'à** **ŋ = téé-t = ŋ** **bángár-á-m-ə**
 market-IN 1SG = go.NV-SS = 1SG return-put-IRR-STI
 'I will go to the market and return.'
- b. **gābā-k'à** **ŋ = tee-t = ŋ** **bangar-k-ə**
 market-IN 1SG = go.NV-SS = 1SG return-REAL-STI
 'I went to the market and returned.'

11.1.2 Switch-reference markers

The two switch-reference markers of Sheko are **-tə** for same-subject (SS) continuation and **-ŋ** for different subject (DS) continuation. Subject switches account for most of the occurrences. An example is given below.

- (5) **sūp'** **sūp'** **sūp'** **yí = ge-ŋ**
 sew sew sew 3FS = say-DS
- yí = sūp'ù-tj'òr-jù-tə** **yí = tāām-ŋ-s-a** **àts-ŋ**
 3FS = sew-finish-CAUS-SS 3FS = fire-DEF-M-ACC give-DS
- bārkāy-ŋ** **tāām-ŋ-s** **kòb-tə**
 monkey.F-DEF fire-DEF-M take-SS
- ' "Sew, sew, sew," she (monkey 1) said; she (monkey 2) finished sewing and she (monkey 2) gave her the fire; the monkey (monkey 1) took the fire and...'

Another factor influencing the choice of switch-reference marker is the presence of a textual boundary, which is signaled by using the DS-marker. (The boundary is marked here by the symbol §.) Questioned about the occurrence of the DS-marker in example (6), a language consultant remarked that the first line served as a title.

- (6) **bārkāy-ka** **zīnà-ka** **t'āāgñ-bàb** **íñ=kì-n** §
 monkey-COOR leopard-COOR two-father 3PL = exist-DS
íñ=daan-tə **íñ=kī-bààstà** **yí=bārkāy-n** **k'ay-t=í**
 3PL = together-SS 3PL = exist-WHILE 3FS = monkey-DEF rise-SS = 3FS
 'A monkey and a leopard were both there § while they lived together,
 the monkey rose and...'

Furthermore, in example (7) a new scene starts, beginning with the setting clause **íñsàwbààstà** 'when they reached it'. The different subject marker occurs preceding the setting clause, although the subject does not immediately switch.

- (7) **íñ=tee-tə** **íñ=wókà** **hāāy** **gèèzà-tà**
 3PL = go.NV-SS 3PL = down.there water edge?-LOC
sàk-n § **íñ=sāw-bààstà** **há=byāāsū** **hāāy**
 arrive-DS 3PL = arrive.NV-WHILE 3MS = crocodile water
bàtā **sòk'-n**
 on.LOC sleep-DS
 '... and they went and they reached the shore of the lake § when
 they reached it, the crocodile lay on the water;...'

As an aside, the switch-reference markers are easily combined with passive marking in Sheko, as shown in examples (8)-(10). Thus Sheko, like Benchnon, constitutes a counter-example for the tendency noted in Van Valin and LaPolla (1997:290), that voice oppositions do not often co-occur with a switch-reference system. Typically, the Sheko examples describe a state of affairs or process in which the Agent is not important.

- (8) **kāmdì yīs** **wó-ka** **bútā** **yīs-tà**
 old.cow DIST.M down.there-LCT outside DIST.M-LOC
bāf-tū-tə ... **bōnk'-ūs-tū-tə**
 slaughter-PASS-SS burn-CAUS-PASS-SS
 'this old cow is slaughtered down there, there outside... and
 grilled...'

- (9) **fùs = í-k-ə** **gē-t'-n** **yòwk'a yīs-tà**
 fulfill.time = 3FS-REAL-STI say-PASS-DS INTJ DIST.M-LOC
yááb-kh **k'āpt'ū-ʔāst-n** **yīs-kaarì** **úm-t'-ára**
 man-DAT cut.PASS-give.PASS-DS DIST.M-until eat-PASS-NEG
 '“She fulfilled the time,” it is said; well, then (a hair from her tail) is cut for somebody (the chief) and given; until then (her milk) is not eaten.'
- (10) **kara** **yīs** **bàtà** **yéngí** **ān-t'-n**
 leave DIST.M on.LOC firewood put-PASS-DS
yéngí **yīs** **bàtà** **gōm-m̄-s-əra**
 firewood DIST.M on.LOC gomfa-DEF-M-ACC
būz-t'ū-t = á **há = ʔān-t'-ā-m-ə**
 pluck-PASS-SS = 3MS 3MS = put-PASS-put-IRR-STI
 '...on the leaves firewood will be put; on the firewood, the plucked *gomfa* bird will be put.'

11.2 Serial verb constructions

This section discusses verb-verb sequences, by which I mean sequences of verb stems, of which the first stem does not carry switch reference marking. Here is an example:

- (11) **há = ʔyāb-m̄-s-əra** **gyàʔù-ts'yàs-n-tə**
 3MS = grass-DEF-M-ACC chew-be.replete.MIDD-SS
 'he ate his fill of the grass and...' (Lit: he chew the grass and was replete.)

These verb-verb sequences have characteristics of serial verb constructions (Aikhenvald 2006): they act together as a single predicate without any overt marker of coordination, subordination or other dependency relation, they share TAM values and arguments, they present things as a single state of affairs, and furthermore, the verbs which are components of the sequence can stand on their own. The transitivity values of the verbs may be different. The subject clitic occurs maximally once³³ (reflecting the status of the event as a single unit

³³ This is actually difficult to ascertain as in most SVCs there is no intervening material at all between the verbs, but see examples (13)-(15).

described in one clause). Therefore, I will call verb-verb sequences serial verb constructions.³⁴

One might argue that sequences of medial verb also conform to some of the characteristics of serial verb constructions, such as sharing of TAM values and arguments. However, medial verbs are not monoclausal, each medial clause may have its own subject clitic, and the switch-reference markers overtly mark the clause as a medial (cosubordinate) clause. Medial clauses present events as occurring one after another. In contrast, serial verb constructions can be called monoclausal, and they present actions as constituting a single event.

Serial verb constructions can roughly be divided into two. The first group consists of a serial verb construction in which the second (last) verb comes from a restricted set of verbs and adds aspectual values to the first verb (verbs), which carries the lexical meaning. The second group consists of a serial verb construction in which both verbs have equal status and the sequence has no idiosyncratic or opaque meaning. In some cases, the first verb expresses manner, while the second verb is (often) a verb of motion.

Verb-verb compounds cannot be distinguished from serial verbs on formal grounds. However, the meaning of a compound is not immediately clear from the meaning of the individual verbs, as e.g. in (12): ‘trade’ + ‘throw away’ = sell; cf. its opposite **fuur-kob** ‘trade-take’ which means ‘buy’. (**bar** ‘throw away’ does not denote Completive aspect here.)

- (12) **ōyt-ñ** **ha = fùùr-bàrù-kì**
 cow.F-DEF 2SG = trade-throw.away-exist[Q]
 ‘are you selling the cow?’

In almost all serial verb constructions, the verbs immediately follow each other; only rarely does an argument separate the

³⁴ An alternative solution would be to allow medial clauses with zero marking, which denote ‘same subject, overlap’ (complementary to medial verbs marked by **-ta** ‘same subject, sequential’) and obligatory absence of the subject clitic in the clause following the ‘same subject, overlap’. This is done for Diizi (Beachy 2005:117). Another solution could be sought in positing some form of ‘complex predication’.

verbs. Intervening arguments may only occur with the second group of serial verbs (non-aspectual). The intervening arguments in examples (13)-(15) are marked by locative or other peripheral cases.

- (13) **ás-əra k'irk'u báákù-tà an-tə há=?an-àb-tà**
 3MS-ACC twist firestones-LOC put-SS 3MS = put-REL-LOC
 'he tied him up above the fireplace and when he had put him there,...'
- (14) **íʃl=tee bēk'ñ-ka tʃ'ad-tə íʃl=zìp'm-k-ə**
 3PL = go-NV spear-WITH pierce-SS 3PL = chase.away-REAL-STI
 '...they came spearing (him) and chased (him) away.'
- (15) **nat dāwā ge búta zìf'm-tə géék'ù-ra**
 1SG deer say outside chase-SS goat-ACC
iy-k'à an-kì-b
 house-IN put-exist-REL
 'the one who calling me deer chased me outside and put the goat inside the house...'

11.2.1 Aspectual serial verb constructions

This section discusses the following verbs occurring as the second member of a serial verb construction:

- | | | |
|------|---------------------------------|--|
| (16) | <i>verb:</i> | <i>aspect:</i> |
| | bar 'throw away' | Completive |
| | ʃí 'defecate' | Irreversibility (?) |
| | fééʃ 'spend the day' | Prolonged progressive |
| | tábééʃ < tág-fééʃ | Prolonged progressive |
| | yəg 'come' | Direction towards the deictic centre |
| | tág 'go' | Direction away from the deictic centre |

The verbs mentioned here are structurally different from the auxiliary verbs **ki** 'exist' and **k'é** 'be left, remain' which denote Imperfective and Perfective aspect. For instance, they do not occur after negated verb stems.

The verb **bar** ‘throw away, abandon’ is used as a main verb (17) and as an indicator of Completive aspect in serial verb constructions (18)-(21).

- (17) a. **káǵú é-ká bar**
 dirt over.there-LCT throw.away
 ‘Throw the garbage away over there!’
- b. **ǵift bar-ə**
 shift throw.away-STI
 ‘Let go of the shift key.’ (Context: computer training.)
- (18) **ǵ = t’ès-bàrù-k-ə**
 1SG = bake-throw.away-REAL-STI
 ‘I finished baking (the injera)’
- (19) **um-bàr = à**
 eat-throw.away = 2SG.Q
 ‘Have you finished eating?’
- (20) **yí = ǵóǵ-kḥ kum-ṃ-s-əra k’ùts’ù-bàr-ṇ**
 3FS = snake-DAT neck-DEF-M-ACC cut-throw.away-DS
 ‘she cut off the neck of the snake...’
- (21) **yīs-t = á yówk’a ééz-ṇ-s-əra kéta**
 DIST.M-LOC = 3MS INTJ honey-DEF-M-ACC all
k’ēēt’-bār-ā-ṃ
 swallow-throw.away-put-IRR
 ‘and then, well, he eats up all the honey.’

The verb **ǵí** ‘defecate’ is used twice in my sample of stories. It possibly indicates irreversibility. Alternatively, it could be a marker of temporality which is only accidentally formally identical to the verb.³⁵

³⁵ Cf. the Wolaitta different subject converb marker **ǵin(i)**, which is also used as adversative (Azeb Amha p.c.), and Zayse **ǵin** on past state predications (Hayward 1990:282).

- (22) **há=ʒub-ʃi-ṇ**
 3MS = die-defecate-DS
 ‘...he died (irreversible)’

- (23) **...fyáyń** **kees-tə** **kaay-ʃi-ṇ**
 frog.F.DEF go.out-SS be.not-defecate-DS
 ‘...the little frog went out and was not there;...’

Furthermore, the verb **fééʃ** ‘spend the day’ is used to indicate that an event occurs over a longer period of time (24). The time of day is not important when this verb is used as aspectual verb. In (25), the emphasis is on the fact that the participants keep sleeping, so **fééʃ** is used even though it is night. The verb **haay** ‘spend the night’ is not used in this way, although as a main verb it is used for ‘spend the night’ as well as ‘stay’ (26).

- (24) **k’oy** **kōb-yēē-tə** **kà-kàʏ** **há-bàtə**
 one take-come.NV-SS PLUR-again 3MS.POSS-on.LOC
án-tə **yīs-tà** **há = dyāskū-fééʃ-t = á**
 put-SS DIST.M-LOC 3MS = relocate-spend.day-SS = 3MS
 ‘...bring another (honeycomb) and again put (it) on the other and then he keeps moving (them) and...’

- (25) **íʃi = sòk’ù-feeʃ-tə** **íʃi = k’áy-ki-bààstə**
 3PL = sleep-spend.day-SS 3PL = rise-exist-WHILE
 ‘they spent the time sleeping and while they were waking up,...’

- (26) a. **ʒáʒá** **haay-ə**
 good spend.night-STI
 ‘Sleep well!’
 b. **má** **úʃsú** **ŋ = hààʏ-k**
 earlier.today five 1SG-spend.night-REAL
 ‘I have stayed for five days now.’

The complex form **tábééʃ** ‘keep doing’, a prolonged progressive, is found a number of times in the sample of stories. It often occurs when the story reaches a head towards the end of the tale. It is a combination of the verbs **tóg** ‘go’ and **fééʃ** ‘spend the day’.

- (27) ...**yě-ě-stà** **dòr-s-ùs-ṇ-təbeeʃ-tə**
 like.this.ELAT-3MS.COP? run-CAUS-CAUS-MIDD-go.spend.day-SS
íʃi = sáák'ù-k'à **wutu-tə** **íʃ = ʃub-k-ə**
 3PL = ravine-IN fall-SS 3PL = die-REAL-STI
 '...they kept on chasing each other far away and they fell into a ravine and died.'

In addition, the verbs **yeg** 'come' and **tég** 'go' are used to indicate direction with respect to the speaker or the deictic centre.

- (28) **bākāʃà** **na-ṇ** **kob-yeg-ə**
 stool 1SG-DAT take-come-STI
 'Bring the stool for me!' (= movement towards speaker)
- (29) **bārt'i-kṇ** **kob-tég-ə**
 Barxi-DAT take-go-STI
 'Bring it to Barxi' (= movement away from speaker)
- (30) **há = gīʃ-kōb-ín-á-m**
 3MS = kidnap-take-go-put-IRR
 'he will kidnap-bring (her)' (Context: in marriage, the pair usually goes into hiding, unless the man's home is far away from the village of the girl.)

It is not clear how exactly a deictic centre is construed in stories. This is an interesting topic for further research on discourse. In a few cases, 'going away' or 'leaving the scene' is referred to by **yəg** 'come', as in example (31).

- (31) ...**yí-baad-ṇ-s** **kòb-tə ũk'-ṇ-s-a** **wùʃk-kòb-tə**
 3FS.POSS-sibling-DEF-M take-SS milk-DEF-M-ACC untie-take-SS
yí = k'yààz-yèg-ṇ
 3FS = leave-come-DS
 '...took her brother, unknotted and took the milk, and she left,...'

If a serial verb construction contains more than two verbs, the third (last) verb is most often an aspectual verb. In the majority of cases, that verb is **ki** 'exist' indicating Imperfective (continuous) aspect (32). Perfective **k'é** 'remain' is also attested;

otherwise it is one of the aspectual verbs mentioned here, such as **bar** ‘throw away’ (33) or **ín** ‘go’ in example (30) above).

- (32) **íŋ = wóógú-kāās-kì-bààstà**

3PL = sit-play-exist-WHILE

‘while they were sitting playing’

- (33) **yáb-m̄-s-əra gootʃ-wuʃu-bàr-n̄**

man-DEF-M-ACC bite(snake)-kill-throw.away-DS

‘he bit the man to death’

11.2.2 Other serial verb constructions

Next to the serial verb constructions whose second member contributes an aspectual value or direction, there are serial verb constructions whose members contribute equally to the semantics of the construction. The two serialised verbs can describe sequential events, as in (34)-(36).

- (34) **yīs-tà há = myású-kōy-t = á há = kāāf-ā-m-ə**

DIST.M-LOC 3MS = hew-bring.NV-SS = 3MS 3MS = build-put-IRR-STI

‘...then he will hew and bring (the wood) and build.’

- (35) **umt'à yí = kàtsù-sàsk-ntà yí-gerì to**
food 3FS = cook-arrive.CAUS-COND 3FS.POSS-head just

um-tə

eat-ss

‘when she cooked food and brought it out, only she herself ate and...’

- (36) **yí-ŋèmə ts'yááts'ú-kōb-tə yí = kááy-tə**

3FS.POSS-clothing tie-take-ss

3FS = be.not-ss

‘...ties and takes her clothes and she disappears and...’

Some frequent compounds are given in (37) and (38). In example (37) two near-synonyms refer to a single event. In (38), the standard way of asking a person who returns home is illustrated. Both are more or less fixed combinations.

- (37) **tíít-ság-ə**
 watch-see-STI
 ‘look!’

- (38) **mìzān-k’à** **tee-bangar = à**
 Mizan-IN go.NV-return = 2SG.Q
 ‘Have you (gone and) returned from Mizan?’

Furthermore, serialised verbs may be used in describing two simultaneous events (39).

- (39) **kyāñ-s** **tóórá** **áz-k’à** **tiit-n**
 dog.DEF-M downward 3MS-IN watch-DS
íſi-kāās-kì-b-tà **dēyg-ñ** **wóógú-séé-kì-n**
 3PL-play-exist-REL-LOC child.F-DEF sit-look.NV-exist-DS
 ‘The dog looked down into it (and) while they played the girl was sitting and looking;...’

In some cases, the first verb of the compound denotes manner; it indicates the way in which the activity referred to by the second verb is taking place. The order of the verbs is more or less fixed in the examples given here (40)-(43).

- (40) **fyáánú gōntſi** **há = kèwù-k-ə** **ge-tə** **dòòr-yèè-tə**
 frog like 3MS = shout-REAL-STI say-SS run-come.NV-SS
 ‘(they) said: ‘It sounds like a frog’ and came running and..’

- (41) **ás-kñ** **kabì-tà** **bā?ū-yēē-kì-b** **īti-tà**
 3MS-DAT shoulder-LOC carry-come.NV-exist-REL who-COP.Q
 ‘who is the one who comes carrying it on his shoulders?’

- (42) **uutñ** **dòòr-kèès-tə**
 rat run-go.out-SS
 ‘The rat came running out (of the hole) and...’

- (43) **yí = zūnkù** **te-k-ə** **ge-t = í** **bòy-kòb-tə**
 3FS = sheep COP-REAL-STI say-SS = 3FS drive-take-SS
 ‘she said “It is a sheep,” and driving it she took it and...’

11.3 Overview of subordinated clauses

This chapter describes relative clauses, adverbial clauses and complement clauses. Relative clauses are marked by **-əb**, and may contain a resumptive pronoun. Among adverbial clauses, locational, temporal and reason clauses are based on relative clauses. Purpose clauses are marked by the suffix **-ñ**. Conditional clauses and other adverbial clauses are marked by **-ntà**. Reason and purpose clauses are further marked by **èfntà**; this marker also marks the reference point in a comparative construction and the reference point in relation to a state of affairs (see section 9.2.8). Thus, all adverbial clauses end in **-ntà**, except for locational and temporal clauses.

<i>clause type</i>	<i>morphological marking</i>
relative	-əb
location, time	-əb + locational phrase
reason	-əb èfntà
purpose	-ñ èfntà
conditional	-ntà
complement	-əb/ -ntà

Furthermore, complement clauses are either marked as relative clauses by **-əb**, or as adverbial clauses by **-ntà** if the complement clause contains a wh-word.

11.4 Relative clauses

Relative clauses are characterized by the fact that one pivot element plays a role in two clauses. Relativization is characterized as the relation between two states of affairs, in which the dependent state of affairs provides additional information about a participant (or notion) in the main state of affairs; and this modified referent is involved in the dependent situation. The relative clause contains the dependent state of affairs, modifying the head in the matrix clause. The way the relative clause and its head are related to each other forms a relative construction or strategy.

Sheko has pre- and postnominal relative clauses as well as headless and appositional relative clauses. It has two relative constructions, one in which the pivot element is coded by a

resumptive pronoun in the relative clause and one in which the coding in the relative clause is zero (gapping strategy). Interestingly, Sheko allows resumptive pronouns in prenominal relative clauses, which is claimed to be rare cross-linguistically (Keenan 1985:148f). Furthermore, Sheko uses the gapping strategy if the role of the coreferent has the function of subject or object in the relative clause, which is claimed to be uncommon for SOV-languages (Payne 1997:331). Sheko relative clauses can also function as verb complements. Adverbial clauses of location and temporality, as well as reason clauses, are built on the relative clause. Adverbial clauses are discussed in section 11.5.

Morphologically, relative clauses are coded asymmetrically with respect to modal distinctions: in relative clauses marked by **-əb** (and allomorphs), there is no modal marking and the clause is interpreted as referring to a realis state of affairs. In contrast, irrealis relative clauses contain the Irrealis marker **-m** preceding the nominalizer **-bààb** ‘father’ (and allomorphs).

11.4.1 Form of the relative verb

Most relative clauses are marked by **-əb_{REL}** for default gender, which refers to masculine and plural referents (44). This morpheme has the allomorphs **-əb** ~ **-b**. In the Sheko town variety, the vowel is dropped when the relative clause marker follows a vowel ((45), but in the Tepi variety, the **-a** remains (46, first line). In addition, the Tepi and Guraferda varieties have zero-marked relative clauses as well (46, second line). Investigation of these clauses is left to future research. Zero-marked relative clauses are found in other Omotic languages as well (e.g. Maale, Amha 2001:160). The relative clause is indicated by square brackets in the examples.

- (44) **[àk̀n sàm-əb]** **fyaanu-s-k̀n ʒéénʃ**
 HERE remain-REL frog-PL-DAT well
 kī-ít-ə ge-tə...
 exist-PL.ADDR-STI say-SS
 ‘(she) said ‘stay well’ to the frogs [who remained there] and...’

- (45) **şóóʒ** [**nata** **tə-k-ə** **há=ge-b**] **sàṁ**
 snake 1SG COP-REAL-STI 3MS=say-REL remain:DS
 ‘The snake [who said ‘It’s me’] remained behind;...’
- (46) **[[kāār-n-kṇ ēēd batà àn-t’ù-ky-àb] jèy-n-s**
 grave-DEF-[M]-DAT door on.LOC put-PASS-exist-REL stone-DEF-M
tèrk-ùs-bàr-t’ù-kì]=í **yí=see-k-ə**
 push.front-CAUS-throw.away-PASS-exist[REL] = 3FS 3FS=see.NV-REAL-STI
 ‘...she saw [that the stone [which was put on the opening of the grave] had been pushed aside].

For feminine gender, the marking is **-àbe** REL.mother, with identical allomorphy (47)-(48). The second syllable of **-àbe** is related to **bây** ~ **bé** ‘mother’, which occurs Irrealis relative clauses and in other parts of the grammar as a nominalizer together with **bāāb** ‘father’.

- (47) **tītù** [**nat** **tə-k-ə** **ge-be**] **sàṁ**
 vulture 1SG COP-REAL-STI say-REL.F remain:DS
 ‘The vulture [who said “It’s me,”] remained behind;...’
- (48) **[gōnà íʃ-ka dààn-tə há=ày-àbe]**
 yesterday 3FS-WITH together-SS 3MS=dance-REL.F
bààrṇ-əra ha=see-kì
 maiden.F.DEF-ACC 2SG=see-exist.[Q]
 ‘Do you see the girl [with whom he danced yesterday]?’

The situation in Dime is strikingly similar to the one in Sheko. In Dime, adjectives and relative clauses are marked for gender by **-ub** for masculine and **-ind** for feminine, cf **ind** ‘mother’ and **bábe** ‘father’ (Mulugeta 2008:45). See also sections 5.5.5 and 5.5.6 on the use of **bááb** ‘father’ in compounds and as nominalizer in Sheko.

As mentioned above, Irrealis relative clauses are clauses with a verb form ending in the Irrealis marker **-m** followed by the nominalizer **bāāb** ‘father’/ **bé** ‘mother’ (49)-(50). Apart from the modal difference, they function exactly like clauses in **-àb**, occurring in the same positions. More examples are provided in section 11.4.6 below.

- (49) [tāmār ìy-tà tág-m-bààb] kî = â
 education(Amh) house-LOC go-IRR-father exist = 3MS.Q
 ‘Is there [someone who will go to school]?’
- (50) [bērn t’ár-n-s kâts-m-be]
 tomorrow injera-DEF-M cook-IRR-mother
 ‘[the one (f) who will bake injera tomorrow]’

Usually, the verb stem in Relative clauses is the non-velar stem (for those verbs that have it). A few relative clauses display a velar stem as in (52); in my corpus these examples concern attributive or headless relative clauses and never complement clauses. Besides, the use of velar and non-velar stems appears to be the same as in main clauses (section 10.5.1).

- (51) [mèngistì yèè-b]-tà
 government(Amh) come.NV-REL-LOC
 ‘when the government came,...’ (Lit: at (the time) that the government came...)
- (52) [wurti fūūr-ā-m tæg-àb]
 vocabulary trade-put-IRR go-REL
 ‘[the one who went to buy language]’

11.4.2 Position with regard to the head

Sheko has both prenominal and postnominal relative clauses. Internally headed relative clauses (circumnominal relative clauses) do not occur. Headless and appositional relative clauses are attested. Examples (53)-(55) feature prenominal relative clauses, while examples (56)-(57) feature postnominal relative clauses.

- (53) háák’astà [màndēri-k’à íſi = kās-kì-b]
 now village(Amh)-IN 3PL = play-exist-REL
 dāws kēta góórà-ka gúúrú íſi = nòn-kì-k-ə
 children all Amhara-WITH only 3PL = talk-exist-REAL-STI
 ‘Now, all the children [who are playing in the neighborhood], talk only in Amharic.’

- (54) **[zeed wòmbèrà áz-k'à kì-b] mèkìni-ka**
 eight chair(Amh) 3MS-IN exist-REL car-with
ń = tee-k-ə
 1PL = go.NV-REAL-STI
 'We went with a car [which had eight seats].'
- (55) **yok'à [akn sàm-àb] fyáánú-s-kn**
 INTJ here-DAT remain-REL frog-PL-DAT
ʒéénʃ kī-ít-ə ge-tə
 well exist-PL.ADDR-STI say-SS
 'Well, they said goodbye to the frogs [who remained there] and...'
- (56) **yí=kī-bààstà kafà [ayk'à ás-kn**
 3FS = exist-WHILE bird up.IN 3MS-DAT
buʃù-ka kì-b] íʃ-əra k'yaaf=á-k
 nest-with exist-REL 3FS-ACC kick = 3MS-REAL
 'While she was there, a bird [who had its nest up there] kicked her.'
- (57) **áz isn [hayk'à zīitū-kì-b]-is-k'à**
 3MS beehive up.IN hang-exist-REL-DIST.M-IN
hayk'à kèès-tə tiit=á-k
 up.IN go.out-SSwatch = 3MS-REAL
 'He jumped up at this beehive [which was hanging up there] and watched it.'

More research is needed on which factors are relevant to the choice between pre- or postnominal relative clauses. It is likely that the status of the referent in the discourse plays a role and/or backgrounding of the relative clause.

Sheko also uses headless relative clauses, as in the examples below.

- (58) **baaf-tə [há=baaf-əb]-əra há-gəri**
 slaughter-SS 3MS = slaughter-REL-ACC 3MS.POSS-head
woots'u-tə
 bite-SS
 '...he slaughtered it and tasted himself [what he had slaughtered]...'

- (59) **é-ká** [egita ge-t'-ab]-is-ta **ín-baab**
 over.there-LCT Egita say-PASS-REL-DIST-LOC 1PL.POSS-father
ín-ʔaku **kees-yee-k'e-k**
 1PL.POSS-grandfather go.out-come.NV-remain-REAL
 'From there, from that (place) [called Egita] our fathers and grandfathers came.'

In the preceding examples (58)-(59), the case marker is used only once after the whole relative construction, which strengthens the claim that the relative clause modifies the head and is part of the NP like any ordinary modifier. In examples (60) and (61), however, the case marker is repeated after the head and after the relative clause. This is a reason to think that the structure is different, namely an appositional relative clause.

- (60) **há-burz** **yab-m-s-ka** [gaazn gè-t'-ùb]-ka
 3MS.POSS-servant man-DEF-M-WITH Gaazn say-PASS-REL-WITH
daan-tə **há = yəg-ñ**
 be.together-ss 3MS = come-DS
 '...he came together with his servant, with [the one who was called Gaazn]'
- (61) **yí-yirsi** **bàrù-t=í** **yí=gābā-k'à**
 3FS.POSS-things abandon-ss=3FS 3FS=market-IN
[yi=yəg-əb]-k'à **ás-k'à** **nata-ka** **daan**
 3FS=come-REL-IN 3MS-IN 1SG-WITH together
mààkīnī-ka **ʔyàrdù-tə**
 car-IN enter-ss
 '...she left her things and at the market, at [where she came], she entered a car at it together with me...'

11.4.3 Accessibility hierarchy and relativizing strategies

In order to generalize on the arguments which undergo relativization, Keenan and Comrie (1977) proposed the Accessibility Hierarchy. This hierarchy states which arguments are accessible for relativization. The hierarchy runs from most relativizable to least relativizable: subject > direct object > indirect object > oblique > genitive > object of comparison.

It is an implicational hierarchy, i.e. when a language is able to relativize for instance an Oblique, it will always be able to relativize Subject, Direct Object and Indirect Object as well. A relativizing strategy must apply to a continuous segment of the Accessibility Hierarchy.

Looking through a corpus of spontaneous Sheko texts, the majority of the relativised heads is subject, followed at a distance by object, oblique and indirect object. This confirms to the greater accessibility of subjects predicted by the hierarchy.

In general, the grammatical function of the relativised argument within the RC is not easily recoverable if the argument is missing in the relative clause. This case-recoverability problem is crucial to the syntactic typology of relative constructions (Givón 1990). The lower the argument in the relative clause is positioned on the Accessibility Hierarchy, the more likely it will be expressed through a personal pronoun.

Sheko uses two relativizing strategies, namely the gap strategy and the pronoun retention strategy. In the gap strategy, the coreferent of the head in the relative clause is zero (i.e. a 'gap'). Use of the gap strategy is said to be uncommon in SOV-languages (Payne 1997:331)³⁶. In the pronoun retention strategy, the coreferent is expressed by a resumptive pronoun in the relative clause. This strategy is also known as the anaphoric pronoun strategy. The pronoun is the same as the personal pronoun used in declarative main clauses and it is case-marked according to its role in the relative clause. The gap strategy is mainly used for subjects and objects, while the anaphoric pronoun strategy is preferred for constituents lower on the Hierarchy.

11.4.4 Gap strategy and anaphoric pronoun strategy

In Sheko, referents which are subjects in the relative clause almost always use the gap strategy, e.g. (62). However, there are cases in which a subject clitic is present in subject relative

³⁶ Cf. Rapold (2006:752). Benchnon is also SOV and uses the gap strategy as well as the anaphoric pronoun strategy.

clauses. An example is given in (63). In adverbial clauses built on the relative, subject clitics are common.

- (62) **bəndū [ífi-kh ʒaʒ-àb] kòòkh-k'à**
 Bəndu 3PL-DAT be.good-REL place-IN
íʃ=kī-m-ə
 3PL = exist-IRR-STI
 'The Bəndu live at a place [which is convenient for them].'
- (63) **há = tʃóf-àb-yīs karà-kh bō-k'à há = gáb-m̄**
3MS = drip-REL-DIST.M leaf-DAT belly-IN 3MS = collect-DS
 'that which drips collects in the leaves;...'

Referents which are objects within the relative clause may (64)-(65) or may not (66)-(67) be referred to with a resumptive pronoun. Impressionistically, the number of resumptive pronouns for objects is very low in texts. Thus, it can be said that for objects the gapping strategy is preferred.

- (64) **íntʃù gyānū bo-k'à há = káát'-á-m**
 wood coffee belly-IN 3MS = hoe-put-IRR
wōyīm [nāārū á kyàts-àb]
 or(Amh) wind 3MS fell-REL
 'He will cut a tree in the coffee (forest) or [one which the wind threw down]'
- (65) **[ŋ-nanu íʃ-əra fūūr-ār = á-kì-be]**
 1SG.POSS-elder.brother 3FS-ACC buy-NEG = 3MS-exist-REL.mother
òtì ʃāpkh-be tə-k-ə
 cow thin.F.DEF-REL.mother COP-REAL-STI
 'The cow [my brother didn't buy] is thin.'
- (66) **[ūti-ka m̄ = bàzhù-kì-b] bàzhà**
 love-WITH 1PL = work-exist-REL work
ʔyáát-ń-s-əb há = sās-k-ā-m-ə
 big-DEF-M-REL 3MS = arrive.CAUS-put-IRR-STI
 'He will give good results on work [that we do with love].'

- (67) [ɲ = íj-kɲ mààk-ùb] tòsà yīs tə-k-ə
 1SG = 3FS-DAT tell-REL story DIST.M COP = REAL-STI
 ‘The story [I told to her] is this.’

For Indirect Objects, probably a resumptive pronoun is preferred, as in (68). For an additional textual example, see (79) below.

- (68) [sāāy-ɲ-s ás-kɲ màtk-àb] dèd-ɲ-s
 fable-DEF-M 3MS-DAT tell.PASS-REL child-DEF-M
 ‘the boy [to whom the story was told]’

For those referents with an Oblique role in the relative clause, a resumptive pronoun is preferred.

- (69) tēngì íj = k’yar-àb-ís [ás-ka
 tree.sp 3PL = beat-REL-DIST.M 3MS-WITH
 íjì = kàf-t-ùt = íjì dèb-t’-àb]
 3PL = build-PASS-SS = 3PL bury-PASS-REL
 ‘this (bark of) tengi tree which they beat (was) [what they would be arrayed with and be buried in].’ (one RC marked)

- (70) [wurti ás-tà fūr-t’-n-bààb] gàbà
 vocabulary 3MS-LOC trade-PASS-IRR-father market
 há = kì-b-má kááy = á kì-ɲtà
 3MS = exist-REL-or be.not = 3MS exist-COND
 ‘whether or not a market exists [where language can be bought]’

Sentences (71) and (72) were elicited on various occasions with mixed result, i.e. both with and without resumptive pronoun:

- (71) [hāāy (ás-ka) ha = ?iir-kì-b]
 water 3MS-WITH 2SG = fetch-exist-REL
 dʒèrikàɲ-s-əra ɲ = ?àrtʃ’-ùs-bàrù-k-ə
 jerrykan.DEF-M-ACC 1SG = crack-CAUS-throw.away-REAL-STI
 ‘I damaged the jerrykan [with which you fetch water].’
- (72) [umt’à (ás-ka) yí = kàts-əb] ?yaana ʃàn = á-k-ə
 food 3MS-WITH 3FS = cook-REL pot break = 3MS-REAL-STI
 ‘The pot [with which she cooked] is broken.’

If the relationship between the head and its coreferent in the relative clause is genitival, a possessive pronoun is used.

- (73) **[íŋ-dàd-n-s şub-àb] yaab dīizū tə-k-ə**
 3PL.POSS-child-DEF-M die-REL man Bench COP-REAL-STI
 ‘The people [whose child died] are Bench.’

- (74) **[yí-nàşà şub-àbe]**
 3FS.POSS-husband die-REL.mother
 ‘widow (one [whose husband died])’

It has been claimed that the pronoun retention strategy is common in postnominal relative clauses but rare in prenominal relative clauses (Keenan 1985:148-49). This is because the preferred order in anaphoric situations is antecedent noun before anaphoric pronoun (Givón 1990:655). In the literature, Mandarin Chinese is commonly cited as the only documented language which does employ this strategy in prenominal clauses, even for higher positions on the Hierarchy. However, Nama (Khoisan) must be added as counter-example (Hagman 1977:125); as well as Shipibo-Konibo (Panoan, spoken in Peru), which even allows this strategy for Agents (Valenzuela 2002:59); resumptive pronouns in prenominal relative clauses are also reported for Benchnon, although not for subjects:

- (75) **[tā yí dèk-n-ùç] nás-ĩ nèk-àç**
 1S.NOM 3ms hitting-R.MIDD-M man-NOM.m up.deic-THIS.M
 hān-k’-ĩ yísk-ù.
 go-FS-m be.located.PRES-M
 ‘The man [I hit] is walking over there.’ (cited from Rapold (2006:573))

As can be seen from e.g. examples (68) and (70)-(72), Sheko also uses resumptive pronouns in prenominal relative clauses. To illustrate and strengthen the point that resumptive pronouns occur in prenominal clauses as well as in post-nominal or headless ones, the examples below are all taken from texts. In texts, objects (almost) never get a resumptive pronoun, the rare examples with indirect objects do, and obliques (almost) always get a resumptive pronoun. The relative clause may be

prenominal (76)-(78), post-nominal (79) or headless (80). Example (80) contains an Irrealis clause.

- (76) **[utʂà áz-tà ky-àb] kàrkà-k'a**
 badger 3MS-LOC exist-REL forest-IN
 'in a forest [in which a badger lives]'
- (77) **[yesus ás-ka ts'yèstù-tè-b] jèm-s-ka**
 Jesus 3MS-WITH tie.PASS-go.NV?-REL clothes.DEF-M-COOR
 'the cloth [in which Jesus was tied] and...'
- (78) **[kuuʒ-n-ʃ ás-ka yèè-kì-b]**
 sickness-DEF-M 3MS-WITH come.NV-exist-REL
kòòk-n-s-k'erà
 road-DEF-M-INCL
 'also the way [in which the sickness comes]'
- (79) **edisi ge-t'-às kuuʒ [tʃ'āārū ás-kh]**
 aids say-PASS-? sickness medicine 3MS-DAT
kááy-k-ís] ky = á-k-ə
 be.not-exist[REL]-DIST.M exist = 3MS-REAL-STI
 'There is a sickness called AIDS [for which there is no medicine].'
- (80) **há = gùŋ-kòb-m̄ há = [yáb-m̄-s ás-ka]**
 3MS = pull-take-DS 3MS = man-DEF-M 3MS-WITH
há = fín-ń-bààb] kááy-n̄
 3MS = descend-IRR-father be.not-DS
 'he pulled it away; (the thing) [with which the man could descend] was not there;...'

Example (81) below has no resumptive pronoun, although the coreferent is Instrument in the relative clause.

- (81) **súk-ń-s [ís-ń-s-ārā ha = ts'yaats'-àb]**
 rope-DEF-M beehive-DEF-M-ACC 2SG = tie-REL
yīz ēē-kì-t = á há = ?iik'-n̄tā
 DIST.M do.NV-exist-SS = 3MS 3MS = be.old-cond
 'If this rope [with which you tie the beehive] happens to be old,...'

In summary, only the highest position on the Accessibility Hierarchy, that of Subject, cannot be expressed by a resumptive pronoun. In relative clauses in which the coreferent occupies an Object, i.e. second position on the Accessibility Hierarchy, a resumptive pronoun is optional. In relative clauses in which the referent has an Oblique position, a resumptive pronoun is preferred. In those with Genitive coreferents, a resumptive (possessive) pronoun is obligatory. (Benchnon and Chinese display the same tendency, moving down the Hierarchy from optional to more obligatory.) The resumptive pronoun may occur preceding its antecedent.

11.4.5 Relative clauses in verb complement position

Relative clauses can also occur in verb complement position. Here the clause does not modify a head with which it is coreferential. The clause expresses a proposition which is taken as a complement by a verb. It is not clear how to distinguish these clauses from the headless relative clauses described before. One solution is to analyse them as normal relative clauses, arguing that verbs can take any relativized clause, whether or not they have a conceivable nominal head. The relativised clauses in (82)-(83) obtain case marking like any Object NP. Another solution is to analyse **-əb** ~ **-àb** as having a nominalizing function next to a relativizing function.

- (82) **[áz kōmtū há=fòòt-àb]-əra yí=t'ùùs-k-ə**
 3MS king 3MS=become-REL-ACC 3FS=know-REAL-STI
 'She knew [he was a king].'

- (83) **[únà íſi=?àngùt'-əb k'wànk'wà**
 long.ago 3PL=increase-REL language(Amh)
íſ=jèy-əb]-əra na-ŋ āng=á sis-tù-kì-k
 3PL=forget-REL-ACC 1SG-DAT much=3MS hear-PASS-exist-REAL³⁷
 'I feel very sorry [that they forget the language in which they grew up in the past].' (only one RC marked)

³⁷ The use of **sis-t** hear-PASS for 'feel emotion' comes from Amharic, cf. **yissammañal**.

- (84) **ēkī wunk'u-t'u-kù-b [ēēn] tə-k-ə**
 money steal-PASS-exist?-REL bad COP-REAL-STI
 'That money is stolen is bad.' (Money being stolen is bad)

11.4.6 Irrealis relative clauses

To complete the description of relative clauses in Sheko, some examples are given to illustrate the functional equivalence of Irrealis relative clauses in **-m-bààb** -IRR-father and other relative clauses in **-əb** REL. **-bààb** 'father' has an allomorph **-bàb**. Although Irrealis relatives differ formally, they are similar structurally. They occur in the same positions as clauses in **-əb**, namely prenominal (85)-(86), postnominal (87, second line), headless (87)-(88) and they occur as object of a verb as well (89).

