Konso

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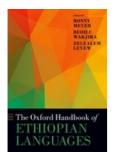
CHAPTER

14   Konso 🔓

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Abstract

This chapter examines the Lowland East Cushitic language of the Afroasiatic phylum spoken in southwest Ethiopia: Konso. It emphasizes that the Konso call themselves *Xonsitta* and their language *Afaa Xonso*. The chapter also displays the four dialects of Konso: Faashe, Karatte, Tuuro, and Xolme. The Konso are organized in nine exogamous clans, each with their own chief. They are predominantly farmers who are known for their indigenous terracing system. This chapter also stresses that the majority of the Konso people are monolingual. It then investigates the rate of bilingualism in Konso and Amharic, and argues that monolingualism in Amharic in the Konso zonal town of Karatte is beginning to show up among children born of native Konso. Ultimately, this chapter details the early studies of Konso phonology and morphology. It also looks at the Konso syntax, grammar, and ideophones.

Keywords: Konso, Lowland East Cushitic, Faashe, monolingualism, bilingualism, Amharic, Karatte, phonology, morphology

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14.1 Introduction

Konso is a Lowland East Cushitic language of the Afroasiatic phylum spoken in southwest Ethiopia by about 350,000 people. The Konso call themselves *Xonsitta* and their language *Afaa Xonso*. There are four dialects: Faashe, Karatte, Tuuro, and Xolme. Data for this work come from the Faashe dialect, which is the mother tongue of the first author.

The Konso are organized in nine exogamous clans each with their own chief. There used to be an age-set system called *Kataa*, which is similar to the well-known *Gada* system of Oromo. The society is divided between *Etanta* 'farmers' (who have relatively high social status) and *Xawdaa* 'traders and craftsmen'. The Konso are predominantly farmers who are known for their indigenous terracing system, which allows them to make use of even the most precipitous slopes while preventing erosion. UNESCO registered the Konso Landscape as a World Heritage Site in June 2011. Most Konso towns are on hilltops and are densely populated.

The majority of the Konso people are monolingual. The rate of bilingualism in Konso and Amharic is on the rise, and monolingualism in Amharic in the Konso zonal town of Karatte is beginning to show up among children born of native Konso. Amharic remains the language of administration and education.

Missionaries used the Fidel script to write Konso for church purposes such as Bible translations, hymns, and a few stories. However, in 2012, representatives of the Konso community made a decision during a one-day symposium to use the Roman script for writing their language. Several attempts have been made in the subsequent years to promote the language. However, the efforts have been severed by the state's political and military measures intended to curb the Konso people's demand for a higher administrative structure (i.e. from woreda to zone). Recent news is that the Konso Zone Administration has introduced the language in two pilot schools as a taught subject in September 2019.

Black (1973) and Sim (1977) are early studies of Konso phonology and morphology, later followed by Bliese & Sokka (1986) on syntax. Studies of specific topics of Konso grammar include Getahun (1999), Mous (2005; 2007b), Ongaye (2009; 2013b; 2013c), Mous & Ongaye (2009, and Ongaye & Mous (2017). Several unpublished BA and MA theses have been written on topics of Konso grammar, namely Mahamod (1999), Beniam (2000), Daniel ↳ (2000), Ongaye (2000; 2004), Gallo (2008), Tizita (2003), and Alemayehu Dereje (2003) from Addis Ababa University, and Daudey & Hellenthal (2004) from Leiden University. The major sources for Konso are Ongaye (2013a) and Black & Shako (1973). Since defending his thesis (Ongaye 2004), Ongaye has published several articles on Konso (Ongaye 2009; 2013b; 2013c; Mous & Ongaye 2009; Ongaye & Mous 2017).

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14.2 Phonology

14.2.1 Consonant phonemes

The 21 consonants distinguish between five places of articulation: labial, alveolar, palatal, velar/uvular, and glottal. No voice contrast is attested among stops but there is a three-way opposition between pulmonic, implosive, and nasal.[1] The pulmonic stops are phonetically voiced when preceded or followed by a voiced sound, such as a vowel, when geminate, or when word initial, and voiceless elsewhere. The velar nasal is absent. For /ɢ/ and /χ/, the place of articulation is phonetically uvular, but for /k/ it is velar. All consonants can be geminate; geminate implosives can be devoiced. Table 14.1—from Ongaye (2013a: 7)—shows the consonant inventory.

Table 14.1 Consonant phonemes

	LABIAL	ALVEOLAR	PALATAL	VELAR/UVULAR	GLOTTAL
PULMONIC STOP	*p*	*t*	*c*	*k*	*ʔ*
IMPLOSIVE	*ɓ*	*ɗ*	*ʄ*	*ɠ*	
NASAL	*m*	*n*	*ɲ*		
FRICATIVE	*f*	*s*	*ʃ*	*χ*	*h*
LIQUID		*l, r*			
GLIDE	*w*		*y*		

14.2.2 Vowel phonemes

The five vowels /i, e, a, o, u/ may be short or long. Word-final short vowels are devoiced (as in Oromo), except in the rare cases when they are high toned. All vowels can co-occur in roots except that round vowels in subsequent root syllables must be identical.

14.2.3 Tone

Konso has no lexical tone, and its functional load in the grammar is relatively light. It plays a minor role in verb conjugations, particularly in marking of a cleft object (§14.9.4) and the negative perfective (§14.5.2). Black & Shako (1973) indicate stress differences in their dictionary but this is erroneous; stress is not contrastive.

14.2.4 Syllable structure, syllable sequences, and phonotactics

Syllables have the shape CV(V)(C). All phonological words start with a consonant, which may be a glottal stop. Clitics may start with a vowel. Geminate consonants are always ambisyllabic; clusters of maximally two consonants occur when a closed syllable is followed by a consonant-initial syllable. In clusters, /ʔ, h/ and the glides /y, w/ only occur as first consonant. If a cluster of three consonants (where geminates count as two) occurs, an epenthetic vowel *i* is inserted before the final consonant. Words typically end in open syllables, with the exception of some numerals, as in (17). A phonological word has a minimum of two syllables.

14.2.5 Phonological processes

The nasal /n/, but no other nasal, assimilates to the place of articulation of a following stop or fricative (1a). As a second consonant, /n/ completely assimilates to a preceding liquid or nasal (1b).[2]

(1)
    a. *komfa*   b. *ʔinantasiʔ*   *ʔiχarri*
         konfa   inanta-siʔ   i=χar-ni
                          girl-DEF.M/F 3=shiver-IPFV.PRS
        'pocketless pants'   'The girl is shivering.'

The bilabial stop is realized as a bilabial fricative between vowels, between a liquid and a vowel, and between a vowel and /t/. The sequences /oʔaa, oʔay/ are commonly labialized as in /loʔaa/→ [lwaa] 'cow'. A word–final glottal stop assimilates completely to a following consonant in connected speech (2).

ʔantit	tomasik	kutta	ʔiɲfaɢay
anti-ʔ	toma-siʔ	kutt-a	in=ʃaɠ-ay
1SG-NOM	bowl-DEF.M/F	be_big-M/F	1=wash-PFV
'I washed the big bowl.'			