- (85) **sak-àb bèngì... [yəg-m-bàb] bèngì...**
 arrive-REL year come-IRR-father year
 'last year... next year...'
- (86) **hààz tə-k-ə [yeta-ra kōb-təg-m-bààb]**
 PROX.M COP-REAL-STI 2SG-ACC take-go-IRR-father
kookn
 road
 'This is it, the road [which will take you (there)].'
- (87) **íŋi-gərì íŋi = bàzù-sàsk-àb tə-ñ**
 3PL.POSS-head 3PL = work-arrive.CAUS-REL COP-DS
k'oy-s-ñ-s [ás-ka íŋi = dēb-t'-ñ-bààb] kááy
 other-DEF-M 3MS-WITH 3PL = bury-PASS-IRR-father be.not
[íŋi = ?óóf-m-bààb] kááy
 3PL = dress-IRR-father be.not
 '...it was what they produced themselves; there was no other (thing) [with which they could be buried], there was nothing [they could wear].'

- (88) **[hāāy ɲ=ás-ka íd-ń-bààb] ɲ-datà**
 water 1SG = 3MS-WITH fetch-IRR-father 1SG.POSS-near.LOC
háák'àstà kááy-ə
 now be.not-STI
 'right now I haven't something [with which I can fetch water].'
- (89) **nata [íʃi-bààb noogù-ra**
 1SG 3PL.POSS-father word-ACC
íʃi = ʔyáz-ń-bàb]-əra āngā ɲ = bààs-kì-k-ə
 3PL = be.able-IRR-father-ACC much 1SG = want-exist-REAL-STI
 'I want very much [that they can (speak) their father's language].'

Furthermore, Irrealis relative clauses behave the same as Realis clauses with respect to resumptive pronouns.

- (90) **[ás-tà há = kāf-t-ń-bàb] tuurù**
3MS-LOC 3MS = build-PASS-IRR-father land
há = fíkūs-t-ā-m-ə
 3MS = prepare-PASS-put-IRR-STI
 '...the land [on which it will be built] will be prepared.'

An interesting semantic difference was disclosed when I suggested (91) for 'they won't know what the chief will tell'. My language consultants commented that in the situation described by (91) "you are not sure whether the chief is coming to the meeting", and they came up with (92) instead. Thus the Irrealis relative clause is interpreted as not asserting the event of telling, whereas the Realis relative clause is used when the coming about of the event of telling is taken for granted.

- (91) **bērn téé-r = íʃi-kì-ntà [kōm-s**
 tomorrow go.NV-NEG = 3PL-exist-COND chief.DEF-M
māāk-m-bàb]-əra t'úús-ér-íʃi-k'y-á-m-ə
 tell-IRR-father-ACC know-NEG = 3PL-remain-put-IRR-STI
 'If they don't go tomorrow, they won't know [whether the chief will tell].'

- (92) **bērn** **téé-r=íŋi-kì-ntà** **[kōm-s**
 tomorrow go.NV-NEG = 3PL-exist-COND chief.DEF-M
mààk-àb]-əra t'úús-ér-íŋi-k'y-á-m-ə
 tell-REL-ACC know-NEG = 3PL-remain-put-IRR-STI
 'If they don't go tomorrow, they won't know [what the chief will tell].'

11.5 Adverbial clauses

11.5.1 Locational and temporal clauses

In many languages, relative clauses are used in forming locative and (by extension) temporal expressions. This is not surprising as most locative and temporal phrases are easily rephrased as relative clauses with a head like 'place' or 'time' (such as "the place where...", "the time that...").

Locational and temporal adverbial clauses in Sheko can be formed by simply employing a relative clause and case marking, as shown in (93)-(95).

- (93) **íŋi=təg-əb-k'à** **íŋi=bangar-tə** **íŋi=yèè-k-ə**
 3PL = visit-REL-IN 3PL = return-SS 3PL = come.NV-REAL-STI
 'They came back from where they had gone.'
- (94) **šāād-k'à** **ŋ=kòb-tee-b-tà** **yi=kinderkonder**
 pond-IN 1SG = take-go.NV-REL-LOC 3FS = IDEO
ge-t=í **yí=wutu-şub-m̄** **ŋ=baaʃ-k**
 say-SS = 3FS 3FS = fall-die-DS 1SG = slaughter-REAL
 'When I took (the cow) to the pond, she fell ill and died; I slaughtered her.' (line from a well-known story)
- (95) **ʒaaʒ=á-k-ə** **há=ge-b-tà** **íŋi=tee-tə**
 be.good = 3MS-REAL-STI 3MS = say-REL-LOC 3PL = go.NV-SS
 'when he said: "OK", they went and...'

This basic construction can be expanded with other nominal material. Some temporal adverbial clauses add a proximal demonstrative between the relative clause marker and case marker, as the following examples (96)-(97) illustrate. They denote simultaneity of events and/or typically function as

clauses which give the setting for storyline events. (The sequence **-b-ààs-tà** ~ **-b-às-tà** REL-PROX.M-LOC is glossed WHILE wherever the morphological make-up of it is not relevant to the discussion, as in (97).)

- (96) **umt'à-ra** **sàskù-t-ífi**
 food-ACC arrive.CAUS-SS = 3PL
bēskū-kì-b-ààs-tà **um-s = ífi** **ék-ǎkñ**
 divide-exist-REL-PROX.M-LOC food.DEF-M = 3PL there.LCT-here
ùkūrì **bēskū-kì-b-ààs-tà** **úftà**
 equal(Amh) divide-exist-REL-PROX.M-LOC down.LOC
túúrù bàtà há = sàmù-k-ə
 land on.LOC 3MS = remain-REAL-STI
 ‘...while they brought out the food and were dividing it, dividing the food here and there in equal parts, (the last bit) remained on the ground.’

- (97) **ífi = ?úm-kì-bààstà** **dād-ñ-s** **k'ay-tə**
 3PL = eat-exist-WHILE child-DEF-M rise-SS
 ‘when they had been eating, the boy rose and...’

The sentences below refer to a location by a locational noun phrase following a noun or demonstrative. The noun or demonstrative is followed by the dative marker **-kñ** and a locational noun phrase with case marking: **sáántà**, from **san** ‘forehead’ and locative case **-tà** ‘to, near’ in (98), and **k'ānk'à** ‘under, at the bottom’ with inessive **-k'à** ‘in, at’ in (99). Compare these phrases with the temporal adverbial clauses in (100)-(101).

- (98) **kyānū íntjù-kñ** **sáántà** **há = sòk'ù-kì-k-ə**
 dog wood-DAT front.LOC 3MS = sleep-exist-REAL-STI
 ‘The dog is sleeping in front of the tree.’
- (99) **hààz-kñ** **k'ānk'à** **òft-àb** **óótj'á-kñ**
 PROX.M-DAT under.IN ask.PASS-REL question-DAT
bángársì **ats-ít-ə**
 answer give-PL.ADDR-STI
 ‘Give answer to the questions which are asked below’

Sequential temporal adverbial clauses are formed with locative phrases too (100)-(101). These clauses contain a relativised verb form (ending in **-àb ~ -àb**) followed by dative case marking and a locational noun phrase. These temporal clauses denote a sequence of events.

- (100) **íŋ = ts'yááts'ú-t = íŋ** **tʃ'òr-ŋ-àb-kh** **ādi-k'à**
 3PL = tie-SS = 3PL finish-CAUS-REL-DAT footprint-IN
p'ēēf'à **búútsú-tə**
 thatch mow-SS
 '...after they finish tying it, they cut the thatch and...'

- (101) **ń = ts'òòk-àb-kh** **sáántà** **yērōtsī ná-ŋ**
 1PL = pray-REL-DAT front.LOC God 1PL-DAT
há = bās-ūs-kì-b-a **há = t'úús-á-m-ə**
 3MS = want-CAUS-exist-REL-ACC 3MS = know-put-IRR-STI
 'God knows what we need before we pray.'

The last two examples of adverbial clauses expressing time contain the locative case marker **-tà** followed by a (locational) noun. The noun **gātsù** 'start' in (102) is related to the verb **gad** 'start, begin'. Especially (103) is an interesting example of how physical location is extended to temporal location. When referring to location, the inessive and locative cases can both be suffixed after **wó-**, but to refer to time only **wó-tà** down.there-LOC is used. Locational nouns are further discussed in section 7.1.3 and case marking in section 9.2.

- (102) **íŋi-yèè-b-tà** **gātsù** **únà** **yááb** **kì-â**
 3PL-come.NV-REL-LOC start long.ago man exist-3MS.Q
 'Were there people long ago, before they came?'

- (103) **wó-tà** **ādi-k'à** **ŋ = yēē-m-ə**
 down.there-LOC footprint-IN 1SG = come.NV-IRR-STI
 'I will come later.' (said when there is no fixed appointment)

Incidentally, comparison clauses in Sheko can be expressed with such locational phrases too (104). The body part noun is **géri** 'head' followed by the locative case marker **-tà**, giving the sense of 'above, greater than'.

- (104) **báán-s** **hààz** **na-ŋ** **àts-àb-kh** **gór-tà**
 well.DEF-M PROX.M 1PL-DAT give-REL-DAT head-LOC
há=kì-b **kì=â**
 3MS = exist-REL exist = 3MS.Q
 ‘Is there someone who is greater than the one who gave us this well?’

11.5.2 Reason clauses

In Sheko, not only locative and temporal adverbial clauses but also reason clauses are made with help of the relative. Reason clauses add **èŋtà** after the relative. Examples are given in (105)-(107). Reason clauses have the element **èŋtà** in common with purpose clauses. The morphological make-up of **èŋtà** is discussed in section 9.2.8.

- (105) **faádù** **íŋ-əra** **há=fàd-ùs-àb** **èŋtà**
 hunger 3FS-ACC 3MS = hunger-CAUS-REL MOTIVE
ĩ **yí=ge-ñ**
 IDEO 3FS = say-DS
 ‘because she (= the calf) was hungry she mooded;’
- (106) **góóra** **dàd-ñ-s** **há-bààb** **batà** **há=k’ùd-àb**
 Amhara child-DEF-M 3MS.POSS-father on.LOC 3MS = cover-REL
èŋtà **ás-əra** **há=?èèb-ùs-t=á** **há=wòòm-k**
MOTIVE 3MS-ACC 3MS = bless-CAUS-SS = 3MS 3MS = bless-REAL
 ‘Because the Amhara boy had covered his father, he blessed him.’
- (107) **sub=á-k-ə** **ŋ=ge-b-tà** **şūñ-k’à** **kì-b**
 die = 3MS-REAL-STI 1SG = say-REL-LOC life-IN exist-REL
èŋtà **ás-kh** **zéeñf-èb** **noogù** **án-ñ-bààb-is**
MOTIVE 3MS-DAT good-REL thing put-IRR-father-DIST.M
bàs-ùs-kì-b **tə-k-ə**
 want-CAUS-exist-REL COP-REAL-STI
 ‘It is fitting to arrange good things for him, because he is alive while I thought he was dead.’

In (108) a relative clause is used to denote manner. Unfortunately I have just one example. Since manner clauses

are usually subsumed under subordinate clauses, the example has got its place here, at the end of the sections on subordinate clauses using relatives.

- (108) **há-bàzà** **bàzù-t'ù-kì-b** **kóysín** **tə-k-ə**
 3MS.POSS-work work-PASS-exist-REL other.DEF.M COP-REAL-STI
 'His way of working is different.'

11.5.3 Purposive clauses

Purposive clauses are marked by the morpheme **-ŋ** followed by **èŋtà**, as is illustrated in (109)-(111). The tone on **-ŋ** is always identical to the preceding one (level 3 or 4). It is not clear whether to view **-ŋ** as purposive clause marker or to attribute a nominalizing function to it, in view of the additional marking by **èŋtà**. The latter also marks point of reference (section 9.2.8) and occurs in reason clauses (section 11.5.2 above).

- (109) **ń = sē-s-ñ** **èŋtà** **ń = təg-ə**
 1PL = see.NV-CAUS-PURP MOTIVE 1PL = go-STI
 'Let's go in order for me to show it.'

- (110) **yí-bèngì-ra** **yí-nàṣà-k**
 3FS.POSS-year-ACC 3FS.POSS-husband-WITH
yí = daan-tə **yí = tʃ'ōr-f-ñ** **èŋtà**
 3FS = be.together-SS 3FS = finish-CAUS-PURP MOTIVE
yí-dàdù-ka **yí = daan-tə** **yí = kī-ñ**
 3FS.POSS-child-WITH 3FS = be.together-SS
 3FS = exists-PURP
èŋtà **yīs** **gayd-n-s** **saw-b-tà** **kaarì**
MOTIVE DIST.M problem-DEF-M arrive.NV-REL-LOC until
sáántà **yīs** **kòòsù-ra** **ītə** **māāk-o**
 front.LOC DIST.M divination-ACC who:COP tell-STI.ADDR
 'When this problem occurs, who will tell this practice in the future so that she will finish her years together with her husband and so that she will live together with her children?'

- (111) **há=fàtā** **há=sāk-ñ** **èjñtā** **há=?ás-ārā**
 3MS.POSS-on.LOC 3MS = arrive-PURP MOTIVE 3MS = 3MS-ACC
gāydū-s-ñ **há=sām-ā-m**
 problem-CAUS-DS 3MS = remain-put-IRR
 ‘it causes him problems to get onto it; he will remain (beneath)’

Purpose can also be expressed differently, without any of the above-mentioned marking. In (112) and (113), an Irrealis clause is followed by another verb form. This type of purpose clause is only used when the subject of the purpose clause and matrix clause is the same. This construction is problematic to analyse as it blurs the distinction between final verbs and non-final verbs.

- (112) **há=gaba-k’a** **fuur-a-m** **saw-tə**
 3MS = market-IN trade-put-IRR arrive.NV-SS
 ‘he arrived at the market to buy it and...’
- (113) **ás** **sée-m-t=í** **yèè-b-tà** **áz**
 3MS see.NV-IRR-SS/COP = 3FS come.NV-REL-LOC 3MS
şub-t=á **kì-ñ**
 die-SS = 3MS exist-DS
 ‘when she came to watch him, he was dead;...’

The rest of section 11.5 gives an overview of adverbial clauses marked by **-ñtā**, most of which are conditional. Next to conditional clauses and concessive clauses, the morpheme **-ñtā** also marks clauses with a temporal interpretation and verb complements with a wh-word.

11.5.4 Conditional and temporal clauses

For each kind of condition, the protasis or ‘if-clause’ is marked with **-ñtā**. Some examples are given in (114)-(116). An example of a counterfactual condition is given in (117).

- (114) **íṣi-kh̄ gaatsa kááy k̄i-ntà**
 3PL-DAT help be.not exist-COND
k̄i-r=íṣi-k'y-á-m-ə
 exist-NEG = 3PL-remain-put-IRR-STI
 'If there is no help for them, they won't stay.'
- (115) **bāārā yí=barbm-t=í yááb íṣ-əra**
 maiden 3FS = become.woman-SS = 3FS man 3FS-ACC
bōys-ā-m yəg-ntà nyākū búta
 give.dowry-put-IRR come-COND young.man outside
bòòz-ntà=ee gyābt'à sāa-r=í-k'y-á-m
 stroll-COND-STI front.yard arrive.NV-NEG = 3FS-remain-put-IRR
 'if a girl became woman and someone came to wed her, if young men walked outside, she didn't come to the front yard.'
- (116) **k'òrk'òrò k̄i-ntà k'òrk'òrò**
 corrugated.iron(Amh) exist-COND corrugated.iron(Amh)
ha=kōb-téé-tə
 2SG = take-go.NV-SS
 'if sheets of corrugated iron are available, you bring the sheets and...'
- (117) **sààmīnt t'āāgñ í=hāāy-m-bàb**
 week(Amh) two 1PL = spend.night-IRR-father
ṇ=t'ùùs-ntà baʒà kóta ṇ=kōygē-m-k̄i-b tàn
 1SG = know-COND work little 1SG = bring-IRR-exist-REL RESULT
 'If I had known that we would stay two weeks, I would have brought a little bit of work with me.'

Clauses marked with **-ntà** may have a temporal rather than a conditional interpretation (118)-(120). This is not surprising as there is some overlap between the two, i.e. it can take some time before the condition is fulfilled. In any case, the situation described in the apodosis normally follows upon and is dependent upon the situation described in the antecedent.

- (118) **yok'à íſi=hàày-t=íſi kūbm̄ hàày-tə zérkń**
 INTJ 3PL = spend.night-ss = 3PL four spend.night-ss time
tʃ'òr-ſ-ntà bangar-t=íſi koynəb-kn ééz
 finish-CAUS-COND return-ss = 3PL Koynəb-DAT honey
kòb-tə
 take-ss
 'well, they spent the night and passed four nights and when they finished the time they returned and brought honey for the Koynəb and ...'

- (119) **ſēŕi batà yí=zut-ntà hāāy batà zút-ará**
 stone on.LOC 3FS = trample-COND water on.LOC trample-NEG
 'When she stepped on the stones, she didn't step in the water.'

- (120) **íntʃù há=kāt'-ā-m=ó há=kāt'-ntà**
 wood 3MS-hoe.PASS-PUT-IRR-STI.CONT 3MS-hoe.PASS-COND
há=fākū-s-tū-tə há-gōm-t'-ā-m-ə
 3MS-split-PASS-SS 3MS-pile-PASS-PUT-IRR-STI
 '...wood is cut; when it is cut, it is split and stacked.'

11.5.5 Concessive clauses

Concessive clauses also take the morpheme **-ntà**, but in addition have the inclusive marker **k'arà** (~ **k'arà** ~ **k'eenà**) 'also, even'. This word usually occurs preceding the verb (121)-(123).

- (121) **...ʔyants'à k'oh=á há=yòwk'a sīs-ntà**
 bee noise = 3MS 3MS = INTJ listen-COND
zaak'n k'een=á kí-ntà kēēs-tə
 noon INCL = 3MS exist-COND go.out-ss
 'if he hears the noise of bees, even if it is noon, he climbs up and...'
- (122) **yír-k'arà há=fòòt-ntà ɳ=óótʃ'-á-m-ə**
 what-INCL 3MS = become-COND 1SG = ask-put-IRR-STI
 'I will ask whatever it is (even anything).'

- (123) **há-ʔèkì-k'èrà** **há = kàʃkùʃ-t = á** **há = kaay-ntà**
 3MS.POSS-money-INCL 3MS = harvest?-SS = 3MS 3MS = be.not-COND
há-dàd-ḡ-s-əra **há = ʔōy-ār = á-kì-k-ə**
 3MS.POSS-child-DEF-M-ACC 3MS = refuse-NEG = 3MS-exist-REAL-STI
 'Even though his son collected his money and disappeared, he didn't
 refuse him.'

There may be intervening matring between **k'era** and the verb (124). A reason for this could be that it preferably attaches to a noun. In addition, **k'era** appears following the verb in one or two cases (125).

- (124) **ʃēʔi-k'èrà** **ás-k'à** **ha = ʃiif-ntà**
 stone-INCL 3MS-IN 2SG = add-COND
ārtʃñ-ār = á-k'y-á-m-ə
 tear-NEG = 3MS-remain-put-IRR-STI
 'Even if you add a stone in it, it will not break.'

- (125) **ás-kḡ** **āṣū** **ʃaṇ-s-əb** **há-fòdòt-ntà** **k'èrà**
 3MS-DAT leg break.DEF-M-REL 3MS-become-COND INCL
 'even though his leg was broken, ...'

11.5.6 Verb complements

Conditional clause marking (-**ntà**) is found on verb complement clauses when the clause contains a wh-word.

- (126) **gēbṡ-tə** **há = kḡ-ntà** **t'úús-ár = a-kḡ**
 how.much-COP 3MS = exist-COND know-NEG = 2SG-exist[Q]
 'Don't you know how much it is?'

Compare the following pairs of sentences. In the (a)-examples, the complement clause contains a question word and the clause is marked by **-ntà** as a conditional clause. In the (b)-examples, the complement clause states a fact, there is no question word and the clause is marked by **-əb** as a relative clause.

- (127) a. **nā-tə** **íʃ = təg-ntà** **t'úús-éṇ-kḡ-k-ə**
 where-COP 3PL = go-COND
 know-NEG.1SG-exist-REAL-STI
 'I didn't know where it was they went.'

- b. **bōytà íʃ = tee-b-əra t'úús-éŋ-kì-k-ə**
 Boyta 3PL = go.NV-REL-ACC
 know-NEG.1SG-exist-REAL-STI
 'I didn't know that they had gone to Boyta.'

- (128) a. **ītī tə-ntà səg = ítī**
 who COP-COND see = 2PL.Q
 'Have you seen who it is?'
 b. **ha = kùʃ-àb-a síís-en-kì-k-ə**
 2SG = be.sick-REL-ACC hear-NEG.1SG-exist-REAL-STI
 'I didn't hear that you were ill.'

- (129) a. **bóóz-yaab-ù-s gēbṁ íʃ = kì-ntà**
 stroll-man-m-PL how.much 3PL = exist-COND
t'úús-ár = a-kì
 know-NEG = 2SG-exist[Q]
 'Don't you know how many guests there are?'
 b. **bóóz-yáab-ù-s p'úc'ā íʃ = fòòt-àb-əra**
 stroll-man-m-PL many.ELAT 3PL = become-REL-ACC
t'úús-ár-a-kì
 know-NEG = 2SG-exist[Q]
 'Don't you know that there are very many guests?'

Finally, a complement position may also be invested by the Irrealis counterpart of a relative clause (130). This complement is functionally equivalent to a pair of two subordinate clauses such as in (131). The latter construction is similar to Amharic (*bihonīm bayhonīm*).

- (130) **bērñ téé-r = íʃi-kì-ntà kōm-s**
 tomorrow go.NV-NEG = 3PL-exist-COND chief.DEF-M
māāk-ñ-bàb-əra t'úús-ér = íʃi-k'y-á-m-ə
 tell-IRR-father-ACC know-NEG = 3PL-remain-put-IRR-STI
 'If they don't go tomorrow, they won't know whether the chief will tell it.' (= example (91))

- (131) **há-fòòt-ntà** **fòòt-ērā** **há=kì-ntà** **k'arà**
 3MS = happen-COND happen-NEG 3MS = exist-COND INCL
ṛ=kōō-m-ə
 1SG = take.NV-IRR-STI
 'Whether it happens or not, I will accept it.' (Lit: if it happens, if it does not happen...)

11.6 Conjunctions

This section deals with the following conjunctions:

- (132) **-ka** 'and' coordinative
-k'ərà 'also, even' inclusive
-ná 'or' alternative
tana 'hence, so, then' resultative
gín 'but' (< Amh.) adversative
wōyñ 'or' (< Amh.) alternative

11.6.1 Coordinative

The coordinative conjunction coordinates noun phrases (133)-(134). **-ka** is suffixed to each coordinate. Next to its coordinating function, **-ka** also marks Instrumental and Comitative roles; see examples (135)-(136) and section 9.2.6. **-ka** does not coordinate clauses, as clauses are typically linked through verbal marking such as present in the switch reference system.

- (133) **bārkāy-ka** **zīnà-ka** **t'āāgñ-bāb** **ʔíʔi=kì-n**
 monkey-COOR leopard-COOR two-father 3PL = exist-DS
 'A monkey and a leopard lived together,...'

- (134) **támú-ka** **t'āāgñ-ka** **ets'n** **bēngī**
 ten-COOR two-COOR moon year
há=fādù-t'ù-kì-k-ə
 3MS = count-PASS-exist-REAL-STI
 'A year counts twelve months.'

- (135) **nata** **ààs-tà** **ṛ-dàdù-ka** **ṛ=kī-m-ə**
 1SG PROX.M-LOC 1SG.POSS-child-WITH 1SG = exist-IRR-STI
 'I will stay here with my children.'

- (136) **íŋi = tee** **bēk'ñ-ka** **tɕ'ad-tə**
 3PL = go.NV spear-WITH pierce-SS
íŋ = zìip'm-k-ə
 3PL = chase.away-REAL-STI
 '...they came and stabbed him with a spear and chased him away'

The adverb **kayēestà** 'again' (short form: **kày**) probably consists of the coordinative **ka** followed by a demonstrative and the locative case marker **-tà**.

- (137) **k'oy** **kōb-yēē-tə** **kàyēestà** **úftà** **án-tə**
 one take-come.NV-SS again down.LOC put-SS
kày **kēēs-tə** **kày** **fááfà** **k'oy** **kōb-yēē-tə**
 again go.out-SS again honeycomb one take-come.NV-SS
 '...brings one and again puts it on the ground, and again climbs up and again brings one comb, ...'

11.6.2 Inclusive

The inclusive conjunction is **-k'ərà** ~ **k'arà** 'also, even' (Tepi var. **k'eenà**). Some examples are given in (138)-(139). The inclusive conjunction is also found in concessive clauses in combination with conditional marking (140).

- (138) **dēyg-ñ-k'ərà** **dād-ñ-s-k'ərà** **tàmāār** **ìy-tà**
 child.F-DEF-INCL child-DEF-M-INCL education(Amh) house-LOC
íŋ = nòn-kì-k-ə
 3PL = talk-exist-REAL-STI
 'The girls and boys are talking at school.'

- (139) **íŋi-k'eenà** **íŋi = dōr-s-ùs-ñ-t = íŋi** **tóórà**
 3PL-INCL 3PL = run-CAUS-CAUS-MID-SS = 3PL downward
kāārū-k'à **tee-k-ə**
 grave-IN go.NV-REAL-STI
 'They also ran and ran and they went down to the grave.'

- (140) **há-ʔèkì-k'ərà** **há=kàʃkùʃ-t=á** **há=kaay-ntà**
 3MS.POSS-money-INCL 3MS=harvest?-SS=3MS 3MS=be.not-COND
há-dèd-ḥ-s-əra **há=ʔōy-ār=á-kì-k-ə**
 3MS.POSS-child-DEF-M-ACC 3MS=refuse-NEG=3MS-exist-REAL-STI
 'Even though his son collected his money and disappeared, he didn't
 refuse him.'

The inclusive conjunction has a short form **-əra** which is formally similar to the accusative case marker (see section 9.2.2). Some speakers use this conjunction very liberally, especially, it seems, in church contexts. In (142), it occurs on the adverbial expression **háák'astà** 'now', twice on **əʃntà** and even once on a subject NP, and there is one regular occurrence of the accusative. Most speakers do not think that this liberal use constitutes 'good' Sheko. The occurrence of **-ra** on the subject NP is considered downright wrong by the language consultants (indicated by an asterisk in the example).

- (142) **háák'ast-əra (...)** **āyñ-én-k'y-á-n**
 now-INCL think.much-NEG.1PL-remain-put-PURP
əʃnt-əra (...) **yiz** **əʃntà-ra** **yērōtsī**
 MOTIVE-INCL DIST.M MOTIVE-INCL God
màngìstì-*ra **fāyk'n** **há=fòdèt-àb-īs-əra**
 government(Amh)-INCL life 3MS=become-REL-DIST.M-ACC
t'úús-ít-ə
 know-PL.ADDR-STI
 'Now ... in order for us not to worry ... Therefore, know that God's
 kingdom is life!'

11.6.3 Alternative

The alternative conjunction is **-ná** 'or'. It is only used in questions (143)-(145). In giving alternatives in a non-interrogative setting, the Amharic conjunction **wōym** may be employed (see section 11.6.5 below).

- (143) **ás-kh̄ gatsu fyáádí-ka-náa zírú-ka-náa éts'ń-ka**
 3MS-DAT start number-WITH-or time-WITH-or moon-WITH
ífi=t'ùs-kì yí=ge-t=í bádìgh̄ ootf'u-k-ə
 3PL=know-exist[Q] 3FS=say-SS=3FS Badìgh̄ ask-REAL-STI
 'Badìgh̄ asked saying "Do they know the start (of the year) by counting or by day or by moon?"'

- (144) **ha-bààb-máà emà t̄**
 2SG.POSS-father-or so.and.so cop.Q
 'Is it your father or so-and-so?'

- (145) **bátf'á-ka náa**
 anger-WITH or
 'In anger?' (i.e. did they part/ did the Sheko leave in anger? Context: reaction of one of the audience listening to the oral history on the split-off between the Diizi and Sheko.)
ūytī-ka t=ífi-yèè-k-ə bátf'á-ka t̄-rée
 love-WITH COP=3PL-come.NV-REAL-STI anger-WITH COP-NEG.STI
 'It was with love that they came, not with anger.' (Context: answer to the above.)

Note that **-na** also connects clauses:

- (146) **ūūtñ k'yar-t̄ wuṣ=a-k-náa wúṣ-ár=a-kì**
 rat beat-SS kill=2SG-REAL-or kill-NEG=2SG-EXIST.Q
 'Did you beat and kill the rat or didn't you?' (Line from a well-known *saaya* 'fable'.)

11.6.4 Resultative

Sheko has the conjunction **tana**, whose meaning is not directly evident. It might encode 'result', i.e. the situation described by the clause in which **tana** occurs is presented as ensuing from the preceding events. Examples are given in (147)-(149). The first two examples come from texts and the third was offered in elicitation.

- (147) **nata** **bàrù-t=á** **há=ʔin-n̄** **tana**
 1SG throw.away-SS=3MS 3MS=go-DS RESUL
ɲ=tɛ-kì-k-ə
 1SG=go.NV-exist-REAL-STI
 ‘...he chased me away and went; hence I am going.’
- (148) **íʃ=kərbu-tə** **íʃi=ʔààtù-kì-k-ə**
 3PL=be.strong-SS 3PL=hold-exist-REAL-STI
há=k’ògù-t=á **tana** **há=yīs-əra** **ààtù-kì-k**
 3MS=be.strong-SS=3MS RESUL 3MS=DIST.M-ACC hold-exist-REAL
 ‘Being strong they keep (cattle). He is strong and so he keeps them.’
- (149) **bádìgɛn** **hààs-ta** **yí=woogu-t=í**
 Badign PROX.M-LOC 3FS=sit-SS=3FS
nòŋ=í-kì-n̄ **tana** **ɲ=tóg-á-m** **ɲ=gè-b-ara**
 talk=3FS-exist-DS RESUL 1SG=go-put-IRR 1SG=say-REL-ACC
ɲ=sàmù-k-ə
 1SG=remain-REAL-STI
 ‘Badign sits here and talks, so I refrained from my saying “I will go”.’

In other cases, ‘result’ (in the sense of ‘cause’) is clearly excluded; but the clause is linked as ‘subsequent’ or ‘consecutive’ to the preceding.

- (150) **há-dàdù-s** **t=á** **ás-k’à** **an-t=á**
 3MS.POSS-child-PL COP=3MS 3MS-IN put-SS=3MS
á=nata-ra **mààd-n̄** **tana** **nata** **yááf-ára-kì**
 3MS=1SG-ACC deceive-DS RESUL 1SG find-NEG-exist[Q]
ge-tə
 say-SS
 ‘“It is his children that he put in it, deceiving me; haven’t I found it?” she said and...’

- (151) **kà-kày** **há-bàtà** **án-tə** **yīs-tà**
 PLUR-again 3MS.POSS-on.LOC put-SS DIST.M-LOC
há=dyāskū-fééf-t=á **kétā** **hayk'à** **īsā-k'à**
 3MS=relocate-spend.day-SS=3MS all up.IN beehive-IN
há=tʃor-ntà **yīs-t=á** **úftà** **fīn-t=á**
 3MS=finish-COND DIST.M-LOC=3MS down.LOC descend-SS=3MS
yīs-tà **tanà** **wóógú-t=á** **k'ēēt'-ā-m**
 DIST.M-LOC RESUL sit-SS=3MS swallow-put-IRR
 '...puts it again on the other and then he spends the time relocating
 them and when all up at the beehive are finished then he climbs
 down and then he sits down and eats'

- (152) **...ítí=nyààs-əb** **āngūt'=á-s-ə** **gé-tə** **tana**
 2PL=give.birth-REL grow.PASS-3MS-OPT-STI say-SS RESUL
ṇ=tūts-ṇ **íʃl=ʔín-m-bààb** **tə-k-ə**
 1SG=dismiss-DS 3PL=go-IRR-father COP-REAL-STI
 '(I bless them) saying: "... may what you birthed grow up," and I
 dismiss them; they will go.'

In Wolaitta, there is a formally somewhat similar morpheme **-ttenne**, which consists of a **tte** copula and the suffix **-nne** which normally coordinates (pro)nouns. **-ttenne** itself does not coordinate but emphasizes verbal and non-verbal predicates (Azeb 2007c:115).

11.6.5 Amharic conjunctions

The two conjunctions which are most often borrowed from Amharic are **gín** < **gīn** 'however, but' and **wōyñ** < **wāyñ** 'or'. As for the first, Sheko does not have a reversing conjunction (153), therefore the use of **gín** fills a gap. An example is given in (154).

- (153) **ń=k'ēdā** **k'ed-ṇ** **ṇ=gīṣù-kès-ṇ**
 1SG-oath swear^o-DS 1SG=pull-go.out.CAUS-DS
há=nata-ra **gyá-ń** **ge-k-ə**
 3MS=1SG-ACC chew-PURP? say-REAL-STI
 'we took an oath (that he would not eat me); I pulled him out, (but)
 he says he is going to eat me.'

- (154) **ás-ka** **t=á** **fòòtù-kì-k-ə** **yááb**
 3MS-WITH COP = 3MS become-exist-REAL-STI man
arà **gín** **k'òysñs** **tə-k-ə**
 thought however(Amh) different COP-REAL-STI
 'It is with him that it happens. But the thoughts of men are different.'

As for the second, **wōym** also feels a gap, since the Sheko conjunction **ná** 'or' is mainly used in questions, whereas **wōym** is used in statements (155)-(157). Thus, **wōym** complements **ná**. Accordingly, the Amharic interrogative **wäys** 'or?' is not attested in my data.

- (155) **túra** **zirkn** **wōym** **ííru** **bèngì-k'à**
 big.rains day or(Amh) rain year-IN
dōōnk'ā-ra **íñi=gād-ā-m-ə**
 millet-ACC 3PL = start-put-IRR-STI
 'they started the millet in the time of big rains or rainy season.' (Lit: year of rain. Context: Traditionally, a Sheko year started by planting millet, which happens around the end of May when the rainy season starts.)

- (156) **wōym gwāādà-k'à** **yí=ky-ā-m**
 or(Amh) back.room(Amh)-IN 3FS = exist-put-IRR
wōym **bažà-k'à** **yí=ky-ā-m**
 or(Amh) work-IN 3FS = exist-put-IRR
 'Either she would be in a back room or she would be at work.'

- (157) **ha = ?in-m-bàb** **ha = ?éz-á-m** **wōym**
 2SG = go-IRR-father 2SG = be.able-put-IRR or(Amh)
haay **há = ge-ntà** **ha = hāāy-ā-m**
 spend.night 3MS = say-COND 2SG = spend.night-put-IRR
 '...you can go. Or when he says 'stay for the night', you will stay.'

12 Verb derivation

Verb derivation includes the causative, passive and middle. All derivational markers are suffixal. The input for these derivations are verbs, and in some cases also nouns. There are some parallel morphophonological processes in the derivation of causative and passive. These include vowel shortening of the stem, L tone on the verb stem, metathesis with root-final velar consonants, and loss of ejective (glottal) feature in certain environments. Furthermore, reciprocals are derived by suffixing the middle to the causative, which is uncommon in Omotic languages.

In addition, this chapter discusses experiencer verbs, since they show interesting variation between causative and non-causative stems.

12.1 Causative

The causative derivation is productive. The formal make-up is discussed in the following section. In some verbs, metathesis takes place. Its syntactic function is to add an argument in the argument structure of a verb; it appears on transitives and intransitives. In some cases, the causative derivation makes a verb from a noun. It can appear more than once, i.e. double causatives are allowed.

12.1.1 Formal aspects of the causative

The form of the causative is **-s**, coupled with L tone on the verb stem and vowel shortening (if the root has a long vowel). The causative formation is partially lexically determined. It is unpredictable with which verbs metathesis between the final C of the root and the causative suffix **-s** takes place (1). Furthermore, it is lexically determined whether the expletive vowel³⁸ **u** is present or absent (2). In the examples below, there is no difference in CV-structure of the root of the verb, but the expletive vowel is suffixed to the root in some cases but not in others.

³⁸ Since the function of this vowel is not clear, and since it is not epenthetic, the term ‘expletive vowel’ is chosen. See also section 10.1.

- | | | | | |
|-----|-------------|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| (1) | fík | ‘be ready’ | fíkū-s | ‘make ready’ |
| | tík | ‘be extinguished’ | tisk | ‘extinguish’ |
| (2) | sír | ‘be dented’ | sírū-s | ‘dent’ |
| | sár | ‘be hot’ | sar-s | ‘heat’ |
| | un | ‘ignite’ | ūnū-s | ‘cause to ignite’ |
| | fín | ‘descend’ | fin-s | ‘lower’ |
| | ṣaan | ‘saw’ | ṣānū-s | ‘cause to saw’ |
| | ṣáán | ‘peek’ | ṣan-s | ‘cause to peek’ |

Some rules apply to all causative forms. Long vowels are always shortened, also in open syllables, i.e. when an expletive vowel occurs. Some examples are provided in (3). This rule applies to other derivations as well, see MP6 in section 3.2.3.

- | | | | | |
|-----|--------------|---------|---------------|------------------|
| (3) | k’ááb | ‘pour’ | k’ab-s | ‘cause to pour’ |
| | góóm | ‘pile’ | gōmū-s | ‘cause to pile’ |
| | door | ‘run’ | dor-s | ‘cause to run’ |
| | teer | ‘swell’ | tērū-s | ‘cause to swell’ |

Furthermore, all causative verb stems have L tone, with the exception of those in (4). Causative stems follow the tonal behaviour of L verb roots, except disyllabic stems in the Basic (imperative) paradigm; these have tone level 3 instead of level 2, as illustrated in (4b). Since this form is taken as the citation form, disyllabic causative stems are cited with tone 3.

- | | | |
|-----|----|-----------------------|
| (4) | a. | fin-s-ə |
| | | descend-CAUS-STI |
| | | ‘Lower it!’ |
| | b. | bāngār-s-ə |
| | | return-CAUS-STI |
| | | ‘Give back! / Reply!’ |

The verbs in (5) have H tone even though their form suggests a causative derivation. The verb **bártʃ’ú-j** ‘wash’ has a passive counterpart **bártʃ’ū-t** ‘be washed’. The verb **dúbdú-s** has a middle marked counterpart **dūb-m** ‘gather, come together’. Of the other two verbs, no base or other derived form is present in my corpus.

- (5) **bártʃú-ʃ** 'wash (something, oneself)'
dúbdú-s 'collect, gather'
káʃkú-ʃ 'harvest'
? dúnkúr-s 'conclude'

The causative suffix displays sibilant harmony, i.e. the sibilant has the same place of articulation as the sibilants in the verb root. The harmony is in place only, not in voice, as can be seen here from the causative stems of **bez** 'sprout', **baʒ** 'work' and **ʒar** 'spill (of grain)'.

- | | | | | |
|-----|-------------|----------|----------------|-------------------|
| (6) | kats | 'cook' | kātsū-s | 'cause to cook' |
| | iits | 'boil' | ītsū-s | 'cause to boil' |
| | bez | 'sprout' | bēzū-s | 'cause to sprout' |
-
- | | | | | |
|-----|-------------|---------------------|---------------|------------------|
| (7) | ʃooy | 'spill (of liquid)' | ʃoy-ʃ | 'spill (liquid)' |
| | baʒ | 'work' | bāʒū-ʃ | 'cause to work' |
| | óótʃ | 'ask' | ōtʃū-ʃ | 'cause to ask' |
| | tʃór | 'be finished' | tʃor-ʃ | 'finish' |
-
- | | | | | |
|-----|--------------|--------------------|----------------|------------------|
| (8) | geetʃ | 'laugh' | getʃu-ʃ | 'cause to laugh' |
| | aʃ | 'plant' | aʃu-ʃ | 'cause to plant' |
| | ʒár | 'spill (of grain)' | ʒar-ʃ | 'spill (grain)' |

An ejective loses its ejective feature and becomes a voiceless stop or affricate immediately preceding the causative marker **-s** (9). (This is MP7 in section 3.2.3.) For stems ending in an ejective stop other than **p'** metathesis and cluster simplification may apply, or they may have the intervening expletive vowel **u**; in the latter case the ejective feature is not lost.

- | | | | | |
|-----|---------------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------|
| (9) | t'ép' | 'carry' | [t'ep-s] | 'load' |
| | t'oop' | 'be baptised' | [t'op-s] | 'baptize' |
| | cf. ts'óóts' | 'be full' | ts'ot-s | 'fill' |

As already evidenced by **ts'ot-s** 'fill' in example (10), adjacent sibilants merge into a single segment. More examples are given below. In order to show the morphological make-up of the causative here, a hyphen is inserted (**ke-s** < **kees-s**), although the root-final and suffixal sibilant are indistinguishable. Note

that other verb roots ending in a sibilant fail to undergo this process (11).

- | | | | | |
|------|----------------|------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| (10) | kees | 'go out' | ke-s | 'bring out' |
| | síís | 'listen' | si-s | 'cause to listen' |
| | kaats | 'be ripe' | kat-s | 'cook' |
| | k'íş | 'drink' | k'i-ş | 'give a drink, water' |
| | k'eets' | 'be reheated (of yam)' | k'et-s | 'to reheat (yam)' |
-
- | | | | | |
|------|-------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| (11) | baas | 'want, search' | bāsū-s | 'be necessary' |
| | iits | 'boil' | ītsū-s | 'cause to boil' |
| | baʒ | 'work' | bāʒū-ʃ | 'cause to work' |

The following verbs undergo metathesis in the causative formation. They all end in a velar consonant. The first two verbs are transitive and also undergo metathesis in the passive formation.

- | | | | |
|------|--------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| (12) | <i>base</i> | <i>causative</i> | <i>passive</i> |
| | boog | 'harvest yam' | bosk' botk' |
| | duuk' | 'sow (maize)' | dusk' duṭk' |
| | diik' | 'be anointed, painted' | disk' |
| | wook' | 'be tired' | wosk' |
| | sok' | 'lie down, be asleep' | sosk' |
| | sak | 'arrive, reach' | sask |
| | tik | 'be extinguished' | tisk |

Finally, note the dropping of the velar of **sóg** 'see' in causative formation, and the dropping of **-d** of **ʔyard** 'enter' (13). A sentential example for the latter is given in (14).

- | | | | | |
|------|--------------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| (13) | sóg | 'see' | se-s | 'show' |
| | ʔyard | 'enter' | ʔyar-s | 'lead into, marry' |

- | | | | |
|------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| (14) | ...yīs-tà | yeta-k'erà | bāārā ʔyār-s-ṇ |
| | DIST.M-LOC | 2SG-INCL | maiden enter-CAUS-DS |
| | ṇ = nàta-k'erà | báábù-kṇ | ʔyard-ə |
| | 1SG = 1SG-INCL | male-DAT | enter-STI |
- '...then you can marry a girl and let me marry a man'

In some instances, the causative cannot be related to an underived verb stem, but there is a corresponding basic noun. Some examples are presented in (15)-(17). The causative can be seen as verbalizer here. It is not clear how productive this process is.

- (15) **nata-ra** **gúúrú** **ɳ-yaaf-à** **batà** **bēngī-k'à**
 1SG-ACC only 1SG.POSS-find-NMLZ on.LOC year-IN
há= **gàydù-s-k-ə** **yí=** **ge-ñ**
 3MS = problem-CAUS-REAL-STI 3FS = say-DS
 ‘ “He only has bothered me on my findings for years,” she said;’
 cf. **gáydu** ‘problem’
- (16) **újñ** **bì?ù-s=í-k-ə**
 flower feather-CAUS = 3FS-REAL-STI
 ‘She put the flower in the hair/adorned with a flower.’
 cf. **bīy** < **bīñ** ‘feather’
- (17) **ts'yārū-s** ‘to form a beard (of maize)’
 cf. **ts'yārū** ‘beard’
hay-s ‘listen, be quiet; govern, manage’
 cf. **haay** ‘ear’; **haay** ‘spend the night’³⁹

Other verbs show an alternation with the passive (18). Although they clearly have a base form, the base form is not attested. The causative and passive in these pairs form transitive and intransitive verbs respectively.

³⁹ Many Ethiopian languages have a similar derivation; e.g. Amharic **addärä** ‘spend the night’; **astädadärä** ‘govern’.

- (18) causatives (tr.) alternating with passives (intr.)

bártʃú-ʃ	‘wash’	bártʃú-tʻ	‘be washed’
dúbdú-s	‘collect, gather’	dúbdú-tʻ	‘be collected’
gārū-s	‘greet’	? gārū-tʻ	‘be greeted’
förtʃū-ʃ	‘undress’	örtʃū-tʻ	‘be undressed’
fādū-s	‘cause to be hungry’	fādū-tʻ	‘be hungry’
kündū-s	‘push’	kündū-tʻ	‘be pushed’
ʒētʃū-ʃ	‘flower (of maize)’		(not attested)
ābdū-s	‘make a floor’	ābdū-tʻ	‘be made’
	cf. áábdà ‘floor of cow dung’		
āngū-s	‘make larger’	āngū-tʻ	‘be made large, increase’

A few verbs do not alternate with passives, and an underived base is not known. As CVCC is a possible stem shape, it could be that the sibilant is part of the root.

- (19) **tʃarʃ** ‘carve’, cf. passive **tʃarʃu-tʻ** ‘be carved’
ubs ‘creep’

12.1.2 Double causatives

The causative stem may be formed from intransitive verbs, deriving a transitive verb, as well as from transitive verbs. The causative suffix may be realized twice, as illustrated in examples (20)-(21). Double causatives are also used in some reciprocal constructions (section 12.3.3).

- (20) **bar** ‘boil’ (intr.) **bars** ‘boil’ **bārsūs** ‘cause to boil’
fín ‘descend’ **fins** ‘lower’ **fínsūs** ‘cause to lower’
ʃor ‘be afraid’ **ʃorʃ** ‘frighten’ **ʃōrʃūs** ‘cause to frighten’
sok ‘lie down, sleep’ **sosk** ‘lay down, make sleep’ **sōskūs** ‘cause to lay down, cause to make sleep’
úm ‘eat’ **ums** ‘feed’ **ūmsūs** ‘cause to feed’

- (21) a. **hāāy-n̄-s** **há = saru-k-ə**
water-DEF-M 3MS = be.hot-REAL-STI
‘The water is hot.’
b. **hāāy sar-ʃ-ít-ə**
water be.hot-CAUS-PL.ADDR-STI
‘heat water!’

- c. **íſ-əra haay-n-s-a há=sar-su-s-k-ə**
 3FS-ACC water-DEF-M-ACC 3MS=be.hot-CAUS-CAUS-REAL-STI
 ‘he made her heat the water’

As can be seen from the examples, the causative introduces a new argument (the causer). The causee may be marked by the accusative (22) or instrumental case (23b).

- (22) **íſ-əra iy-ñ-s-əra há=dìr-sù-k-ə**
 3FS-ACC house-DEF-M-ACC 3MS=sweep-CAUS-REAL-STI
 ‘He made her sweep the house.’

- (23) a. **aftu beyns kom-s-əra**
 drinking mother.DEF.M chief.DEF-M-ACC
há=gasku-k-ə
 3MS=insult-REAL-STI
 ‘The drunkard insulted the chief.’
- b. **aftu beyns dadu-ka kom-s-a**
 drinking mother.DEF.M child-WITH chief.DEF-M-ACC
há=gàskù-s-k-ə
 3MS=insult-CAUS-REAL-STI
 ‘The drunkard had the chief insulted by a child.’

12.2 Passive

The passive derivation marker is **-tʰ**. There is a process of metathesis when the passive derivation is suffixed to verb roots with an affricate or velar stop.

12.2.1 Formal aspects of the passive

Like in causative formation, in passive formation a long vowel is shortened and all passive verb stems have L tone. They follow the tonal behaviour of L verb roots, except disyllabic stems in the Basic (Imperative) paradigm; these have tone level 3 instead of level 2.

- (24) **góóm** ‘pile’ **gom-tʰ** ‘be piled’
góótʃ ‘bite (of snake)’ **gōtʃū-tʰ** ‘be bitten’

The passive-middle marker **-t'** deglottalises and becomes the voiceless plosive **-t** after a voiceless fricative (*MP 8*).

- | | | | | |
|------|-------------|----------------|---------------|---------------------|
| (25) | k'of | 'estimate' | k'of-t | 'be estimated' |
| | myas | 'hew' | myas-t | 'be hewn' |
| | toos | 'add to water' | toos-t | 'be added to water' |
| | byáh | 'open' | byah-t | 'be opened' |

In many verbs with a stem-final velar stop, metathesis takes place (*MP 9*). Further changes are assimilation in voice, i.e. clusters of a voiced velar stop and passive **-t'** become voiceless. Only the second consonant (after metathesis) may be ejective. The presence of the ejective feature is not fully predictable. The following verbs are known to undergo metathesis in passive formation:

- | | | | | |
|------|--------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| (26) | duuk' | 'sow (maize)' | dutk' | 'be sown' |
| | mook' | 'break off' | motk | 'be broken off' |
| | záák' | 'peel maize' | zatk' | 'be peeled' |
| | haak | 'pick' | hatk | 'be picked' |
| | maak | 'tell' | matk | 'be told' |
| | beg | 'pay' | betk' | 'be paid' |
| | bóóg | 'harvest yam' | botk' | 'be harvested' |
| | daag | 'invite' | datk | 'be invited' |

Some sentential examples are given in (27).

- | | | | |
|------|----|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| (27) | a. | yáb-m̄-s | dàtk = á-k-ə |
| | | man-DEF-M | invite.PASS = 3MS-REAL-STI |
| | | 'The man was invited.' | |
| | b. | ʃét'î | dīrga-ka |
| | | maize | Dirga-WITH |
| | | dùtk' = á-k | SOW.PASS = 3MS-REAL |
| | | 'The maize was sown by Dirga.' | |
| | a. | gyāñ-s | bèt'k' = á-k-ə |
| | | coffee.DEF-M | pay.PASS = 3MS-REAL-STI |
| | | 'The coffee is paid (for).' | |

Furthermore, some verbs ending in an affricate simplify the cluster that is created after suffixing the passive-middle **-t'** to a

cluster of homorganic sibilant and stop (as described in *MP 10*).

- | | | |
|------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| (28) | bóóʈʂ ‘scrape, dig’ | boʂt ‘be dug’ |
| | búúʈs ‘cut (horizontally)’ | bust ‘be cut’ |
| | giitʃ ‘rub’ | gift ‘be rubbed’ |
| | geetʃ ‘laugh’ | geʂt ‘be laughed (at)’ |
| | k’aatʃ ‘stone’ | k’àʂt ‘be stoned’ |
| | k’uts ‘cut’ | k’ust ‘be cut’ |
| | ʃátʃ ‘herd’ | ʃaʂt ‘be herded’ |
| | ts’yááʈs ‘tie’ | ts’yast ‘be tied’ |
| | ats ‘give’ | ast ‘be given’ |
| | íʈts ‘cook (liquid)’ | ist ‘be cooked’, ex. (29) |

- (29) **gyānū hāàʃ áás-t=á** **há = ʔist-n-baab**
 coffee water how-COP = 3MS 3MS = cook.liquid.PASS-IRR-father
te-n **ɲ = maaku-ki-k**
 COP-DS 1SG = tell-exist-REAL
 ‘I will be telling how coffee is/has to be prepared.’⁴⁰

Note that not all verbs ending in an affricate follow this pattern of cluster simplification.

- | | | |
|------|---------------------------------|---|
| (30) | gootʃ ‘bite (of snake)’ | gotʃu-tʰ ‘be bitten’ |
| | k’ap’ʈs ‘cut (scissors)’ | k’ap’ʈs-u-tʰ ~ kap’-tʰ ‘be cut’ |
| | ts’uuts ‘whistle’ | ts’uts-u-tʰ ‘be whistled’ |

Verb roots ending in **-tʰ** mostly merge their last consonant with the passive **-tʰ** (31). Some verbs assimilate their last consonant and merge (32). But not all verbs do, as illustrated in example (33).

- | | | |
|------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| (31) | bootʰ ‘smear, rub, paint’ | bo-tʰ ‘be smeared’ |
| | káátʰ ‘hoe, dig’ | ka-tʰ ‘be hoed, dug’ |
| | k’eetʰ ‘swallow’ | k’e-tʰ ‘be swallowed’ |
| | k’iitʰ ‘grind’ | k’i-tʰ ‘be ground’ |
| | matʰ ‘ferment’ | ma-tʰ ‘be fermented’ |

⁴⁰ **gyānū hāàʃ** (or simply **gyānū**) is the common Sheko coffee beverage, a hot drink prepared from coffee leaves. In contrast, **sīnī gyànū** (Lit: cup coffee), is the Amharic style coffee from the beans.

- (32) **tʂʰad** ‘pierce’ **tʂʰa-t** ‘be pierced’
- (33) **tʂʰit** ‘stretch (muscles)’ **tʂʰit-u-t** ‘be stretched’
kʰud ‘cover’ **kʰudu-t** ‘be covered’

As was shown for causatives, some verbs drop the last velar consonant in derivation.

- (34) **eg** ‘do’ **e-t** ‘be done’
ség ‘see’ **se-t** ‘be seen, be visible’
- (35) **bútà sē-tʰ-ər = í-kʰy-á-m**
outside see.NV-PASS-NEG = 3FS-remain-put-IRR
‘She was not seen outside.’

A stem-final glottal stop is deleted before the passive.

- (36) **gyaʔ** ‘chew’ **gya-t** ‘be chewed’
baʔ ‘carry on the back’ **ba-t** ‘be carried’
daʔ ‘batter’ **da-t** ‘be battered’
ʂuʔ ‘rest’ **ʂu-t** ‘be rested’
- (37) **há = tʰùpʰ-ù-tʰ-àb-kh** **ādi-kʰà** **há = dā-tʰ-ā-m-ə**
3MS = soak-PASS-REL-DAT footstep-IN 3MS = batter-PASS-put-IRR-STI
‘After it is soaked, it is battered.’
- (38) **yeeb-m-s** **ʂu-tʰ = á-k-ə**
mourning-DEF-M rest-PASS = 3MS-REAL-STI
‘the mourning diminished/came to an end (was rested)’

12.2.2 Semantic aspects of the passive

Semantically, the passive centralises the Patient, which becomes subject of the sentence. The original subject is decentralised and can be expressed by an Instrument phrase or left out.

- (39) a. **ʂóóʔ na-ŋ āʂū-ra gootʃ = á-k**
snake 1SG-DAT leg-ACC bite = 3MS-REAL
‘A snake bit me in the leg.’

- b. **na-ŋ āṣū (ṣóóṣ-ka) gòtṣù-t' = á-k-ə**
 1SG-DAT leg-ACC snake-WITH bite-PASS = 3MS-REAL-STI
 'My leg was bitten (by a snake).'

In view of the formal identity of passive and reflexive in some Omotic languages, it may be noted that the passive in Sheko does not have a reflexive meaning (40). Reflexivity is discussed in section 6.3.

- (40) **woogi k'ùst = í-k-ə**
 Woogi cut.PASS = 3FS-REAL-STI
 'Woogi was cut. /*Woogi cut herself'

In some instances, the passive has elements of middle semantics. In (41)-(42), the passive may also have an interpretation of 'potentiality':

- (41) **má kōōkñ jád-ñ-s**
 earlier.today road be.far-DEF-M
 há = sè-t'ù-k-ə
 3MS = see.NV-PASS-REAL-STI
 'Today far places are visible (one can see far today).'
- (42) **ṣūk'-ñ-s hàz ūm-t'-ār = á-kì-k-ə**
 porridge-DEF-M PROX.M eat-PASS-NEG = 3MS-exist-REAL-STI
 'This porridge is not eatable.'

Instead of the Realis form in (42), an Irrealis is used as well (43).

- (43) **ṣūk'-ñ-s ūm-t'-ār = á-k'y-a-m-ə**
 porridge-DEF-M eat-PASS-NEG = 3MS-remain-put-IRR-STI
 'The porridge is not eatable.'

In (44), verb stems with a possibly frozen passive are listed. These are semantically related to middle (body centered, spontaneous process or emotive). However, Sheko has a dedicated middle marker -ṇ (section 12.3 below). Another possibility is that -t ~ t' in these verbs a reflex of the Omotic inchoative marker -t ~ t'. Two other verb stems in -t also fit

into the list. (The final consonant in **gift** ‘boast’ etc. can be explained by *MP* 8, see (25) above.)

- | | | |
|------|-----------------|--|
| (44) | fayt' | ‘be weak’ cf. fayt'u-s ‘weaken’ |
| | gift | ‘boast’ |
| | kyabt' | ‘become king’ cf. kyabt'u-s ‘make king’ |
| | k'ūmūt' | ‘be moldy (of injera)’ |
| | ṣārūt' | ‘be asleep (of body part)’ |
| | tṣ'āmūt' | ‘be jealous (?)’ |
| | taft | ‘touch’ |
| | tīknūt' | ‘hiccup’ |
| | aft | ‘be intoxicated, drunk’ |
| | gumt | ‘kneel down’ |
| | ? fért | ‘put in its place’ |

12.3 Middle

The middle is formally characterized by a syllabic nasal. Syntactically, middle verbs can be transitive or intransitive. Semantically, it ranges from spontaneous processes (45), to self-centeredness (46), and reciprocal (47). The reciprocal is typically built on a causative stem. The Sheko middle is analysed as a reciprocal-middle, rather than a ‘middle proper’ since it does not occur with body grooming verbs (cf. Tolemariam 2009:150). See section 12.3.2 for a discussion and a list of middle verb stems.

- | | | |
|------|----|---------------------------------|
| (45) | a. | gàz=á-k-ə |
| | | snap = 3MS-REAL-STI |
| | | ‘He snapped it.’ |
| | b. | gàz-ṇ=á-k-ə |
| | | snap-MIDD = 3MS-REAL-STI |
| | | ‘It snapped.’ |
| (46) | a. | mūzī ṇ=bēsk-ā-m-ə |
| | | banana 1SG = divide-put-IRR-STI |
| | | ‘I will divide the banana’ |

- b. **mūzī ɲ = bēsk-ɲ-ā-m-ə**
 banana 1SG = divide-MIDD-put-IRR-STI
 ‘I will divide the banana for my own benefit’
- (47) a. **íŋi = yangu-kì-k-ə**
 3PL = be.angry-exist-REAL-STI
 ‘they are angry’
- b. **yàngù-s-ɲ = íŋi-k-ə**
 be.angry-CAUS-MIDD = 3PL-REAL-STI
 ‘They were angry with each other.’

12.3.1 Formal aspects of the middle

The middle suffix is a syllabic **-ɲ**. The **ɲ** assimilates to the adjacent consonant as described in section 3.1, *PR 9*. There are a few verbs with a stem-final **ɲ** which could also belong to the middle (48). In some cases, a variant form is found with a bilabial stop, which could explain the **ɲ** by assimilation.

- (48) **bārm̐** ‘become an adult (f)’ ~ **bārbm̐**
wúrm̐ ‘be turbid’ ~ **wúrbr̐**
gīrm̐ ‘ruminate’
gūym̐ ‘bow down, worship’
tʃ’ārm̐ ‘be pure’
t’ūrm̐ ‘frown’ cf. **t’ur** ‘be folded’

Most middles are L stems. Since they are disyllabic, the imperative singular has tone 3 (just as disyllabic causatives and passives). The following verb stems however are H:

- (49) **níb̐m̐** ‘dew’
sút̐n̐ ‘be sharp, pointy’
ts’árk̐n̐ ‘spit far’
ts’úb̐m̐ ‘be narrow’
tʃ’óg̐n̐ ‘smack, eat noisily’
wúrm̐ ‘be turbid’

While most middle verbs are intransitive (50)-(51), a few verbs are transitive, such as **zūp’m̐** ‘chase’ and **bōt̐n̐** ‘pound in a mortar’. The Patient/Undergoer of those verbs is in the accusative (52).

- (50) **ás-kḥ iik'a-ka dādū nyākū há = ḳi-ntà**
 3MS-DAT be.old.NMLZ-WITH child young.man 3MS = exist-COND
há = nyàk-n-àb íŋi = t'ūūs-ā-m-ə
 3MS = become.adult.man-MIDD-REL 3PL = know-put-IRR-STI
 'they would know that he became adult if he was a young man by his age'
- (51) **ítí = úm-m̄-bààb èŋntà āyñ-ārā**
 2PL-eat-IRR-father MOTIVE think.much.MIDD-NEG
k'é-t-ə
 remain-PL.ADDR-STI
 'Do not worry about what you will eat'
- (52) **ŋót'i-ra yí = bōtñ-ḳi-b-tà**
 maize-ACC 3FS = pound.MIDD-exist-REL-LOC
 'when she was pounding maize'

The middle is argument decreasing in some cases, mostly when the middle is derived from a basic transitive verb (53b). In other cases, it is valency neutral, for instance in middles expressing 'selfcenteredness' (54b).

- (53) a. **kaf-m̄-s íŋ-əra k'yaaf-m̄ yí = wut-n̄**
 bird-DEF-M 3FS-ACC kick-DS 3FS = fall-DS
 'the bird kicked her; she fell...'
- b. **dāygn̄ yí = k'yaf-m̄-ky-a-a**
 child.F.DEF 3FS-kick-MIDD-exist-IMPL-STD
 'the girl was convulsing...'
- (54) a. **ń = təg-ə**
 1PL = go-STI
 'let's go'
- b. **ń = təg-n-ə**
 1PL = go-MIDD-STI
 'let's go (for ourselves)'

12.3.2 Semantics of the middle

In general, there is a large semantic overlap between middle and reflexive/reciprocal. Haspelmath (2003:225) refers to reflexive and middle functions with one semantic map. Kemmer (1993) analyses the middle as having a participant which refers to a single entity (or a high degree of unity between participants), while the participant of a reflexive is conceptualised as split into subparts one of which acts upon the other (or a low degree of unity). On the other hand, the middle and the passive have in common that the Agent is unimportant. Payne (1997) describes the middle as a process which ignores the Agent role. In contrast, the passive is seen as an action with a downplayed Agent.

To illustrate the range of the middle in Sheko, first a list of verbs is presented. Secondly, some functions, such as spontaneous processes and self-centeredness, are discussed using example sentences. Section 12.3.3 discusses reciprocals, which are formed in Sheko by a combination of causative and middle. The middle **-ጥ** in Sheko is positioned towards the reflexive-reciprocal end of the semantic continuum. It does not cover grooming verbs, which is uncommon for an Ethiopian middle (Tolemariam 2009). The semantic distinction between middle and passive is not wholly clear-cut in Sheko, as is illustrated in (44) above, where some verbs with a frozen passive marker **-ጥ** are listed which have middle semantics.

The following alphabetical list contains deponent middle verbs, ie. they do not occur without the middle marker **-ጥ**. If a cognate noun is known, it is given as well. The list contains among others verbs denoting cognitive processes or speech actions ('reproach', 'be mute'), body actions ('swim', 'slurp'), spontaneous processes ('leak', 'slip'), and properties ('become wide', 'be sharp and pointy'). Some verbs can be seen as inherently reciprocal ('be equal', 'wrestle'). Of course, some verbs could be grouped under several headings, such as 'become adult', which is a spontaneous process and body centered.

- (55) **bārṁ** ~ **bārbṁ** ‘become adult (of girl)’, cf. **bāārā** ‘girl’
bōtṁ ‘grind in mortar’, cf. **bōtā** ‘mortar’
būrṣṇ ‘slip’
dāk’ṇ ‘become dirty’, cf. **daak’u** ‘dirt’
dēṣṇ ‘be rotten (of wood)’
dīik’ṇ ‘be mute, dumb’, cf. **dīik’ā** ‘mute person’
dīip’ṁ ‘be equal’, cf. **dīip’i** ‘same, equal’
dūbṁ ‘be spoiled by vermin’, cf. **dúbà** ‘vermin’
fērṁ ‘evaporate’ (e.g. of morning mist)
fētṁ ‘be scratched/injured’
fōrkṇ ‘peel’
gōōts’ṇ ‘be white’
gōtṁ ‘be distant, far’
gāts’ṇ ‘help’
gībṁ ‘struggle, wrestle’
gūp’ṁ ‘be turned upside down’
hāṣkṇ ‘become wide’
kūsṇ ‘drizzle (rain)’
mīt’ṇ ‘witness’
mūṣk’ṇ ‘swim’
mūzrṇ ‘melt’
nārṁ ‘blow (of wind)’, cf. **nāārū** ‘wind’
nībṁ ‘dew’
nīk’ṇ ‘be pulverized’
nyākṇ ‘become adult (of boy)’,
cf. **nyākū** ‘young man’
sútṁ ‘become sharp, pointy’
ṣūrfṁ ‘gulp, slurp’
ṣūrt’ṇ ‘shrink’
ṣōkṇ ‘wrap clothes around oneself’
ṣōṣkṇ ‘become light, easy’
ts’árkṇ ‘spit far’
ts’ēsṇ ‘be satisfied (food)’
ts’úbrṁ ‘become narrow’
ts’yāsṇ ‘break off with fingertips’
tṣ’ēbṁ ‘plant a post’, cf. **tṣ’ēbṁ** ‘post, stake’
tṣ’ādṇ ‘fight, war’, cf. **ts’at** ‘pierce’
tṣ’ógṇ ‘smack, eat noisily’
t’ōsk’ṇ ‘leak’
t’ēp’ṁ ‘become one, grow together’
tōfṁ ‘do again, repeat’

tōsñ	‘greet’, cf. tóóz ‘relative’
t’yābm̄	‘become thick’
wúrbr̄n	‘become turbid’
yāzñ	‘reproach’
yītñ	‘walk happily, gait’
zīp’ṁ	‘chase away’
zūgñ	‘become infertile’, cf. zūgī ‘infertile’
zāp’ṁ	‘shine’
ātñ	‘become used to’
āyñ	‘think much’
ēdñ	‘become rotten’
īgñ	‘be gluttonous, selfish’

Absent in the list are verbs of grooming, such as ‘to wash (oneself)’, ‘to shave’, ‘to braid one’s hair’. In the case of **bártʃ-úʃ** ‘to wash’ the verb alternates between causative and passive ((18) above). **fyaats** ‘to shave’ and **mán** ‘to braid’ are transitive verbs (56)-(57).

- (56) **ás-kñ ts’yārū há = fyààts’-kì-k-ə**

3MS-DAT beard 3MS = shave-exist-REAL-STI
 ‘he is shaving his beard’

- (57) **íʃ-kñ góri-ra mán-t’ = á-k-ə**

3FS-DAT head-ACC braid-PASS = 3MS-REAL-STI
 ‘she got her hair braided, her head is braided’

However, other body-centered middles do occur. See the list in (55) and the example sentence (58) below (with derived middle):

- (58) **san t’ùr-m̄ = á-k-ə**

forehead roll.up-MIDD = 3MS-REAL-STI
 ‘He frowned’

Furthermore, in (59)-(61), the middle is used for spontaneous events, in which there is no control of an Agent over the process.

- (59) a. **baakà t'yamà ɲ = mòòk'ù-kì-k-ə**
 taro small.part 1SG = break.off-exist-REAL-STI
 'I'm breaking off the small parts from the taro.'
- b. **iy mòk-ṇ = á-k-ə**
 house break.off-MIDD = 3MS-REAL-STI
 'The house is broken down.'
- (60) a. **zèrikāñ-s-əra ɲ = hàrtʃ'ù-s-bàrù-k-ə**
 jerrykan.DEF-M-ACC 1SG = tear-CAUS-throw.away-REAL-STI
 'I wrecked the jerrykan'
- b. **hāāy ás-ka ha = ?iir-k-əb**
 water 3MS-WITH 2SG-fetch-exist-REL
- zèrikàna há = hàrtʃ'ṇ-k-ə**
 jerrykan 3MS = tear-MIDD-REAL-STI
 'The jerrykan with which you fetch water is broken.'
- (61) **ʃúri dùb-ṇ = á-k-ə**
 sorghum.sp maggot-MIDD = 3MS-REAL-STI
 'the sorghum is spoiled by maggots'
 ~ also possible with a passive: **dùbùt'ákə**

Furthermore, the middle is used in situations where the subject is affected or involved. Sentence (62) comes from an interview with a traditional leader. He is asked whether there will be someone like him in the future, who will organise work, educate the people and govern the land, in the light of all the disappearing traditional practices. His answer is given in (62). He continues saying that there are no wise people anymore, and that whoever listens to him now is listening voluntarily. I take it to mean that even those who know about the tradition will keep their knowledge to themselves and not follow the tradition.

- (62) **kááy-ə ífí tə t'ũūs-ṇ-ə**
 be.not-STI 2PL COP know-MIDD-STI
 'There will not be (anybody). It is you who know.' (Context: answer is directed at the researcher and an informant who does not follow traditional practices.)

Creating a context when talking about (63), my language consultants sketched a situation in which the addressee leaves the room and the speaker wants him to stay, but “has no option” because the addressee will not obey, and therefore says (63). However, permission does not seem to play a role in other examples. The utterance in (63) may convey that the event of going will be for the sake of the addressee, thereby suggesting that his going is not ‘neutral’ but lacks the consent of the speaker. This is compatible with the situation sketched by the language consultants.

- (63) **ha = tɔ́g-ń-ə**
 2SG = go-MIDD-STI
 ‘You can go’

In searching for an explanation of the verb forms in (62) and (63), it turned out that this type of middle marking is productive. Commonly the examples are with Jussive forms, and can be translated in various ways depending on the context. Note that although an autobenefactive reading is possible in some cases, normally autobenefactives are built on transitive verbs (e.g. in Oromo, Tolemaria 2009:97), whereas the Sheko examples are with intransitive verbs. Instead of autobenefactive, the term ‘selfcenteredness’ may be used in referring to such forms.

- (64) **ɲ = síís-ń-ə**
 1SG = listen-MIDD-STI
 ‘Let me listen for my sake, I can listen if I must, I will listen anyway’
- (65) **íŋ = kãās-ń-ə**
 3PL = play-MIDD-STI
 ‘let them play for themselves/ for their own benefit, they can play etc.’

Here are some examples from discourse:

- (66) **hààz-ka** **ɲ = k'ùùts' = á** **gònt'a** **ge-ntà**
 PROX.M-WITH 1SG = cut = 3MS⁴¹ blunt say-COND
hààz-ka **ɲ = k'ūūts'-ñ-ə** **yí = ge-ñ**
 PROX.M-WITH 1SG = cut-MIDD-STI 3FS = say-DS
 '... "If I cut with this one and it becomes blunt, I'll cut with this one," she said;...'

- (67) **gé = n** **ye-kh** **kum-k'à** **k'òrk'-ñ-t = n**
 say = 1SG 2SG-DAT neck-IN twist-MIDD-SS = 1SG
n = gáámtà **sak-ə**
 1SG = far.side.LOC arrive-STI
 'Say, let me coil myself around your neck and reach the other shore.'
 (Context: said by a snake.)

- (68) **má-a** **mààk-ñ** **ɲ = kōb-t = ɲ**
 earlier.today = 2SG tell-DS 1SG = take-SS = 1SG
yēg-ñ-ə
 come-MIDD-STI
 'Had you told (me) earlier - I would have brought it (for you/myself).' (Context: reaction of Monkey to his antagonist Crocodile who told him that he needs a monkey's heart.)

The middle in (69) is built on the passive. As (70) shows, it is possible to mention the Agent. This example also illustrates that the beneficiary (the one for whom the door was opened) need not be mentioned overtly.

- (69) **íj-kh** **òy-əb** **èèd-ñ-s** **há = byà-t'-ñ-k-ə**
 3FS-DAT refuse-REL door-DEF-M 3MS-Open-PASS-MIDD-REAL-STI
 'The door that refused her was opened (for her).'

- (70) **ēèd-ñ-s** **ɲ-baadù-ka**
 door-DEF-M 1SG.POSS-younger.sibling--WITH
byà-t'-ñ = á-k-ə
 open-PASS-MIDD = 3MS-REAL-STI
 'The door was opened by my brother (for somebody).'
- ⁴²

⁴¹ There is no DS marker here although the subject changes.

⁴² In eliciting this example, only the possibility of opening for someone else was discussed, but probably a reading 'for my brother' is also possible.

In the two examples above, the middle derivation follows the passive. The reverse order, middle-passive, does occur in the example below. Its semantics are not transparent. However, there are other Omotic languages in which passivization with some verbs entails ‘stacked’ derivational morphemes (e.g. Benchnon (Rapold 2006:324); Maale (Azeb 2001a:104)).

- (71) **Fītēr kāāsù-kñ ìk-ñ-t’ = á-k-ə**
 Peter game-DAT be.old-MIDD-PASS = 3MS-REAL-STI
 ‘Peter has grown too old for games.’

Here are some examples where the middle allows a reciprocal interpretation next to an interpretation of self-centeredness and involvement. It is not clear whether the verbs **besk** ‘divide’ in (72) and **dyask** ‘relocate’ in (73) contain a frozen causative or not. Reciprocals are normally built on a causative.

- (72) **...umt’à-ra sàsk = íñi bēsk-ñ-kì-bààstà**
 food-ACC arrive.CAUS = 3PL divide-MIDD-exist-WHILE
 ‘...and brought out food and while they divided it between them...’

- (73) **k’obààb ūk’-ñ-s kòb-m k’obààb**
 one.father milk-DEF-M take-DS one.father
ééz-ñ-s kòb-m íñi = dyàsk-ñ-tə íñi = kòb-tə
 honey-DEF-M take-DS 3PL = relocate-MIDD-SS 3PL = take-SS
 ‘one took the milk, the other took the honey; they bartered with each other/for themselves and took it...’ (Context: two thieves each want to profit from selling a bad quality product.)

12.3.3 Reciprocity⁴³

Reciprocity is coded by the middle suffix **-ñ** following a causative suffix **-s**. This is illustrated for intransitives (74b) and transitives (75b), and a transitive which does not occur without the derivational morpheme (76b).

⁴³ This section largely builds on data elicited with the MPI video stimuli for reciprocal constructions by Evans e.a. (2004).

- (74) a. **yí = tùfkù-k-ə**
 3FS = collide-REAL-STI
 ‘she bumped (into someone/ something)’
- b. **íñ = tùfk-ùs-ñ-k-ə**
 3PL = collide-CAUS-MIDD-REAL-STI
 ‘they bumped into each other’
- (75) a. **kúťsú íñ = ts’ooku-k-ə**
 hand 3PL = palm.hit-REAL-STI
 ‘they clapped their hands, they applauded’
- b. **íñ = ts’òk’-ùs-ñ-kì-k-ə**
 3PL = palm.hit-CAUS-MIDD-exist-REAL-STI
 ‘they are slapping each other’
- (76) a. **íñ-əra íñ = gàrùs-kì-k-ə**
 3FS-ACC 3PL = greet.CAUS-exist-REAL-STI
 ‘They greet her.’
- b. **íñ = gàrùs-ñ-kì-k-ə**
 3PL = greet.CAUS-MIDD-exist-REAL-STI
 ‘They greet each other.’

In some instances, the causative morpheme appears twice. In (77c), the reciprocal is built on the causative stem **?yar-s** ‘marry (a wife)’. In (78), the participants not only hit each other, but in doing so give cause for continuing the fight. Interestingly, in (79) the middle itself also occurs twice.

- (77) a. **há = ?yàrdù-k**
 3MS = enter-REAL
 ‘he entered’
- b. **há = ?yàr-sù-k**
 3MS = enter-CAUS-REAL
 ‘he married’
- c. **?yár-s-ús-ñ**
 enter-CAUS-CAUS-MIDD
 ‘marriage’ (marrying each other)

(78) **íſi = dūm-s-ūs-ñ-ā-m-ə**

3PL = fist.hit-CAUS-CAUS-MIDD-put-IRR-STI

‘they will (cause each other to) hit each other’ (Context: 1. everybody fights with everybody. 2. pairs keep hitting each other.)

(79) **íſi = dūf-m-s-ūs-ñ-kì-k-ə**

3PL = hit-MIDD-CAUS-CAUS-MIDD-exist-REAL-STI

‘they are hitting each other (for themselves)’ (Context: someone receives a blow and then hits the next person, who in turn hits another person, etc.)

Of course, reciprocity may be expressed analytically as well. While looking at the stimuli, one person remarked after a while that it was also possible to “simply say” (80b) instead of (a)...

(80) a. **íſi = tiit-ūs-ñ-kì-k-ə**

3PL = watch-CAUS-MIDD-exist-REAL-STI

‘they look at each other’ (Context: two persons watch each other.)

b. **íſ áz tiit-ñ áz íſ tiit-ñ**
 3FS 3MS look-DS 3MS 3FS look-DS

‘she looks at him, he looks at her’

In addition to the morphological means, the reciprocity may be marked lexically as well by the word **ánk’à**, glossed ‘each other’.

(81) **dāws ánk’-àstà íſi = dūf-s-ūs-ñ-kì-k-ə**children each.other-3MS.COP? 3PL = hit-CAUS-CAUS-MIDD-exist-REAL-STI

‘the children were hitting (all of) each other’

The use of a causative-middle derivation for reciprocity is uncommon in Omotic languages. Tolemariam (2009:172) states that in Kafa, Wolaitta, Koorete and Konta it is the double passive which yields a reciprocal interpretation. He does not mention a combination of causative-middle for reciprocity. One language which perhaps can be analysed as building the reciprocal on the causative is Dime. Although Mulugeta (2008:141) does not break up the reciprocal marker **-sim**, it

may consist of the causative, which is **-(i)s** in Dime, and another derivational marker⁴⁴. An example is given in (82):

- (82) **tadese-ká** **taye-ká** **gís'-s'im-i-n**
 Tadese-CNJ Taye-CNJ kick-REC-PF-3
 'Tadese and Taye kicked each other.' (Mulugeta 2008:145)

Furthermore, Benchnon has a reciprocal-middle marker **n̄**, which derives reciprocals from transitive verbs (excluding a reflexive reading), and reflexives from denominals (excluding a reciprocal reading), as described in Rapold (2006:320f).

12.4 Experiencer verbs

This section offers an initial analysis of experiencer verbs in Sheko. Some of these verbs are prototypically causatives, with the experiencer in the accusative. Example (83) shows next to such a causative (**fādūs** 'make hungry') also a non-causative **wook'** 'be tired', which contrasts with the causative **wosk'** in (84). The latter is more frequent. The causative - non-causative opposition has a direct consequence for the experiencer: it is either object (accusative) of a causative verb or subject (nominative) of a non-causative verb.

- (83) **há=íſi-ra** **fād-ùs-n̄** **íſi=wook'u-tə**
 3MS=3PL-ACC be.hungry-CAUS-DS 3PL=be.tired-ss
 'they became hungry and tired and...'

- (84) **nata-ra** **wòsk'=á-k-ə**
 1SG-ACC be.tired.CAUS=3MS-REAL-STI
 'I am tired' (Lit: It tired me.)

In some instances, a causer noun may be present:

- (85) **fáádù nata-ra há=fād-ùs-k-ə**
 hunger 1SG-ACC 3MS=be.hungry-CAUS-REAL-STI
 'Hunger is making me hungry.'

⁴⁴ Mulugeta (2008:141) lists as other derivational markers **-int'** 'passive' and **-imá** 'inchoative'.

Other examples of causative experiencer verbs are given in (86)-(87).

- (86) **íḡ = a há = yemz-ṇ wa? yí = ge-ṇ**
 3FS-ACC 3MS = hurt-DS INTJ 3FS = say-DS
 ‘She got hurt; she said ‘stop’...’ (Lit: It hurt her...)

- (87) **há = māāk-ṇ èḡṇtà k’arà ás-a**
 3MS = tell-PURP for INCL 3MS-ACC
há = fàyt’-ùs-k-ə
 3MS = be.weak-CAUS-REAL-STI
 ‘He couldn’t even speak (It made him weak in order to tell even).’

The verbs in (88) and (89) are causative as well. The experiencer in these sentences has no accusative marker suffixed, but accusative marking is also not obligatory for other objects.

- (88) **íḡ há = kòsṇ-s-k-ə**
 3FS 3MS = pant.MIDD-CAUS-REAL-STI
 ‘She panted, breathed heavily’

- (89) **nat á = ʒì-ʒìn-s-k-ə**
 1SG 3MS = PLUR-nod-CAUSE-REAL-STI
 ‘I am nodding (drowsy)’

There are two examples which do not have causative marking on the verb, but still have an object pronoun. Example (90) shows the transitive verb **ḡúm** ‘make thirsty, long for’; and it has a separate pronoun for the experiencer, which in this instance happens to be 3ms. Likewise, example (91) features the (intransitive?) verb **ḡo?** ‘be cold’, and a 3ms subject clitic as well as a 1pl pronoun.

- (90) **hāāy-ṇ-s hààz k’iḡ-kì-b kéta kayēēstà**
 water-DEF-M PROX.M drink-exist-REL all again
ás há = ḡúm-á-m-ə
 3MS 3MS = thirst-put-IRR-STI
 ‘Everybody who drinks this water will again become thirsty.’

- (91) **ṣōw āngā há = náta ṣoʔu-k-ə**
 cold much 3MS = 1PL be.cold°-REAL-STI
 ‘We feel the cold very much.’