(2)

p. 230 ## 14.2.6 Morphophonemic processes

Although the glottal stop can occur as the initial element in consonant clusters, it often elides either with compensatory lengthening of the preceding vowel, or the insertion of an epenthetic glide *y* if followed by a front vowel, including the epenthetic *i*.

a. /ɗaʔ-ta/ → [ɗaata̪] 'butter'
b. /riwwaʔ-tta/ → [riwwayitta̪] 'Milky Way'

(3)

Additional morphophonological processes concerning variation in derivational verbal suffixes, in subject clitics, and in verbal inflection are mentioned in the relevant sections.

14.3 Nouns

14.3.1 Gender agreement

Gender agreement is shown on verbs and adjectives. On verbs, subject nouns have one of three gender values: masculine, feminine, and plural. Although there is some correlation between the semantics of a noun and its gender, gender cannot be predicted for the majority of nouns. Nouns that are semantically singular and biologically masculine take the masculine agreement on the verb (4a). However, it is also possible to find nouns that are semantically feminine or plural but have (unmarked) masculine gender agreement on the verb (4b–c). Note that the masculine and feminine gender distinction is collapsed in definite suffixes. However, these suffixes do distinguish nouns in plural gender (PLG), and these refer to a singular entity. A full treatment of and argument for plural as a third gender value in Konso and some other Cushitic languages can be found in Ongaye (2013a: 73–77), Mulugeta (2017), and Mous (2008).

a. ɗimayta-siʔ   ʔi=kal-ay
   old_man-DEF.M/F   3=return_home-PFV
   'The old man came home.'

b. ʔokkatta-siʔ   ʔi=ɗal-ay   c. ʔorra-siʔ   ʔi=ɗey-ay
   cow-DEF.M/F   3=give_birth-PFV   people-DEF.M/F   3=come-PFV
   'The cow gave birth.'   'The people came.'

(4)

Most nouns that are semantically singular and biologically feminine take the feminine gender agreement (5a). However, some plural nouns (5b) have feminine gender agreement on the verb.

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a. *ʔinanta-siʔ*	*ʔi=makk-t-i*	b. *kerkeetasiχ*	*χonsupa* *ʔideʔti*
		kerkeeta-siʔ	*χonso-opa* *ʔi=ɗey-t-i*
girl-DEF.M/F	3=become_sick-3F-PFV	Boorana-DEF.M/F Konso-to	3=come-3F-PFV
'The girl became sick.'		'The Borana came to Konso.'	

(5)

Gender agreement on adjectives is purely morphological; it has nothing to do with the semantic meaning of the noun and corresponds to the gender value on the verb. Specifically, nouns with masculine or feminine gender agreement on verbs are marked by the gender suffix –*a* (M/F) on adjectives (6), and nouns with plural agreement on verbs are marked by –*aaʔ* (PL) on adjectives (7).

a. *ʔanti-ʔ*   *ʔinantaa*   *ɢallaʔ-a=n*   *ʔakk-ay*
    1SG-NOM   girl:REL   be_thin-M/F=1   see-PF
    'I saw a thin girl.'

b. *ʔatti-p*   *pinantaa*   *kapp-a*   *iʔ=ʔakk-it-i*
    2SG-NOM   animal   be_fat-M/F   2=see-2-PFV
    'You saw a fat animal.'

c. *ʔanti-ʔ*   *ʔorra*   *a*   *ɗed~ɗer-a=n*   *ʔakk-ay*
    1SG-NOM   people   REL   PL~be_tall-M/F=1   see-PFV
    'I saw tall people.'

(6)

a. *raaka-siʔ*   *ʔinnaa*   *a*   *ʃakk-aaʔ=ʔi*   *ʔampan-ni*
    old_woman-DEF.M/F   child   REL   be_small-PL=3   baby_sit-IPFV.PRS
    'The old woman babysits a small child.'

b. *ʔorra-sip*   *pinaanaa-siniʔ*   *a*   *ka~kapp-aap*   *pisa*   *ʔi=leyʃ-i-n*
    people-DEF.M/F   animals-DEF.PLG   REL   PL~be_fat-PL   ALL   3=kill[PL]-PFV-PL
    'The people killed all the fat animals.'

c. *ɢoraa-sinik*   *ku~kutt-aaʔ*   *ʔi=ɢuur-am-i-n*
    trees-DEF.PL   PL~be_big-PL   3=cut[PL]-PASS-PFV-PL
    'The big trees were cut.'

(7)

Gender agreement on adjectives occurs when they are used as attributes. Attributive adjectives function as relative clauses (§14.9.3). Nouns that are semantically plural show both number and gender agreement on adjectives.

14.3.2 Number in nouns

Number in nouns can be singulative or plurative, and it is derivational rather than inflectional. The singulative is derived from a (plural) base by replacing the final vowel of the base with the suffix –*ta*, –*itta*, or –*teeta*.

	BASE			SINGULATIVE	
a.	*lafaa*	'bones'	→	*laf-ta*	'bone'
b.	*ʔoχinaa*	'fences'	→	*ʔoχin-ta*	'fence'
c.	*ʔilkaa*	'teeth'	→	*ʔilk-itta*	'tooth'
d.	*χolaʔaa*	'cacti'	→	*χolaʔ-itta*	'cactus (sp.)'
e.	*talaa*	'goats'	→	*tal-teeta*	'she-goat'
f.	*ʔikkiraa*	'lice'	→	*ʔikkir-teeta*	'louse'

(8)

p. 232 The derivation of the plurative employs various strategies, including suffixation, reduplication of the base-final consonant, and gemination of the last consonant of the base. Suppletive plural forms, irregular pluratives, and double plurative derivations also occur.

Five plurative suffixes are attested: *-ɗɗaa*, *-ɗaa*, *-wwaa*, *-ayaa*, and *-iyyaa*. The suffixes *-ɗɗaa* and *-ɗaa* are attached to stems (9), while the others are suffixed to roots by replacing the endings *-ta*, *-atta*, or *-itta* of the base (10).

	BASE			PLURATIVE	
a.	*kosaa*	'granary'	→	*kosa-ɗɗaa*	'granaries'
b.	*maakaa*	'snake'	→	*maaka-ɗɗaa*	'snakes'
c.	*karmaa*	'lion'	→	*karma-ɗaa*	'lions'
d.	*χorma*	'ox, bull'	→	*χorma-ɗaa*	'oxen, bulls'

(9)

	BASE			PLURATIVE	
a.	*ʔalleeta*	'house'	→	*ʔallee-wwaa*	'houses'
b.	*kannoota*	'calabash'	→	*kannoo-wwaa*	'calabashes'
c.	*karratta*	'squirrel'	→	*karr-ayaa*	'squirrels'
d.	*massatta*	'crocodile'	→	*mass-ayaa*	'crocodiles'
e.	*ʔallaʔitta*	'vulture'	→	*ʔallaʔ-iyyaa*	'vultures'
f.	*ɠupitta*	'finger'	→	*ɠup-iyyaa*	'fingers'

(10)

Plurative by reduplication involves the copying of the base-final consonant /l/ or /n/ in a consonant cluster and geminating it:

	BASE			PLURATIVE	
a.	*sipla*	'metal'	→	*sipla~llaa*	'metals'
b.	*tawna*	'bell'	→	*tawna~nnaa*	'bells'

(11)

Another strategy for deriving the plurative is by geminating the onset of the final syllable and lengthening the final vowel:

	BASE			PLURATIVE	
kaasa	'horn, gun'	→	*kaassaa*	'horns, guns'
tika	'house'	→	*tikkaa*	'houses'

(12)

Some nouns exhibit a double plurative derivation in that a plurative form is used as a base to derive another plurative. This applies to pluratives formed by geminating the onset of the last syllable (13a–c), or those that reduplicate the final consonant (13d–f). A double plurative derivation does not bring about a change in meaning.