Some experiencer verbs can take a passive, as attested in (92)-(93). It is not known to which extent experiencer verbs allow passivization.

- (92) **éná ha = ṣūm-t’-ā-m-ə**
 later.today 2SG = thirst-PASS-put-IRR-STI
 ‘you will be thirsty again.’

- (93) **ṇ = ʔyàrkṇ-tù-k-ə**
 1SG = perspire-PASS-REAL-STI
 ‘I perspired.’
 also possible: **nat = á ʔyarkn-s-k-ə** with a causative.

Other verbs which are semantically experiencer verbs behave like normal intransitive verbs. The experiencer is the subject of the verb. Some verbs have a middle derivation -ṇ. A few examples are listed:

- (94) **kuʃ** ‘be sick’
yánk’ ‘be angry’
ṣor ‘be afraid’
kááz ‘be happy’ (see example (95))
āyñ ‘worry, think a long time’
ts’yāsñ ‘be satisfied (food)’

- (95) **k’àmīsì íʃ-kṇ fùr-t’-àb yèʃntà āngā**
 dress 3FS-DAT trade-PASS-REL for much
yí = kaazu-k-ə
 3FS = be.happy-REAL-STI
 ‘she was very happy because a dress was bought for her.’

With the verbs **zááz** ‘be good’ (also ‘nice, convenient, beautiful, OK’ etc.) and **ʃeen** ‘be bad’ (also ‘evil, inferior, awful, unpleasant’, etc.) the experiencer of the good or bad is in the

dative. Alternatively, the referents can be conceptualised as Recipients of the ‘good’ or ‘bad’.

- (96) **na-ŋ** **ʒááʒár=á-kì-k** **nata** **íŋi-bààb**
 1SG-DAT be.good-NEG=3MS-exist-REAL 1SG 3PL.POSS-father
noogù-ra **íŋi=ʔyáz-ń-bàb-a** **āngā**
 word-ACC 3PL=be.able-IRR-father-ACC much
ɱ=bààs-kì-k-ə
 1SG=want-exist-REAL-STI
 ‘I don’t like it. I want very much that they can (speak) their fathers’
 language.’ (Lit. it is not good to me...)

- (97) **bəndū** **íŋi-kñ** **ʒaʒ-àb** **kóókí-k’à**
 Bəndu 3PL-DAT be.good-REL place-IN
íŋ=kí-m-ə
 3PL=exist-IRR-STI
 ‘The Bəndu live at a place they like/ a place which is convenient for
 them.’

The organ associated most with feelings and (lack of) judgement is the stomach, although **ʒóón** ‘heart’ is also mentioned. In (98), **bōw** ‘stomach, belly’ is combined with the verb **ʒeen** ‘to be bad’. The dative in this example marks the possessor of the stomach. Two further examples of the use of **bōw** ‘stomach, belly’ are given in the ideomatic expressions in (99)-(100).

- (98) **àftù-tə** **yí=tógá-k’à** **sòk’-kì-ń** **ń=səg-ń**
 be.drunk-SS 3FS=mud-IN lie.down-exist-DS 1SG=see-DS
na-ŋ **bōw-k’à** **yí=ʒèen-k-ə**
 1SG-DAT belly-IN 3FS=be.bad-REAL-STI
 ‘Seeing a drunken woman lying down in the mud I felt bad.’ (Lit: ...I
 saw her; she was bad in my stomach.)
- (99) **yááb** **ás-kñ** **bōw** **íŋi=kààf-k-ə**
 man 3MS-DAT belly 3PL=cover-REAL-STI
 ‘people deceived him’

- (100) **bōw** **án-ń-kì-b**
 belly put-NEG2-exist-REL
 ‘idiot’ (someone without a stomach)

In addition, example (101) features an (old?) idiomatic expression:

- (101) **na-ṛ** **buunì-k’a** **há = woots’u-k-ə**
 1SG-DAT body-IN 3MS = bite-REAL-STI
 ‘I am sorry, sad’ (Lit: it bites in my body. **buunì** is said to be an old word for body, cf. **faad** ‘body’.)

‘Hot’ and ‘cold’ are also used to express feeling. The extent of this use is not known at present. Two examples are given in (102) and (103).

- (102) **ṁ-bank’à** ⁴⁵ **há = saru-k-ə**
 1SG-on.IN 3MS = be.hot-REAL-STI
 ‘It is hot on me.’ (Context: the eldest brother sends the younger brother away because of his strength.)

- (103) **bádìgṇ** **tʃ’āāmā** **na-ṛ** **ats-ə**
 Badign shoes 1SG-DAT give-STI
ṁ = ge-k’òr-ṇ **ʃiip’a** **yí = taaf-k-ə**
 1SG = say-beg-DS IDEO 3FS = cool.down-REAL-STI
 ‘I begged saying “Badign, give me the shoes,” but she refused flatly.’ (e.g. Badign does not allow herself compassion with the one who begged.)

Finally, a calque from Amharic **tä-sämma** (PASS-hear ‘feel’) is also employed:

- (104) **íʃ = ʃey-b-əra** **na-ṛ** **āng = á** **sìs-tù-kì-k**
 3PL = forget-REL-ACC 1SG-DAT much = 3MS hear-PASS-exist-REAL
 ‘I am very sorry that they forgot it.’

⁴⁵ variant of **ṁ-batà** 1SG.POSS-on

13 Interrogatives

Omotic languages display a rich array of interrogative strategies, some of which are typologically rare.⁴⁶ They display four major means to distinguish between declaratives and interrogatives. First, change of intonation and a interrogative (or declarative) sentence type marker, such as e.g. in Maale. Some languages have interrogative suffixes or intonation next to other distinctive strategies, for instance Yemsa, Diizi, Dime and Sheko. Secondly, special interrogative paradigms, i.e. the declarative and interrogative have each a distinct set of morphemes co-varying for person, gender and number. This is the case in Benchnon and Omoto languages such as Wolaitta. Yemsa has a special paradigm for future tense. Thirdly, “subtractive morphology” or dropping off of grammatical elements which are obligatorily present in the declarative. The element that is dropped to form the interrogative varies from language to language. In Zayse and Zargulla, the grammatical focus marker **-tte** is dropped. In Dime, the final person agreement marker is dropped; for first and third persons, absence of person agreement signals interrogative, while for second persons a dedicated interrogative marker **-aa** is used. Dime uses rising intonation in interrogatives as well. In Sheko, the modal marker is dropped. Absence of a modal marker is one of three ways to distinguish between interrogatives and their declarative counterparts in Sheko. Finally, Diizi interrogatives have not only question markers attached to the verb, but also employ person agreement prefixes, whereas corresponding declarative clauses use suffixes.

Turning to the details of Sheko interrogative formation, the interrogative in Sheko is characterized by one or more of the following:

- absence of a modal marker. A modal marker is obligatory in declaratives.

⁴⁶ The project in which research for this thesis took place aimed at a typological overview of the way Omotic languages deal with the declarative - interrogative distinction, taking up the challenge of Hayward (1995) to investigate unique interrogative phenomena in Omotic. Data from a earlier project on Dime and Zargulla and from the subproject on Sheko fed into the comparative research. The short overview given here is based on a report of the principal investigator of the project, Azeb Amha.

- the indirect stance marker **-o**, which occurs only in vocatives and interrogatives. The indirect stance marker **-ə** occurs in declaratives.
- falling intonation on the last tone bearing unit. While most languages have an intonation with a final rise for interrogatives, Sheko has the reverse.

After discussing each of the points above in three sections, with illustrative graphs in the section on intonation, interrogative pronouns are presented, as well as some alternative ways to render embedded questions.

13.1 Absence of a modal marker

Interrogatives have no modal marker. The absence of a modal marker may be the only indication that the utterance is a question (this does not apply to simple negated verb forms and negated copulas, see below). The absence of a modal marker thus distinguishes between declaratives and interrogatives (1a,b). Note that a stance marker may follow as the last element of the verb form, as in (2a,b), (see further section 13.2 below).

- (1) a. **ɲ = mǎāk-ā**
 1SG = tell-put[Q]
 ‘shall I tell?’
- b. **ɲ = mǎāk-ā-m**
 1SG = tell-put-IRR
 ‘I will tell’
- (2) a. **yír = ɲ** **mǎāk-ā-o**
 what = 1SG tell-put-STL.ADDR
 ‘What shall I tell?’
- b. **tōsā** **ɲ = mǎāk-ā-m-ə**
 story 1SG = tell-put-IRR-STI
 ‘I will tell a story’

Below, examples are given for polar (yes/no) questions (3)-(4) as well as wh-questions (5), and (6) features a copula as verb. For comparison, matching declaratives are also given.

- (3) a. **únà sókú tuurù-k'à tɕ'ádɛ̀ kì = á**
 long.ago S'oku land-IN war exist = 3MS[Q]
 'In the past, has there been war in Sheko?'
- b. **únà sókú tuurù-k'à tɕ'ádɛ̀**
 long.ago S'oku land-IN war
kì = á-k-ə
 exist = 3MS-REAL-STI
 'In the past, there has been war in Sheko.'
- (4) a. **gābā-k'à ífí = tóg-á**
 market-IN 2PL = go-put[Q]
 'Will you (pl) go to the market?'
- b. **tóg-én-k'y-á-m-ə**
 go-NEG.1PL-remain-put-IRR-STI
 'We won't go.'
- (5) a. **ífí = ge-b kày nā = á há = kì**
 2PL = say-REL god where = 3MS 3MS = exist[Q]
 'What you call god, where is he?'
- b. **ífí = ge-b kày só há = kī-m-ə**
 2PL = say-REL god up.there 3MS = exist-IRR-STI
 'What you call god, he might be up there.'
- (6) a. **ye-kɛ́ sóón kááy tə**
 2SG-DAT heart be.not COP[Q]
 'Where is your courage/common sense?' (Lit: Is your heart not there?)
- b. **yír-be kááy tə-kn**
 what-mother be.not COP-KNOWN
 'There is nothing.'

The interrogative shares its feature of not having a modal marker with the Imperative-Jussive, even though in interrogatives, the tone on the verb stem distinguishes between Factual and Non-Factual/ Basic. Both sentence types have in common that a reaction of the addressee is expected. Attempting an interpretation of the Sheko data, it is clear that an interrogative asks for information on a constituent or on the

modal status of the proposition, instead of giving this information. An interrogative thus looks for assertion from the addressee. The absence of a modal marker in interrogatives is therefore a meaningful gap. The interrogative has corresponding ‘declaratives’ which can affirm information. On the other hand, the imperative asks for action of the addressee rather than a verbal response. With an Imperative, one does not evaluate or assert a proposition but one gives a directive for the addressee to follow up.

13.2 Stance marking in interrogatives

Next to absence of the modal marker, there is an indirect stance marker **-o** which occurs only in interrogatives and vocatives, i.e. the types of utterance asking (giving opportunity) for a verbal response of the addressee. The interrogatives displaying the distinctive stance marker are usually Non-factual verb forms, i.e. Irrealis, although an example with a Factual form has also been found (9). (The distinction between Factual and Non-factual verb forms is made on the verb stem by a tonal distinction, see section 10.3). The interrogatives which end with the stance marker **-o** can be polite questions which leave the addressee free in the way he wants to answer (7), or rhetorical questions (8). When **-o** is suffixed, the falling intonation indicating interrogativeness is not present. In Irrealis verb forms, the suffix **-a** ‘put’ is often dropped before the stance marker **-o** as well.

- (7) **kāārì saantà yīs koosù-ra ìte määk-o**
 toward front.loc DIST.M tradition-ACC who:COP tell-STI.ADDR
 ‘Who will tell this traditional wisdom in the future?’

- (8) a. **kāy-ṇ-s ṁ-p’ēep’-àb-əra há=síís-o**
 god-DEF-M 1PL.POSS-pray-REL-ACC 3MS = listen-STI.ADDR
 ‘Will God listen to our prayers?’
- b. **há=síís-á-m-ə**
 3MS = listen-put-IRR-STI
 ‘he will listen’

- (9) **yí = ní ní ní** **yowk'á** **m̩-baad-n̩-s**
 3FS = elder.sister INTJ 1SG.POSS-younger.sibling-DEF-M
- yír-k' = á** **sàmù-kì-o** **ge-tə**
 what-IN = 3MS remain-exist-STI.ADDR say-SS
- yí = téé-kì-bààstà**
 3FS = go.NV-exist-WHILE
- ‘The sister said ‘Well, what is my brother stuck up in?’ and while she went, ...’

Note that the stance marker is not compulsory. The choice for a stance marker depends on the attitude of the speaker with respect to his utterance and is pragmatic (see section 10.2). The stance marker may be phonetically lengthened to signal a greater degree of distance (e.g. in showing bewilderment).

- (10) a. **áás=ŋ** **bāȣ-ā**
 what = 1SG work-put
 ‘How shall I do it?’ (Context: simple inquiry.)
- b. **áás=ŋ** **bāȣ-ā-o**
 what = 1SG work-put-STI.ADDR
 ‘How shall I do it?’ (Context: may signal uncertainty or
 politeness, or speaker repeats his question.)

-o also functions to question noun phrases. In these cases, the indirect stance marker makes the difference between interrogatives and other sentence types. Compare the NPs in (11) and (12). While the stance marker **-o** is used to question the noun phrase **kūū̀r̀ǹsk̀n̄ ʒóóǹn̄** ‘the heart of the donkey’ in (11), its counterpart **-ə** in (12) may or may not be present on the nominal predicate **goota**.

- (11) **k'ay-tə kūr-n-s-kn** **ʃóón-n-ʃ-o** **há=ge-n**
 rise-SS donkey-DEF-M-DAT heart-DEF-M-STL.ADDR 3MS=say-DS
 'he rose and said: "What about the heart of the donkey?" ...'
- (12) **ń-zààrà** **gootà(-ə)**
 1PL.POSS-clan Goota(-STI)
 'Our clan is Goota.'

13.3 Intonational contour in interrogatives

In clauses with a simple negated verb form or negated copula, the last tone bearing unit has a falling tone. In these clauses, the tonal contour is the only indication of the status of the utterance as interrogative. The falling intonation is notated in this chapter by a downward arrow `.⁴⁷

- (13) a. **māāk-ārā`**
 tell-NEG.Q
 'He didn't tell?'
 b. **māāk-ārā**
 tell-NEG
 'he didn't tell'

- (14) **fūr-t'-ērēe`**
 trade-PASS-NEG.STI.Q
 'It has not been bought?' (Context: talking about a lack of salt.)

- (15) **ye-khè té-ré`**
 2SG-DAT COP-NEG.STI.Q
 'Is it not yours?'

The falling tone can appear in every other type of question, also those not containing a negative. Examples (16)-(18) illustrate an open question (with a content question word), an interrogative with a complex negated verb form, and one with no verb at all. However, the tonal indication of interrogativeness in these types of questions may disappear in fluent speech, and it always disappears before the stance marker, which is -o in interrogatives (19).

- (16) **nā=a tee`**
 where=2SG go.NV.Q
 'where did you go?'

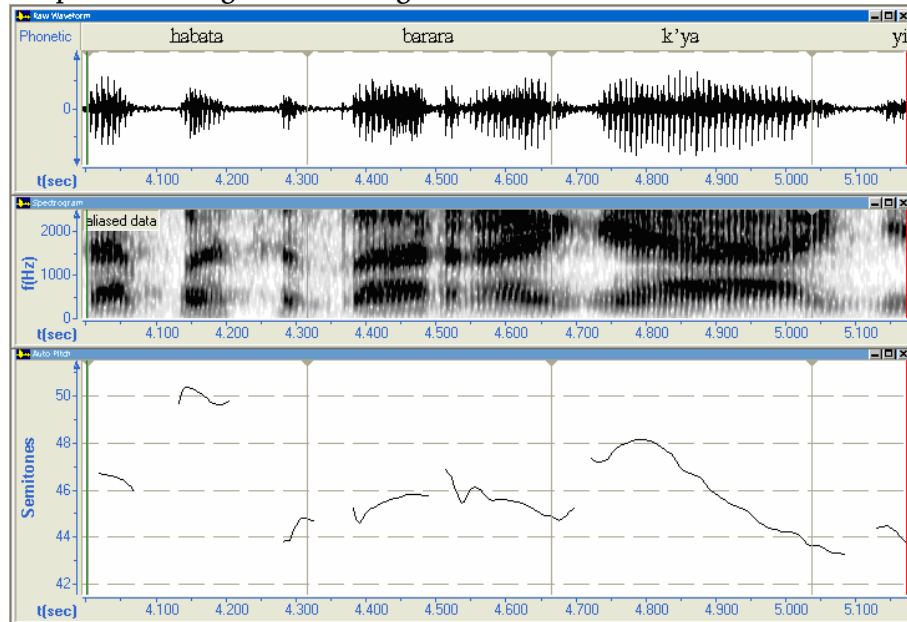
⁴⁷ In the other chapters, it is notated through tone 1 and the gloss .Q where tone 1 is distinctive, and the gloss [Q] in all other cases.

- (17) **īy-k'à** **?yārd-ār=ítí-k'y-á`**
house-IN enter-NEG = 2PL-remain-put.Q
‘Won’t you enter the house?’
- (18) **nat-ná`**
1SG-or
‘Me?’ (Context: reaction to a call: ‘You’re addressing me, aren’t you?’)
- (19) **wōskìn** **ha=yēg-ā-o**
when 2SG = come-put-STL.ADDR
‘When will you come?’

Below, three graphs are presented. The first graph illustrates the falling intonation. The graph shows the underlined part of the sentence in (20), uttered by a male speaker. It is clearly visible that the contour on the syllable **k'yá** gets at least as low as the tone 1 on **há-batà** ‘on him’.

- (20) **gātſī** **hààs** **há-batà**
stick PROX.M 3MS.POSS-ON.LOC
- bār-ār=a-k'y-á`** **yí=ge-t=í**
throw.away-NEG=2MS-remain-put.Q 3FS = say-SS = 3FS
- zèèr-ñ**
advise-DS
- ‘she advised him saying: “Won’t you throw this stick on him?” ’

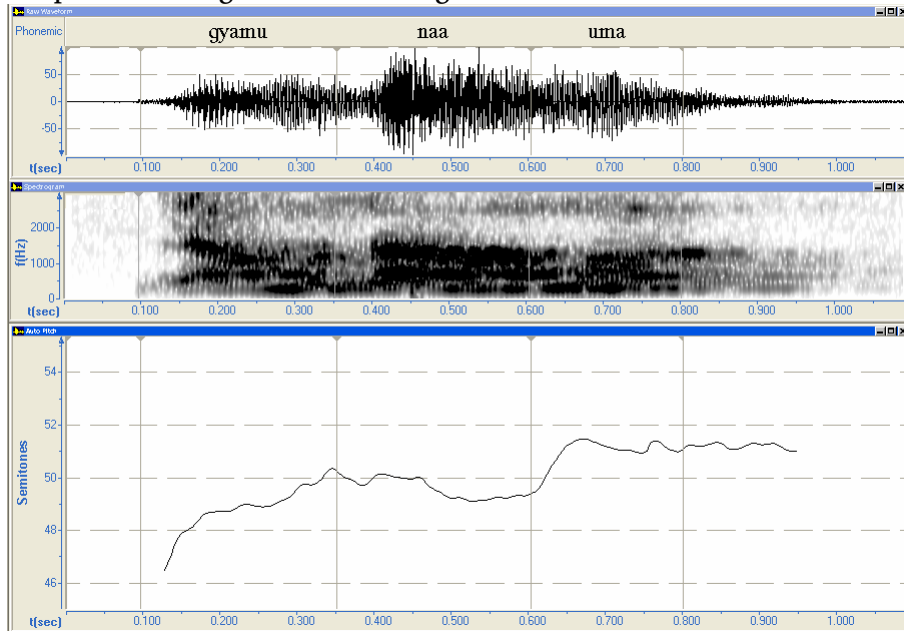
Graph 1. Interrogatives: falling intonation.



The second graph, with an utterance from another male speaker, also shows a clause with a non-factual (Irrealis) verb form. It is evident that there is no falling contour in the utterance.

- (21) **gyāmū** **nā = a** **úm-á**
 evening where = 2sg eat-put[Q]
 'Where will you eat in the evening?'

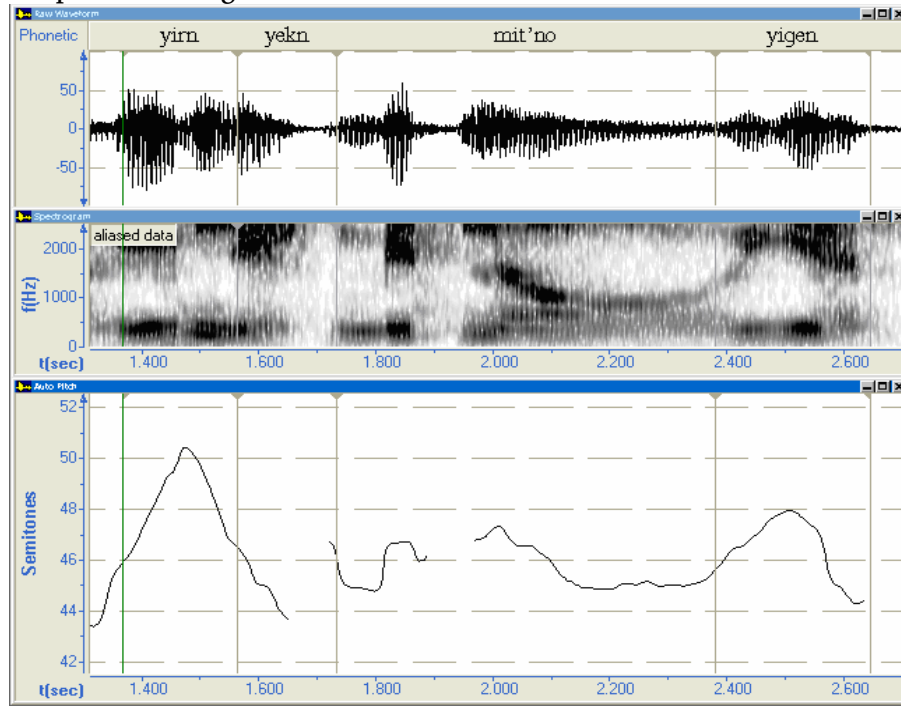
Graph 2. Interrogatives: no falling intonation.



The third graph shows a question ending in the indirect stance marker **-o**, uttered by the same speaker that gave the first example. Around about 2.2 seconds, the tone stays level for a while, before the following clause starts.

- (22) **yír=ɲ** **ye-kɛ̃** **mít'ɛ̃-o** **yí=ge-ɛ̃**
 what = 1SG 2SG-DAT witness-STL.ADDR 3FS = say-DS
 ‘“What could I say in favour of you?” she said;...’

Graph 3. Interrogatives: with stance marker



Interestingly, the Guraferda variant of Sheko has segmental question markers, namely **-à** and **ne**. Apparently, **ne** only occurs in open questions (23), whereas **-à** occurs in open questions (24) as well as polar questions (25). It is possible that the falling tonal intonation of the Sheko variants spoken around Sheko town is related to **-à**. Diizi has segmental question markers as well (Beachy 2005:106f).

- (23) **yír=ɲ** **getə** **ɲ=an-ki-ne**
 what = 1SG say-SS 1SG = put-exist-OQ
 ‘What can I say?’

- (24) **ant-anta** **a=?e-t=a** **wu?-à**
 RDP-how/where 2SG = do.NV-SS = 2SG enter-Q
 ‘How did you enter?’

- (25) **á = ʃèèn-à yí = ge-n**
 3MS = be.bad-Q 3FS = say-DS
 ‘Is/was it bad?’ she said

Finally, the alternative conjunction **-ná** (~ **-ná`**) is used in questions giving a choice (26). Also, **-ná** is used to ask for confirmation (27). The expected answer is a ‘yes’.

- (26) **bēngī ás-kḥ gatsu fyáádí-ka-ná` zírú-ka-ná`**
 year 3MS-DAT start number-WITH-or time-WITH-or
ʔyáts’ń-ka íʃḷ = t’ùùs-kì yí = ge-t = í
 moon-WITH 3PL = know-exist[Q] 3FS = say-SS = 3FS
bádìgḥ ootʃ’u-k-ə
 Badign ask-REAL-STI
 ‘Badign asked “Do they know the start of the year by counting or by day or by the moon?”’

- (27) **ŋ-k’òy-ná**
 1SG.POSS-one-or
 ‘On my own?’ (i.e. ‘Should I do this on my own?’)

13.4 Interrogative pronouns

The basic question words are listed in (28).

- (28) **iṭi** ‘who’
yírà ‘what’
nā ‘where’
áás ‘how’
gēbḥṇ ‘how much’

Here are a few sentential examples:

- (29) **kírá ye-kn yír = á há = ʔàtsù**
 bird.of.prey 2SG-DAT what = 3MS 3MS = give[Q]
 ‘What did the *kira* bird give you?’
- (30) **há = byāāsū k’ay-tə áás = ñ n = ʔēg-o**
 3MS = crocodile rise-SS how = 1SG 1SG = do-STI.ADDR
 ‘the crocodile rose and (said): “What (Lit: how) shall I do?...”’

The word for ‘which?’ is built on **nā** ‘where’ with a proximal demonstrative following it.

- (31) **ha=bààs-kì-b** **nāās-tə**
 2SG = want-exist-REL where.PROX-COP[Q]
 ‘which one do you want?’ (Lit: the one you want is which?)
- (32) **nā-ās-t=ñ** **ñ=tée-t=ñ** **tʃāārū**
 where-PROX.M-COP = 1SG 1SG-go.NV-SS = 1SG medicine
yááf-o **ge-b-tà**
 find-STL.ADDR say-REL-LOC
 ‘when he said: “Which (way) can I go and obtain a medicine?” ...’

Several options are available to ask about time. One is to use a word referring to a time period, such as **bókñ** ‘day’ (33a), or a loanword from Amharic such as **k’en** ‘day’, **gize** ‘time’, or **saati** ‘hour’. Another way is to use a word that Sheko has presumably in common with (or borrowed from) Benchnon (b). In Guraferda yet another word is used, which is clearly compounded (c).

- (33) a. **yír-bókñ**
 what-time[Q]
 ‘when?’
- b. **wōskìn** (cf. Bench **wōskèn** ‘when?’)
- c. **antakyaasta** (Guraferda, tone not known)

With additional case marking, other question words can be made, e.g. suffixing the dative marker **-kñ** to **ītī** gives **ītīkñ** ‘whose?’, suffixing the object marker **-ra** gives **ītīra** ‘whom?’, and so forth. Below some examples with **yírà** ‘what?’:

- (34) **yír-əʃñtà** **yí=batʃ’ù**
 what-MOTIVE 3FS = voice.anger.Q
 ‘Why is she angry?’

- (35) **sāyā yír-k̀n-t̀ə**
 fable what-DAT-COP.Q
 ‘What is the story about?’

yírà ‘what’ does not get an accusative marker, not even when it is used as object. When **-əra** is added, it conveys annoyance. It is analysed in this case as the short form of the inclusive marker.

- (36) **yír-əra**
 what-INCL
 ‘What (on earth is it that you bother me)?’

The combination of a question word with the inclusive marker **k'ərà** ‘also, even’ yields indefinite pronominal expressions, or ‘polarity items’. Interrogative-based indefinite pronouns are common cross-linguistically (Haspelmath 1997:26). Two examples are given in (37)-(38). In combination with negation an interpretation as negative indefinite arises (39)-(41). See also section 14.4.

- (37) **yírà-k'arà há = f̀òt-ǹt̀ə ɲ = óótʃ'-á-m-ə**
 what-INCL 3MS = happen-COND 1SG = ask-put-IRR-STI
 ‘I will ask any question.’ (Lit. whatever it be, I’ll ask.)

- (38) **ĩtĩ-k'ərà há = ỳəg-ǹt̀ə**
 who-INCL 3MS = come-COND
 ‘if anybody comes,.../ whoever comes,...’

- (39) **gōnà nā-k'arà téé-ɲ-kì-k-ə**
 yesterday where-INCL go.NV-NEG.1SG-exist-REAL-STI
 ‘I didn’t go anywhere yesterday.’

- (40) **yír-bánà-k'arà bāās-ēn-kì-k-ə**
 what-matter-INCL want-NEG.1SG-exist-REAL-STI
 ‘I don’t want anything whatsoever.’

- (41) **ĩtĩ-ra-k'arà sée-ɲ-kì-k**
 who-ACC-INCL see.NV-NEG.1SG-exist-REAL
 ‘I didn’t see anybody/I saw nobody.’

13.5 ‘Embedded questions’

Sheko does not have true embedded questions. The language employs various other constructions to render what would be an embedded question in an European language. First of all, Sheko prefers quotes, i.e. a direct question plus a medial verb (*gé* ‘say’).

- (42) **há=gama te-k-ə ge-tə**
 3MS = true COP-REAL-STI say-SS
 ‘he said: “It is true, ” and he...’ (saying/thinking that it was true, he...)

In a few instances, a question word occurs in a complement clause complementised by **-ntà** (see also section 11.5.6).

- (43) **hāāy na-ŋ ats-ə ge-kì-b ĭtī há=tə-ntà**
 water 1SG-DAT give-STI say-exist-REL who 3MS = COP-COND
ha=t’ùùs-ntà
 2SG = know-COND
 ‘If you knew who it is that said “Give me water,”...’

- (44) **nā-tə íŋ=təg-ntà t’úús-en-k’e-k-ə**
where-COP 3PL = go-COND know-NEG.1SG-remain-REAL-STI
 ‘I didn’t know where they went.’

- (45) **ĭtī-ka daan yəg-ntàsàg=à**
who-WITH together come-COND see = 2SG.Q
 ‘Did you see with whom he came?’

For yes-no questions, various strategies appear to be possible: example (46) shows a clause with an Irrealis verb form nominalised by **bāāb** ‘father’; example (47) two clauses in **-ntà** and example (48) two Jussives. The first came up more or less spontaneously in elicitation. The latter two examples are elicited using Amharic example sentences. The structure closely follows the Amharic stimulus; however, my informants judged it proper Sheko.

- (46) **bērn** **téé-r = íŋi-kì-ntà** **kōm-s**
 tomorrow go.NV-NEG = 3PL-exist-COND chief.DEF-M
māāk-m-bààb-əra **t'ūūs-ēr = íŋi-k'y-á-m-ə**
 tell-IRR-father-ACC know-NEG = 3PL-remain-IRR-STI
 'If they don't go tomorrow, they won't know whether the chief will tell.'
- (47) **há-bààs-ntà** **bāās-ār = á-kì-ntà** **t'ūūs = a-kì**
 3MS = want-COND want-NEG-3MS-exist-COND know = 2SG-exist[Q]
 'Do you know whether he wants or not?'
- (48) **hà = ?útú-kì-ə** **út-ár = a-kì-ə**
 2SG = love-exist-STI love-NEG = 2SG-exist-STI
há = fòòt-ntà **t'ūūs-ēn-kì-k**
 3MS = become-COND know-NEG.1SG-exist-REAL
 'I don't know whether you like it or not.'

14 Negation

Sheko has a negative existential verb **kááy** ‘be not there’ and two verbal negation markers, which I have dubbed event negation marker (**-əra**) and state negation marker (**-ɲ**). Negated verbs lack TAM and person distinctions, unless an auxiliary predicate is added (complex negative). In addition, the way in which Sheko expresses ‘never’ and ‘nothing other than’ is described here.

14.1 Negative verb of existence

The existential verb **kì** ‘exist, live’ has a negative counterpart **kááy** ‘be not there, be not present’. A stance marker can be suffixed to the negated form. There is no subject agreement and no aspect/mood marking in negated existential predicates (1b).

- (1) a. **àhee kì=á-k-ə**
 yes exist = 3MS-REAL-STI
 ‘Yes, it is there.’
- b. **àʔáà kááy-ə**
 no be.not-STI
 ‘No, it is not there.’

14.2 Event negation

The event negation marker is **-ara** ~ **-əra**. It suffixes to the verb stem. The verb form negated by **-ara** can form an utterance by itself and is called a simple negative here. A simple negative followed by an auxiliary predicate is called a complex negative.

14.2.1 Simple negatives

Simple negated verb forms in Sheko consist of the verb stem followed by **-ara** ~ **-əra**. The tone on the negative suffix is identical to the tone of the preceding verb stem. If the indirect stance marker **-ə** follows, the vowels of the negative suffix and stance marker are changed into **-e**. Example (2) illustrates verbs without and (3) verbs with a stance marker. As with the negative verb of existence, there is no subject clitic, nor any aspectual or modal marking on a simple negated verb form.

- (2) **síís-árá** 'not listen'
kāās-ārā 'not play'
- (3) **síís-éree** 'not listen'
kāās-ērēe 'not play'

Here are two sentential examples:

- (4) **ṣāād-ḥ-s** **sām = á-k-ə** **dīr-t'-ārā**
 pond-DEF-M remain.behind = 3MS-REAL-STI sweep-PASS-NEG
 'The pond went out of use. It has not been cleaned.'
- (5) **tūmhīrt** **gād = íṣi**
 education(Amh) start = 3PL[Q]
 'Have they started school?'
- kātṣa** **gād-ērēe**
 yet start-NEG.STI
 'They haven't started yet.'

Out of context, a simple negative is interpreted first as a realis, e.g. **bāz-ārā** '(he) did not work/ has not worked', but a simple negative can occur in irrealis contexts as well (6b).

- (6) a. **yí-bay** **íṣ-kḥ** **yí = gāts'ñ-à**
 3FS.POSS-mother 3FS-DAT 3FS = help-put.Q
 'Will her mother help her?'
- b. **gāts'ñ-ārā** **yír = í** **yí = gāts'ñ-ā**
 help-NEG what = 3FS 3FS = help-put[Q]
 'She won't help. Why (what) would she help?'

Equational sentences with the copula are negated by adding the negation marker plus indirect stance marker (**-rée**) to the copula.

- (7) a. **ṇ-naanu** **tə-k-ə**
 1SG.POSS-elder.brother COP-REAL-STI
 'It is my elder brother.'

- b. **ŋ-naanu** **té-rée**
 1SG.POSS-elder.brother COP-NEG.STI
 ‘It is not my elder brother.’

To question a simple negative declarative or a copula, only the final falling intonation (marked here by tone 1 on the last tone bearing unit) marks it as an interrogative, as in the (a) examples; or else an auxiliary predicate is added, as in the (b) examples (see complex negatives below). For some speakers, the negated copula [**téréè**] can be pronounced [**túrí**].

- (8) a. **fūr-t’-ārà**
 trade-PASS-NEG.Q
 ‘Has it not been bought?’
 b. **fūr-t’-ār = á-kì**
 trade-PASS-NEG = 3MS-exist[Q]
 ‘Has it not been bought?’
- (9) a. **áz** **ha-naanu** **té-rée**
 3MS 2SG.POSS-elder.brother COP-NEG.STI.Q
 ‘Is he not your brother?’
 b. **áz** **ha-naanu** **té-ré**
 3MS 2SG.POSS-elder.brother COP-NEG.STI
 kì(=â)
 exist(= 3MS).Q
 ‘Is he not your brother?’

14.2.2 Complex negatives

The simple negated form of the verb is often followed by a second auxiliary predicate, comprising a subject clitic, a verb denoting aspect and a clause or sentence type marker. The verbs occurring as the second predicate are restricted to Imperfective **ki** ‘exist, live’ and Perfective **k’é** ‘remain’, as well as the Irrealis suffix **-a** ‘put’. Since the information in this second predicate consists of grammatical notions such as TAM and person, I call it an auxiliary predicate.

The auxiliary predicate may be more or less integrated to the negated verb, because the subject clitic is attracted by the

negation and encliticizes to the negated form (cf. section 15.2.3). Examples are given below. In (10), a Realis predicate follows the negated verb form. Depending on the context, it can be translated by any of the following: ‘I do/did not listen, am/was not listening, have not listened’. The list in (11) shows the contracted (more integrated) form. In these forms, the last vowel of the negative marker is dropped when it is followed by a subject marker starting with a vowel; in the first person the negative marker and subject marker merge to **-en-** or **-ŋ-**.

- (10) **síís-ára** **ŋ=kì-k-ə** ‘I do not listen’
síís-ára **ha=kì-k-ə** ‘you do not listen’
síís-ára **há=kì-k-ə** ‘he does not listen’
síís-ára **yí=kì-k-ə** ‘she does not listen’
síís-ára **ń=kì-k-ə** ‘we do not listen’
síís-ára **ítí=kì-k-ə** ‘you do not listen’
síís-ára **íŋ=kì-k-ə** ‘they do not listen’
- (11) **síís-en-kì-k-ə** ‘I do not listen’
síís-ár=a-kì-k-ə ‘you do not listen’
síís-ár=á-kì-k-ə ‘he does not listen’
síís-ár=í-kì-k-ə ‘she does not listen’
síís-én-kì-k-ə ‘we do not listen’
síís-ár=ítí-kì-k-ə ‘you do not listen’
síís-ár=íŋ-kì-k-ə ‘they do not listen’

Here are some sentential examples from spontaneous discourse. Note that the complex negative can be a final verb (12), medial verb (13) or subordinate verb (14) in accordance with the clause marker on the auxiliary predicate.

- (12) **k’óy** **k’erà** **síís-ér=í-kì-k-ə**
one.ELAT INCL listen-NEG = 3FS-exist-REAL-STI
‘She doesn’t understand anything (of the language).’
- (13) **gōōtà** **yááf-ér=í-kì-ń** **há=kār-k’à** **kòb-tee-tə**
night find-NEG = 3FS-exist-DS 3MS = forest-IN take-go.NV-SS
‘...at midnight she did not notice; he took them into the forest...’

- (14) **bááʃ-̀n-s** **yīs** **bāʃ-t-ērē** **há=k'e-̀ntà**
 slaughter-DEF-M DIST.M slaughter-PASS-NEG.STI 3MS = remain-COND
túúrù **batà** **yōg-m̄-bààb** **gaydu** **yír-tà**
 land on.LOC come-IRR-father problem what-COP.Q
 'If those are not/would not be slaughtered any more, what are the problems which would hit the land?'

The subject clitic follows the negated verb in most cases. It is also possible that the subject clitic of the auxiliary predicate occurs preceding the negative (15).

- (15) **yéntʃ'a** **há=āāt-ārā** **kì-̀ntà** **m-árá**
 avoidance 3MS = hold-NEG exist-COND eat-NEG
há=k'é-m-ə
3MS = remain-IRR-STI
 'If he did not avoid sexual contact, he could not eat (the milk at that time).'

Since the second (auxiliary) predicate provides information about aspect and mood, it can be used to assert (16) or to weaken (17) the negated statement. (Recall that the verb-plus-negator is sufficient in itself.) The following sentence is from the story of the Samaritan woman who has an encounter with Jesus. He asked her to give him water, although Jews in Jesus' time didn't want to associate with Samaritans at all. The addition of **kíkə** 'it is' asserts that the part 'water was not the problem' holds true.

- (16) **kōmtū** **há=fòòt'-àb-əra** **há=māāk-ñ** **èʃntà**
 king 3MS = become-REL-ACC 3MS = tell-PURP MOTIVE
há=bààs-k-ə **hāāy** **gáydu** **té-ré** **kì-k-ə**
 3MS = want-REAL-STI water problem COP-NEG.STI exist-REAL-STI
 'He wanted to tell that he is king. Water was not the problem.'

Likewise, the use of the Irrealis in example (17) casts some doubt on **kááy** 'not there' by not asserting it.

- (17) **kááy** **yí=kī-m-ə**
 be.not 3FS = exist-IRR-STI
 'She is probably not there/She might be absent.'

Finally, Prohibitives or negative Imperatives consist of a negative followed by an Imperative verb form of **k'é** 'remain', as in example (18)-(19). See section 4.3.2 for more information on affirmative Imperatives.

- (18) **māāk-ārā** **k'é-ə**
 tell-NEG remain-STI
 'Don't tell!'

- (19) **má=ŋ** **fíkùs-ŋ** **k'ééts'-ára**
 earlier.today = 1SG prepare.CAUS-DS take.apart-NEG
k'é-yt
 remain-PL.ADDR
 'I just fixed it, don't take it off! (pl)' (Context: men were putting wooden handles on iron tools.)

14.3 State negation

The negation marker **-ŋ** has the same tone as the preceding tone bearing unit. Semantically, it functions in contexts which refer to more time-stable concepts, e.g. in the description of properties and states. However, the clause type may account for (part of) the semantics as well, since all examples up to (25) feature relative clauses. In contrast to **-əra**, the marker **-ŋ** needs a following auxiliary predicate, as illustrated below, and always occurs in a complex negative.

- (20) a. **áz** **t'ũũs-ārā**
 3MS know-NEG
 'he doesn't know'
- b. ***áz** **t'ũũs-ŋ**
 3MS know-NEG2
 'he doesn't know'

In example (21)-(22), intrinsic properties of individuals are referred to.

- (21) **ás-kh̄ ááb ság-ń-kì-b bār-ń-s-əb**
 3MS-DAT eye see-NEG2-exist-REL be.blind-DEF-M-REL
tə-k-ə
 COP-REAL-STI

‘One whose eye doesn’t see is a blind person.’

- (22) **bōw án-ń-ky-àb-kh̄ há=bōw àškù**
 belly put-NEG2-exist-REL-DAT 3MS=belly meat
àst=á há=kòb-t=á ìy
 give.PASS=3MS 3MS=take-SS=3MS house
duuru-k’à ?yàrdù-k-ə
 deserted.place-IN enter-REAL-STI

‘To him who has no stomach (a fool) the meat of the stomach (worthless entrails) was given; he took (accepted) it and entered a deserted house (without cooking facilities).’ (Proverb emphasizing stupidity)

The examples (23)-(25) illustrate that the properties or states characterize the entity that they refer to. For example, the leaders which are referred to in example (23) habitually do not have people from the Bəndu clan living on their lands. The form **án-ń-kì-b** would not be used for a leader who had only temporally no Bəndus, but at other times would have them. In other words, the negation marker **-ń** is used to present a state of affairs as a (time-stable) state.

- (23) **bəndū án-ń-kì-b kōmtū-s háák’astà**
 Bəndu put-NEG2-exist-REL chief-PL now
íʃ=fādù-t’-ń sùs=í-tí-k-ə
 3PL=count-PASS-DS hear=2PL-REAL-STI
 ‘You just heard the chiefs who do not maintain Bəndus be counted.’

- (24) **zīrkū t’ūūs-ń-kì-b súkú íʃi=tūūʃ-ā-m-ə**
 time know-NEG2-exist-REL rope 3PL=knot-put-IRR-STI
 ‘Those who did not know time (did not use a calendar) knotted a rope.’

- (25) **ōtì baatʃi án-ń-kì-b tēngì bàtà**
 cow skin put-NEG-exist-REL tree.sp on.LOC

íʃi = sōk'ū-kì-b-īs

3PL = lie.down-exist-REL-DIST.M

‘those who didn’t have a cow hide, that they slept on *tengi* bark...’

-*ŋ* can also be used with non-relative verb forms, but impressionistically this is infrequent. When I elicited negative optatives, example (27) was given as an alternative to (26). Another context in which both negators are attested is given in sentences (28)-(29). Further research should establish the exact semantic or structural difference between the two verbal negators.

- (26) **ŋ-gági bey-ŋ-s-kñ kárbú fōōt-ārā**
 1SG.POSS-revenge mother-DEF-M-DAT strength become-NEG

k'y = á-s-ə

remain = 3MS-OPT-STI

‘May my enemy have no strength’

- (27) **ŋ-gági bey-ŋ-s-kñ kárbú fōōt-ñ**
 1SG.POSS-revenge mother-DEF-M-DAT strength become-NEG2

k'y = á-s-ə

remain = 3MS-OPT-STI

‘May my enemy have no strength’

- (28) **baasa tó-ń-kì-t = á tʃ'ukn tə**
 Baasa COP-NEG2-exist-SS = 3MS X'ukn COP

yèè-k-ə

come.NV-REAL-STI

‘It was not Baasa but X'ukn who came.’

- (29) **badign tó-r = í-kì-ñ boori tə**
 Badign COP-NEG = 3FS-exist-DS Boori COP

yèè-k-ə

come.NV-REAL-STI

‘It was not Badign but Boori who came.’

Finally, here is a rare example of the negation marker **-ŋ** with more eventive verbs, from spontaneous discourse:

- (30) **áz** **kāy** **ás-k'à** **ʃiif-m-kī-ntá**
 3MS god 3MS-IN add-NEG2-exist-COND.CONT
kāy **áz-k'à** **ár-ń-kí-ntà** **yírà-be**
 god 3MS-IN think-NEG2-exist-COND what-mother
fōōt-ñ-bàb **kááy**
 become-IRR-father be.not
 '...if he, if God does not add on it, if God does not approve of it,
 nothing whatsoever will happen.'

14.4 Negative polarity and 'nothing other than'

To express negative polarity, Sheko uses indefinite pronominals together with negation on the verb. The indefinite pronominals are formed by adding the inclusive marker **k'əra** 'also, even' to a question word (section 13.4). Example (31) illustrates a positive statement, while (32)-(33) contain negated forms.

- (31) **yír-k'ərà** **na-ŋ** **ats-ə**
 what-INCL 1SG-DAT give-STI
 'Give me any of them.'
- (32) **ŋ = tee-b-kh** **ādi-k'à** **yírà-k'ərà**
 1SG = go.NV-REL-DAT footstep-IN what-INCL
fōōt-ār = á-kì-k-ə
 become-NEG = 3MS-exist-REAL-STI
 'Nothing happened after I left.'
- (33) **gōnà** **nā-k'ərà** **tée-ŋ-kì-k-ə**
 yesterday where-INCL go.NV-NEG.1SG-exist-REAL-STI
 'I didn't go anywhere yesterday.'

Example (34) uses an indefinite noun phrase instead of a question word. See section 7.3.3 on the uses of **k'oy** 'one' for indefiniteness.

- (34) **k'óy yaab yēē-r=á-k'y-á-m-ə**
 one.ELAT man come.NV-NEG = 3MS-remain-put-IRR-STI
 'Nobody will come.' (*A man will not come.)
 Also possible: **yááb k'oy-k'arà...**

The expression 'never/ever' is closely related to the notion of experiential perfect, i.e. whether a person experienced a particular event at least once during some time in the past leading up to the present (Comrie 1976:58). Many languages of Ethiopia convey this notion through the verb 'to know' (Crass and Meyer 2008:244). Sheko is no exception. Thus, the expression of 'never/ever' is with a verb form of **t'uus** 'know', as illustrated in (35) and (36).

- (35) a. **kuki-k'à tee-t'ùs=a-kì**
 Kuki-IN go.NV-know = 2SG-exist[Q]
 'Have you ever been to Kuki?' (Lit: Do you know going to Kuki?)
 b. **t'ūūs-ēn-kì-k-ə**
 know-NEG.1SG-exist-REAL-STI
 'Never.' (Lit: I don't know.)

- (36) **ṇ-tuurù yaab-ù-s gēētù séé-t'ūūs-ērēe**
 1SG.POSS-land man-m-PL waterpipe see.NV-know-NEG.STI
 'The people of my country have never seen a waterpipe.'

The notion of 'nothing other than X' can be expressed as in the following examples. In (37) and (38), X may be viewed as a kind of Ground marked by the dative in a locational construction with **fatà** 'on' or **ʃíʃtà ~ ʃoʃtà** 'at the side', or simply as a locational expression with body parts in which the possessor NP is dative-marked (see section 9.3.3). In example (39), the 'Ground' is also in the dative. Only in (40) there is no dative case. The latter part of **mōkārì** may be related to **kaarì** 'towards'. Note furthermore that the last two examples use a form of **t'uus** 'know'.

- (37) **íṣ t'ára-kh fatà yí = ?úm-kis úmt'à kááy**
 3FS injera-DAT on.LOC 3FS = eat-? food be.not
 'She eats nothing but bread.' (Lit: upon injera there is no food she eats.)
- (38) **áz bazà-kh jóf-tà k'oyśns (noogù)**
 3MS work-DAT side-LOC other.DEF.M thing
án-ár = á-kì-k-ə
 put-NEG = 3MS-exist-REAL-STI
 'He does nothing but work.' (Lit: he does not put other things at the side of work.)
- (39) **há = bāṣ-ñ-bààb-kh k'oyśns**
 3MS = work-IRR-father-DAT other.DEF.M
t'ūūs-ār = á-kì-k-ə
 know-NEG = 3MS-exist-REAL-STI
 'He does nothing other than work.' (Lit: he doesn't know other (things) to work.)
- (40) **úmt'à úm-ín-bààb mōkārì há = t'uus-kis kááy-ə**
 food eat-IRR-father except? 3MS = know-? be.not-STI
 'He does nothing but eat.' (Lit: there is nothing he knows except eating food.)

15 Subject clitics and focus

This chapter treats the function of subject clitics.⁴⁸ The form of the subject clitics is given here again for ease of reference.

(1)	1sg	ɲ=	1pl	ń=
	2sg	ha=	2pl	ítí=
	3ms	há=	3pl	íŋ=
	3fs	yí=		

The presence/absence of subject clitics and their place in the clause are related to information structure. Regarding the function of subject clitics, one language consultant offered the following as a summarizing description: **yíz nóógù sēsūkīb** ‘this is something which shows words/things’. I have only started to investigate the relations between information structure, focus and the grammar of subject clitics, and therefore I can present merely a partial picture of the system here.

Section 1 aims at giving an overview of the occurrence of clitics, while section 2 and 3 discuss subject clitics in final main clauses and medial clauses respectively. Section 4 compares Sheko to languages with a similar strategy of using subject clitics to indicate focus and information structure. Section 5 discusses clefting as well as a construction used to contrast propositions and a contrastive topic marker.

15.1 Proclitics, enclitics and the absence of clitics

15.1.1 Overview

The subject clitic is basically a proclitic to the verb stem in final main verb clauses. This preverbal position appears to be the “unmarked” position, corresponding to a topic-comment informational structure (Lambrecht 1994:16, 235). Likewise, the clitic in medial clauses occurs in clause-initial position in clauses with a topic-comment structure, and usually procliticizes to the first constituent of the clause. However, the subject clitic may also encliticize to the medial verb of the

⁴⁸ This chapter benefitted greatly from discussions following two presentations, especially from comments by Orin Gensler, Tom Güldemann and Ines Fiedler.

preceding clause, a fact which is further discussed in section 15.3.1.

In addition, the subject clitic may encliticize to another part of the clause if that part is highlighted; in other words, the clitic generally follows a salient part of the sentence. For instance, in both main and medial clauses, the subject clitic encliticizes to *wh*-words and negatives, which are often assumed to be inherently focused. The subject clitic also follows non-subject constituents which are in focus and stage-setting adverbials. Furthermore, the subject clitic encliticizes to the verb stem in main clauses when the truth value of the predicate is asserted (with Factual verb stems such as in the Realis). In medial clauses, the subject cannot encliticize directly to the verb stem, for the reason that a medial verb is dependent on a final verb for modal values and assertion.

Thirdly, the subject clitic may be absent. In many medial verb clauses there is no overt reference to the subject participant at all, and subject continuation is expressed only through the same-subject switch-reference marker. In addition, the subject clitic is absent in subject focus constructions. In these clauses, a full noun phrase or pronoun overtly refers to the subject in focus.

15.1.2 ‘Double’ occurrence

It is not easy to establish whether cliticization occurs to the left or to the right. In fact, both directions are possible, but the full nature of left- and rightward cliticization is not understood yet. The following example illustrates both, i.e. the 1sg clitic *n* encliticizes while the 3fs clitic *yí* procliticizes.

- (2) **yír=n** **ye-kñ** **mit’ñ-o** **yí=ge-ñ**
 what = 1SG 2SG-DAT witness-STL.ADDR 3FS = say-DS
 ‘ “What could I say in favour of you?” she said’

In a discussion about orthography, some language consultants expressed a preference for writing the first clitic twice, as <Yir^ñ ñ yekñ mixno?>, but they didn’t comment on the second clitic, written only once as <yí gen>.

- (2') **yír=ṇ** **ṇ=ye-kh** **mīt'ñ-o** **yí=ge-ñ**
 what = 1SG 1SG = 2SG-DAT witness-sti.ADDR 3FS = say-DS
 '“What could I say in favour of you?” she said'

Concerning the first clitic in (2'), future research should investigate what the native speakers' intuition for writing the clitic doubly is based upon. Here, I follow the language consultants' choices in the texts that we have discussed. Concerning the second clitic **yí=**, the fact that there is a clause boundary before the 3FS clitic is not a sufficient explanation for its proclitization, as there are other examples in which a clitic encliticizes to the verb of the preceding clause (3).

- (3) **...ń=ín-ə** **ge-t=á** **uutñ-əra** **zèèr-ñ**
 1PL = go-STI say-SS = 3MS rat-ACC advise-DS
 'saying “...let's go,” he advised the rat'

There are also instances where the clitic cliticizes both ways across a clause boundary. In (4), the 3fs clitic **yí=** occurs encliticized to the medial verb of the first clause and is followed by a short pause (indicated by the vertical bar), and then it procliticizes to the object argument in the second medial clause.

- (4) **yí=bārkāy-ñ** **k'ay-t=í** | **yí=fārā** **yaaf-m̃**
3FS = monkey.F-DEF rise-SS = 3FS 3FS = horse find-DS
 'the monkey rose and found a horse'

Cross-linguistically, there is probably a preference for enclitization, just as most affixes are suffixal (Dryer 2005). The 'double' occurrence may be caused by the conflicting tendencies to procliticize and encliticize. Compare the underlined clitic in (4) with the 1sg clitic in (2') which cliticizes to a wh-word as well as the following constituent. If it is correct that the subject clitic canonically is proclitic, it may (still) have an inclination to procliticize in the cases in which it is attracted by focused elements away from the verb and has encliticized to its host.

15.2 Subject clitics in main clauses

This section first establishes that main clauses in which the subject clitic procliticizes to the verb stem have verbal predicate focus, correlating to a topic-comment structure. Secondly, various environments are listed in which the subject clitic occurs as an enclitic to the verb stem (for verb polarity focus andthetic sentences) or as an enclitic on some constituent preceding the verb (identificational focus of non-subject constituents (Lambrecht 1994) and discourse focus on stage-setting adverbs).

15.2.1 Preceding the main verb

Final verbs to which a subject clitic is procliticized are interpreted as having predicate (VP) focus, such as in (5b) and (6b). These sentences have a topic-comment structure.

- (5) a. **bádìg̀n** **yír=í** **bàzù-kì**
 Badign what = 3FS work-exist[Q]
 ‘What is Badign doing?’
- b. **baakà yí=fyaan-kì-k-ə**
 taro 3FS=peel-exist-REAL-STI
 ‘She is peeling taro.’
- (6) a. **Gurma-o**
 Gurma-STI.ADDR
 ‘What about Gurma?’
- b. **zeed-k’a** **há=gadu-k-ə**
 eight-IN 3MS=start-REAL-STI
 ‘He started in the eight grade.’

Consider also the following stretch of natural discourse, which in simple sentences comments on the behaviour of adolescents in the past and present. In the first three lines of (7), the topic is a boy and in the comments three things are predicated of him, namely what he did as work. The subject clitic is procliticized to the final verb in each line. Likewise, the last two lines of (7) predicate on the topic ‘boys and girls’. In each case, the verbal predicate is the salient information, while the

subject clitic appears on the verb as proclitic. Again, it is clear that these clauses exhibit a topic-comment structure.

- (7) **há-bààb** **òtì** **há = jétj-á-m-ə**
 3MS.POSS-father cow 3MS = herd-put-IRR-STI
há-bààb **guy** **há = búúts-á-m-ə**
 3MS.POSS-father grassland 3MS = cut-put-IRR-STI
há-bààb **katji** **há = yáán-á-m-ə** (...) **(...)**
 3MS.POSS-father yam 3MS = plant.yam-put-IRR-STI
háák'àstà **yīs** **kááy-ə** **dēyg-ñ-k'èrà**
 now DIST.M be.not-STI child.F-DEF-INCL
dēd-ñ-s-k'èrà **tāmāārìy-ta** **íj = nòn-kì-k-ə**
 child-DEF-M-INCL school-LOC 3PL = talk-exist-REAL-STI
wó-kà **tìmhirtìy-k'à** **āṣū-ka íjì = kààs-kì-k-ə**
 down.there-LCT school-IN leg-WITH 3PL = play-exist-REAL-STI
 'He herded his father's cattle. He cut his father's grassland. He planted his fathers' yam. (...) This is not so now. The girls and boys are talking at school. Down at the school they are playing with their feet.'

15.2.2 Following stem in Realis forms

The placement of subject clitics creates a meaning difference in Realis verb forms. In contrast to a form in which the subject clitic precedes the verb stem (8a), a form in which the subject clitic follows the verb stem is used to highlight the verb or its polarity, as in (8b). This latter form is employed frequently in yes-or-no questions and answers (9).

- (8) a. **ń = t'ùùs-k-ə**
1PL = know-REAL-STI
 'we know it'
 b. **t'ùùs = ń-k-ə**
 know = 1PL-REAL-STI
 'we KNOW it', 'we do know it'
- (9) a. **sāāy-ñ-s-a** **ye-kh** **mààk = í**
 fable-DEF-M-ACC 2SG-DAT tell = 3FS.Q
 'Did she tell you the story?'

- b. **mààk = í-k**
 tell = 3FS-REAL
 ‘She did.’

Verb forms in the Obvious mood, marked by the gloss KNOWN, display the same variation in clitic placement regarding enclitization to the main verb stem. In (10), the subject clitic appears preceding the verb stem, indicating that the verbal predicate is in focus; in (11), the subject clitic occurs following the verb stem, indicating focus on the truth value of the predicate. (See section 10.3.6 for the semantics of the Obvious, which posits something as generally known or known to the addressee).

- (10) **baak-n-s m = fyààn-kì-kn-yà**
 yam-DEF-M 1SG = peel-exist-KNOWN-STD
 ‘But I am peeling the yams!’ (Context: father asked teenage daughter to do something for him.)

- (11) **bàz = á-kn**
 work = 3MS-KNOWN
 ‘It WORKS.’ (Context: machine works properly after it is fixed.)

Apart from polarity or truth value focus, subject clitics occur encliticized to the verb stem inthetic main clauses as well. In example (12), the sentences function to report an event, while in example (13), the sentences function to present a referent.

- (12) a. **íírú k’yar = á-k-ə**
 rain beat = 3MS-REAL-STI
 ‘It rains!’
- b. **gébèn bây dàdù nyààs = í-k**
 Geben female child give.birth = 3FS-REAL
 ‘Geben has given birth to a daughter!’
- (13) a. **ṣāād kì = á-k-ə**
 pond exist = 3MS-REAL-STI
 ‘There is a pond.’ (Context: introduction of *ṣaad* in the discourse. *ṣaad* is a pond with water which reportedly contains minerals stimulating milk production of cattle.)

15.2.3 Following non-subject wh-words and constituents

A subject clitic appears encliticized to non-subject constituents in focus. The subject clitic identifies the referent for a given proposition. It is interesting that in this function the subject clitic, which is topical itself, attaches to the most salient argument in the clause.

Wh-words are assumed to be inherently focused, and the subject clitic always follows it directly, except when *tə* COP is employed (see section 15.5.1). In example (14), the 3pl clitic follows the wh-word **yír(à)** ‘what’ and in (15), the 1sg clitic follows **nā** ‘where’.

- (14) **gōnà** **yír=íſi** **ye-k̀n** **mààk̀ù**
 yesterday what=3PL 2SG-DAT tell[Q]
 ‘WHAT did they tell you yesterday?’

- (15) **nā=ŋ** **íſi-ra** **án-á-o**
 where=1SG 3PL-ACC put-put-STL.ADDR
 ‘WHERE can I put them?’

Example (16) shows that the subject clitic also directly follows the corresponding constituent in the answering sentence. Furthermore, the subject clitic follows non-subject NPs with intended focus (17), and adverbs which refer to the setting for events (18).

- (16) **yír=a** **ha=na-ŋ** **āts-o** **yí=ge-̀n**
 what=2SG 2SG=1SG-DAT give-STL.ADDR 3FS=say-DS
zūnk̀ù=ŋ **ŋ=ye-k̀n** **āts-ā-m-ə** **há=ge-̀n**
 sheep=1SG 1SG=2SG-DAT give-put-IRR-STI 3MS=say-DS
 ‘she said: “WHAT will you give me?” (and) he said: “I’ll give you A SHEEP.”’

- (17) **woogi-o** **bāārā=a** **ha=na-ŋ**
 Woogi-STL.ADDR maiden=2SG 2SG=1SG-DAT
bààs-̀nt-o
 want-COND-STL.ADDR
 ‘Hey Woogi, (what if) you search a GIRL for me?’

- (18) **yīs-t=íŋ** **tūbsū** **ʔyats'ŋ** **gé-m-ə**
 DIST.M-LOC=3PL seven moon say-IRR-STI
 'THEN they would say: "Seven months".'

Like wh-words, negation is assumed to be inherently focused. The subject clitic regularly encliticizes to the negated verb, as in (19).

- (19) **nyākū** **bútà** **bòòz-ntà-ee** **gyābt'à**
 young.man outside stroll-COND-STI front.yard
sāa-r=i-k'y-á-m
 arrive.NV-NEG=3FS-remain-put-IRR
 'If a young man walked outside, she wouldn't enter the front yard.'

15.2.4 Main clauses without subject clitic

The only main clauses which do not contain subject clitics are those which focus the subject. When the subject is focused, there is necessarily a subject NP which refers to the subject.

- (20) **m-bāyñ** **nata** **gasku-k-ə**
 1SG.POSS-wife 1SG insult-REAL-STI
 'MY WIFE insulted me.'
- (21) **yīs** **kòòsù-rà** **itī** **māāk-o**
 DIST.M tradition-ACC who tell-STI.ADRR
 'WHO will tell this traditional wisdom?'

In most cases, the focused subject appears in a cleft construction (see section 15.5.1). In example (22) and (23), the subjects are clefted and there is no subject clitic on the main verb.

- (22) **bārkāy** **ḡōñ tə** **tʃāārū** **fōōt-ā-m-ə**
 monkey heart COP medicine become-put-IRR-STI
 'A MONKEY'S HEART will/could be medicine.'

- (23) **báy** **ʔyār-s-ārā-kì-b** **ʔyéts-ʔyéts-àb-is**
 woman enter-CAUS-NEG-exist-REL PLUR-big.DEF.M-REL-DIST.M
yīs-tə **k'ūṣ-ā-m**
 DIST.M-COP milk-put-IRR
 'Who have not married a wife, who have become big, THOSE are the ones who milk.'

Enclitization of the subject clitic to a subject constituent is always ungrammatical, in contrast to enclitization of the subject clitic to a focused non-subject constituent. The following functional account may explain why the subject clitic cannot encliticize to a subject constituent: whether the subject clitic procliticizes or encliticizes, it always refers to the topic of the clause, namely the subject about which something is predicated. The clitic serves thus at once to refer to the topical subject and to indicate by its position which part of the clause is in focus. If the clitic would encliticize to a focused subject, the interpretation of the subject as topical (rendered by its referring function) would clash with the interpretation of the subject as focal (rendered by its position in the clause).

15.2.5 Restrictions regarding clitic placement

From the description so far, it is clear that subject clitics occur in various places in the sentence. To look at the data from another angle, this section lists the restrictions on clitic placement in the earlier sections.

First, there are restrictions on clitic placement with regard to modal distinctions. While it may not be possible to fully separate the effects of information structure on the one hand and modal distinctions on the other hand, it may be helpful to note the following: in the Imperative there is no clitic at all; in the Jussive, Irrealis and Implicative the clitic cannot follow the verb stem; and in the Optative the clitic must follow the verb stem. In the Realis and Obvious there are no restrictions.

- (24) a. **fōōt = á-s-ə** (Optative)
 become = 3MS-OPT-STI
 'may it be'

- b. **há = fōōt-ā-m-ə** (Irrealis)
 3MS = become-put-IRR-STI
 'it will become'
- c. **há = fōōt-ə** (Jussive)
 3MS = become-STI
 'let it be'

Of course, the different sentence types each have characteristic (discourse) functions which have implications for the possibilities with regard to information structure. For instance, imperatives are directives rather than predication and the subject (second person) is understood. Furthermore, in contrast to e.g. the Irrealis, the Realis and Obvious typically assert predication and therefore the truth value can be questioned or emphasized for these two modal types. The Optative, which is mainly used for curses and blessings, might be taken as a predictive modality which emphasizes the verb.

Secondly, the subject clitic cannot encliticize to the subject constituent, in contrast to non-subject constituents in focus. In medial clauses, the subject clitic can procliticize to a subject constituent; which is evidence that proclitization serves a function (indicating verbal predicate focus) that differs from enclitization (indicating argument focus).

Thirdly, the subject clitic may not encliticize to some modified and/or case-marked noun phrases. This issue awaits further research.

- (25) **ʔhá-zègù = á** **na-ŋ** **kòb-yèè-k-ə**
 3MS.POSS-ox = 3MS 1SG-DAT take-come.NV-REAL-STI
 intended: 'He brought HIS OX for me.'

15.2.6 Summary

In conclusion, clitic placement is remarkably flexible in Sheko. Cysouw (2003) proposes a focus hierarchy of clitic attraction, in which he links cliticization to focus structure of the clause. While some languages have special clitic placement for one of the extremes of the hierarchy only, only a very small number of languages move further up or down the hierarchy. The table

below is adapted to reflect the situation as attested in Sheko main clauses:

↑ <i>enclitization away from verb</i>	<i>strong non-verb focus</i> ↑
↑ Wh-word, (negation)	inherent focus ↑
↑ Focused non-subject NP	constituent focus ↑
↑ Adverb of time/place	stage setting ↑
proclitic to verb stem	VP focus (“neutral”)
↓ enclitization to stem - Opt	strong focus on verb ↓
↓ enclitization to stem - Real (negation)	focus on verb polarity ↓
↓ <i>enclitization on the verb</i>	<i>strongest predicate focus</i> ↓

Table 1. Clitic attraction in main clauses correlated with focus
(adapted from Cysouw 2003).

In summary, the clitic placement interacts with information structure (topicality, focus type) and modality. Sheko subject clitics appear away from the verb encliticized to wh-pronouns, negation, non-subject NPs and adverbs. In the case of wh-words and non-subject NPs, the sentences have argument (identificational) focus. For adverbs, identificational focus may be insufficient as features of (larger) discourse appear to play a role as well. In case of negation, next to being inherently focused, focus on verb polarity can also be assumed. In “unmarked” sentences, corresponding roughly to predicate focus in a topic-comment sentence structure, the clitic appears procliticized to the final verb. Irrealis type clauses are more or less treated as “unmarked” final verb clauses, but cliticization is different from “unmarked” final verbs in two cases: a clitic appears encliticized to the verb stem in Optatives, and in Realis forms signaling verb polarity focus. Finally, athetic informational structure, which presents events or entities, is expressed by an enclitic on the verb stem as well (not indicated in the table).

15.3 Subject clitics in medial clauses

Main clauses and medial clauses are similar in that proclitization of the subject clitic is a sign of a topic-comment structure. However, while in main clauses the clitic

procliticizes to the main verb stem, in medial clauses the clitic appears in clause-initial position. Its separation from the verb may be the reason that in this position, it does not always procliticize to the following element. A further trait of medial clauses is that under topical subject continuation the subject clitic may be dropped. Absence of the subject clitic is furthermore attested for subject focus/thetic clauses.

15.3.1 Subject clitics in clause-initial position

For a string of clauses with medial verbs, verbal predicate focus is expressed with the subject clitic being the first element of the clause.

For same-subject medial verbs, there are two possibilities for the cliticization of subject clitics. In some instances, the clitic procliticizes to the following element in its clause (26)-(27). In these instances, there is a clearly audible pause between the medial verb and the clitic. Pauses are marked with a vertical line here. (If there is no other constituent, the clitic will attach to the verb, as e.g. in the third clause of (26).)

- (26) **ás-k̀n góri bàt̀a an-t̀ə | há = uk'-n-s-ə̀ra**
 3MS-DAT head on.LOC put-SS 3MS = milk-DEF-M-ACC
- bundu um-t̀ə | há = saw-t̀ə | há = kuus-n-s-ə̀ra**
 copious eat-SS 3MS = arrive.NV-SS 3MS = plug-DEF-M-ACC
- baas-n̩ |**
 want-DS
- ‘...he put (the stopper) on his head and he ate his fill of the milk and then he searched for the stopper...’
- (27) **...há = yēē-k̀i-bààst̀a | íŋi = byāāsū baaỳn̩**
 3MS = come.NV-exist-WHILE 3PL = crocodile wife.F.DEF
- yārti-nonko see-t̀ə | íŋi = íŋ-k̀n mààk-n̩ |**
 friend-KPL see.NV-SS 3PL = 3FS-DAT tell-DS
- yí = byāāsū baaỳn̩ k'ay-t̀ə | yí = zérk̀n k'oy...**
 3FS = crocodile wife.F.DEF rise-SS 3FS = day one
- ‘...while he came (from the house of the monkey), the friends of the crocodile’s wife saw him and told it to her, and the wife of the crocodile rose and one day she...’

In other instances, the subject clitic of a certain clause encliticizes to the medial verb form of the preceding clause, as the underlined clitics in examples (28)-(30) illustrate.

- (28) **yááb** **ʃub-ɲtà** | **yēē-t=á** **fòòt-àb** **ēkī** |
 man die-COND come.NV-SS=3MS become-REL money
zúnkù **bááʃ-t=á** | **yérbm̐** **ʃō-ʃū-t=á** | ...
 sheep slaughter-SS=3MS blood spill-CAUS-SS=3MS
 ‘If someone died, he would come and slaughter some livestock, a sheep, and spill the blood and...’

- (29) **dāānà** **k’íʃ-t=íʃi** | **yīs** **gōntʃi** **íʃi-gə-gəri-kh̐**
 beer drink-SS=3PL DIST.M like 3PL.POSS-PLUR-head-DAT
gúy-k’à **téé-t=íʃi** | **íʃi-ʔùmtà**
 grassland-IN go.NV-SS=3PL 3PL.POSS-food
íʃi=kōōʃ-ō-m
 3PL=farm-put-IRR
 ‘...they drank beer and like this they went to their own fields and they farmed their food.’

- (30) **ʒaaʒ=á-k-ə** **há=ge-t=á** | **ás-kh̐**
 be.good=3MS-REAL-STI 3MS=say-SS=3MS 3MS-DAT
kum-k’à **an=á** **gáámtà** **sàw-tə** |
 neck-IN put=3MS far.side.LOC arrive.NV-SS
úʃtà **fín** **há=ge-ɲ** |
 down.LOC descend 3MS=say-DS
 ‘“Fine,” he said and he put (the snake) round his neck and reached the shore and said: “Descend!”;...’

It is not clear if there is a difference between the two sets of examples (i.e. between pro- and enclitization of the subject clitic in medial clauses). If there is, the type of clause linkage may differ. On the other hand, the variation could also be caused by the conflicting tendencies of the clitic to cliticize leftward as well as rightwards (see section 15.1.2).

Enclitization of a subject clitic to the verb form of the preceding clause is impressionistically very infrequent when that verb form is a different-subject medial verb. Most

different-subject medial verbs are immediately followed by a pause (31). The different-subject switch-reference marker may correspond to a somewhat heavier boundary than the same-subject marker (cf. section 11.1.2).

- (31) ... **yí=ge-n̩** | **há=ás-kn̩** **kúʔs'-ń-s-əra** **àts-n̩** |
 3FS = say-DS 3MS = 3MS-DAT hand-DEF-M-ACC give-DS
yí=bārkày **áz-k'à** **ààtù-tə**
 3FS = monkey 3MS-IN hold-SS
 '...she said; he gave his hand; the monkey took it and...

At any rate, the subject clitic is the first element in the majority of medial clauses (about three quarters of the medial clauses in my small sample). The association of this clause structure to predicate focus is therefore even more plausible, since a topic-comment (corresponding to a subject-predicate) structure is likely to be common in stories.

15.3.2 Subject clitics in medial position

In medial clauses, examples with subject clitics in non-initial position are rare. From the few examples I have, it is clear from the context that the constituent preceding the clitic is in focus. However, it appears that the subject clitic does not attach to these focused constituents, but to the following verb. The direction of cliticization needs to be verified in future research.

- (32) **há-k'amù-kn̩** **k'aabu-tə** **k'is-tə**
 3MS-servant-DAT pour-SS drink-SS
na-ŋ̩ **há=k'aab-n̩**
 1SG-DAT 3MS = pour-DS
 '...pours for his servants, drinks, pours for ME;...'
- (33) **má** **n=ʔats-n̩** **íʃi=ʔum-k-ə**
 earlier.today 1SG = give-DS 3PL = eat-REAL-STI
ts'èsn̩=íʃi-k-ə
 replete = 3PL-REAL-STI
 'I gave them EARLIER; they have eaten. They really are satisfied.'
 (Context: stephmother lies when the father of the children asks her to give them food.)

15.3.3 Medial clauses without subject clitics

Not all medial clauses have a subject clitic. In a small sample of seven *sāāyàs* ‘stories, fables’, about a quarter of the 350 medial (non-copula, non-direct speech) clauses does not have a subject clitic. In the case of subject focus, an NP or other overt reference to the subject is usually present. Likewise, new participants are sometimes introduced in clauses with a full referring NP, but no subject clitic. In contrast, there are also clauses which contain neither a subject clitic nor another reference to the subject; this concerns mainly connected series of actions in which the topic is understood.

This section first discusses medial clauses in which the subject is focussed, then topical subjects and zero expression of referents.

Subject focus

Often a new participant is introduced in a subject position. In that case, normally a full NP but no clitic refers to the new participant (34)-(36). Non-animate entities may also be introduced in this way, as example (37) illustrates. Because of the verb *ki* ‘exist, live’, the clause in (37) can also be analysed as athetic medial clause, i.e. it has a presentational function. However, there is no syntactic difference with subject focus medial clauses.

- (34) *śóóz* *tə-t=á* *tée-bààstà*
snake COP-SS = 3MS go.NV-WHILE
 ‘There was a SNAKE and while he went...’ (Lit: It was a snake...
 Context: first sentence of a story.)

- (35) *íʒ* *śōōnà* *yaaf-m̐* *áz* *īy* *yaaf-m̐*
3FS booth find-DS 3MS house find-DS
 ‘SHE found a booth; HE found a house;...’

- (36) *áš-t=ŋ* *ēē-t=ŋ* *hāāy* *gaamtà*
how-COP = 1SG do.nv-ss = 1SG water far.side.LOC
sāk-ā-o *há=ge-ñ* *yááb* *k’oy* *yèg-ñ*
arrive-put-STI.ADDR 3MS = say-DS man one come-DS
 ‘ “HOW do I do and reach the other shore?” he said; A MAN came;...’

- (37) **ɪʃɪ = úm-m-bààb** **kááy-n** **yí = téé-bààstà**
 3PL = eat-IRR-father be.not-DS 3FS = go.NV-WHILE
- myāngū** **ìy** **kì-n**
spirit house exist-DS
- ‘there was nothing they could eat; while she went (looking for food),
 there was THE HOUSE OF A SPIRIT,...’

As an aside, a new participant may be referred to by a non-subject constituent as well when it is mentioned for the first time, even if the new participant is going to play an important role in the story, such as *yātñbey* ‘fox’ in (38). New actors with low importance in the story usually are referred to by an NP as well as a clitic, such as the neighbor in (39), who is probably part of the frame of reference (everybody has neighbors).

- (38) **há=yàtñbey** **dàtà sàk-n**
 3MS=fox.mother near.LOC arrive-DS
 ‘he reached a fox;...’

- (39) ... ge-t=á górábèt íŷ-a zèèr-n
say-SS=3MS neighbor(Amh) 3FS-ACC advise-DS
'saying "... a/the neighbor advised her;...' [presented as topical]

Zero expression of arguments

Examples (40) and (41) illustrate medial clauses without a subject clitic and without another overt reference to the subject. Many of these clauses have same-subject marking. They are used among others for series of actions or steps of a procedure by a certain participant, as shown in the examples.

- (40) **há = zūyñ-a** **baaʃ-gyaʔu-tə**
 3MS = sheep.F.DEF-ACC slaughter-chew-SS
íʃ-kñ báátʃí-ra **kyānū bàtà sùp'ù-tə**
 3FS-DAT skin-ACC dog on.LOC sew-SS
íʃ-kñ kum-k'à **gyādū an-tə**
 3FS-DAT neck-IN rope put-SS
há = kòb-tee-t = á
 3MS = take-go.NV-SS = 3MS
 '... he slaughtered and ate the sheep, and sewed her skin on the dog, and put a rope around her neck, and he brought her and...'

- (41) **yīs-tà** **yí-baad-ñ-s-əra**
 DIST.M-LOC 3FS.POSS-younger.sibling-DEF-M-ACC
wor-kèsù-tə **úʃtà bàrù-tə** **ʃēʔi-ra**
 draw-go.out.CAUS-SS ground throw.away-SS stone-ACC
haaku-tə **yáb-m-s** **ʔyan-n-s-k'à** **goom-tə**
 pick-SS man-DEF-M pot-DEF-M-IN pile-SS
yí-baad-n-s **kòb-tə** **ūk'-ñ-s-a**
 3FS.POSS-younger.sibling-DEF-M take-SS milk-DEF-M-ACC
wùʃk-kòb-tə **yí = k'yàaz-yèg-ñ**
 untie-take-SS 3FS = leave-come-DS
 'Then she drew her brother out, left him on the ground, gathered stones, stacked them in the man's pot, took her brother, unknotted and took the milk, and she left;...'

Example (42), from a fable about a monkey and a crocodile, is exceptional in that there is even no subject clitic after the different subject marker. From the context it is clear that the referent must be the crocodile.

- (42) **yí = bār̀kà** **k'ay-tə ás-kñ fāāfā-ka** **áámà-ka**
 3FS = monkey rise-SS 3MS-DAT papaya-COOR yam.sp-COOR
k'áʃù **àts-ñ** **um-tə bār̀kà-ka** **gúúrú**
 hanging.fruit? give-DS eat-SS monkey-WITH only
daan feef-tə **há = yēē-kì-bààstà**
 together spend.day-SS 3MS-come.NV-exist-WHILE
 'Monkey rose and gave him papaya and *aama* yams and tree-fruits; (he, the crocodile) ate and spent the day only with Monkey and while he came (home),...'

Obviously, the subjects in (40)-(42) refer to highly topical referents. As the examples show, expression of a topical referent is not obligatory and may be zero. Otherwise, this environment is identical to the string of medial verbs in (26)-(30) above, which also refer to a coherent sequence of actions.

It is common in the language to leave arguments unexpressed. In (43)-(44), the direct and indirect objects are referred to anaphorically by a zero pronoun. In (45), the first verb (**kaʃ**) refers to a ritual concerning cows. The speaker presupposes that his interlocutor knows the ritual, which involves cutting a hair from the tail of the cow for the chief. Without this knowledge the example would be difficult to understand.

- (43) **myāng-ñ-s** **tə-s-a-a** **nā=ñ** **téé-t=ñ**
 spirit-DEF-M COP-VIEWP-STD where = 1PL go.NV-SS = 1PL
ñ=āātū-kōy-t=ñ **ñ=sē-s-o**
 1PL=hold-bring-SS = 1PL 1PL=see.NV-CAUS-STI.ADDR
 'It is a spirit. Where do we go and take (it) and bring and show (it)?'

- (44) **k'ũṣ-ʔātsū-kì-b** **k'arà** **há-bayn-ka** **kì-b**
 milk-give-exist-REL INCL 3MS.POSS-wife-WITH exist-REL
kì-ntà **há=k'ũṣ-ʔāts-ā-m** **ge-tə** **má-ará**
 exist-COND 3MS=milk-give-put-IRR say-SS eat-NEG
há=k'é-m-ə
 3MS=remain-IRR-STI
 'Even the one who milks and gives, if he was with his wife (i.e. has had intercourse), he milks and gives (the milk to her), but does not drink (the milk himself).'

- (45) **kàšt' = í-k-ə** **ge-t'-n** **fùs = í-k-ə**
 cut.back.PASS = 3FS-REAL-STI say-PASS-DS complete = 3FS-REAL-STI
ge-t-n **yōk'à** **yīs-tà** **yááb-kh**
 say-PASS-DS INTJ DIST.M-LOC man-DAT
k'àp't'ù-?àst-n **yīs-kaarì** **ūm-t'-ārā**
 cut.PASS-give.PASS-DS DIST.M-toward eat-PASS-NEG
 'she has been cut back, it is said; she fulfilled the time, it is said; well, then (a hair from her tail) is cut for someone (= the chief) and given (to him or to his deputy); until then (her milk) is not eaten.'

15.3.4 Background clauses

A cursory investigation of clitics in background clauses reveals that 'while...'-background clauses (nearly) always contain a subject clitic.

- (46) **íſi = nōn-kì-bààstà** **yí-bààb** **yèè-sàw-tə**
 3PL = talk-exist-WHILE 3FS.POSS-father come.NV-arrive.NV-SS
 'while they were talking, her father arrived and he...'