(13)

	BASE: PLURATIVE 1			PLURATIVE 2	
a.	*tikkaa*	'houses'	→	*tikka-ɗaa*	'houses'
b.	*porraa*	'roads'	→	*porra-ɗaa*	'roads'
c.	*raakkaa*	'old women'	→	*raakka-ɗaa*	'old women'
d.	*sipla~llaa*	'metals'	→	*siplalla-ɗɗaa*	'metals'
e.	*hawla~llaa*	'graves'	→	*hawlalla-ɗɗaa*	'graves'
f.	*ɗapna~nnaa*	'temples'	→	*dapnanna-ɗɗaa*	'temples (of face)'

Another strategy used to indicate multiple reference is the use of suppletive pluratives:

	BASE			PLURATIVE	
a.	ʔinnaa	'child'	→	hellaa	'children'
b.	nama	'man, person'	→	ʔorra	'people'
c.	ʔinanta	'girl'	→	tupar(r)aa	'girls'

(14)

The associative plural is expressed by the particle *opa* followed by the noun of the association:

ʔopa   kappooli-χ   χopaa   heer-i-n
AP   Kappoole-NOM   shoes:3   buy[PL]-PFV-PL
'Kappoole and his associates bought shoes.'

(15)

14.3.3 Number agreement in adjectives

Singular number is not marked on adjectives (16a), but plural number is marked by reduplicating the initial C_1V syllable when followed by a geminate consonant in the root (16b), otherwise C_1VC_1 occurs (16c). Plural number in adjectives has a distributive meaning: the meaning of the adjective applies to each member of the group. Number agreement on adjectives is important to mention here because it is the only place where the category of number triggers agreement. Note that agreement on the verb only applies to gender.

a. ʔinnaa-siniʔ   ʔi=kapp-i   b. hellaa-siniʔ   ʔi=ka-kapp-i
   child-DEF.PLG   3=be_fat-PFV   children-DEF.PLG   3=PL-be_fat-PFV
   'The child is fat.'   'The children are fat.'

c. ɢoraa-siniʔ   ʔi=ded-der-i
   trees-DEF.PLG   3=PL-be_tall-PFV
   'The trees are tall.'

(16)

14.3.4 Numerals

The Konso cardinal numeral system is decimal, with *kuma* 'thousand' being the highest individual lexical item. Numerals have all the morphological qualities of nouns, not those of adjectives. The basic cardinal numerals are:

takka	'one'	leh	'six'
lakki	'two'	tappa	'seven'
sessaa	'three'	setteʔ	'eight'
ʔafur	'four'	sakal	'nine'
ken	'five'	kudan	'ten'

(17)

The number for tens, hundreds, and thousands precede digits. Note the metathesis in the case of tens:

kunda lakki	'twenty (lit. ten two)'
kuma afur	'four thousand (lit. thousand four)'

(18)

Multiples of base ten, hundred, and thousand contain the conjunction *ka* 'and' between the base and the unit numeral (19a–c). Multiples of other bases contain the suffix *-ʔ* attached to the base (19d), whose glottal stop completely assimilates to a following consonant (19e).

<div>

a. *kuɗan ka lakki*   'twelve (lit. ten and two)'
b. *ɗippa ka kunɗa sessaa*   'one-hundred and thirty'
c. *kuma ka ɗippa lakki*   'one-thousand two hundred'
d. *kunɗa lakki-ʔ afur*   'twenty-four'
e. *ɗippa sessaa-k kunɗa afur*   'three-hundred and forty'

</div>

(19)

Except for 'first', which is based on the verb root *paayy-* 'start' plus the suffix *-uta*, ordinal numbers are marked with the suffix *-atta*, e.g. 'second' is based on the root *lamm-* 'two' (which is an Old Cushitic form) and adds the ordinal suffix *-atta* yielding *lammatta*.

14.3.5 Case

Nominative case is marked by the suffix *-ʔ* on pronouns, proper names, and names of weekdays and months. The nominative is only marked within this very restricted set of inherently specific nominals; and since the accusative is not, Konso is marked-nominative in the restricted functional load of core case. The glottal stop assimilates to the following consonant.

<div>

a. *ʔanti-χ*   *χorma=n*   *piɗɗ-ay*
  1SG-NOM   OX=1   buy[SG]-PFV
  'I bought an ox.'

b. *tapayya-ɗ*   *ɠoyraa*   *mur-ri*
  Tapayya-NOM   tree:3   cut[SG]-IPFV.PRS
  'Tapayya is cutting a tree.'

c. *palawwa-p*   *parre*
  Saturday-NOM   tomorrow
  'Saturday is tomorrow.'

</div>

(20)

The 1SG and 2SG pronouns distinguish between nominative and accusative (§14.4).

The dative is marked by the suffix *-ʔ* (21), and the instrumental by *-n(n)* (22). The dative suffix assimilates completely to a following consonant; the instrumental suffix appears as a single consonant when followed by a consonant (22a) and as a long one when followed by a vowel (22b). The instrumental suffix is homophonous with the path marker, as in *kara-n* 'through' from *kara* 'in'.

<div>

a. *luukkataasiʔ*   *ʔana-p*   *piɗɗ-i*
  fruit:DEM.M/F   1SG-DAT   buy[SG]-IMP.SG
  'Buy this fruit for me!'

b. *ʔinaanta-sikka*   *ʔiʃa-ʃ*   *ʃaɠaa*   *ɗaass-i*
  girl-DEF.M/F:AND   3SG-DAT   local_beer   give:3F-PFV
  'And the girl gave the local beer to him.'

</div>

(21)

<div>

a. *ʔanti-χ*   *χorma-si=n*   *teepaa-n*   *hiɗɗ-ay*
  1SG-NOM   OX-DEF.M/F=1   rope-INST   tie-PFV
  'I tied the ox with rope.'

b. *namasik*   *kumaantasiʔ*   *ʔoranannee*   *torp-ay*
  nama-siʔ   kumaanta-siʔ   ʔorana-nn-i   torp-ay
  person-DEF.M/F   antelope-DEF.M/F   spear-INST-3   shoot_with_spear-PFV
  'The man shot the antelope with a spear.'

</div>

(22)

Genitive is expressed with the particle *a* for human possessors,[3] and *a-* … *-ʔ* for non-human possessors. The particle precedes the possessor. In connected speech, the genitive particle merges with the preceding vowel.

a.	*ʔinnaa*	*a*	*ʔongaye*	b.	*kokaa*	*a*	*karmaa-ɠ*	*ɠara-ʔ=in*	*muk-ay*

a. *ʔinnaa a ʔongaye*
child GEN Ongaye
'Ongaye's child'

b. *kokaa a karmaa-ɠ ɠara-ʔ=in muk-ay*
skin GEN lion-GEN ON-LOC=1 sleep-PFV
'I slept on the lion's skin.'