Some of these background clauses allow for two interpretations, together with the preceding clause. For example, in (47) the clitic belongs either to the preceding clause or it belongs to the 'while'-clause:

- (47) **há = byāāsū** **k'ay-tə ...** **ge-b-tà**
3MS = crocodile rise-SS say-REL-LOC
 'the crocodile rose and when he said "...", ...'

The clitic in (47) likely belongs to the 'while' clause, because a subject NP in a clause without subject clitic is attested independently (see section 15.2.4). Furthermore, sometimes a subject and the rest of the clause are divided by an intervening clause, as in (48).

- (48) **íſi = yáb-m-s** **īy-k' = á** **sòk'ù-kì-n** **bútà**
 3PL = man-DEF-M house-IN = 3MS sleep-exist-DS outside
sàw-tə
 arrive.NV-SS
 'they, the man sleeping in the house, arrived outside and...'

15.4 Flexible subject clitics in other languages

The phenomenon of subject markers following focused elements is found in other Omotic languages as well. It is reported for Diizi, the southern Majoid language (Beachy 2008). However, some differences can be observed, particularly that Diizi subject markers which follow the verb stem are different from subject markers which precede the verb stem, see (49)-(50). In Guraferdan Sheko enclitization of subject clitics to the verb stem is ungrammatical. It is as yet not known how verb polarity focus is expressed in Diizi and Guraferda.

- (49) **ñ-zoku mo otu dad siag-o**
 1SG.POSS-bull earlier.today calf child give.birth-3ms
 ‘My bull gave birth to a calf.’ (Adapted from Beachy 2005 appendix A.)

- (50) **undi yir-g ki gob-ə-g tə-n á-zoku otu**
 past what-IN exist country-EPEN-IN BE-DS 3ms-bull calf
siag-də-ni
 give.birth-IPF-CQ
 ‘In the past, in which country was it where a bull gives birth to a calf?’ (Idem.)

Benchnon subject pronouns clearly have a relationship with topic and focus. However, unlike in Sheko, the pronouns differ slightly in form regarding tone and presence/absence of a final alveolar nasal. For instance, ‘long strong’ forms (**tān** ‘I, as for me’) code topical or contrastive topical subjects. The ‘short weak’ forms (**tā**), associated most with topic continuity, express verb or verb polarity focus in compound verb forms when they follow the lexical verb; and perhaps they express non-subject constituent focus when they precede the verb. Subject pronominal suffixes (-**tān**) on simple main verbs indicate verb or verb polarity focus (cf. section 15.2.2). A number of other forms exist; details of the system can be found in Rapold (2006: 341-363).

Zargulla, an East-Ometo language, shows remarkable similarities with Sheko. In Zargulla, the copula marker **-tte** has

an extended grammatical function as focus marker (Azeb 2008). In focused verbal clauses, such as below, **-tte** is immediately followed by a set of suffixes which co-varies for person, number and gender of the subject (51). **-tte** plus the subject agreement suffix can attach to any non-subject focused element, such as an adverb (52). The agreement suffix (without **-tte**) cliticizes obligatorily to wh-words. Hayward (1990b:320ff) reports a similar situation for the closely related Zayse and proposes that the phenomenon originates in erstwhile cleft constructions, because the verb form is similar to the verb form in a relative clause.

- (51) **kast-íſſin-na ?áik-útt-o-tt-íſ-inne**
 steal-TEMP-INST catch-PASS-THV-FOC-3FS-PAST
 ‘while stealing, she was CAUGHT.’

- (52) **?eeré ?eeré-tt-íſ bal-utt-e**
 little little-FOC-3FS make.mistake-PASS-REL.IPF
 ‘It differs (only) A LITTLE’

In some Omotic languages, information structure interacts with subject agreement marking only marginally.⁴⁹ In Koorete, another East-Ometo language, it is not a subject marker but a focus/sentence type marker which follows the salient part of the sentence. However, there is some interaction with person marking as well, since in some cases the subject agreement morpheme is not present when the verb is out of focus. For example, in example (53b), both the focus marker and the subject agreement marker are dropped. In example (54b), the object is marked for focus and the 2pl agreement marker **itu** is not present (Binyam 2008:124-6; 172).

- (53) a. **tan-i hant-uu-s-so**
 I-NOM work-PAST-1SG-A.FOC:DECL
 ‘I WORKED’

⁴⁹ In Zay, a Gurage language, some interaction is also noted: in some cases of nominal predication, subject marking follows the focus marker or may be added to it optionally (Meyer 2005:338,340). Andreas Wetter kindly pointed this out to me.

- b. **tan-i hant-o**
 I-NOM work-PAST
 ‘I worked’
- (54) a. **hinun-i doro woon-d-o-itu-w-a**
 you-NOM sheep buy-PF-PAST-2PL-EPEN-FOC:Q
 ‘did you (pl) BUY sheep?’
- b. **hinun-i doru-w-a woon-d-o**
 you-NOM sheep-EPEN-FOC:Q buy-PF-PAST
 ‘did you (pl) buy SHEEP?’

For Aari, a South Omotic language, “inflecting” adverbs and wh-words are reported (Bender 1991 citing Tully; see also Hayward 1990c:454). We can conclude that languages of various branches of Omotic, which do not all border each other, display at least traces of the same phenomenon. For some languages, a high-quality documentation is still lacking; hence it is not yet clear to which extent and with what variation the subject clitic is used to shape the information structure of sentences in Omotic languages.

Subject markers following focused or salient information are of course not only attested in Omotic, but also in Cushitic. In the well-known case of Somali, person marking is fused with the focus marker (Saeed 2000). In Konso, subject clitics are central to structuring information at sentence level as well, although in some verb paradigms additional person marking is found on the verb. Consider the following examples from Ongaye (2009), where the second person clitic appears procliticized to the verb (55a), encliticized to a focused NP (b), and procliticized to the first element of the sentence (b). The form differs because of morphophonological rules.

- (55) a. **ɕoyra ?im = mur-t-i**
 tree 2 = cut-2-PF
 ‘You CUT a tree.’
- b. **ɕoyr = im mur-t-i**
 tree = 2 cut-2-PF
 ‘You cut A TREE.’

- c. **ʔiɕ=ɕoyra mur-t-i**
 2 = tree cut-2-PF
 ‘You CUT A TREE’

In wh-questions, the clitic obligatorily attaches to the wh-word (56). There is no clitic and no person agreement on the verb when the subject is emphasized (57).

- (56) **maana=n piɕɕ-a**
 what = 1 buy-IPF
 ‘WHAT shall I buy?’

- (57) **kee ɕoyra mur-e**
 you tree cut-PF
 ‘It is YOU who cut a tree’

In the genetically unrelated Khoisan language Sandawe (Eaton 2002; Steeman in preparation), subject clitics co-express modality. These port-manteau clitics have an information structuring function, and in addition the realis subject clitics also occur obligatorily on clause conjunctions. Moreover, realis subject clitics can occur more than once in a clause. An interesting parallel with Sheko, Zargulla and Konso is that in Sandawe the clitic is not allowed to attach to the subject. Outside Africa, some Iranian languages have ‘flexible’ subject clitics indicating information structure and focus. Cysouw (2005) discusses Northern Talysh (Iranian), citing Schulze (2000), and the Jewish dialect of Hamadān, citing Stilo (2003). Related Jewish dialects such as spoken in Isfahan and Gaz (Stilo 2007) can also be mentioned.⁵⁰

15.5 Other strategies indicating focus and contrast

This section discusses three other devices in Sheko which function in the domain of focus and contrast. First clefting is treated; secondly, clause linkage with **getə**, which contrasts propositions; and finally a contrastive topic marker.

⁵⁰ In Iranian languages, there are in fact two sets of clitics and cliticization to the subject is not excluded (Stilo 2008).

15.5.1 Clefting

Next to flexible placement of subject clitics as a strategy to indicate focus and sentence structure, Sheko makes use of a cleft strategy. Clefting partially complements subject placement, in that clefting applies straightforwardly to subjects (as well as non-subjects), whereas the absence of subject clitics in subject focalization is an inaudible clue. On the other hand, clefting and subject placement reinforce each other, since the subject clitic, if present, attaches to the copula.

The next four examples show the occurrence of the subject clitic following the copula **tə** which functions as a focus marker. The schwa of the copula is deleted. Evidently, it is not the copula which is focal, but the constituent to which the copula is attached.

- (58) **há-dàdù-s** **t=á** **ás-k'à** **an-t=á**
 3MS.POSS-child-PL COP = 3MS 3MS-IN put-SS = 3MS
há=nata-ra **maad-ñ**
 3MS = 1SG-ACC deceive-DS
 ‘It’s HIS CHILDREN that he put in it, deceiving me’ (Context: stepmother discovers why the father has asked her to add cooked grain in the granary.)

- (59) **utşá** **utşà** **áz-tà** **ky-aàb** **kàrkà-k'a**
 badger.CONT badger 3MS-LOC exist-REL forest-IN
īśñ-ōrā **ha=kààf-mětă** **k'éét'-à** **gúúru**
 beehive-ACC 2SG = build-COND swallow-INF only
t=á **k'ēēt'ū-tə** **há=tş'ōr-ş-ā-m**
COP = 3MS swallow-SS 3MS = finish-CAUS-put-IRR
 ‘the badger, if you build beehives in a forest where a badger lives, will ONLY EAT and he will finish (the honey).’ (Lit: ...it is just eating that he eats and finishes.)

- (60) **ūytī-ka** **t=íşī-yèè-k-ə** **batş'a-k**
 love-WITH COP = 3PL-come.NV-REAL-STI anger-WITH
tá-rée
 COP-NEG.STI
 ‘It was WITH LOVE that they came, it was not with anger.’ (Context: referring to the separation of the Sheko from the Diizi.)

Wh-words may be clefted as well (61)-(62).

- (61) **áás-t=ŋ** **?ēē-t=ŋ** **hāāy** **gaamtà**
 how-COP = 1SG do.NV-SS = 1SG water far.side.loc
sāk-ā-o **há=ge-ñ**
 arrive-put-STL.ADDR 3MS = say-DS
 ‘he said: “ HOW do I do and reach the other shore?”’
- (62) **nāās-t=á** **sàmù** **há=ge-b-tà** **só**
 where-COP = 3MS leave.behind[Q] 3MS = say-REL-LOC up.there
íntʃù-k’à **há=sàmù-k-ə ...**
 wood-IN 3MS = leave.behind-REAL-STI
 ‘when he said: “WHERE did it remain?”, (she said:) “It remained up there in a tree.”’

When the subject is clefted, often the subject clitic is absent (63)-(66). Note that the subject clitic is absent in subject focus constructions, whereas it encliticizes to non-subject constituents in focus. However, in (67) a clitic is attached to the copula in a subject cleft.

- (63) **bārkāy** **şōōn tə** **tʃāārū** **fōōt-ā-m-ə**
 monkey heart COP medicine become-put-IRR-STI
 ‘A MONKEY’S HEART will be medicine.’
- (64) **ŋ-naanu** **té-ré** **ŋ-baad-ñ-s**
 1SG.POSS-elder.brother COP-NEG.STI 1SG.POSS-younger.sibling-DEF-M
tə **íʃ-a** **?yār-s-ā-m-ə**
 COP 3FS-ACC enter-CAUS-PUT-IRR-STI
 ‘It is not my elder brother. It is my YOUNGER BROTHER who will marry her.’
- (65) **yīs** **kòòsù-rà** **ītə** **māāk-o**
 DIST.M tradition-ACC who:COP tell-STL.ADDR
 ‘WHO will tell this traditional wisdom?’

- (66) **bádìghè** **yēē-rā** **kì-ḥ** **k'oyśḥ-be**
 Badign come.NV-NEG exist-DS other.F.DEF-mother
tə **yèè-k-ə**
 COP come.NV-REAL-STI
 'It's not Badign who came; It's ANOTHER FEMALE who came.'

- (67) **yeta** **akàrb** **ás** **t=á** **nata-ra**
 2SG alike 3MS COP=3MS 1SG-ACC
mēdā **bàtā** **k'ìts'ù-t=á** **há=in-k-ə**
 plain(Amh) on.LOC tie-SS=3MS 3MS=go-REAL-STI
 'It is SOMEONE LIKE YOU, who tied me on the field and left.'

It appears that a clefted 3ms-pronoun **ás-ta** (from **ás-t=á** 3MS-COP=3MS ?) functions as a grammaticalised focus marker. In (68), a 1sg clitic is encliticized to the copula. In (69), the subject clitic is not encliticized to the marker.

- (68) **gām-ást=ḥ** **mīt'n-ā-m-ə**
 truly-3MS.COP?=1SG witness-put-IRR-STI
 'I will witness truthfully (fair and square)'

- (69) **há=fōōt-ə** **ge-tə** **áng-ásta**
 3MS=become-STI say-SS much.ELAT-3MS.COP?
k'is=f-k-ə
 drink=3FS-REAL-STI
 'Even so, she has drunk a lot/too much.'

Since the tone marking in my examples is not consistent, another interpretation is possible, namely a proximal demonstrative suffix (-**às**), possibly followed by the locative marker **tà**. Whatever the exact morphological make-up, the form **asta** occurs as an emphasizing device suffixed to e.g. verbs (70) and adverbs (68).

- (70) **ṣūk'-ḥ-s** **hàz** **ūm-t'-ār-āstà**
 porridge-DEF-M PROX.M eat-PASS-NEG-3MS.COP?
há=k'y-á-m-ə
 3MS=remain-put-IRR-STI
 'This porridge cannot be eaten at all.'

15.5.2 Getə-constructions

The word **getə**, from the verb **gé** ‘say’, occurs as clause linker in constructions which contrast propositions (71)-(74). It is uninflected. The marker **-tə** may be the copula or the same-subject marker.

- (71) **nata** **íntfù-k’à** **kès-t-us** **tə=ŋ**
 1SG wood-in go.out-PASS-? COP=1SG
ʔyazu-kì-k-ə **ge-tə** **hāāy** **batà** **bòz-t’-us**
 be.able-exist-REAL-STI say-COP water on.LOC stroll-PASS-?
ʔyáz-ará **ŋ-kì-k-ə**
 be.able-NEG 1SG-exist-REAL-STI
 ‘I am the one who can climb trees, I can’t walk on water.’
- (72) **há-bay-ka** **kì-b** **kì-ntà**
 3MS.POSS-wife-WITH exist-REL exist-COND
há=k’ūs-ʔāts-ā-m **ge-tə** **má-rá** **há=k’é-m-ə**
 3MS=milk-give-put-IRR say-COP eat-NEG 3MS=remain-IRR-STI
 ‘If he is with wife, he will milk and give (it to her), but not drink (himself).’
- (73) **góórà-ka** **íʃi=nōŋ-ā-m** **ge-tə** **ʃókú-ka**
 Amharic-WITH 3PL=talk-put-IRR say-COP Sheko-WITH
nōŋ-m-bàb **yaab** **kááy**
 talk-IRR-father man be.not
 ‘they talk in Amharic; there is nobody to speak Sheko with.’
- (74) **na-ŋ** **gùlbātà** **gèt’ər-k’à**
 1SG-DAT strength(Amh) countryside(Amh)-IN
há-tʃoru-kì-k-ə **ge-tə** **katam-k’-às-tà**
 3MS-finish-exist-REAL-STI say-COP town-IN-PROX.M-LOC
na-ŋ **gùlbātà** **tʃór-ará**
 1SG-DAT strength(Amh) finish-NEG
 ‘My strength is running out in the countryside, but here in the city my strength doesn’t run out.’

In (75), a reaction is given to the question whether there was any difference between the food eaten by a chief and food eaten by his subjects.

- (75) **k'oy-ásta** **ge-tə** | **liyuneti** | **kátí**
 one-3MS.COP? say-COP difference(Amh) yam
ky=ǎ-k-ə
 exist = 3MS-REAL-STI
 'It's the same - difference - there was yam.'

The verb 'to say' is also used in adversative linking expressions.

- (76) **há-fōōt-ə** **ge-te** **hààs-kh** **únà** **gātsù**
 3MS = become-STI say-COP PROX.M-DAT long.ago begin
yēsūs **há=šúb-t=á** **há=k'áy-á-m-ə**
 Jesus 3MS = die-SS = 3MS 3MS = rise-put-IRR-STI
gè-t'ù-ky-àb **noog-ñ-s** **yīz** **íñi-kh** **árà-k'à**
 say-PASS-exist-REL thing-DEF-M DIST.M 3PL-DAT thought-IN
kááy **há=k'e-k-ə**
 be.not 3MS = remain-REAL-STI
 'Nevertheless, the word that long before this had been said 'Jesus will die and rise,' was not yet in their mind.'
- (77) **há=see-k-ə** **ge-tə** **tóórà** **kāārā-kh**
 3MS = see.NV-REAL-STI say-COP downward grave-DAT
bōw-k'à **ʔyárd-ár=á-k'e-k-ə**
 belly-IN enter-NEG = 3MS-remain-REAL-STI
 'Although he saw it, he didn't enter into the grave.'

It is possible to use the **getə**-construction for contrasting constituents, although I have only elicited examples. The one in (78) is with a dative.⁵¹

- (78) **íʒ** **bēskū-kh** **ge-tə** **yí=ʔyáná-ra** **zùʔm-k-ə**
 3FS Besku-DAT say-COP 3FS = pot-ACC lend-REAL-STI
 'It is to Besku that she lent a pot (not to others).'

⁵¹ Cf. Crass & Meyer (2008: 243) who describe a slightly different construction with 'to say' common to many Ethiopian languages.

In (79), **gé** ‘to say’ is the second verb in a compound. There is probably no contrastive focus here, although the activity denoted by the verb is the focal point of the clause.

- (79) **súkú gúrú ʔíʃi = tūūtʃū-ge-t = íʃi tūūtʃū-ge-t = íʃi**
 rope only 3PL = knot-say-SS = 3PL knot-say-SS = 3PL
ʃót'-h-ʃ gāār-k-àbààstà tūtʃ'-àb
 maize-DEF-M bear.fruit-exist?-WHILE knot.PASS-REL
suk-ŋ-s yīs-kh tūūtʃù íʃ = fād-ā-m-ə
 rope-DEF-M DIST.M-DAT knot 3PL = count-put-IRR-STI
 ‘They just knotted and knotted a rope and they counted the knots of the knotted rope while the maize ripened.’

15.5.3 Contrastive topic marker

áyntʃi is tentatively analysed as contrastive topic marker. This analysis agrees with the examples in their context and is also in accordance with the backtranslations of my language informants into Amharic (e.g. **īne-mma** ‘as for me’, cf. Girma and Meyer (2007:28); or **īne rase** ‘I myself’). One language consultant translated **az ayntʃi** as ‘**bässu mīknīyat**’, i.e. ‘on account of him’. The last syllable of **áyntʃi** may relate to the dative case **-tʃi** of which some Omotic language have reflexes. Sheko has **-kh** as dative case; another trace of **-tʃi** may be present in the similative (section 9.2.7).

- (80) **gàm-ástà n = mīt'n-ā-m-ə nat ayntʃi**
 truly-3MS.COP? 1SG = witness-put-IRR-STI 1SG CONTR.TOP
ha-kutʃi gyèw-kì-be tə-k-ee
 2SG.POSS-ckicken chew-exist-REL.F COP-REAL-STI
 ‘I will speak the very truth. I am the one who is eating your chicken.’

(81) **ín-baadù-s-on-ñ-ka**

1PL.POSS-younger.sibling-PL-ASS-DAT-COOR

ín-nini-won-ñ-ka

1PL.POSS-elder.sister-ASS-DAT-COOR

kétā

all

dāmōz

salary(Amh)

íſ = bègù-k-ee

3PL = pay-REAL-STI

ná-ñ

1PL-DAT

áyntſiCONTR.TOP**bēg-ōr = íſ-kì-k-ə**

pay-NEG = 3PL-exist-REAL-STI

‘They paid salary to all our younger brothers and elder sisters. To us they haven’t paid.’

(82) **yok’à í = étſi**

INTJ

1PL = CONTR.TOP**bērgū sàw-bàstà**

year

arrive.NV-WHILE**kóós-tə**

divinate-SS

‘well, we, while the year progressed, divinated and...’

(83) **kāy**

god

antſiCONTR.TOP**há-bàzà**

3MS.POSS-work

ītī

who

bāz-ā-o

work-put-STI.ADDR

‘As for God, who can do his work?’

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Appendix A. Texts

When transcribing and translating texts, some changes have been made for various reasons, e.g. a slip of the tongue or mistake from the speaker has been corrected, or language consultants proposed a different wording. The edited texts are presented here, with the | to mark a pause and [] to mark a place which is edited.

In the footnotes, an asterisk denotes a change made because of grammaticality judgments. The asterisk is only used when I felt certain the construction was wrong. In less clear cases, no asterisk is used. The use of \ \ in the footnotes signals which material was added in editing, while () signals which material was deleted in editing. Where possible, comments from the language consultants have been included.

Text 1. The snake, the man and the fox.

Sāāyā ‘story’ told by Ayna Bejih, 28 April 2008. Present: AB, his son Adane, researcher. Place: house of AB. Story told on request of researcher.

- (1) **şóóz** **tə-t=á** **há=tée-bààstà** |
 snake COP-SS = 3MS 3MS = go.NV-WHILE
 hāāy **tèèr-t=á** **kì-n** |
 water swell-SS = 3MS exist-DS
 ‘There was a snake and while he went, the river was flooded
- (2) **áás-t=ŋ** **ŋ=ʔēē-t=ŋ** **hāāy** **gaamtà**
 how-COP = 1SG 1SG = do.NV-SS = 1SG water far.side.LOC
 sāk-ā-o **há=ge-ŋ** |
 arrive-put-STI.ADDR 3MS = say-DS
 ‘he said: “How do I do and reach the other shore?”
- (3) **yááb** **k’oy** **yəg-ŋ** |
 man one come-DS
 ‘a man came

- (4) **gé=ŋ** **ye-k̀n̩** **kum-k'̀à** | **k'̀ork-n̩-t=ŋ** |
 say = 1SG 2SG-DAT neck-IN twist-MIDD-SS = 1SG
ŋ=gáámtà **sak-ə** **[ha=nata-ra**
 1SG = far.side.LOC arrive-STI 2SG = 1SG-ACC
fín-s-ə]¹ **há=ge-n̩**
 descend-CAUS-STI 3MS = say-DS
 'he (the snake) said: "Say, let me curl around your neck and reach the other shore (but) you should let me descend."
- (5) **ʒaaʒ=á-k-ə** **há=ge-t=á** | **ás-k̀n̩**
 be.good = 3MS-REAL-STI 3MS = say-SS = 3MS 3MS-DAT
kum-k'̀à **an=á** **gáámtà** **sàw-tə** |
 neck-IN put = 3MS far.side.LOC arrive.NV-SS
úʃtə **fín** **há=ge-n̩** |
 down.LOC descend 3MS = say-DS
 'he (the man) said: "Fine," and put him on his neck and reached the shore and said: "Descend!"
- (6) **hàà-s-tà** **fín-éŋ=k'y-á-m-ə** **só**
 PROX-M-LOC descend-NEG.1SG-remain-put-IRR-STI up.there
yī-n-t=ŋ **ŋ=téé-fín-á-m-ə** **há=ge-n̩** |
 DIST-F-LOC = 1SG 1SG = go.NV-descend-put-IRR-STI 3MS = say-DS
 'he said: "I won't go down here. Just over there I'll go and descend."
- (7) **só** **yī-n-t=á** **sàsk-n̩** |
 up.there DIST-F-LOC = 3MS arrive.CAUS-DS
 'he brought him a little further
- (8) **fín-ə** **há=ge-n̩** |
 descend-STI 3MS = say-DS
 'he said: "Descend!"

¹ [(há=*ge-n̩ |) há=nata\ra\ fín-s-ə] : 3MS = say-DS 3MS = 1SG-ACC descend-CAUS-STI.
 Comment: the same person keeps talking, so we can't use the say-verb here.

- (9) **[fín-én=k'y-á-m-ə]**² **só òtì**
 descend-NEG.1SG = remain-put-IRR-STI up.there cow
ás-tà kì-b-tà ɲ=sāw-t=ɲ
 3MS-LOC exist-REL-LOC 1SG = arrive.NV-SS = 1SG
fín-á-m-ə há=ge-n̄ |
 descend-put-IRR-STI 3MS = say-DS
 'He said: "I won't descend. Up there where that cow is I will arrive and descend."
- (10) **ō<y>t-n̄ datà íj=sàk-n̄ |**
 cow <F> -DEF near.LOC 3PL = arrive-DS
 'they arrived near the cow
- (11) **òtì-o na-ɲ mīt'n̄-ə | há=ge-bààstà |**
 COW-STI.ADDR 1SG-DAT witness-STI 3MS = say-WHILE
yáb-m̄-s yē ge-t=á há=?ō<y>t-n̄-kn̄
 man-DEF-M like.this say-SS-3MS 3MS = COW <F> -DEF-DAT
gé-bààstà | ò<y>t-n̄ k'ay-tə | yeta akàrb
 say-WHILE COW <F> -DEF rise-SS 2SG alike
ás [tə]³ nata-ra mēdā batà
 3MS COP 1SG-ACC plain(Amh) on.LOC
k'ìts'ù-t=á | há=?in-k-ə | yír=ɲ
 tie-SS = 3MS 3MS = go-REAL-STI what = 1SG
ɲ=ye-kn̄ mīt'n̄-o yí=ge-n̄ |
 1SG = 2SG-DAT witness-STI.ADDR 3FS = say-DS
 'when he said: "Oh cow, argue for me," while the man said that to the cow, the cow rose and said: "It is someone like you who tied me on the field and left. What shall I say in favour of you?"
- (12) **kàyeēstà há=tee-t=á tee-t=á**
 again 3MS = go.NV-SS = 3MS go.NV-SS = 3MS
tee-t=á | []⁴ dāwā kì-n̄ |
 go.NV-SS = 3MS deer exist-DS
 'again he went and went and went and - there was a deer

² Comment: it starts with **fínénk'yámə**. I.e. added for symmetry.

³ [**tə(-t-á há=)**] : COP-SS = 3MS 3MS = . Or: [**t(=á há=)**] : COP = 3MS 3MS = .

⁴ [**(há=)**] : 3MS. Speaker hesitated. Not clear whether there is a 3MS clitic present on the tape.

Note that the deer gets feminine agreement in the following clauses.

- (13) **dāw-īn** **datà** **sòò-tə** | **dāwā-o** |
 deer-F.DEF near.LOC arrive.NV-SS deer-STI.ADDR
[na-ŋ] **ʃóóʒ** **às-à**⁵ **mīt'ñ** **há=úʃtə**
 1SG-DAT snake PROX.M?-ACC witness 3MS = down.LOC
sak-ə **há=ge-ñ** |
 arrive-STI 3MS = say-DS
 'he arrived near the deer and said: "Oh deer, bear witness for me
 against the snake. Let him reach the ground."

- (14) **nat** **dāwā** **ge** **bútà** **nat** **ziim-tə** |
 1SG deer say outside 1SG chase-SS
géék'ù-ra **īy-k'à** **an-kì-b** **[yeta**
 goat-ACC house-IN put-exist-REL 2SG
tə-r=a-kì]⁶ **yír=ŋ** **ŋ=ye-kh**
 COP-NEG-2SG-exist[Q] what = 1SG 1SG = 2SG-DAT
mīt'ñ-o **yí=ge-ñ** |
 witness-STI.ADDR 3FS-say-DS
 'she said: "Are you not the one who calling me deer chased me
 outside, and put a goat in the house? What could I witness for you?"

- (15) **kàyeēst** **yí=ʔōy=á** **tee-t=á** **tee-t=á**
 again 3FS = deny = 3MS go.NV-SS = 3MS go.NV-SS = 3MS
tee-t=á | **há=yàtñ-be** **datà** **sàk-ñ** |
 go.NV-SS = 3MS 3MS = fox-mother near.LOC arrive-DS
 'again, she refusing, he went and went and went and arrived near a
 fox

- (16) **yàtñ-bey-o** **na-ŋ** **mīt'ñ-ee** **há=ge-ñ** |
 fox-mother-STI.ADDR 1SG-DAT witness-STI 3MS = say-DS
 'he said: "Oh fox, witness for me."

⁵ [s'óós' ása na-ŋ] : snake PROX.M?-ACC 1SG-DAT

⁶ [yet'a\ tə-k] : 2SG COP-REAL. Statement changed into a question during editing.

- (17) **yàtñ-bey** | **gàm-ástà** **ɲ = mĩt'n-ā-m-ə** |
fox-mother truly-3MS.COP? 1SG = witness-put-IRR-STI
[nat aynci]⁷ **ha-kutfi** **gyèw-kì-be**
1SG CONT.TOP 2SG.POSS-chicken chew-exist-REL.mother
tə-k-ə | **ye-kh** **ɲ = mĩt'n-ā-m-ə** **yí = ge-n** |
COP-REAL-STI 2SG-DAT 1SG = witness-put-IRR-STI 3FS = say-DS
‘the fox said: “I will speak the very truth. It is me who is eating your chicken. I will witness for you.”
- (18) **na-ñ** **mĩt'n-ə** **há = gè-b-tà** | **şóóş yeta**
1SG-DAT witness-STI 3MS = say-REL-LOC snake 2SG
fín-tə **[ha = ?é-k-is-tà]**⁸ **sak-ə**
descend-SS 2SG = there-LCT-DIST.M-LOC arrive-STI
yí-ge-n |
3FS = say-DS
‘while he said: “Witness for me,” she said: “Snake, you go down and arrive over there,”
- (19) **şóóş-ñ-ş** **é-k-ĩ-s-t** **sàk-ñ** |
snake-DEF-M there-LCT-DIST-M-LOC arrive-DS
‘the snake arrived over there
- (20) **yáb-m-s** **yeta** **akñ-ààs-tà** **áás-ə**
man-DEF-M 2SG here-PROX.M-LOC stand-STI
yí = ge-n
3FS = say-DS
‘she said: “Man, you stand over here.”
- (21) **há = ?aaş-ñ** |
3MS = stand-DS
‘he stood (over here)

⁷ [nata (ɲ =) aynci]: 1SG (1SG =) CONTR.TOP.

⁸ [\ha = \é-k-is-tà]: \3MS = \ there-LCT-DIST.M-LOC.

- (22) **[yòwk'a]**⁹ **yáb-m-s-ara** | **ye-kh** **şóón** **kááy** **tèè** |
 INTJ man-DEF-M-ACC 2SG-DAT heart be.not COP.Q
ye-kh **kútsú-k'à** **gātŋi** **hàs-à** **há-batà**
 2SG-DAT hand-IN stick PROX.M-ACC 3MS.POSS-on.LOC
bār-ār=a **ha=k'y-â** **yí=ge-t=í** **zeer-n** |
 throw-NEG=2SG 2SG-remain-put.Q 3FS=say-SS=3FS advise-DS
 ‘telling the man: “Well, don’t you have a heart? Won’t you throw
 this stick in your hand on him?” she advised him
- (23) **há=şóós-n-ş-ara** **yéb-m-s** **duufu-t=á**
 3MS=sake-DEF-M-ACC man-DEF-M hit-SS=3MS
wuŋ-n |
 kill-DS
 ‘the man hit the snake and killed it
- (24) **yí=sàw-t=í** **yír=a** **ha=na-ŋ**
 3FS=arrive.NV-SS=3FS what=2SG 2SG=1SG-DAT
āts-o **ge-t=í** **ge-n** |
 give-STI.ADDR say-SS=3FS say-DS
 ‘she came and said: “What will you give me?”
- (25) **zūnkù=ŋ** **ŋ=ye-kh** **āts-ā-m-ə** **há=ge-n** |
 sheep=1SG 1SG=2SG-DAT give-put-IRR-STI 3MS=say-DS
 ‘he said: “I’ll give you a sheep.”
- (26) **ʒaaʒ=á-k-ə** | **yí=ge-n** |
 be.good=3MS=REAL-STI 3FS=say-DS
 ‘she said: “It is good.”
- (27) **īy-tà** **[ha=yēē-t=a]**¹⁰ **kob-ə** **há=ge-n** |
 house-LOC 2SG=come.NV-SS=2SG take-STI 3MS=say.DS
 ‘he said: “Come to the house and take it.”

⁹ [yowk'(=f)] : INTJ = 3FS

¹⁰ [\ha=yēē-t=a] : 2SG = come.NV-SS = 2SG. Not clear why the 2sg proclitic was added in editing.

- (28) **yí = tee-bààstà | wó-k órá-tà**
 3FS = go.NV-WHILE down.there-IN garden-LOC
tée-kí-n | [ɲ = ye-kh kōb-tée-tə ɲ = ?ats-ə]¹¹
 go.NV-exist-DS 1SG = 2SG-DAT take-go-SS 1SG = give-STI
há = ge-n |
 3MS = say-DS
 ‘While she went, he said: “Go and stay down in the garden; let me bring it for you and give it.”

- (29) **íʒ yówk’á órá-tà yí = tee-t = í**
 3FS INTJ garden-LOC 3FS = go.NV-SS = 3FS
kootu-kí-bààstà | há = zūyñ-a
 wait-exist-WHILE 3MS = sheep.F.DEF-ACC
baaʃ-gèw-tə | íʃ-kh báátʃí-ra kyānū batà
 slaughter-chew-SS 3FS-DAT skin-ACC dog on.LOC
sìp’ù-tə | íʃ-kh kum-k’à gyādū an-tə |
 sew-SS 3FS-DAT neck-IN rope put-SS
há = kōb-tee-t = á bōy-ʔin-ə ge-n |
 3MS = take-go.NV-SS = 3MS drive-go-STI say-DS
 ‘Well, while she went to the garden and waited, he slaughtered and ate the sheep and sewed her skin on the dog and put a rope around her neck and took her and went and said: “Go drive it.”

- (30) **yí = zūnkū tə-k-ə ge-t = í**
 3FS = sheep COP-REAL-STI say-SS = 3FS
bōy-kōb-t = í kōōkñ-tà sāw-b-tà |
 drive-take-SS = 3FS road-LOC arrive.NV-REL-LOC
há = wúwúwúw ge-tə íʃ-əra wóóts’-ń ge-n |
 3MS = IDEO say-SS 3FS-ACC bite-1SG say-DS
 ‘she drove it away, saying: “It is a sheep,” and when she reached the road, he barked and wanted to bite her

¹¹ [ye-kh kōb-t *yí = ?ats-ə] : 2SG-DAT take-SS 3FS = give-STI. Mistake of storyteller.

- (31) **yí=k'ay-tə | yááb dàdù-kh | şübū**
 3FS = rise-SS man child-DAT death
yìr=á-k-ə | ge-tə yí=tee-k-ə
 be.less = 3MS-REAL-STI say-SS 3FS = go.NV-REAL-STI
há=gè-t'ù-k-ee |
 3MS = say-PASS-REAL-STI
 'she rose and saying: "Death is less to mankind," she went away, it is said.'

Text 2. Sheko history

Tōsā 'history'. Some passages from an interview with Komtu Shewa Tureta, recorded 23 February 2008. Present: Komtu Shewa Tureta, several men (some elderly, two youth) and some children, Ayna Bejih, and the researcher. Place: under a big tree on the compound of Komtu Shewa.

- (1) **ń-kòòsù-ee | náta | koynəb dàdù tə-k-ə |**
 1PL.POSS-divination-STI 1PL Koynəb child COP-REAL-STI
 'As for our tradition, we are the children of Koynəb.'
- (2) **ń-kòòs yòk'a | ēgītà gè-t'ùb**
 1PL.POSS-divination INTJ Egita say-PASS-REL
kìy=á-k-ə |
 exist = 3MS-REAL-STI
 'Well, our tradition - There is a place called Egita.'
- (3) **é-ká | ēgītà gè-t'àb-is-tà m-bààb**
 there-LCT Egita say-PASS-REL-DIST.M-LOC 1PL.POSS-father
ń-ʔàkù kèès-yèè-k'e-k |
 1PL.POSS-grandfather go.out-come.NV-remain-REAL
 'From there around the place called Egita our fathers and our grandfathers came.'

- (4) **yòk'a** **ń=etji** | **bērgū** **sàw-bàstà** **kōōs-tə** |
 INTJ 1PL = CONTR.TOP year arrive.NV-WHILE divinate-SS
éés-kh **às-tà** **kōōs-tə** | **umt'à**
 honey-DAT PROX.M-LOC divinate-SS food
gāār-m̄-bààb **ń=kōōs-tə** | **umt'à** **múr-ń-bààb**
 ripen-IRR-father 1PL = divinate-SS food ripen(tuber)-IRR-father
ń=kōōs-tə | **yē** **tə=ń** **kì-k** |
 1PL = divinate-SS like.this COP = 1PL exist-REAL
 'well, we, while the year(s) progressed, divinated and we divinated
 for honey here and we divinated grains and tubers to ripen and like
 this we lived.
- (5) **kayēestà** **n=mààk-àb-ee** | **zoyti** | **zaba**
 again 1SG = tell-REL-STI Zoyti Jeba
burzi-ka **koynəb-ka** **k'oy** **tə-k-ə** |
 Burzh-COOR Koynəb-COOR one COP-REAL-STI
náánú-ka **báádù-ka** |
 elder.brother-COOR younger.sibling-COOR
 'Again as for what I am telling, Zoyti, (i.e.) Jeba Burzh¹² and Koynəb
 were one: elder and younger brother.
- (6) **yēē** **ky-à-a** | **zaba** **burzi** **wó-k'à**
 like.this exist-IMPLC-STD Jeba Burzh down.there-LOC
sàm=a | **koynəb** **yè-k** **ēgītà** | (... ...)
 remain = 3MS? Koynəb come.NV-REAL Egita
 'It being like this, Jeba Burzh stayed down there and Koynəb came,
 from Egita.

¹² Zoyti is the name of Jeba Burzh in a spiritual cult.

- (7) **ʃətʰi kōʃ-t-ñ-bàb | baakà āʃ-t-ñ-bàb**
 maize farm-PASS-IRR-father taro plant-PASS-IRR-father
kátʃi yān-tʰ-ñ-bàb | yīs-əra səg-ñtə-ee |
 yam plant.yam-PASS-IRR-father DIST.M-ACC see-COND-STI
yááb-o dādū-o kʼáy-t = ítí baʒ-ə |
 man-STI.ADDR child-STI.ADDR rise-SS = 2PL work-STI
baʒà sààti àlèf = á-k-ə kʼáy-ít-ə |
 work hour(Amh) pass(Amh) = 3MS-REAL-STI rise-PL.ADDR-STI
gúy káátʰ-ít-ə | ʃətʰi kooʃ-ít-ə |
 grassland hoe-PL.ADDR-STI maize farm-PL.ADDR-STI
duukʰ-ít-ə | ń = ge-ñ
 plant.corn-PL.ADDR-STI 1PL = say-DS
 ‘Maize is to be tilled, taro to be planted, yam to be planted;
 regarding this, we say: “Hey people, hey children, rise up and work.
 The time of work is over, wake up. Hoe the grassland. Farm the
 maize, sow it.”

- (8) **íʃi = yòkʰa | səbəʃəb-t = íʃi ààs-tà |**
 3PL = INTJ collect°(Amh)-SS = 3PL PROX.M-LOC
dāānà àn-tʰ-ñtə kʼiʃ-t = íʃi | yīs gōntʃi
 beer put-PASS-COND drink-SS = 3PL DIST.M SIMIL
íʃi-gə-gəri-khə guy-kʰà téé-t = íʃi |
 3PL.POSS-PLUR-head-DAT grassland-IN go.NV-SS = 3PL
íʃi-ʔùmtʰà íʃ = kōōʃ-ō-m |
 3PL.POSS-food 3PL = farm-put-IRR
 ‘Well, they gathered and if beer was ordered, they drank here (i.e.
 on the compound of the traditional leader) and like this they went to
 their own grasslands and they farmed their food.’

- (9) **yīs-ka ta = ń [ń-woom]¹³**
 DIST.M-WITH COP = 1PL 1PL.POSS-blessing°
yaafu-kʰe-k-ə |
 find-remain-REAL-STI
 ‘It has been with this that we found our blessing.’

¹³ Text on tape unintelligible (**idata?**).