(23)

14.3.6 Definiteness and demonstrative modifiers

Konso marks definite reference on nouns by the suffixes *-siʔ* (M/F) and *-siniʔ* (PLG):

a. *piʃaa-siniʔ ʔi=ɲapal-i-n*
water-DEF.PLG 3=be_spoiled-PFV-PL
sook-i-n
exit-PFV-PL
'The water got spoiled.'

b. *pinaanaa-sini-kka ʔolpa*
animal-DEF.PLG-and.3 together
'And the animals gathered together.'

(24)

Demonstrative modifiers—for pronouns see §14.4—express only proximity by various suffixes: *-oosiʔ*, *-asiʔ*, *-siʔ* for nouns with masculine/feminine gender agreement on the verb (25–27), and *-oosiniʔ* for nouns with plural agreement (28). The distribution of the masculine/feminine suffixes is captured by morphological means: *-oosiʔ* is added to any nominal root (25) and *-asiʔ* to nominal roots that end in the nominalizer *-a/-ta* (26), while *-siʔ* replaces the nominalizer *-a/-ta* (27).

a. *karm-oosiʔ*
lion-DEM.M/F
'this lion'

b. *ʔinant-oosiʔ*
girl-DEM.M/F
'this girl'

c. *por-oosiʔ*
road-DEM.M/F
'this road'

(25) ↳

a. *ʔinanta-asiʔ*
girl-DEM.M/F
'this girl'

b. *pora-asiʔ*
road-DEM.M/F
'this road'

c. *ɠoyra-asiʔ*
tree-DEM.M/F
'this tree'

(26)

a. *ʔinan-siʔ*
girl-DEM.M/F
'this girl'

b. *por-siʔ*
road-DEM.M/F
'this road'

c. *nam-siʔ*
person-DEM.M/F
'this person'

(27)

a. *ʔinn-oosiniʔ*
child-DEM.PLG
'this child'

b. *pinaan-oosiniʔ*
animals-DEM.PLG
'these animals'

c. *ɗill-oosiniʔ*
fields-DEM.PLG
'these fields'

(28)

14.3.7 Nominal derivation

Nominal derivation includes the formation of abstract nouns, agent nouns, and nouns for ethnic groups. Abstract nouns are derived from nominal roots by the suffix *–uma* (29a), or from adjectival roots by *–umaa* (29b).

(29)

   a. *ʔinn-uma*   b. *kapp-umaa*
       child-ABSTR   be_fat-ABSTR
       'childhood'   'fatness'

Agent nouns are derived from verb roots, and are marked by the suffixes *–aampayta* (M), *–aampayteeta* (F), *–aampayaa* (PL):

(30)

   a. *kod-aampayta*   b. *kod-aampayteeta*   c. *kod-aampayaa*
       work-AGNT.M   work-AGNT.F   work-AGNT.PL
       'male worker'   'female worker'   'workers'

Most nouns for ethnic groups are marked by the denominal derivational suffixes *–itta* (M), *–itteeta* (F) and *–eeta* (PL):

(31)

   a. *kerk-itta*   b. *kerk-itteeta*   c. *kerk-eeta*
       Borana-NMLZ.M   Borana-NMLZ.F   Borana-NMLZ.PL
       'Borana man'   'Borana woman'   'the Borana people'

14.4 Pronouns

The personal pronouns are shown in Table 14.2. Only 1SG/PL and 2SG pronouns distinguish between nominative and object forms.

Table 14.2 Personal pronouns

PERSON	SUBJECT FORM	OBJECT FORM
1SG	ʔanti	ʔana
2SG	ʔatti	ke
3SM	ʔiʃa	
3SF	ʔiʃeenna*	
1PL	ʔinu	ʔino
2PL	ʔiʃina	
3PL	ʔiʃoonna	

*   The 3SF pronoun has further variants: ʔiʃeet(t)a, ʔiʃeed(d)a.

The use of the pronouns is shown below:

a. ʔanti-n   nama   lekayta=n   ʔup-a
    1SG-NOM   person   many=1   know-IPFV.PRS
    'I know many people.'

b. ʔinanta-siʔ   ʔanaa   ʔakk-it-i
    girl-DEF.M/F   1SG.OBJ:3   see-3F-PFV
    'The girl saw me.'

(32)

a. ʔatti-ʔ   ʔana=ʔ   ʔakk-it-i   b. ʔanti-k   kin   ʔakk-ay
    2SG-NOM   1SG.ACC=2   see-2-PFV   1SG-NOM   2SG.OBJ:1   see-PFV
    'You saw me.'   'I saw you.'

(33)

The possessives distinguish person and number but not gender, and have separate forms for possessive pronouns as head of a noun phrase and possessive suffixes as specifiers to a nominal head (Table 14.3).

Table 14.3 Possessive pronouns and suffixes

PERSON	PRONOUN		SUFFIX FOR	
			M/F POSSESSUM	PLG POSSESSUM
1SG	χayyu	'mine'	-aawu	-aayyu
2SG	χaayti	'yours'	-aayti	-aatti
3SM/F	χaadi	'his/hers'	-aadi	-aadi
1PL	χannu	'ours'	-aaynu	-aannu
2PL	χaayʃin	'yours'	-aayʃin	-aassin
3PL	χassu	'theirs'	-aayʃuʔ	-aassuʔ

Demonstrative pronouns—for modifiers see §14.3.6—express proximity and distinguish number. The demonstrative pronouns *ini/sedi* refer to a singular entity, and *seni* to a plural entity.

14.5 Verbs

14.5.1 Verb derivation

Deverbal derivation consists of several causative extensions, the middle, the passive, the punctual, and the pluractional. With the exception of the pluractional, derivations are suffixal. The causative, middle, and passive can also derive verbs from other word classes. Verbs are derived from adjectives by an inchoative suffix.

14.5.1.1 Causative

Konso uses different causative derivations depending on degrees of involvement. The suffixes –*ʃ/–s* (–*s* being used whenever a further verbal derivation follows) derive direct causatives (34a), and –*atɟiis* indirect causatives (34b) (see also Mous 2004b). There is no structural difference between the causatives of intransitive and transitive bases.

> a. *nama-siχ*   *χalitta-siʔ*   *ʔi=ɢep-ʃ-ay*
>   man-DEF.M/F   stick-DEF.M/F   3=be_broken-CSD-PFV
>   'The man broke the stick.'
> b. *ʔantu-ɢ*   *ɢoyra-siʔ*   *ʔi=mur-atʃtʃiis-ay*
>   Anto-NOM   tree-DEF.M/F   3=cut[SG]-CSI-PFV
>   'Anto had the tree cut.'

(34)

In rare instances, the causative adds an external causer to the state of affairs expressed in the base verb, which still remains intransitive:

(35)

a. ʔi=ʔawd-ay
   3=be_bright-PFV
   'It is midday/totally bright.'

b. waaɢa   ʔi=ʔawd-iʃ-ay
   god   3=be_bright-CSD-PFV
   'The weather is clear again.'

14.5.1.2 Middle

The middle has a wide range of meanings (Mous 2007b), but the autobenefactive is the most productive reading, as in Somali (Saeed 1995) and some other Cushitic languages (Tolemariam 2009: 97, 149).

nama-siɗ   ɢoyra-siʔ   ʔi=mur-ad-ay
person-DEF.M/F   tree-DEF.M/F   3=cut[SG]-MID-PFV
'The man cut the tree for himself.'

(36)

p. 239 The middle suffix *-aɗ* has the allomorph *-at* when other derivational suffixes follow. The core meaning of the middle is body orientation (actions performed by the body, body grooming, body positions, and body movement) including mental activities (Mous 2004c), e.g. *ɗaʔt-* 'smear something'→ *ɗaʔt-aɗ-* 'smear something on the body'. The middle is often assumed to be an intransitivizing operation but this is not the case in Konso. Transitive middles do exist, as in (37):

ɗila   ʔi=armad-ay
field   3=weed:MID-PFV
'He weeded the field.'

(37)

The middle derivation has a strong tendency to lexicalize and most middles occur only in frozen forms. Their semantics fall into the typological classification of middles developed by Kemmer (1993). The Konso middle has developed an additional sense from body-centredness to self-centredness, namely, the expression of self to the exclusion of others:

a. ʔi=xosal-ad-ay
   3=laugh-MID-PFV
   'He laughed alone.'

b. ʔi=dam-ad-ay
   3=eat-MID-PFV
   'He ate alone, by himself.'

(38)

With some verbs, the middle has a passive reading (39), which is not uncommon in Ethiopian languages (Tolemariam 2009: 166), and has also been reported for Ts'amakko (Savà 2005: 174).

ʔi=ɗal-ad-ay   / *ʔi=ɗal-am-ay
3=bear-MID-PFV   3=bear-PASS-PFV
'The baby is delivered.'

(39)

14.5.1.3 Passive

The passive is derived by the suffix *-am* (Mous 2007b). All passive sentences presuppose the existence of an agent—which is the main semantic difference from the middle. If the agent is expressed, it is usually marked by the instrumental:

(40)

> χarra-sif   furaa-nne   pan-am-ay
> door-DEF.M/F key-INST   open-PASS-PFV
> 'The door was opened with a key.' (Daudey & Hellenthal 2004: 26)

A competing impersonal construction occurs in which the verb inflects for a generic 3PL subject:

> mataafaa tika   kara-χ   χaay-i-n
> book:3   house   in-LOC   put-PFV-PL
> 'They have put a book in the house.'

(41)

Only the theme of a ditransitive verb can become subject of the related derived passive verb (42). The passive of a causative transforms the causee into the subject (43a). A locative phrase can also be the subject in a passive clause (43b).

> a. ʔanti-ʔ   ʔinnaa-d   damta   ʔin=erk-ay
>   1SG-NOM   boy.PLG-DAT   food   1=send-PFV
>   'I sent food to the boy.'
>
> b. damta   innaa-ʔ   ʔi=erk-am-t-i
>   food   boy.PLG-DAT   3=send-PASS-F-PFV
>   'Food was sent to the boy.'

(42)

> a. horeeta-siʔ   ʔi=kal-s-am-t-i
>   cattle-DEF.M/F   3=return_home-CAUS-PASS-F-PFV
>   'The cattle were brought home.'
>
> b. ʔurmalaa-pa   ʔi=aan-am-mi
>   market.PL-LOC   3=GO-PASS-IPFV.PRS
>   'The market is frequented.'

(43)

Konso also allows passives of intransitive verbs.

> a. ʔi=χaχad-ay   b. ʔi=χaχat-am-mi
>   3=swear-PFV   3=swear-PASS-IPFV.PRS
>   'He swore.'   'It is sworn.'

(44)

The passive of intransitives usually denotes a markedly favourable or unfavourable state (45a), separation, or body movement. The subject agreement is 3SF but it is not clear what it refers to. A passive verb with feminine subject can refer to a first person (45b) even though the clause contains no reference to a first person. The subject can be a cognate object, as in Oromo (Tolemariam 2009: 111).

> a. ʔi=muk-am-t-i   b. ʔi=ker-am-t-i
>   3=sleep-PASS-3F-PFV   3=be_old-PASS-3F-PFV
>   'Sleeping happened under difficult   'I became old (lit. it became old
>   circumstances.'   on me).'

(45)

14.5.1.4 Pluractional and punctual

Konso has a pluractional and also a punctual (semelfactive) derivation. The punctual derivation denotes that something is done once or a bit.[4] The pluractional is fully productive, but the punctual is not. The pluractional is formed by reduplicating the initial syllable of the root (i.e. C_1VC_1-C_1... (46a–c), but C_1V-C_1... when the second root consonant is geminate (46d–e)), and the punctual by geminating the root-final

consonant (47). It is ↳ possible to derive a pluractional from a derived punctual but not vice versa. Double derived pluractionals and punctuals are not possible.

	Base (sg)		Pluractional	
a.	dot-	→	doddot-	'stab'
b.	toom-	→	tottoom-	'hit with a fist'
c.	tarp-	→	tattarp-	'pass, cross'
d.	daww-	→	dadaww-	'herd'
e.	tuɠɠuur-	→	tutuɠɠuur-	'push'

(46)

	Base (pl)		Punctual	
a.	ɠof-	→	ɠoff-	'pinch'
b.	tit-	→	titt-	'pull'
c.	rak-	→	rakk-	'hang'
d.	leɓ-	→	leɓɓ-	'kick'
e.	ɠud-	→	ɠudd-	'pierce'

(47)

Konso pluractional and punctual derivations form a system of event number. The base verb to a derived pluractional is interpreted as referring to a singular event, and every base verb with a punctual counterpart is interpreted as plural. In addition, a number of suppletive singular-plural pairs are best described in terms of event number; see the complete list in (48). The suppletive plural verb in (48l–m) has two singular counterparts with different meanings.

	Base (sg)		Suppletive Pluractional	
a.	keer-	→	hir-	'run'
b.	toy-	→	ley-	'die'
c.	piʔ-	→	seh-	'fall'
d.	χaʔad- 'run'	→	paɠad-	'run/fly'
e.	ʔiʃʃ-	→	leyʃ-	'kill'
f.	mur-	→	ɠuur-	'cut'
g.	put-	→	huuɓ-	'uproot'
h.	ɠaniin-	→	ɠom-	'bite'
i.	pidd-	→	heer-	'buy'
j.	day-	→	ɠid-	'hit'
k.	χooɓɓ-	→	ʔik(k)-	'take a sip'
l.	χapt-	→	dakk-	'throw'
m.	kat-	→		'drop'

(48)

A plural event entails distinguishing between separate sub-events either because the subject is plural (typically with intransitive verbs), or the object is plural (mostly with transitive verbs), or the action is repeated:

(49)

a. *talaa-sinit*   *teepaa*   *ɢara-nne*   *doɗ~ɗoy-i-n*
goats-DEF.PL   rope   on-path:3   PL~jump[SG]-PFV-PL
'The goats jumped over the rope.'

b. *kuta-siʔ*   *ʔi=keer-ay*   *ka*   *hellaa-siniɗ*   *ɢaɗ~ɗaniin-ay*
dog-DEF.M/F   3=run[SG]PFV   and   children-DEF.PL   PL~bite[SG]-PFV
'The dog ran and bit the children.'

c. *kuta-siʔ*   *ʔinanta-siʔ*   *ʔi=ɢaɗ~ɗaniin-ay*
dog-DEF.M/F   girl-DEF.M/F   3=PL~bite[SG]-PFV
'The dog bit the girl (a few times).'