- (10) **kōṣṇ yīs há = kōṣ-t-ùb-is-ee | tūrētà-kh**
 farm DIST.M 3MS = farm-PASS-REL-DIST.M-STI Tureta-DAT
há = kōṣ-t-ā-m-ə |
 3MS = farm-PASS-put-IRR-STI
 ‘As for these fields which were farmed, for Tureta would be farmed.’
- (11) **bádi-kh há = kōṣ-t-ā-m-ə |**
 Badi-DAT 3MS = farm-PASS-put-IRR-STI
 ‘For Badi would be farmed.’
- (12) **aybara-kh há = kōṣ-t-ā-m-ə |**
 Aybara°-DAT 3MS = farm-PASS-put-IRR-STI
 ‘For Aybara would be farmed’
- (13) **[ás-kh ts’ōōnī sáánt’ā]¹⁴ bālābātī**
 3MS-DAT top before traditional.leader(Amh)
gè-t’-àb-is yaab-ù-s-kh há = kōṣ-t-ā-m-ə | (... ...)
 say-PASS-REL-DIST.M man-m-PL-DAT 3MS = farm-PASS-put-IRR-STI
 ‘Before the top, they would farm for the people who were called chiefs.’
- (14) **ííru kaay-ntà | kàyēestà ífi = dūp-m-t = ífi |**
 rain be.not-COND again 3PL = gather-MIDD-SS = 3PL
ííru kaay = á-k-ə | ts’yāāts’ù náta-ra
 rain be.not = 3MS-REAL-STI sun 1PL-ACC
wús-ā-m-ə ífi = ge-ntà |
 kill-put-IRR-STI 3PL = say-COND
 ‘If there was no rain, again they would gather and if they said
 “There is no rain, the sun will kill us”
- (15) **ín-bèk’ù ky-ǎ-k-ə |**
 1PL.POSS-spear exist = 3MS-REAL-STI
 ‘We have a spear.’

¹⁴ The text on the tape is short and somewhat cryptic: [as-kn anati] : 3MS-DAT summit(Amh). ‘Before its top’ can either refer to a time, like ‘just before the peak of the year’ or to the grains for sowing, like ‘before the people took the first from their own seeds’.

- (16) **bēk'ñ gyēbtà kōb-kēsū-tə |**
 spear front.yard take-come.out.CAUS-SS
ñ-bààb-o | ñ-?àkù-o | (...)¹⁵
 1PL.POSS-father-STI.ADDR 1PL.POSS-grandfather-STI.ADDR
 ‘Taking the spear out into the front yard, (saying:) “Our father, our grandfather...” ’-

- (17) **yīs-a òškū-tə | ééz kù-ntà | tākā**
 DIST.M-ACC call-SS honey exist-COND mead
[māf'ū-tə dyāās-tə]¹⁶ | yīs-t = ñ
 ferment-SS soak.in.water-SS DIST.M-COP = 1PL
yòwk'a k'òr-n | én-ást
 INTJ beg-DS later.today-3MS.COP?
bērn-ást há = k'yár-á-m-ə |
 tomorrow-3MS.COP? 3MS = beat-put-IRR-STI
 ‘We called these (forefather spirits) and if there was honey¹⁷, fermenting and soaking it in water, made beer and well, we begged; later that day, the following day, it would rain.

- (18) **nata ñ-gərì-k'əra ñ = òšk-ntà éna**
 1SG 1SG.POSS-head-INCL 1SG = call-COND later.today
á = yēē-k'yán-á-m-ə |
 3MS = come.NV-beat-put-IRR-STI
 ‘Even as I called myself, it would rain the same day.’

Proverbs

Below, four **hamsus** ‘proverbs, examples’ are given; the fourth is in the Guraferda (Samərta) dialect.

¹⁵ The speaker explains that he calls his *myangu*, ‘forefather spirits’.

¹⁶ [**dyāās-tə bat'bat'u-tə**] : soak.in.water-ss beat.a.liquid°(Amh)-ss. Commentary: too much Amharic and the speaker should describe the process correctly.

¹⁷ According to one informant, making honey beer was not facultative but essential for the ritual.

- (1) **door** **ōrā-tà** **sàk-n̄** **há=byāk'n̄**
 elephant garden-LOC arrive-DS3MS = speak
bora-k'à **àṣ-tù-k-ə**
 tree.sp-IN plant-PASS-REAL-STI
 'An elephant reached the garden; the spear stood in a *bora* tree.'
 (Context: used to comment on cowardice. The *bora* tree has soft wood, and a man would plant his spear in strong wood.)
- (2) **ūkā** **gù-t'-n̄** **āāp-m̄-s** **ás-tà** **sàw-tə**
 uncle hang-PASS-DS nephew-DEF-M 3MS-LOC arrive.NV-SS
ás-kh̄ **fōrī** **há=k'òòtʃ'ù-k-ə**
 3MS-DAT throat 3MS = scratch-REAL-STI
 'The (maternal) uncle was hanged; the man's sister's son arrived and scratched his throat.'
 (Context: spontaneous grief at someone else's misfortune.)
- (3) **gáydí** **bààb** **zùnk'ù-ra** **há=zīnà** **ààtù-k-ə**
 problem father goat-ACC 3MS = leopard hold-REAL-STI
 'The leopard caught the goat of a poor man.'
- (4) **kátʃí** **kob-as** **kàha** **baat'-n̄**
 yam take-REL.M? quietly turn.away-DS
há=syanga **kob-as** **gàytù-t'n-s**
 3MS = dried.vines take-REL.M? hold-PASS-DECL
há=gè-t'n̄-s
 3MS = say-PASS-DECL
 'The one who took (stole) the yams walked away quietly; the one who took the dried vines was caught, it is said.'
 (Context: Someone can use this proverb to declare his innocence when he is falsely accused or reproached because the circumstances speak against him.)

Appendix B. Alphabet

In 2008, the Bench-Maji Zonal government decided to develop six of the languages spoken within the Zone for the purpose of mothertongue education. Sheko is one of these languages, together with Benchnon, Diizi and three Nilo-Saharan languages.

Before the development of the Sheko alphabet, there were no official written publications in Sheko. Some people wrote informal letters and notes using the Amharic script. Published audio material is restricted to some Christian cassette tapes. The first cassette tape with Sheko songs was released in 2007, entitled *Byargu yeekə* ‘The year has come’, singer Amanuel Kani Shindu, of the Qorxha Mekane Yesus Betel congregation. This tape was quickly followed by some others from different congregations, of which I have only details on *Nàng s’uuno Yesusəra naas’ə* ‘My soul, praise Jesus’ by Sintayo Zerkns from the Shashaqa congregation.

The Sheko alphabet, called **S’oku noogu aab**, was drafted in 2009 after a decision was made for Latin script. This script decision meeting took place on 13-14 February 2009 in Sheko town and was attended by more than 250 Sheko from all administrative districts. Six people were then selected by the Sheko wärädä administration to discuss the details of the alphabet and orthography in workshops for the three Omotic languages, facilitated by SIL Ethiopia. The trial version of the Sheko alphabet is presented here, with the corresponding IPA symbols below:

a b c h c’ d e ə f g h i k m n o p q r s sh s’ t ts u w x xh xs x’ y z zh z’ ’
a b tʃ tʃ d e ə f g h i k m n o p’ k’ r s ʃ ʃ t ts u w t’ tʃ’ ts’ tʃ’ y z ʒ ʒ’

The first booklets in the Sheko orthography were produced by Sheko participants of the workshops and published in September 2009 by the SIL Bench-Maji Zone Language Development and Mothertongue-based Multilingual Education Project, Mizan Teferi. Here is a list:

Kaari S’oku nooguqa kobtəgnbaab maxsafi
(Sheko transition primer, trial edition)

S'oku noogu maxsafi - dadu kotnsabkn

(Sheko book for children, contains short stories and rhymes)

S'oku noogu maxsafi - dadu iiqnsabkn

(Sheko book for teenagers, contains contemporary stories)

S'oku saayka há bazhaka maxsafi

(Sheko stories and practices book, contains some traditional stories and some descriptive texts)

The language workers Xərata Aləmu and Agəgnəw Worku, who are appointed by the Sheko wärädä administration, play a large part in starting up the language work in Sheko. Aim is to provide training as well as the necessary materials in Sheko for education up to grade four.

The language workers have written two poems for this book, to celebrate the development of the language with verbal art.

1. QOY S'OON NÍ FOOTƏ

kookn shadnka daanta kib S'oku yaabonka
 dacha ítira sasku qarnsab bengiqə
 bengs náng təkə azqa ní qaynbab
 náng s'oon qoy antə faadu ní kaysnbab
 unabab qyaastə qarns footutə
 ní dadu tamarstə ní noogu arutə
 wota saanta ní baznbab ní dadukn maakutə
 unaka haaqastaka bazxabara sesutə
 ní noogu ní angusə qoy footutə

ítitə há tuurukn gibta fóotnbab
 S'oku gaydura há gaydu genbab
 S'oku tosəra há etka maaknbab
 qoy s'oon ní footə nátas do təkə

faadu ní kesnbab yeshnta daan gibmtə
 ní S'oku noogukn ara atsutə
 ní dadu tamarstə aska xsafutə
 qoysnsab xsafnbab yeshnta tamarstə
 ní aska xuustə S'oku ní noogu təkə

xsafab Agəgnəw Worku

1. LET US BE ONE HEART

Sheko people in far places and nearby
 in the new era which got you there suitably
 the year is ours in it we will rise
 make our hearts one wipe out hunger
 leave the past and become new
 teach our children consider our language
 in the future what we will do is telling our children
 showing what has been done in the past and now
 expand our language becoming one

who is the one who will be a defence for the land?
 who calls the Sheko problems his problems
 who lends his own voice to Sheko history
 Let us become one heart, it's just us

let's struggle together to remove hunger
 let's give thought to the Sheko language and
 teach our children and write it
 teach because they will write other things
 let's get to know it Sheko is our language

writer Agəgnaw Worku (translation ACH with AW)

UTI

uti umxa təkə
 uti ugn təkə
 uti uqu təkə
 uti ushta há saskamə
 uti... taamu qeexns təkə
 taafutə tikara kib qemə
 qeexns təkə
 qeex'u samara qemə
 uti... aabka seetə há toosnsəra
 aynərá qemə aas'utə
 ararə qemə arara yekn
 uti... s'uun təkə s'ubarə qemə
 s'uma tiskukib təkə
 faadura fayxustə
 faaraka dorsukub təkə
 utab askn ushn z'ararə qemə
 utab ugnta bartəb qena kinta oyarə qemə
 uti uutn zyaama há saskamə
 wo uti ishi gekə
 unutə taamura s'oonkn boqa
 uusu byaqn urni iiru
 wo uti ishi gekə wo uti ishi gekə
 ugn gonchi shishqukib
 wo uti ishi gekə
 umxa footab s'uunkn
 ura durnstə
 umsutə há umxəra
 há gərikn uusu gorqntə
 koru samutə
 kooru qeexutə
 komtu dadura konqa saskutə
 qanqabaabara konqa qaysutə
 qoy gaamta saskutə
 wo uti ishi gekə
 utə utuxə
 utira umə
 utira umsə

2. LOVE

love is food
 love is salt
 love is milk
 love helps up who is on the ground
 love ... is the catching of fire
 will not cool down and extinguish
 is flaming
 will not stop burning
 love... watching a relative
 does not envy him, she stands
 does not think, does not assume for you
 love... is life, she does not die
 is what quenches thirst
 defeats hunger
 is what sets running on the highway
 who loves does not drop the flowers
 does not refuse even the one who fell into the rubbish dump
 love makes from the poor a next of kin
 oh love they say
 ignite the fire in the heart
 spear of the bones, hailstorm
 oh love they say
 which is tasty like salt
 oh love they say
 which is food for life
 wanting to delight
 feeding its fare
 eating her own bones
 remaining behind empty
 to swallow up bareness
 carrying the king's child on the hip
 lifting who is on the bottom to her hip
 bringing it to the other side
 oh love they say
 love and be loved
 eat love
 feed love

writer Xərata Aləmu (translation ACH with AB)

Appendix C. Wordlist

The wordlist uses the Sheko alphabet as listed in Appendix B.

Part 1: S'oku - Ingliz

Part 2: English - Sheko

Abbreviations:

<i>adj.</i>	adjective
<i>adv.</i>	adverb
<i>caus</i>	causative derivation
<i>dem.</i>	demonstrative
<i>f.</i>	feminine gender
<i>H, L</i>	verb class
<i>loc.</i>	with locative case
<i>midd</i>	middle derivation
<i>n.</i>	noun
<i>num.</i>	numeral
<i>nvs</i>	non-velar stem
<i>pass</i>	passive derivation
<i>pron.</i>	pronoun
<i>q.</i>	question word
<i>quant.</i>	quantifier
<i>v.</i>	verb
<i>1,2,3,4</i>	tone
<i>></i>	to be found under

S'oku - Ingliz

aab 4 *n.* 1. eye; 2. fruit **aab bita** face **ñ-aabka ñ seekə** I saw with my own eyes
aas 4 *q.* how?
aas' *H v.* stand, stop
aat *L v.* hold, catch
absi 41 *adv.* upward
adi 33 *n.* footprint, footstep **Xkn**
adiqa after X
aft *L v.* be drunk **aftu baab** drunkard
an *H v.* put, do
anga 33 *quant.* much, very
angus *L v.* make big *pass:* **angux**
ar *H v.* think **ara** 41 *n.* brains, thought **ara an** hope
asha 33 *n.* debt
as' *L v.* plant

as'ku 33 *n.* meat
as'u 33 *n.* leg, foot
atn *L v.* become used to **atnsi** *n.* exercise
ats *L v.* give
ax'u 21 *n.* tooth
ay *L v.* dance
ayn *L v.* think much about, worry, be sad, long for **ayna** 33 *n.* desire, wish, grief
az 4 *pron.* he **asa** 42 him

baab(a) 31 *n.* father **babm** 41 father (term of address)
baabu 33 *n.* male
baachi 44 *n.* skin
baadu 41 *n.* younger sibling
baaka 21 *n.* taro (*Colocasia esculenta*)
baaku 41 *n.* firestones
baar *H v.* take a mouthful
baara 33 *n.f.* girl teenager, unmarried woman
baara 31 *num.* hundred
baarin 31 *n.f.* star
baas *L v.* search, want, like
basus *v caus.* need **nàng há**
basuskikə It is necessary for me
baash *H v.* slaughter
baaya 33 *n.* lion
bacha 33 *n.* paternal uncle
bacha 21 *n.* bed
bakara 441 *n.* griddle
bakasha 331 *n.* stool
bakn 44 *n.* molar tooth
bambu 44 *n.* grave, pit
bangar *H v.* return, answer
bar *H v.* become blind
bar *L v.* 1. boil, cook (of liquid); 2. throw away, abandon; 3. do completely, finish **ñ**
xesbarukə I finished baking
barka 33 *n.* thigh
barkay 331 *n.f.* grivet monkey
barm *L v.* become adult (girl)

barxhush *H v caus.* wash, bathe
pass: barxhux
basn 44 *n.* doorstep
baxa 33 *n.* soft cheese
baxh *H v.* voice your anger
bay 41 *n.f.* mother, female 31
 mother (term of address)
bayn wife
bazh *L v.* work, make, do **bazha**
 21 *n.* work
ba' *L v.* carry on the back **kum**
ba' embrace
beg *L v.* pay
bengi 33 *n.* year
besk, bes'k *L v.* divide
bets *L v.* leave standing while
 cutting weed around; put
 neatly together
bez *L v.* grow, sprout out, be
 produced
bəndu 33 *n.* clan of potters and
 hunters
bii 33 *n.* feather
biik *H v.* stop (of rain)
bitsu 31 *n.* fern
bokn 44 *n.* day
bonq *L v.* burn
boob *H v.* speak in your sleep
boog *H v.* harvest yam *caus:*
bosq
boor *H v.* move to another
 region
booru 33 *n.* harvested farmland
boota 33 *n.* dust
boox *L v.* paint, rub, smear
boox' *H v.* dig up, scrape
booz *L v.* stroll, walk, visit
bora 21 *n.* goiter
bota 41 *n.* calebash half
bota 33 *n.* mortar **botn** *L v.*
 grind in mortar
bow 33 *n.* stomach, belly **bow**
annkib fool **bow kaaf** mislead
box'a 21 *n.* shelf or sitting place
 from mud
boy *L v.* drive (cattle, vehicle)
boys *L v.* wed **boysu** 44 *n.*
 dowry
buchi 33 *n.* wound

buc'a 21 *n.* nest
buda 31 *n.* pumpkin
buh *H v.* bark
bur *H v.* 1. fly, flow by; 2. ask
 payment of debt
bur *L v.* flood
bura 44 *n.* waistcloth
but *L v.* throw
buta 41 *loc.* outside
buuts *H v.* cut (horizontal
 movement), clear ground
byaa 21 *n.* calf
byaasu 33 *n.* crocodile
byad *H v.* be slippery
byah *H v.* open
byaqn 33 *n.* spear
byarn 33 *adv.* tomorrow
daab *L v.* create
daadu 33 *n.* lightning
daadu 13 *n.* reciprocal labor
daag *L v.* invite *pass: datk*
daaka 21 *n.* yeast
daaq *H v.* taste acid (fruit)
daam *L v.* plant sticks for yam
daan *H v.* be together
daana 31 *n.* beer made from
 grain
daaxhu 31 *n.* worm
dacha 12 *adv.* right, correct,
 straight
dadu 33 *n.* child **dedns** boy
daygn girl **dadu kotns** baby,
 little child **dadu iiqns**
 teenager
dafa 12 *ideo.* slowly, careful
damxhara 211 *n.* ginger
darq *L v.* be cut in long pieces
daya 21 *n.* bow
da' *H v.* batter
deeb *L v.* 1. bury; 2. beat, strife
deyna 21 *n.* burial site in forest
dəwa 41 *n.* python
dəwa 33 *n.f.* deer
dich *L v.* sneeze
didu 33 *n.* scar
diiq *L v.* be anointed, painted
caus: disk **diiqu** 21 *n.*
 ointment, cream, paint

- diiqa** 31 *n.* mute, dumb
diin 4 *n.* erosion, landslide
dikn 31 *n.* heel
dincha 13 *n.* black spotted maize
dinga 13 *adv.* round
dinguru 331 *n.* viper
dir *L v.* sweep, brush
dod *L v.* be fresh (butter), be young (wood)
dogama 131 *n.* dove
donqa 33 *n.* (red durra) sorghum
dook *L v.* roast uncooked food on fire
donq *H v.* dip
door *L v.* run
doosha 33 *n.* baboon
dooz *L v.* trudge, make slow headway
dori 33 *n.* rainbow
duba 41 *n.* maggot
dubdus *H v caus.* collect *pass: dubdux, midd: dubm*
dud *H v.* be deaf **dudu baab** deaf
duf *H v.* hit
dufara 331 *n.* elephantiasis
duk 44 *n.* jawbone
duqasha 211 *n.* garlic
duqux *L v pass.* be spoiled by vermin
dum *L v.* hit with fist
dunki 21 *n.* basket used for honey
dupqn 31 *n.* small leaf at bottom of ensete
duuq *L v.* sow corn
dyaas *L v.* immerse, soak in water
dyabxsu 33 *n.* dung (of cow)

ed 4 *n.* mouth, rim (of cup)
eeb *L v.* be blessed (by father)
eed 3 *n.* door
eekn 33 *n.* cabbage (*Brassica caranata*)
eena 44 *n.* wealth, riches **eena baab** rich person
eeri 33 *n.* hare, rabbit
eez 4 *n.* honey

eeza 21 *n.* cat
eg *L v.* do *nvs: ee*
eki 33 *n.* cattle, money, resources **eki baab** rich person
ema 21 *n.* so-and-so
ena 41 *adv.* later today
erfu 44 *n.* wild ensete
es *H v.* take honey from a hive
exs *H v.* be sweet

faad *L v.* count **f(y)aadi** 44 *n.* number
faad 2 *n.* body
faafa 41 *n.* honeycomb
faafa 33 *n.* papaya
faan *v.* saw
faana 31 *n.* fork (in branch, in road)
fadus *L v caus.* make hungry *pass: fadux* **faadu** 41 hunger
fak *L v.* split, be dissected *caus: fakus*
far *H v.* clear ground
fara 33 *n.* horse
fay *L v.* be saved, healed
fayx *L v.* be weak, tired
feesh *H v.* spend the day
fer *L v.* blow
fik *H v.* be convenient **fikus** *H v caus.* put in order, prepare, fix
fin *H v.* descend, dismount
fits *L v.* walk, take big step
fooq *H v.* disclose, unlock, open
foot *L v.* become, happen
fora 21 *n.* hole (in the ground)
fori 33 *n.* throat
fosq *L v.* skin, cut a slice
forxhush *L v caus.* undress *pass: forxhux*
funchu 44 *n.* chaff, hulls
funchu 33 *n.* honey grates
fur *H v.* slip through, under
furfi 44 *n.* storm, hurricane
fus *L v.* finish a period of time
fuur *L v.* trade, buy, sell *pass: furx* 1. be traded; 2. obey
fuurkob buy **fuurbar** sell
fyaan *L v.* peel

fyaanu 44 *n.* frog
fyaaxs *L v.* shave

gaachu 33 *n.* teff (*Eragrostis tef*)
gaam *H v.* roast
gaamta 41 *loc.* other side, bank
 (of river)

gaan *L v.* make consenting or
 encouraging noises
gaar *L v.* bear fruit (of grains)
gaazh *L v.* bite, itch
gaazhu 33 *n.* sideboards,
 whiskers

gaaz' *L v.* prune
gab *H v.* collect, be gathered
gab *L v.* gossip **gaba** 41 *n.*
 gossip

gaba 33 *n.* market

gachi 33 *n.* stick

gad *L v.* start (something)

gagi 41 *n.* revenge **gagi baab**
 enemy

gama 12 *adv.* truly, really
gamabaab truth

gang *L v.* fly

ganxsu 44 *n.* noise

ganxsu 31 *n.* dewlap

gap *L v.* roast under hot stones

gar *L v.* sing drunkenly

gara 33 *n.* 1. joke; 2. albino skin

garga 33 *n.* termite **garga iy**
 termite hill

garus *L v caus.* greet *pass:* **garux**
garusn greet each other

garz' *L v.* be not cooked well,
 stay unripe

gask *H v.* insult

gashtu 41 *n.* pig, swine

gatsn *L v.* **nàng há gatsnkə** he
 helped me

gax' *L v.* be greedy

gaydu 44 *n.* problem

gaz *L v.* snap, break *midd:* **gazn**
 snap (spontaneously)

gazhira 131 *n.* long knife

ge *H v.* say

gebm 31 *q.* how much

gyabta 31 *n.* front yard

geen *L v.* pour with a cup **geeni**
 33 *n.* gourd with long neck

geequ 41 *n.* goat

gees'u 33 *n.* lower back

geetu 31 *n.* waterpipe

geex' *L v.* laugh **geex'u** 31 *n.*
 laughter, **durx'a geex'** smile

gera 44 *n.* hill, upward slope

gerbi 33 *n.* armpit

gəri 41 *n.* head **nàng gəri** my
 head, **h-gəri** myself, **geriqə**
 up, above **Xkn gərta** above,
 more than, greater than X

gibm *L v.* wrestle, struggle

gibu 41 *n.* cloud

gich *H v.* lean

gift *L v.* boast, brag

giis' *L v.* pull, abduct for
 marriage

giixs *L v.* rub (ointment), batter
 (on millstone)

giizhu 41 *n.* cheek

ginginga 131 *n.* milipede

ginq *v.* nod off, doze

girfu 33 *n.* 1. spider; 2. trap

girm *L v.* ruminant

gixs *L v.* girdle, dress (trousers,
 skirt)

gob *H v.* jump

gob 2 *n.* welkin **gob saaxsákə** It
 has dawned, become light

gofara 211 *n.* toad

gogu 33 *n.* tortoise

gona 31 *adv.* yesterday

gooba 33 *n.* bed of mud

gooch *H v.* bite (of snake)

goof *L v.* brood (of chicken)

goom *H v.* pile, heap, stack

gooma 33 *n.* someone born in
 the same month, equal

goona 33 *n.* beehive half

goona 21 *n.* mat

goora 41 *n.* Amhara, north

Ethiopian, outsider, stranger

goorz'n 44 *n.* gullet, throat

goosu 33 *n.* gourd

goota 31 *adv.* midnight

gooxsn *L v.* be white

gopara 331 *n.* bark of tree

gorz'u 13 *n.* lizard
gotn *L v.* be far, distant
goydu 31 *n.* guereza monkey
gozh *H v.* praise
gub 4 *n.* chest
gumt *L v.* kneel down
gupm *L v.* be turned upside down
gurxi 33 *n.* navel
gushn 44 *n.* porcupine
gut *L v.* hang, string up
guuru 44 *quant.* only
guy 4 *n.* farmland which has to be tilled
guym *L v.* bow down, worship
gyaamu 33 *adv.* evening
gyaasu 33 *n.* shield
gyadu 33 *n.* rope
gyanu 33 *n.* coffee (plant, drink)
gyanu aab coffee beans
gya' *L v.* eat, chew

haak *H v.* pick, gather
haaqasta 411 *adv.* now
haara 44 *n.* knife
haaz 1 *dem. m.* this
haani 11 *dem. f.* this
haashu 31 *n.* tail
haatu 41 *n.* razor
haay *L v.* spend the night
haay 3 *n.* water
haay 2 *n.* 1. ear; 2. leaf of ensete or yam
hamshu 41 *n.* sand
hark *L v.* respect a taboo **harku** 44 *n.* taboo
harxh *H v.* rip, tear, break
has'kn *L v.* be wide
hayqa 21 *adv.* up
hays *L v.* 1. shut one's mouth, be quiet 2. manage, govern
humxha 41 *n.* midrib of ensete

iid *H v.* fetch water
iiq *H v.* be old
iir *see iid*
iiru 44 *n.* rain **iiru qyarákə** It rains
iits *L v.* boil (drinks)

iiz' 4 *n.* new tubers that form after yam is harvested
in *H v.* go (*alt. of tæg*)
inchu 41 *n.* wood, tree
ins *L v.* be pregnant
ints *L v.* be heavy, difficult
irish *H v.* ululate
irxhush *L v caus.* rub (dry material) *pass: irxhux*
is *L v.* close
isn 33 *n.* beehive
ishi 41 *pron.* they
iti 44 *pron.* you pl.
iti 33 *q.* who?
iw *L v.* live, reside
ixh *H v.* bewitch, do evil **iixha**
baab witch
iy 3 *n.* house
izh 4 *pron.* she
izhama 211 *n.* hippo

kaaf *L v.* 1. build; 2 add, cover
kaam *H v.* be lit
kaama 44 *n.* flame, spark
kaari 21 *adv.* toward
kaaru 33 *n.* cementary, grave
kaaru 41 *n.* canine tooth
kaas *L v.* play **kaasu** 31 *n.* game
kaas' *H v.* warm oneself by the fire
kaats *H v.* be ripe *caus: kats*
cook
kaax *H v.* hoe, dig
kaay *H v.* be absent, lack *caus: kays*
lose
kaazh *H v.* be happy, glad
kaazha 41 *n.* joy
kabe 32 *n.* dream
kabi 44 *n.* axe
kabi 21 *n.* shoulder
kacha 12 *adv.* already, yet
kachi 44 *n.* yam (*Dioscorea*)
kada *n.* top part
kadi 31 *n.* cactus (*Euphorbia candelabrum*)
kadu 33 *num.* three
kafa 21 *n.* bird
kaga 44 *n?* left

- kamdi** 31 *n.* cow which has given birth often
kant *H v.* beg milk
kanta 31 *n.* carrying basket
kaq *H v.* suspend, hang up
kara 21 *n.* leaf
karb *L v.* be strong, powerful
karbu 44 *n.* strength
karm 33 *n.* fence
karka 31 *n.* forest
karsi 44 *n.* doll representing deceased person
kasa 21 *n.* mamba snake
kask *H v.* be cheerful, laugh out
kasn 44 *n.* whiskers
kashkush *H v caus.* harvest
kashu 44 *n.* garbage, dirt
kat *v.* gallop
kawa 21 *n.* fat
kay 31 *n.* god, idol **kaym** *f.* reddish sun disc
keec' *H v.* spin, twist
kees *L v.* climb, go out, up
keexh *v.* snore
kengaxha 441 *n.* pipe
keri 31 *n.* finger
keru 33 *n.* pelvis
kesa 41 *n.* thatch, reeds
ket *H v.* plaster (with mud)
keta 41 *quant.* all
ki *L v.* be, exist, live **X nàng**
kiákə I have X.
kob *L v.* take
kobxh *H v.* make roofbeams,
kobxha 41 *n.* roofbeam
koh *H v.* ripple, murmur (of water)
komtu 33 *n.* king, chief, traditional leader
konda 44 *n.* jug
kongu 33 *n.* wing, fin
koobu 33 *n.* cock
koochi 41 *n.f.* mother-in-law
kooka 44 *n.* lowest point of valley
kookn 33 *n.* road, path, place
koon *v.* prophesy, foretell
koos *L v.* divinate, practice traditional customs **koosu** 21 *n.* divination, culture, traditional practice, wisdom
koos' *L v.* farm, plough, till
kos'n 33 *n.* farm, field
koot *H v.* wait, look after **hà-gəri koot** beware!, you are warned
kooc' *H v.* 1. vomit; 2. throw a spear
kooya 41 *n.* bridge
kor *H v.* be dry
koru 31 *adv.* empty
kos'qn 31 *n.* wedge
kota 42 *quant.* few, little
koxa 31 *n.* comb
koy *L v.* 1. answer a call; 2. joke with somebody
koyg *L v.* bring *nvs koy*
kubm 33 *num.* four
kuchi 41 *nf.* chicken, hen
kuc'u 44 *n.* arm, hand **kuc'u**
kumu elbow
kum 2 *n.* neck
kums' *L v.* be pulverized, crumbled (by hand)
kundus *L v caus.* push *pass:* **kundux**
kur *L v.* heft, lift up
kurkns *L v.* bore, do not interest
kush *L v.* be ill, sick
kuura 31 *n.* donkey
kuysn *H v.* drizzle
kuzhu 33 *n.* cockscomb
kyaz 3 *n.* lord, chief
kyab *L v.* burn farmland (**guy**)
kyaka 31 *n.* border
kyam *L v.* meet
kyangar *H v.* curse
kyanu 33 *n.* dog
kyat *H v.* sting (of bee)
kyats *L v.* fell (a tree)
ma 4 *adv.* earlier today
maak *L v.* tell
maara 31 *n.* beads
maaru 21 *n.* mercy **maaru qor** repent
maaya 21 *n.* raincape of grass

mad *H v.* deceive **maadi** 33 *n.* deceit
mak *H v.* measure in cups
maka 33 *n.* best man, mediator in marriage
man *H v.* braid, plait hair
manta 44 *n.* braid
mar *H v.* stink, smell bad
mash *H v.* 1. be brave; 2. be patient **mashknsh** courageous, patient
mas'a 33 *n.* spirit
mati 41 *n.* clay cup (for woman)
max *L v.* ferment
meen 2 *n.* buffalo
meer *H v.* be thick, fat
mixi 31 *n.* chili pepper
mixn *L v.* witness
miznx *L v.* despise
mooq *L v.* break off, destroy
moy 21 *adv.* quick
mukmuri 131 *n.* top ensete leaf, still curled up
mur *H v.* bear fruit, ripen (of tubers)
mura 41 *n.* mead
muru 44 *n.* lower part of yam tuber, corm (ensete bulb)
mus'a 41 *n.* moss
mus'qn *L v.* swim
muti 33 *n.* cubit, forearm
muz' *L v.* shred
muz'rn *L v.* melt
myaaqu 44 *n.* egg
myangu 33 *n.* forefather spirit
myas *H v.* hew, carve
myawu 41 *n.* jackal

na 3 *q.* where?
naanu 44 *n.* elder brother
naar *H v.* blow (of wind), make dry **naaru** 33 *n.* wind, weather
naas' *L v.* praise, thank, honor **naas'i** 44 *n.*
nar *H v.* dance together (of two persons)
nas'a 33 *n.* husband
nàta 22 *pron.* I **nàng** 21 *to/for* me

náta 42 *pron.* we **náng** 41 *to/for* us
neep *L v.* be ripe and good (of tubers, pumpkin)
nefa 42 *adv.* always
nesha 13 *adv.* firmly
nexs *H v.* taste food on your hand
nibm *H v.* dew
niini 44 *n.* elder sister
nin *H v.* kiss
niqn *L v.* be pulverized
noki 33 *n.* tonsil
nong *L v.* talk **noogu** 41 *n.* word, language, matter
nooxha 21 *n.* leech
nori 33 *n.* butter
nunq *H v.* suck
nuuxu 33 *n.* 1. wild animal 2. thing, device
nuuc'u 31 *n.* hyena
nyaas *L v.* bear a child
nyaku 33 *n.* young man, bachelor **nyakn** *L v.* become adult (of man)

ochi 44 *n.* mushroom
oc' *L v.* cough
om *H v.* boast
om *L v.* be replete, more than satisfied
oof *H v.* dress
oon 4 *n.* plain, flat ground
oor *v.* set a snare **oora** 21 *n.* snare
ooru 33 *n.* fish
ooxh *H v.* 1. ask; 2. visit **ooxha** 44 *n.* question
or *L v.* make a sound (of animals)
or *H v.* urinate **ooru** 44 *n.* urine
ora 44 *n.* wet dung
orata 33 *loc.* (in the) garden
orxhush *L v caus.* peel (e.g. hairs of taro) *pass: orxhux*
orq *L v.* peel banana
ors'a 41 *n.* cardamom
os'a 44 *n.* dry dung
os'k *L v.* call

oti 31 *n.f.* cow *n.m.* cattle
oy *L v.* refuse **oysns** *L v.* look
 down on

peep *H v.* pray **peepu** 21 *n.*
 prayer
peexa 31 *n.* grass used to thatch
 a roof
peezu 21 *n.* ring on grass roof
piizi 44 *n.* hole as small as a
 pinprick
puxha 44 *quant.* many, much
purq *L v.* be uprooted, fallen
 down

qaab *H v.* pour out
qaam *H v.* bring up (someone
 else's) child
qaax' *L v.* stone
qaax'u 41 *n.* red army ant
qaaza 41 *n.* trap
qabxsi 33 *n.* cockroach
qabus *L v caus.* order, command
qabust *L v.* obey
qambu 13 *n.* settlement, village
qamu 41 *n.* servant, slave
qanda 41 *n.* backyard
qapm 44 *n.* big gourd holder
qapxs *H v.* cut (e.g. with scissors)
qarns 44 *adj.* new, raw (meat)
 green (nearly ripe maize)
qarx'u 44 *n.* wrist or ankle joint
qash *H v.* pluck, break fruit from
 stem
qaxi 33 *n.* ring
qay *H v.* rise
qed *v.* swear **qeda** 33 *n.* oath
qeeda 41 *n.* ring for wearing
 things on the head
qeeru 33 *n.* door (old style)
qeexs *L v.* 1. be sharp, hot; catch
 (of fire) 2. be roasted (of
 cooked food)
qeexs *H v.* get iron tool off its
 wooden handle
qeex *L v.* swallow, eat (honey),
 take medicine
qeex' *H v.* be cold
qeqiri 441 *n.* dung (of goat)

qemti 31 *n.* co-wife
qenq *v.* ring a bell
qepm 41 *n.* peg, nail
qesha 44 *n.* handle, ear
qeshk *H v.* stab with finger, hit
 with knuckles
qes' *v.* be wonderful, frightening
qiis' *L v.* milk
qiixs *L v.* tie cattle
qiix *L v.* grind dry material on
 millstone
qiq *H v.* intertwine
qirq *H v.* bend, curve, twist
qis' *H v.* drink
qof *L v.* estimate, guess
qorq *H v.* see qirq
qooxh *L v.* scratch
qopm 33 *n.* eyelash
qor *L v.* beg
qosa 21 *n.* basket
qoy 2 *num.* one, a certain
qoysns 33 *adj.* other, different,
 unique, special
qozh *L v.* be strong, hard
qud *L v.* cover **qudi** 31 *n.* lid,
 cover
qumu 33 *n.* knee
qundi 44 *n.* buttocks, bottom
quxs *L v.* cut
qyaaf *H v.* kick
qyaas *H v.* leave, let go,
 abandon (an activity)
qyar *H v.* beat

saaku 41 *n.* downward slope,
 ravine
saanta 41 *loc.* in front
saaqu 33 *n.* sky
saaxnta 441 *adv.* in the morning
saaxs *H v.* dawn
saaya 31 *n.* story (for fun)
saba 33 *n.* mane
sagn 21 *num.* nine
sak *L v.* arrive, reach *nvs:* **sa**,
caus: **sask** bring (out), invent,
 show the way
sam *L v.* remain
san 2 *n.* forehead
san *L v.* be turned, go around

sar *H v.* be hot
seema 41 *n.* tusk
seh, syah *H v.* erase, wipe out
sekiri 331 *n.* wattle, sixth finger or toe
sæg *H v.* see *nvs:* see, *caus:* ses show *pass:* sex be visible
siiku 33 *n.* chin
siip *L v.* sew sipm 33 *n.* awl
siis *H v.* hear
sinxu 41 *n.* nose
sir *H v.* be dented, cracked
siskn 41 *n.* scorpion, crab
sita 44 *n.* sword
sitsu 44 *n.* hair
so 4 *adv.* up there
soq *L v.* lie down, sleep
sub *L v.* be red
suku 44 *n.* rope (esp. of humxha)
suma 41 *n.* name
sumini 131 *n.* 25 ct coin
sunda 31 *n.* 1. bridge of rope 2. cloth for carrying children on the back
sutn *H v.* be sharp, pointy
syaaf *L v.* be wet, be rotten
syaak *H v.* give birth (of animal)
syaaru 33 *n.* red soil

shaad *H v.* be long, tall
shaaku 41 *n.* firesticks
shaaqu 33 *n.* soup
shaam *L v.* glitter
shaan *H v.* break
shaanu 44 *n.* hoof
shaar *L v.* 1. rob, snatch; 2. sing
shaara 31 *n.* song
shach *H v.* herd
shafa 44 *n.* fingernail
shak *H v.* weave
shapk *v.* be thin
shapm 33 *n.* bee larvae
sharux *L v pass.* be asleep (of body part)
shash *H v.* wet, make sharp
sheen *L v.* be bad
sheema 33 *n.* clothing
shenshi 44 *n.* 50 ct coin
shey *H v.* forget

she'i 33 *n.* stone, rock
shänku 33 *ideo.* quickly
shəxi 41 *n.* maize
shəxu 31 *n.* earthworm
shi 4 *n.* dung (of dog)
shibar *H v.* stroke over the head
shiif *L v.* add
shiiru 33 *n.* abundance, prosperity
shima 31 *adv.* day after tomorrow
shiq *L v.* be short
shiqu 31 *n.* thorn
shira 44 *adv.* two days after tomorrow
shishk *L v.* be delicious, tasty
shishkn 41 *n.* claw, fingernail
shishu 44 *n.* side
shitn 41 *n.* pool, lake
shänku 33 *ideo.* quickly
shoota 44 *n.* little filter for coffee
shooy *L v.* spill (of liquids)
shor *L v.* be afraid
shora 44 *n.* locust
shorkn 33 *n.* grasshopper
shurxn *L v.* shrink

s'aad 3 *n.* water (well) containing minerals
s'aan *H v.* peek
s'aan *L v.* saw
s'aap *H v.* tear off
s'aar *L v.* cry (of chicken)
s'an *H v.* become bald **s'aana** 41 *n.* baldness
s'əfi 41 *n.* grass or leaf used to fan oneself
s'okn *L v.* wrap (clothes)
s'oku 44 *n.* Sheko
s'ongu 33 *n.* lyre
s'onqu 44 *n.* lie
s'oog *H v.* shove, move aside
s'oon 4 *n.* heart
s'oona 31 *n.* booth
s'oonu 33 *n.* squirrel
s'oota 33 *n.* coals
s'ooz' 4 *n.* snake
s'orxn 13 *n.* lung

s'os'kn *L v.* be light, easy
s'ow *3 n.* cold
s'oy *4 n.* stick, tool for pushing
 or holding something
s'ub *H v.* 1. die; 2. be tender (of
 meat)
s'ubu *33 n.* death
s'uf *H v.* smell nicely
s'ukn *44 n.* eyebrow
s'uqa *31 n.* stiff porridge
s'um *H v.* make thirsty
s'us'ku *44 n.* weed
suuqu *41 n.* handle
s'uun *3 nf.* life
s'u' *H v.* rest **s'u'a** *41 n.* rest,
 chapter