The semantic interpretation of the pluractional and punctual depends on various factors:

(i)   Lexical semantics, i.e. if the semantics of the verb excludes sub-events, plurality of events becomes available as an interpretation;

(ii)   If the base verb is number neutral (i.e. referring to both singular and plural events) the derived pluractional has a distributed interpretation and the derived punctual expresses intensity, quickness, or suddenness;

(iii)   A pluractional derived from a punctual expresses low plurality (a few times);

(iv)   Interaction with the aspectual system (i.e. imperfective vs. perfective).

A full analysis of the system is presented in Ongaye & Mous (2017).

The punctual denotes that something is done only once. Example (50a), for instance, expresses that pinching is done only once. Such an action is incompatible with a plural object, hence the ungrammaticality of (50b).

a. *nama-siʔ*   *ʔinanta-siʔ*   *ʔi=ɢof-f-a*
man-DEF.M/F   girl-DEF.M/F   3=pinch-SG-IPFV.FUT
'The man will pinch the girl once.'

b. **nama-siʔ*   *hellaa-siniʔ*   *ʔi=ɢof-f-a*
man-DEF.M/F   children-DEF.PL   3=pinch-SG-IPFV.FUT
(Intended: The man will pinch the children once.)

(50)

Derived causative, middle, passive, and inchoative verbs cannot form a punctual derivation, nor verbs that have the same ending as those derived verbs. As the punctual is marked on the last consonant of a root, it is not accessible in suffixal derivations.

14.5.1.5 Inchoative de-adjectival derivation

The inchoative is derived by three suffixes, which are distributed according to the phonological shape of the base: –*aɗ* on roots with a geminate consonant or a cluster, –*aaɗ* on CVC roots, and –*naaɗ* on roots with a long vowel. Note, however, that some counter examples exist.

(51)

a.	*kapp-*	'be fat'	→	*kapp-aɗ-*	'become fat'
b.	*palɗ-*	'be wide'	→	*palɗ-aɗ-*	'become wide'
c.	*ɗer-*	'be tall, long'	→	*ɗer-aaɗ-*	'become tall, long'
d.	*ɗeh-*	'be near'	→	*ɗeh-aaɗ-*	'become near'
e.	*ʔilaaw*	'be green'	→	*ʔilaaw-naaɗ-*	'become yellow'
f.	*poor-*	'be black'	→	*poor-naaɗ-*	'become black'

p. 243 The bases in (51) express qualities and are therefore adjectives. The resemblance of the inchoative to the middle is no coincidence.

The causative also serves as a verbalizer with comparable forms in *-ʃ*, *-ayʃ*, and *-nayʃ*. In addition, there are denominal inchoative verbs derived by *-um* and *-ooɗ*.

a.	*χasa*	'happiness'	→	*χas-ooɗ*	'become happy'
b.	*maaʃʃaa*	'drunkenness'	→	*maaʃʃ-ooɗ*	'become drunk'
c.	*ʔaappaa*	'father'	→	*aapp-um-*	'become a father'
d.	*mootta*	'friend'	→	*moott-um-*	'become a friend'

(52)

14.5.2 Verb inflection

The verb is inflected for person and gender (§14.3.1), for event number (§14.5.1.4), and for aspect/mood—which is discussed in this section. Konso distinguishes between perfective and imperfective aspect. There are two imperfective conjugations: one for the present, the other for the future. The present imperfective is invariable for subject and ends in *-ni*; the future imperfective ends in *-a* (see Table 14.4). In addition to these main clause conjugations, a dependent conjugation characterized by a final *-o* occurs. The general order of subject and TAM inflection is: verb stem−person−aspect−(plural). The plural ending distinguishes second and third person plurals from their singular bases.

Table 14.4 Perfective and future imperfective conjugations

	PERFECTIVE	FUTURE IMPERFECTIVE
1SG	*ʔin-kat-ay*	*ʔin-kat-a*
2SG	*ʔik-kat-ti*	*ʔik-kat-ta*
3SF	*ʔi-kat-ti*	*ʔi-kat-ta*
3SM	*ʔ-ikat-ay*	*ʔi-kat-a*
1PL	*ʔin-kan-ni*	*ʔin-kan-na*
2PL	*ʔik-kat-tin*	*ʔik-kat-tan*
3PL	*ʔi-kat-in*	*ʔi-kat-an*
	SBJ-sell-PFV	SBJ-sell-IPFV.FUT

(*kat-* 'to sell')

Subject clitics that precede the verb in Table 14.4 are compulsory. Their most basic forms are shown in Table 14.5.

Table 14.5 Subject clitics

CLAUSE TYPE	PERSON		
	FIRST	SECOND	THIRD
INDEPENDENT	*in*	*iʔ*	*i*
DEPENDENT	*an*	*aʔ*	*a*
NEGATIVE	*an*	*aʔ*	*in*

The final glottal stop of the second person assimilates completely to a following consonant (§14.2.6), and the nasal of the first person clitic assimilates in place of articulation to this consonant. If the subject clitics attach to a preceding word ending in the vowel, the vowel of the subject clitic is deleted (Table 14.6).

The negative counterpart of the present imperfective is formed by using the negative subject clitics and the negative forms of the verb 'to be' (for which see Table 14.8).

Table 14.6 Subject-invariant paradigms (affirmative and negative)

	PRESENT IMPERFECTIVE	NEGATIVE PRESENT IMPERFECTIVE I	NEGATIVE JUSSIVE	NEGATIVE PERFECTIVE
1SG	*ʔinkanni*	*ʔankeerri ʔantʃo*		*ʔanɢapni*
2SG	*ʔikkanni*	*ʔakkeerri ʔakkittu*		*ʔaɢɢapni*
3SF	*ʔikanni*	*keerri ʔinkittu*	*ʔinkannin*	*ʔinɢapni*
3SM	*ʔikanni*	*keerri ʔintʃo*	*ʔinkannin*	*ʔinɢapní*
1PL	*ʔinkanninna*	*ʔanhirri ʔankinnu*		*ʔino anɢapni*
2PL	*ʔikkannittan*	*ʔahhirri ʔakkittan*		*ʔaɢɢapni*
3PL	*ʔikanni*	*hirri intʃan*	*ʔinkannin*	*ʔinɢapni*
	SBJ-*kat-ni*	NEG.SBJ-*keer/hir-ni* NEG.SBJ-be	NEG.SBJ-*kat-nin*	NEG.SBJ-*ɢap-ni*

(verbs: *kat-* 'to sell'; *ɢap-* 'catch, hold')