taaf *H v.* cool down
taamu *33 n.* fire
taashu *33 n.* skirt of grass
taazn *33 n.* trumpet, horn
taft *L v.* touch
taka *33 n.* mead, beer
tamu *44 num.* ten
tara *21 n.* 1. wasp; 2. spur
tarti *41 n.* butterfly
techa *31 n.* hip
tee see **təg**
teema *31 n.* honey (liquid)
teer *L v.* swell
teresha *441 n.* coffee pot
təg *H v.* go *nvs:* *tee*
tig *L v.* shake, trill *caus:* *tigus*
tiim *L v.* mock
tiira *31 n.* shadow
tiit *H v.* look, watch, stare, gaze
tiiti *33 n.* 1. back; 2. corm
 cortex of ensete
tiits *L v.* dismiss
tik *L v.* be extinguished, be
 quenched (of thirst), be turned
 off (of light) *caus:* *tisk*
tir *L v.* throw tumblingly
toga *44 n.* mud
tooq *L v.* thunder
toopa *31 n.* stem (of ensete)
toora *44 adv.* downhill
toos' *L v.* add to water
toot *H v.* erect, put on its base

tooz *4 n.* relative
tor *H v.* plant, stick into the
 ground
tora *31 adv.* open
tori *41 n.* three-legged fork
tosa *33 n.* story, myth, history
tubsu *33 num.* seven
tucha *21 n.* upper part of a yam
 tuber
tufk *L v.* collide, bump into
tukn *31 n.* hole
tumba *33 n.* tobacco
tuqar *H v.* spring forth, gush
tura *31 n.* skin to decorate an
 artefact
tura *21 n.* rainy season
tuun *L v.* lead people
tuun *4 n.* spring
tuuri *33 n.* tree stump
tuuru *41 n.* land, ground, earth,
 soil **tuurukn gəriqa** (in) the
 world
tuusu *44 n.* pole in the middle of
 the house
tuuc' *L v.* knot, tie **tuuc'u** *31 n.*
 knot
tyaaq *L v.* cut a yam root
tyaara *41 n.* gourd half for
 drinking (for men)
tyarbu *33 n.* drum

uba *44 n.* see **guy**
ubs *L v.* creep (of baby)
udg *L v.* become night, darken
udu *44 n.* ensete
ugn *41 n.* salt
uka *33 n.* maternal uncle
uka *21 n.* cap, hat
uqər *H v.* crow (of cock)
uqu *33 n.* milk
um *H v.* eat **umxa** *21 n.* food
un *L v.* ignite
una *41 adv.* in the past, long ago
underkn *441 adv.* day before
 yesterday
urgn *41 n.* hail
us'n *33 n.* horns
ushn *44 n.* flower

ut *H v.* love, want **uti** *33 n.* love, will
utsi *44 n.* fly
uc'u *44 num.* five
uusu *41 n.* bone
uutn *31 n.* rat
uzi *21 n.* firstborn

woka *44 adv.* down there **wota** *41* down there, later
womfa *33 n.* canoe
wonxhi *44 n.* grass
woog *H v.* sit down
wooq *H v.* 1. be smooth, soft; 2. be weak, tired; *caus:* **wosq** tire
woom *L v.* bless
woor *H v.* draw from sheat
wooxs *H v.* bite, sting (of bees)
woozh *L v.* refuse to ripen
wopmbe *212 n.* chameleon
wor *L v.* miss the mark
wos *L v.* send **wosa** *33 n.* message, letter
woskin *41 q.* when?
woshkn *L v.* move, be in motion
wumx' *L v.* rinse your mouth
wunq *L v.* steal
wurbm *H v.* be turbid
wurxsu *44 n.* tadpole
wusk *L v.* enter, insert
wusha *42 adv.* much
wus' *H v.* kill
wus'k *L v.* untie
wut *H v.* fall
wuuru *33 n.* flesh (of fruit)

xaagn *33 num.* two
xara *41 n.* injera
xechu *13 n.* pebble
xef *H v.* be plump, fat
xemsi *44 n.* stone used to steady a pot on the fire
xep *H v.* carry (on shoulder, on head)
xerk *L v.* push forward, shove
xes *L v.* bake bread, injera
xip *L v.* fill up, close,
xoop *L v.* be baptised
xosqn *L v.* leak

xos' *H v.* make a sound of beating with one's fingers
xur *L v.* roll up **san xurm** frown
xuum *L v.* sheave **xuma** *21 n.* sheaf
xuum *4 n.* mountain
xuus *L v.* know **xuusi** *33 n.* knowledge
xyabm *L v.* be thick
xyam *4 n.* breast

xhaaq *L v.* have headache
xhaaru *41 n.* (stone in) waterfall
xhaaru *33 n.* medicine
xhaaru *21 n.* twin
xharku *33 n.* dew
xharsh *L v.* carve
xhir *H v.* be fresh, unripe, wet
xhirnsh *44 adj.* green, unripe
xhix *L v.* stretch (muscles)
xhof *H v.* drip
xhor *H v.* finish, come to an end
caus: **xhorsh** finish, bring to a close
xhoy *H v.* go mad
xubi *44 n.* small knife

xsaar *L v.* be filtered (of liquid)
xsah *H v.* dry, ripen
xsama *41 n.* eagle
xsapm *33 n.* root
xsarkn *H v.* spew, spit far
xsaw *L v.* darken, be black
xserti *21 n.* rue
xsezga *21 n.* udder
xsiiqn *41 n.* charcoal
xsir *4 n.* clay
xsirku *44 n.* diarrhea **xsirku** goom lie, tell untruth
xsog *L v.* bear fruit (of banana, ensete)
xsoqu *31 n.* infructescence (ensete)
xsook *L v.* pray
xsooq *H v.* slap with handpalm, clap, applaud
xsooni *33 n.* top, edge
xsooxs *H v.* be full
xsubm *H v.* be narrow

xsur *H v.* throw a spear
xsuuxs *H v.* whistle
xsuxs *L v.* itch
xsuykn *21 n.* firefly
xsyaaxs *H v.* tie, imprison
xsyaaxsu *31 n.* sun, shunshine
xsyak *L v.* be good, preferred
xsyakn *33 n.* ashes
xsyaru *33 n.* beard
xsyasn *L v.* be satisfied, replete

x'ad *H v.* 1. pierce, pin 2. stretch one's legs
x'ad *L v.* cut off new sprouts of yam
x'adn *L v.* fight, war **x'adn** *41 n.* fight, war
x'amfi *44 n.* bait
x'ubu *44 n.* smoke
x'ubu *21 n.* sin
x'ud *v.* spit **x'ud** *4 n.* saliva
x'uumu *33 n.* fog
x'uux'u *31 n.* louse

yaab *4 n.* person, man
yaaf *H v.* find, meet **yaafenkikə** sorry, I don't know (polite answer to a question)
yaan *H v.* plant yam
yaazu *33 n.* twig
yadk *H v.* stir
yaku *33 num.* six
yamz *L v.* hurt
yanq *H v.* be angry, annoyed
yarmb *44 n.* blood **yarmb suku** vein
yari *41 n.* sesame
yatn *13 n.* fox
yatsa *21 n.* flat basket coated in cattle dung, winnowing basket
yazn *L v.* reproach
yee *see* **yəg**
yeef *L v.* weep, cry, mourn **yeef** *2 n.* tear, mourning
yəg *L v.* come *nvs:* **yee**
yehi *44 n.* sieve
yengi *44 n.* firewood, deadwood
yerotsi *333 n.* God
yets *L v.* win, be victorious

yeta *22 pron.* you
yiinu *41 n.* intestines
yiir *L v.* be less, little
yiish *L v.* pull out, dig up, uproot
yiixs *H v.* sprinkle
yip *H v.* wink
yira *41 q.* what **yireshta** why
yirsi *41 n.* thing, artefact
yis *3 dem. m.* that
yini *31 dem. f.* that
yitn *L v.* walk happily, gait

zaaba *44 n.* line
zaara *33 n.* group, clan
zama *41 n.* machete
zeed *2 num.* eight
zeer *L v.* advise
zegu *33 n.* ox
zerkn *44 n.* day
ziina *31 n.* leopard
ziipm *L v.* chase away
ziit *L v.* hang, pin on the wall, crucify **ziitu** *21 n.* cross
zugn *L v.* be infertile
zuma *31 n.* veins or ribs of a plant
zunku *31 n.* sheep
zut *H v.* trample, step
zyaama *31 n.* in-law

zhaazh *H v.* be good **zheensh** *41 adj.* good, well
zhaga *12 adv.* straight
zhapm *L v.* shine **zhapm** *44 n.* lamp
zhazha *44 n.* goodness, peace
zhechush *L v caus.* flower (of maize)
zhinga *41 n.* tendon, hind leg
zhirbi *44 n.* cotton
zhumata *441 adv.* early morning

z'aakn *21 adv.* noon, midday
z'aaq *H v.* peel, husk (maize)
z'ar *H v.* spill (of grains)
z'ufi *21 n.* bat

'yaach *H v.* hide
 'yaana *44 n.* pot
 'yaatns *adj.* big, great
 'yab *3 n.* fodder for cattle
 'yam *3 n.* paternal aunt
 'yanga *33 n.* ram
 'yanxsa *21 n.f.* bee
 'yar *H v.* eulogize
 'yarb *3 n.* tongue
 'yard *L v.* enter, understand
caus: 'yars marry 'yarsusn *n.*
 marriage
 'yarkn *21 n.* sweat
 'yaxsn *44 n.* moon, month
 'yaz *H v.* be able
 'yazn *44 n.* right

English - Sheko

abandon	bar L, qyaas
able, be	'yaz
above	> gəri, hayqa
absent, be	kaay
abundance	shiiru
add	shiif, toos'
adult	yaab, barm,
nyakn	
advise	zeer
after	> adi
afraid, be	shor
albino skin	gara
all	keta
already	kacha
always	nefa
Amhara	goora
angry, be	baxh, yanq
animal	nuuxu, eki
ankle	qarx'u
anoint	diiq
answer	bangar, koy
ant	qaax'u
applaud	xsooq
arm	kuc'u, muti
armpit	gerbi
arrive	sak
ashes	xsyakn
ask	ooxh, bur H

aunt	'yam, > bay
awl	> siip
axe	kabi 44
be	ki
baboon	doosha
baby	> dadu
back	tiiti, gees'u
backyard	qanda
bad, be	sheen
bait	x'amfi
bake	xes
baptized, be	xoop
bark v.	buh
bark of tree	gopara
basket	kanta, dunki,
qosa, yatsa	
bat	z'ufi
bathe	barxhush
batter	da', giixh
beads	maara
bear child	nyaas
bear fruit	gaar, mur, xsog
beard	xsyaru
beat	deeb, duf, qyar
become	foot
bed	bacha, gooba
bee	'yanxsa
beehive	isn, goona 33
bee larvae	shapm
beer	daana, taka
beg	qor, kant
bend	qirq
best man	maka
bewitch	ixh
big	'yaatns
bird	kafa
birth, give	nyaas, syaak
bite	wooxs, gooch,
gaazh	
black, be	xsaw
bless	eeb, woom
blind, become	bar L
blood	yarbm
blow	fer
blunt	gonxa
boast	om H, gift
body	faad 2
boil	bar, iits

bone	uusu	cheese	baxa
booth	s'ona	chest	gub
border	kyaka	chicken	kuchi
bore	kurkns	child	dadu
bow	daya	chin	siiku
bow down	guym	clan	zaara
boy	> dadu	claw	shishkn
buttocks	qundi	clay	xsir
braid	man	clear ground	far, buuts
brains	ara	climb	kees
brave, be	mash	close	is, xip
break	shaan, gaz,	clothing	sheema
mooq, harxh,	qesh	cloud	gibu
breast	xyam	coals	s'oota
bridge	kooya, sunda	cock	koobu
bring	koyg, kob, > sak	cockroach	qabxsi
bring up	qaam, angus	coffee	gyanu
brood	goof	coffee pot	teresha
brother	naanu, baadu	coin	sumini, shenshi
buffalo	meen	cold	s'ow
build	kaaf	cold, be	qeex'
burn	bonq, gaazh,	collect	dubdus, gab
kyab		collide	tufk
bury	deeb	comb	koxa, kuzhu
butter	noki	come	yæg
butterfly	tarti	convenient, be	fik
buy	fuur	cook	> kaats, bar
		cool	taaf
cabbage	eekn	cotton	zhirbi
cactus	kadi	cough	oc'
calf	byaa	count	faad L
calebash	goosu, bota	cover	kud, kaaf
call	os'k	cow	oti, kamdi
canoe	womfa	co-wife	qemti
cardamom	ors'a	crab	siskn
careful	dafa	cream	> diiq
caress	shibar	create	daab
carry	ba', xep	creep	bud
carve	xharsh, myas	crocodile	byaasu
cat	eeza	cross	> ziit
catch	aat, qeexs L	crow	uqər
cattle	oti, eki	crumble	kums'
chaff	funchu 44	cry	yeef, s'aar, or
chameleon	wopmbe	cubit	muti
chapter	> s'u'	cultural	> koos
charcoal	xsiiqn	cup	mati, tyaara
chase away	ziipm	curse	kyangar
cheek	giizhu		
cheerful, be	kask		

cut	quxs, buuts,	dung	ora, os'a, qeqiri
qapxs, darq, fosq, kaas', muz'm,		dusk	gob 2
tyaaq, x'ad L		dust	boota
custom	> koos		
		each other	ank'a
dance	ay, nar	eagle	xsama
darken	udg, xsaw	ear	haay 2, qesha
dawn	gob 2	earth	tuuru
day	bokn, zerkn,	earthworm	shəxu
shima, shira, underkn		easy, bes'os'kn	
deaf	dud	eat	um, gya', qeex
death	> s'ub	egg	myaaqu
debt	asha (bur H)	eight	zeed
deceit, deceive	mad	elbow	> kuc'u
deer	dəwa	elephant	door
delicious, be	shishk	elephantiasis	dufara
dented, be	sir	embrace	> ba', garus
descend	fin	empty	koru
despise	miznx	encourage	gaan
dew	xharku, nibm	enemy	> gagi
dewlap	ganxsu	ensete	udu, erfu, muru
diarrhea	farx'a, xsirku	enter	'yard, wusk
die	s'ub	erase	seh
different	qoysns	erosion	diin
difficult, be	ints	estimat	qof
dig	boox', kaax,	eulogize	'yar
yiish		evening	gyaama
dip	donq	exercise	> atn
dismiss	tiits	exist	ki
divide	besk	eye	aab
divinate	koos	eyebrow	s'ukn
do	eg, an, bazh	eyelash	qopm
dog	kyanu	extinguish	> tik
donkey	kuura		
door	eed, qeeru	face	san, > aab
doorstep	basn	fall	wut, purq
dove	dogama	false banana	see ensete
downward	toora	far, be	gotn
dowry	boysu	farm	koos'
draw	woor	farmland	see field
dream	kabe	fat (be)	kawa, meer, xef
dress	oof, gixs, an	father	baab
drink	qis'	feather	biy
drip	xhof, kuysn	fell	kyats
drive	boy	female	bay
drizzle	kuysn	fench	karm
drunk, be	aft, gar	ferment	max
dry, be	kor, naar, xsah	fern	bitsu
drum	tyarbu	fetch water	iid

few	kota	game	> kaas
field	booru, guy,	gallop	kat
kos'n		garbage	kashu
fight	x'adn	garden	orata
filter	shoota	garlic	duqasha
filtered, be	xsaar	gather	gab, haak
find	yaaf	get off	fin, qeexs H
finger	keri	give	ats
finger nail	shafa	girdle	gixs
finish	xhor, bar L, fus	girl	> dadu, baara
fire	taamu	glitter	shaam
firefly	xsuykn	go	tæg, in
firesticks	shaaku	go out, up	kees
firestones	baaku	goat	geequ
firewood	yengi	god	yerotsi, kay
firmly	nesha	goiter	bora
firstborn	uzi	good, be	zhaazh, xsyak
fish	ooru	gossip	gab L
five	uc'u	gourd	goosu, geeni
fix	> fik	govern	hays
flame	> kaam	grass	wonxhi, peexa
flat	oon	grasshopper	shorkn
flesh	as'ku, wuuru	grave	deyna, kaaru
flood	bur L	greedy, be	gax'
flower	ushn	green	xhiru
flower v.	zhechush	greet	garus
fly	utsi	griddle	bakara
fly v.	gang, bur H	grind	botn, qiix
fodder	'yab	group	zaara
fog	x'uumu	grow	bez, > angus
forehead	san	guess	qof
fork	faana, tori	gullet	goorz'n
food	> um		
fool	> bow	hail	urng
foot	as'u	hair	sitsu
footprint,	adi	hand	kuc'u
forest	karka	handle	suuqu
forget	shey	hang	gut, kaq, ziit
four	kubm	happen	foot
fox	yatn	happy, be	kaazh
frightening, be	qes'	hare	eeri
frog	fyaanu	harvest	kashkush, boog
front, in	saanta	hat	uka 21
front yard	gyabta	have	> ki
frown	> xur	he	az
fruit	aab	head	gæri
full, be	xsooxs, xip	headache	> xhaaq
		heal	> fay
		hear	siis

heart	s'oon	jackal	myawu
heavy, be	ints	jawbone	dukñ
heel	dikñ	joke	gara, koy
help	gatsñ	joy	> kaazh
herd	shach H	jug	konda
here	haaz, haani	jump	gob
hew	myas		
hide	'yaach	kick	qyaaf
hill	gera, saaku	kill	wus'
hip	techa	king	komtu, kyaaz
hippo	izhama	kiss	nin
hit	duf, dum, qeshk	knee	qumu
hoe	kaax	kneel	gumt
hold	aat	knife	haara, xhubi,
hole	tukñ, fora,	gazhira	
bambu, piizi		knot	tuuc'
honey	eez, teema	know	xuus, > yaaf
honey grates	funchu 33	knowledge	> xuus
honey badger	uc'a		
honeycomb	faafa 41	lack	kaay
honor	naas'	lamp	> zhaphm
hoof	shaanu	land	tuuru
hope	ara an	language	> nong
horn	us'n	later	ena, > woka
horse	fara	laugh	geex', kask
hot, be	sar	lead	tuun L, boy
house	iy	leader	kyaaz, komtu
how?	aas	leaf	kara, haay 2,
how much?	gebm	humxha, mukmuri	
hundred	baara 31	leak	xosqn
hunger	> fadus	lean	gich, dooz
hungry, make	fadus	leave	bar, bets, qyaas
hurt	yamz	leech	nooxha
husband	nas'a	left	kaga
hyena	nuuc'u	leg	as'u, zHINGA
		leopard	ziina
I	nata 22	less, be	yiir
ignite	un, kaam	letter	> wos
ill, be	kush	lid	> kud
infertile, be	zugñ	lie	s'onqu, > xsirku
infructescence	xsoqu	life	s'uun
injera	xara	lift up	kur
in-law	zyaama	light, be	s'os'kn, saaxs
insert	wusk	lightning	daabu 33
insult	gask	like	baas, ut
intertwine	qiq	line	zaaba
intestine	yiinu	lit	kaam, un
invite	daag	live	ki, iw
itch	gaazh, xsuxs		

liver	> bow	mother-in-law	koochi
lizard	gorz'u	mountain	xuum
locust	shora	mourn	yeef
long, be	gotn, shaad	mouth	ed
look	tiit	mouthful, take a	baar
look down on	> oy	move	woshkn, boor
lord	kyaaaz	much	wusha, puxha
lose	> kaay	mud	toga
louse	x'uux'u	mushroom	ochi
love	ut	mute	diiqa
lungs	s'orxn		
lyre	s'ongu	nail	qepm
		name	suma
machete	zama	narrow, be	xsubm
mad, become	xhoy	navel	gurxi
maize	shəxi, dincha	necessary, be	> baas
make	bazh, daab	neck	kum
man	yaab, > baab	need	> baas
mane	saba	nest	buc'a
many	puxha	new	qarns
market	gaba	night	goota, haay, udg
marriage	> 'yard	nine	sagn
marry	> 'yard	nod	ginq
mat	goona 21	noise	ganxsu 44
mead	mura	noon	z'aakn
measure	mak	nose	sinxu
meat	as'ku	now	haaqasta
medicine	xhaaru 33, qeex	number	> faad L
meet	kyam, yaaf		
melt	muz'rn	oath	> qed
mercy	maaru	obey	> fuur, >
message	> wos	qabus	
midday	z'aakn	ointment	> diiq
midnight	goota	old, be	iiq
milipede	ginginga	on	bata
milk	qiis', uqu	one	qoy
mislead	> bow	only	guuru
miss	wor	open	byah, fooq, tora
mock	tiim	order	qabus
molar	bakn	other	qoysns, gaamta
money	eki,	outside	buta
monkey	barkay, goydu	ox	zegu
month	'yaxsn		
moon	'yaxsn	paint	boox, diiq
more than	> geri	papaya	faafa 33
moning	zhumata	parch	s'oos'
mortar	bota	past	una
moss	mus'a	path	kookn
mother	bay	patient, be	mash

pay	beg	rabbit	eeri
pebble	xechu	rain	iiru
peek	s'aan H	rainbow	dori
peel	fyaan, orxhush,	raincape	maaya
orq, z'aaq		rainy season	tura 21
peg	qepm	raise	qaam, angus
pelvis	keru	ram	'yanga
person	yaab	rat	uutn
pick	haak, qəsh	ravine	saaku
pierce	x'ad H	raw	qarns
pig	gashtu	razor	haatu
pile	goom	reach	sak
pipe	kengaxha	red, be	sub, syaaru
place	kookn	refuse	oy
plain	oon	relative	tooz
plant	as', yaan, tor,	remain	sam
daam		remember	fokka
plaster	ket	repair	> fik
play	kaas	repent	> maaru
plough	koos'	reproach	yazn
pluck	qəsh	rest	s'u'
plump, be	xef	return	bangar
pole	tuusu	revenge	gagi
pool	shitn	rich, riches	> eena, > eki
porcupine	gushn	right	'yazn
porridge	s'uqa	rim	ed
pot	'yaana	ring	qaxi, qeeda
pour	qaab, geen	ring a bell	qenq
praise	gozh, naas', 'yar	rinse mouth	wumx'
pray	peep, xsook	ripe, be	kaats, gaar, mur,
pregnant, be	ins	neep, xsah	
prepare	> fik	ripple	koh
prison	> xsyaaxs	rise	qay
problem	gaydu	road	kookn
produce	bez, bazh, > sak	roast	gaam, dook,
prophecy	koon	qeexs L, gap, s'oos'	
prune	gaaz'	rob	shaar
pulverized, be	niqn, kums'	roll	xer
pumpkin	buda	roll up	xur
push	kundus	roofbeam	kobxha
put	an, toot	root	xsapm
pull	giis'	rope	gyadu, suku
pull out	bud, yiish	rotten, be	syaaf
		round	dinga
queen	gebe	rub	giixh, boox,
quench	> tik	irxhush, shibar	
question	> ooxh	rue	xserti
quick	moy, shənkū	ruminate	girm
quiet, be	hays	run	door

sad, be	ayn	slap	xsooq
saliva	x'ud	slaughter	baash
salt	ugn	sleep	soq, sharux
sand	hamshu	slippery, be	byad
satisfied, be	xsyasn, om L	slip	fur
saved, be	fay	slow	dafa, dooz
saw	faan, s'aan L	skin	baachi, tura 31
say	ge	skirt	taashu
scorpion	siskn	sky	saaqu
scar	didu	smell	s'uf, mar
scrape	boox'	smile	> geex'
scratch	qooxh, boox'	smoke	x'ubu 44
search	baas	smooth, be	wooq
see	səg	snake	s'ooz', dəwa,
sell	fuur	dinguru, kasa	
send	wos	snap	gaz
servant	qamu	snare	oor
sesame	yari	sneeze	dich
seven	tubsu	snore	keexh
sew	siip	so-and-so	ema
shadow	tiira	soil	tuuru
shake	tig	song	> shaar
sharp, be	qeexs L, sutn	sorghum	donqa
sharpen	shash	soup	shaaqu
shave	fyaaxs	sound	or L, ganxsu
she	izh	spark	> kaam
sheaf	> xuum	speak	nong, boob
sheep	zunku	spear	byaqn
shield	gyaasu	special	qoysns
shine	xsyaaxs, zhapm	spend day	feesh
short, be	shiq	spend night	haay
shoulder	kabi 21	spider	girfu
shove	s'oog	spill	shooy, z'ar
show	> səg	spin	keec'
shred	muz'	spirit	mas'a, myangu
shrink	shurxn	spit	xhud, xsarkn
sibling	baadu, naanu,	split	fak
niini		spoiled, be	duqux
side	shishu, gaamta	spring	tuun
sideboards	gaazhu	spring forth	tuqar
sieve	yehi, shoota	sprinkle	yiixs
sin	x'ubu 21	spur	tara
sing	shaar, gar	squirrel	s'oonu
sister	niini, baadu	stab	qeshk, x'ad H
sit down	woog	stack	goom
six	yaku	stand	aas'
skin	baachi	star	baarin
skin v.	fosq	start	gad
		steal	wunq

stem	toopa	termite	garga
step	zut, fits	thank	naas'
stick	gachi, s'oy	that	yini, yis
sting	kyat, woos	thatch	kesa, peexa
stir	yadk	there	eka, so, woka
stone	she'i, xemsi	they	ishi
stone v.	qaax'	thick, be	meer, xyabm
stool	bakasha	thigh	barka
stoop	gabba	thin, be	shapk
stop	aas', biik	thing	yirsi, nuuxu
storm	furfi	think	ar, ayn
story	saaya, tosa	thirst	s'um
straight	zhaga	thorn	shiqu
stranger	goora	thought	ara
strength	> karb	three	kadu
stretch	xhix, x'ad H	throath	fori, goorz'n
strong, be	karb, qozh	throw away	bar L, xsur
struggle	gibm	throw	but, tir, kooc'
suck	niqn	thunder	tooq
sun	xsyaaxsu, > kay	tie	xsyaaxs, qiixs,
swallow	qeex	tuuc'	
swear	qed	till	koos'
sweat	'yarkn	tired, be	wooc
sweep	dir	top	xsooni
sweet, be	shishk, exs	trap	girfu
swell	teer	truly, truth	gama
swim	mus'qn	toad	gofara
swine	gashtu	tobacco	tumba
sword	sita	today	ma, ena
		together, be	daan
taboo	> hark	tomorrow	byarn
tadpole	wurxsu	tongue	'yarb
tail	haashu	tonsil	noki
tall, be	shaad	tooth	ax'u, bakn,
taro	baaka	kaaru	
take	kob, es, qeex	top	tuum, kada,
take off	forxhush	tortoise	gogu
talk	nong, maak	touch	taft
taste	nexs, daaq,	toward	kaari
shishk		trade	fuur
tear	yeeb	trample	zut
tear v.	harxh, s'aap	trap	qaaza
teenager	baara, nyaku, >	tree	inchu, tuuri
dadu		trill	tig
teff	gaachu	trouble	gaydu
tell	maak	trumpet	taazn
ten	tamu	turbid, be	wurbm
tender, be	s'ub	turn	san, gupm,
tendon	zhinga	bangar	

tusk	seema	wedge	kosqn
twig	yaazu	weed	s'us'ku
twin	xhaaru 21	weep	yeef
twist	keec'	wet	shash
two	xaagn	what?	yira
		when?	woskin
udder	xsezga	where?	na
ululate	irish	whiskers	kasn, gaazhu
uncle	bacha, uka 33	whistle	xsuuxs
understand	'yard	white, be	gooxsn
undress	forxhush	who?	iti 33
unique	qoysnsn	why?	> yira
unlock	fooq	wide, be	has'kn
unmarried	baara, nyaku	wife	> bay, qemti
unripe	xhiru, garz',	wild	> nuuxu
woozh		win	yets
untie	wus'k	wind	> naar
up	hayqa, so	wing	kongu
uprooted, be	purq	wink	yip
upward	absi	wisdom	> xuus, > koos
urinate	or H	witch	> ixh
		witness	mixn
valley	kooka	woman	bay
vein	zuma, > yarbmn	wonderful, be	qes'
vermin	duqux	wood	inchu, yengi
very	anga	word	> nong
village	qambu	work	bazh, bazha,
viper	dinguru	daabu	
visit	booz, ooxh	world	> tuuru
vomit	kooc'	worm	daaxhu, duba
		worry	ayn
waistcloth	bura	worship	guym
wait	koot	wound	buchi
walk	booz, fits, yitn	wrap	s'okn
want	baas, ut	wrestle	gibm
war	x'adn	wrist	qarx'u
warm oneself	kaas', s'okn	yam	kachi, tucha
wash	barxhush	year	bengi
wasp	tara	yeast	daaka
watch	shach, tiit	yesterday	gona
water	haay 3, s'aad	yet	kacha
waterfall	xhaaru 41	you	yeta, iti 44
waterpipe	geetu	young, be	> dadu, dod
wattle	sekiri		
we	nata 42		
weak, be	fayx, wooq		
wealth	eena		
weather	> naar, saaqu		
weave	shak, qiq		

Samenvatting

(Summary in Dutch. For a summary in English, see section 1.2.4.)

Dit proefschrift beschrijft de grammatica van het Sheko. Het Sheko is een Omotische taal in het zuidwesten van Ethiopië en telt ongeveer 37.500 sprekers. Hoofdstuk een vertelt kort over de geschiedenis en cultuur van de sprekers, en bespreekt de sociale context van het Sheko. Er is tot nog toe zeer weinig geschreven over deze taal. Het proefschrift vergroot de kennis van het Sheko aanzienlijk en kan goed worden gebruikt in vergelijkende onderzoeken.

Hoofdstuk twee behandelt de klanken van de taal en de combinaties waarin ze voorkomen. Bijzonder in de Ethiopische context is de serie retroflexe klanken (waarbij het puntje van de tong omhoog en naar achteren krult). Net als andere Omotische talen heeft het Sheko regel die bepaalt dat alle *s*-achtige klanken in een woordstam op dezelfde plaats in de mond worden gemaakt (sibilantharmonie). Een woord als *sjezen* komt dus niet voor. Verder zijn er lange en korte klinkers en een klinkerachtige nasaal.

Hoofdstuk drie somt alle processen op waardoor klanken veranderen of wegvallen, evenals verdubbelingsprocessen, d.w.z. reduplicatie van lettergrepen of klanken.

Hoofdstuk vier bespreekt en illustreert toon. Het Sheko is een toontaal. Een verandering in toonhoogte op een lettergreep leidt dus tot een verandering in betekenis. Dit betekenisverschil kan zowel grammaticaal zijn als lexicaal, d.w.z. op woordniveau. Het Sheko is een van de weinige Afrikaanse talen die vier distinctieve toonhoogtes kent. De vier tonen zijn niet gelijk verdeeld over het lexicon en het beperkte aantal lexicale toonpatronen voor naamwoorden en werkwoorden wijst erop dat de taal vroeger minder dan vier tonen had. Verder heeft het Sheko een dalende intonatie op het eind van sommige vraagzinnen.

Hoofdstuk vijf behandelt de opbouw van zelfstandige naamwoorden. Dit hoofdstuk gaat onder andere in op de verhoudingen tussen bepaaldheid, geslacht en getal. Het

markeren van bepaaldheid ('*de*'/ '*een*') en het markeren van getal (enkelvoud/ meervoud) sluit elkaar uit. Als een zelfstandig naamwoord bepaald wordt gemaakt, wordt tegelijk ook het geslacht aangeduid. Het aanduiden van bepaaldheid en getal is niet verplicht. Een ongemarkeerd woord kan dus ook verwijzen naar iets bepaalds of naar een meervoud. Verder worden afleidingen en samenstellingen van naamwoorden besproken.

Hoofdstuk zes beschrijft persoonlijke voornaamwoorden en reflexiviteit: wederkerende voornaamwoorden (*zich*) zijn in het Sheko identiek aan persoonlijke voornaamwoorden. In het Sheko kan *hij prikt hem* dus of 'hij prikt zich' of 'hij prikt iemand anders' betekenen, waarbij de context duidelijk moet maken welke van de twee bedoeld is.

Hoofdstuk zeven gaat over verschillende andere woordklassen. Aanwijzende voornaamwoorden (*dit, dat*) zijn gemarkeerd voor geslacht. Corresponderende bijwoorden van plaats en richting (*daar, daarheen*) maken onderscheid op grond van hoogteverschil. Bijvoeglijke naamwoorden, die van werkwoorden worden afgeleid door de markeerders van bepaaldheid en geslacht, kunnen op grond van hun eigenschappen als een aparte categorie worden beschouwd. Telwoorden, kwantificerende woorden (*alle*) en bijwoorden van tijd en hoedanigheid worden ook behandeld.

Hoofdstuk acht voegt de categorieën ideofon en tussenwerpsel toe. Anders dan bijvoorbeeld bijvoeglijke naamwoorden, beschrijven ideofonen een gebeurtenis niet zozeer maar roepen de gebeurtenis als het ware op (*rinkeldekinkel*). De meeste ideofonen hebben een karakteristiek, opvallend reduplicatiepatroon. Tussenwerpsels zijn er in drie soorten: expressieve tussenwerpsels weerspiegelen de emoties van de spreker (*nee toch!*), conatieve tussenwerpsels duiden een verzoek aan de luisteraar aan (*hé...*) en phatische tussenwerpsels dienen om het communicatieproces te starten of soepel te laten verlopen (*ja... m-m...*).

Hoofdstuk negen gaat in op de naamwoordelijke zin. Wanneer een zelfstandig naamwoord wordt voorafgegaan door een ander

(voor)naamwoord, verandert het toonpatroon van het zelfstandig naamwoord. Als er binnen de naamwoordgroep iets volgt op het zelfstandig naamwoord, is er geen tonale verandering. Verder kan een naamwoordgroep gemarkeerd worden voor naamval: de nominatief heeft geen naamvalsuitgang; de accusatief is in een deel van de gevallen gemarkeerd; verder kent het Sheko een datief (*voor, aan*), locatief (*te, in, bij*), inessief (*binnenin*), instrumentalis (*met*), similatief (*zoals*) en motief (geeft grond of beweegreden aan). Er zijn drie genitieve constructies (*mijn vriend, vriend van mij, hij is een vriend voor me*). In constructies met het werkwoord 'zijn' wordt de nadruk gelegd op de bevestiging van de bezitsrelatie. In constructies waarin twee woorden naast elkaar staan (juxtapositie), ligt de nadruk op het geheel (de bezitter), en in constructies met de datief op het woord dat het geheel aanduidt ligt de nadruk op het deel (dat wat wordt bezeten).

Hoofdstuk tien behandelt de vorming van werkwoorden die zelfstandig een zin kunnen vormen, de finale werkwoorden. De werkwoordsvorm eindigt met een stance markeerder, die aanduidt hoe de spreker zich verhoudt tot zijn uitspraak. Een indirecte stance markeerder druk een zekere afstand uit (voor bijv. beleefdheid of rapportage van andermans uitspraken) en een directe stance markeerder drukt het ontbreken van afstand uit. Verder heeft het werkwoord een modaal achtervoegsel, een aspectueel achtervoegsel, een stam en een subjectcliticum, d.w.z. een element dat verwijst naar het onderwerp en dat vrij is om zich behalve aan het werkwoord ook aan andere woorden te hechten.

Modale wijzen zijn onder meer de Realis, die een gebeurtenis presenteert als bevestigd (gebeurd of aan het gebeuren); Irrealis, die wordt gebruikt als de gebeurtenis niet kan worden bevestigd (bijv. bij vermoeden, mogelijkheid, toekomstige tijd, gewoonte); Obvious, die een gebeurtenis presenteert als algemeen bekend; Imperatief-jussief, voor bevelen en verzoeken; en de Optatief; voor zegeningen en vervloeking. Een klein groepje werkwoorden heeft twee stamvormen, waarvan de stam eindigend met een g-klank wordt gebruikt in contexten waarin grotere zekerheid bestaat over het realiseren van de gebeurtenis.

Hoofdstuk elf beschrijft werkwoordsvormen die niet alleen kunnen staan. Mediale werkwoorden vormen vaak een lange keten van deelzinnen met alleen op het eind een zinsdeel met een finaal werkwoord. Mediale vormen bestaan uit een onderwerpscliticum, stam en een zogenaamde switch-reference marker, d.w.z. een achtervoegsel dat aangeeft of het onderwerp in het volgende zinsdeel hetzelfde zal blijven of zal veranderen. Seriële werkwoorden hebben geen switch-reference markering en maar één onderwerpscliticum per seriële constructie. Sommige seriële werkwoorden drukken aspect uit, bijvoorbeeld ‘voortdurende’ of ‘voltooide’ handeling.

Verder komen ook in ondergeschikte bijzinnen onzelfstandige werkwoordsvormen voor. Bijzinnen van plaats, tijd en reden zijn gebaseerd op een relatieve werkwoordsvorm, terwijl voorwaardelijke bijzinnen hun eigen markering kennen. Werkwoordscomplementen (heb je gehoord *dat hij komt?*) zijn relatiefvormen, behalve als er een vraagwoord in voorkomt; dan zijn ze gemarkeerd als een voorwaardelijke zin.

Relatiefzinnen (de man *die daar loopt*) zijn interessant, met name omdat ze vaak een anafoor bevatten, d.w.z. een persoonlijk voornaamwoord dat verwijst naar het antecedent (dus krijg je in het Sheko zoiets als: ‘de man die ik een boek *aan hem* gaf’). Dit gebeurt zelfs als de relatiefzin vóór het antecedent komt, terwijl anaforen meestal terugverwijzen naar iets dat al genoemd is, in plaats van vooruitverwijzen naar iets dat nog genoemd moet worden.

Hoofdstuk twaalf beschrijft de afleidingen waarmee nieuwe werkwoordstammen worden gevormd: de causatief (*lachen* > *doen lachen*), de passief (*eten* > *gegeten worden*) en de middle, die onder andere wordt gebruikt voor wederkerige situaties en in het Sheko vaak met de causatief voorkomt (*slaan* > *elkaar (doen) slaan*).

Hoofdstuk dertien behandelt vraagzinnen. Het Sheko heeft drie manieren om vraagzinnen te maken. In alle vraagzinnen ontbreekt een modaal achtervoegsel op het werkwoord. In sommige gevallen is dit het enige verschil tussen een stellende en een vragende zin. Ten tweede wordt in sommige vraagzinnen, in het bijzonder ontkennende vraagzinnen, gebruik gemaakt van een dalende intonatie op de laatste

lettergreep. In de derde plaats heeft de stance markeerder, als deze aanwezig is, een andere vorm dan in stellende zinnen.

Hoofdstuk veertien gaat in op de uitdrukking van ontkenning. Naast een negatief koppelwerkwoord ‘niet zijn’ heeft het Sheko twee werkwoordachtervoegsels die ontkenning aanduiden, waarbij de meestvoorkomende wordt gebruikt voor ontkenning van een gebeurtenis, terwijl de andere lijkt te worden gebruikt voor het ontkennen van een langdurige toestand.

Hoofdstuk vijftien laat zien dat de plaats van het onderwerpscliticum erg flexibel is en correspondeert met de informatiestructuur van de zin. Met andere woorden: het onderwerpscliticum verwijst niet alleen naar het onderwerp maar geeft ook door zijn positie aan welk deel van de zin het belangrijkste is. Dit laatste doen we in het Nederlands met de klemtoon. Wanneer het onderwerpscliticum vooraan het werkwoord staat, heeft de zin een topic-comment structuur, waarbij het hele predikaat (werkwoord, lijdend voorwerp en eventuele andere bepalingen) als informatief wordt beschouwd. Wanneer het onderwerpscliticum direct achter de werkwoordstam wordt geplaatst, ligt de nadruk op de polariteit van het gezegde (vergelijk Nl. *en, hééft hij haar gezoend?*). Wanneer het onderwerpscliticum na een naamwoordgroep komt, wordt die naamwoordgroep als meest informatief beschouwd (*ik ben gisteren in Katwijk naar de kerk gegaan*). De naamwoordgroep kan echter niet verwijzen naar het onderwerp. Bij nadruk op het onderwerp is het onderwerpscliticum afwezig.

Ten slotte volgen een lijst met referenties en drie bijlagen: een gedeelte met verschillende soorten teksten, een stuk dat kort ingaat op de ontwikkeling van de spelling van het Sheko, met als illustratie twee gedichten, en een woordenlijst Sheko-Engels en Engels-Sheko.

Curriculum Vitae

Anne-Christie Hellenthal is born on 11 November 1980 in Nijmegen, the Netherlands. She attended the Prof. S. Greijdanus comprehensive school, Zwolle, and studied African Languages and Linguistics at Leiden University from 1999 to 2004. For her masters' thesis, she did research on the Konso language (Cushitic). She worked for a short interval on Mao (Nilo-Saharan) for the language development programme of the Benishangul-Gumuz regional government. In 2005, she started describing and analyzing the Sheko language for her Ph.D. as part of the research project "Two modal categories in Omotic languages", under supervision of prof.dr. M. Mous and dr. Azeb Amha, within the endangered languages programme of the Dutch Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO). In total, she made five field trips to Ethiopia to do original research.