Another negative present imperfective paradigm is attested for derived de-adjectival inchoative verbs and for six stative verbs, namely *ʔup-* 'know', *pah-* 'look like, resemble', *heen-* 'want', *sah-* 'be able to', *ɢap-* 'have; catch, hold', *χoʔ-* 'like something very much' (Table 14.7):

Table 14.7 Negative present imperfective II and negative dependent

	NEGATIVE PRESENT IMPERFECTIVE II	NEGATIVE DEPENDENT
1SG	*ʔan-deraaɗ-u*	*ʔan-kal-in*
2SG	*ʔad-deraat-tu*	*ʔak-kal-in*
3SF	*ʔin-deraat-tu*	*ʔan-kal-in*
3SM	*ʔin-deraaɗ-u*	*ʔan-kal-in*
1PL	*ʔan-deɗ~deraan-nu*	*ʔan ʔinu ʔan-kal-in*
2PL	*ʔad-deɗ~deraat-tan*	*ʔak-kal-in*
3PL	*ʔin-deɗ~deraaɗ-an*	*ʔan-kal-in*
	NEG.SBJ-become_tall[SG/PL]-SBJ:NEG.PRS	NEG.SBJ-go_home-DEP

The conjugations of the verb 'to be' are slightly deviant, as they involve two root variants: *tʃ–* and *kit–* (Table 14.8).

Table 14.8 Conjugations of 'to be' in the present

	NEGATIVE	AFFIRMATIVE
1SG	*ʔan-tʃo*	*ʔin-tʃa*
2SG	*ʔak-kittu*	*ʔi-kitta*
3SF	*ʔin-kittu*	*ʔi-kitta*
3SM	*ʔin-tʃo*	*ʔi-tʃa*
1PL	*ʔan-kinnu*	*ʔin-kinna*
2PL	*ʔak-kittan*	*ʔi-kittan*
3PL	*ʔin-tʃan*	*ʔi-tʃan*
	NEG.SBJ-be:NEG	SBJ-be

The form of the negative future imperfective and the jussive is similar to the dependent paradigm (Table 14.9):

The subject clitics for the negative jussive slightly differ from the other negative subject clitics. The jussive (affirmative and negative) lacks a subject clitic for the first person; a full independent subject pronoun is used instead, *ʔana* and *ʔino* in Table 14.9. Affirmative jussive subject clitics are of the dependent series (see Table 14.5). The negative jussive has no form for the first person. In the second person, the negative imperative is used, e.g. *ʔin = aan–an* ↳ (2:NEG = *go*–NEG.IMP.SG) 'Do not go!' The third person negative subject clitic is used for both third and second persons (negative imperative). It is the only paradigm where the subject clitics do not distinguish between third person and speech act participants.

Table 14.9 Affirmative dependent and jussive, and negative future imperfective

	DEPENDENT	NEGATIVE FUTURE IMPERFECTIVE	JUSSIVE
1SG	ʔan-katu	ʔan-kat-u	ʔana katu
2SG	ʔak-kattu	ʔak-kat-tu	
3SF	ʔa-kattu	ʔin-kat-tu	ʔa-kattu
3SM	ʔa-katu	ʔin-kat-u	ʔa-katu
1PL	ʔan-kannu	ʔan-kan-nu	ʔino kannu
2PL	ʔak-kattan	ʔak-kat-tan	
3PL	ʔa-katan	ʔin-kat-an	ʔa-katin
	SBJ-sell	SBJ-sell-SBJ:NEG.PRD	SBJ-sell.JUSS

(*kat-* 'to sell')

Several (morpho)phonological processes occur. The glottal stop of the second person subject clitic assimilates to the initial consonant of the verb root yielding a geminate consonant, and the *n* of the first and third person subject clitics also assimilates to the initial consonant of the root (§14.2.5). The stem-final consonants *ɗ* and *m* assimilate in place of articulation and voice to the person suffix *-t* (2SG/PL, 3SF), but after final *ʃ* the person marker *-t* assimilates in manner to the preceding fricative yielding *ss* (53b). After stem-final geminates an epenthetic *i* is inserted. Stem-final *t* or *ʃ* completely assimilate to the 1PL marker *-n* (53e–g), whereas *-n* completely assimilates to a preceding *m*, *l* or *r* (53h). A stem-final *ɗ* is realized as a glottal stop (53a, i). These rules do not apply to root-final geminate consonants, since they are followed by epenthetic *i* (53d).

a. *i=faɗ-t-i*   [ʔifaʔti]/[ʔifaati]   'she wanted'
b. *i=ɗaaʃ-t-i*   [ʔiɗaassi]   'she gave'
c. *i=faat-t-i*   [ʔifaatti]   'she split'
d. *i=piɗɗ-t-i*   [ʔipiɗɗiti]   'she bought'
e. *in=faat-n-i*   [ʔinfaanni]   'we split'
f. *in=ɗaaʃ-n-i*   [ʔinɗaanni]   'we gave'
g. *in=ɗam-n-i*   [ʔinɗammi]   'we ate'
h. *in=fil-n-a*   [ʔinfilla]   'we will comb'
i. *in=haaɗ-n-i*   [ʔinhaaʔni]   'we carried'

(53)

The imperative never has a subject clitic. The difference between singular and plural addressee is expressed by the suffixes *-i/-u* (SG) vs. *-a* (PL). The singular suffix is *-u* when the verb ends in the middle/inchoative suffix *-aɗ*.

(54)

a. *tika   kara   sah-i*   b. *tika   kara   sah-a*
house   in   sweep-IMP.SG   house   in   sweep-IMP.PL
'Sweep the house (2SG/2PL)!'

c. *tika   kara   sah-n-a*   d. *piɗɗ-aɗ-u*
house   in   sweep-1PL-IMP.PL   buy[SG]-MID-IMP.SG
'Let us sweep the house!'   'Buy for yourself (2SG)!'

The perfective refers to an event that is finished at the moment of speaking. The present imperfective denotes actions taking place at the moment of speaking but also habitual actions and statements of general truth. The future imperfective refers to actions that start after the moment of speaking. Dependent forms are used in subordinated clauses after conjunctions (see §14.11).

Continuous aspect with emphasis on the continuation is expressed in periphrastic constructions involving the verb 'to be' with a verbal noun as complement followed by the postpositions *ɢaraa* 'on' (for an ongoing action) or *ɢuɗaa* 'side of' (for a past action):

a. *ʔinukkirpa ɗawiya ɢaraan kinna*
ʔinu-ʔ   *kirpa*   *ɗaw-iya*   *ɢaraa=in*   *kit-n-a*
1PL-NOM   song   sing-VN   on=1   be-1PL-IPFV.FUT
'We are singing a song (lit. we are on (top of) singing a song).'

b. *ʔinuk kirpa ɗawiya ɢuɗaan kinna*
kirpa   *ɗaw-iya*   *ɢuɗaa=in*   *kit-n-a*   *ʔinu-ʔ*
song   sing-VN   side_of=1   be-1PL-IPFV.FUT   1PL-NOM
'We have been singing a song (lit. we are on the side of singing a song).'

(55)

In the imperfective, third persons may also occur with the additional subject suffixes *–tta* (F), *–ya* (M) or *–yan* (PLG). These suffixes are optional; they may add meaning such as 'contrary to expectation':

ʔinantasiʔ ʔikallitta
inanta-siʔ   *i=kal-ni-tta*
girl-DEF.M/F   3=return_home-IPFV.PRS-3F.CONTRARY_TO_EXPECTATION
'The girl is going home.'

(56)

14.6 Adjectives

Konso has about 30 adjectives for colour, other qualities, dimension, and distance. In attributive phrases, a head noun is followed by the genitive/relative particle *a*, and then by the adjective, which agrees in number and gender with the head noun. Plural number is marked on the adjective through C_1VC_1– reduplication (§14.3.3),[5] and gender by the suffixes *–a* (M/F) and *–aaʔ* (PL).

p. 248

a. *ʔanti-ʔ   ʔorra   ʔa   ku-kutt-a=n   ʔakk-ay*
1SG-NOM   people   GEN   PL-be_big-3M/F=1   see-PFV
'I saw big people (lit. I saw people who are big).'

b. *hellaa   ʔa   ʃa-ʃakk-aaʔ   ʔi=ɗey-i-n*
children   GEN   PL-be_small-PL   3=come-PFV.PL
'Small children came (lit. children who are small came).'

(57)

When used predicatively (Table 14.10), the adjectives inflect in a paradigm resembling that of perfective verbs (see Table 14.4). With inchoative and stative verbs, the perfective denotes the (resultant) state. The subject clitic is that of main clauses, and the adjectival root is followed by *–i* plus *–nna* (1PL), *–ttan* (2PL), and is reduplicated for plural subjects. Negative predicates with adjectives use the negative subject clitics on the adjectival root, which is followed by the negative verb 'to be'.

Table 14.10 Paradigm of adjectival predicative clauses

	AFFIRMATIVE	NEGATIVE
1SG	ʔantiʔ ʔin-der-i	ʔan-der-een-tʃo
2SG	ʔattiʔ ʔid-der-i	ʔad-der-eek-kittu
3SF	ʔiʃeennaʔ ʔi-der-i	der-in-kittu
3SM	ʔiʃaʔ ʔi-der-i	der-in-tʃo
1PL	ʔinuʔ ʔin-ded~der-i-nna	ʔan-ded~der-een-kinnu
2PL	ʔiʃinaʔ ʔid-ded~der-i-ttan	ʔad-ded~der-eek-kittan
3PL	ʔiʃoonnaʔ ʔi-ded~der-i	ded~der-in-tʃan
	pro SBJ-(RDP~)be_long-PFV(-1PL/2PL)	NEG.SBJ-(RDP-)be_long-NEG.SBJ-be

Nouns denoting entities with the quality of an adjective can be derived by the suffixes *–ayta* (*ɗer–ayta* 'tall (M)'), *–ayteeta* (*ɗer–ayteeta* 'tall (F)'), and *–ayaa* (*ɗer–ayaa* 'tall (PLG)'). These de–adjectival nouns modify other nouns. If they follow the head noun, they agree in gender with it, but if they precede the head noun, the genitive/relative marker *a* is required between the two.

a. *tika* *kutt-ayteeta*
house be_big-NMLZ.F
'a big house'

b. *kutt-ayteeta* *a* *tika*
be_big-NMLZ.F GEN house
'a house which is big'

(58)

De–adjectival inchoative verbs can be nominalized by *–taá*.

sukeentasik kuttattaá paayyiti
sukeenta-siʔ kutt-aɗ-taá paayy-t-i
lamb.F-DEF.M/F be_big-INCH-NMLZ:3 start-3F-PFV
'The lamb started to become big.'

(59)

14.7 Postpositions, adverbs, and conjunctions

14.7.1 Postpositions

Postpositions end with *a* or *aa* (Table 14.11):

Table 14.11 Postpositions

a.	*ɢara(a)*	'on'
b.	*ɢuda(a)*	'beside'
c.	*kapa(a)*	'near'
d.	*kamma(a)*	'behind'
e.	*kara(a)*	'in, inside'
f.	*tura(a)*	'in front of'
g.	*kela(a)*	'under'

The quantity of the final vowel is crucial for the semantic interpretation: with short final *a*, the referent or container is focused (60a), and with final long *aa*, the located object is focused (60b). What is focused in the postposition *karaa* in (60b) is the explicit or implied entity that serves as a figure. In the example, the focus is not the postposition or the ground (i.e. the pot), but rather the implied entity located in the pot. Postpositions ending in short *a* may co-occur with the locative suffix *-ʔ* to emphasize the location of an entity (60c).

a. *oktaa   kara   ʃaɠ-i*   b. *oktaa   karaa   ʃaɠ-i*
pot   inside   wash-IMP.SG   pot   from_inside   wash-IMP.SG
'Wash the inside of the POT!'   'Wash (the thing) from INSIDE of the pot!'

c. *oktaa karaɗ ɗiiʃi*
oktaa   kara-ʔ   ɗiiʃ-i
pot   INSIDE-LOC   leave-IMP.SG
'Leave it in the pot!'

(60)

14.7.2 Adverbs

Adverbs specify location, direction, and time. Adverbs expressing location can be basic or derived. There are four basic locative adverbs: *aye* 'here', *ɗise* 'there (on a horizontal plane)', *χate* 'down there', and *ile* 'up there'. Three locative adverbs are derived by geminating the onset of the second syllable of basic locative adverbs to express further distal location: *ille* 'further up there', *ɗisse* 'further over there (on a horizontal plane)', and *χatte* 'further down there'.

The directional adverbs are *ɗesa*, *χata*, and *ɗela*. The adverb *ɗesa* expresses motion (on a horizontal plane) towards or away from the deictic centre, *χata* from a higher elevation towards the deictic centre, and *ɗela* from a lower elevation towards the deictic centre. Unlike the locative adverbs, directional adverbs cannot be derived.

Time adverbs (with the day of speaking *awwi* 'today' as centre) express time spans encompassing up to three days before the day of speaking (61a–c), and four days after it (61d–g).

(61)

a.	*χala*	'yesterday'	d.	*parre*	'tomorrow'
b.	*χallakkali*	'the day before yesterday'	e.	*partaane*	'the day after tomorrow'
c.	*χattakkali*	'three days ago'	f.	*namakule*	'in three days' time'
			g.	*setikule*	'in four days' time'

A week (*torpaa* or *tappaa*) has seven days, most of which are named after market places:

ʔompakko	'Monday'	*paɢawli*	'Thursday'	*saanpata*	'Sunday'
lankayya	'Tuesday'	*paɢawli parrayta*	'Friday'		
ʔoypattaali	'Wednesday'	*palawwa*	'Saturday'		

(62)

14.7.3 Conjunctions

Conjunctions can be lexical items or suffixes. Coordination is expressed by *ka* (63a), and contrast by *ma* (63b). In utterances, the conjunction is followed by a pause.

a. *ɢoyra-siʔ*   *ʔi=piʔ-ay*   *ka*   *dahannaata-sip*   *paɢ-ʃ-ay*
    tree-DEF.M/F   3=fall-PFV   and gourd-DEF.M/F   break-CAUS-PFV
    'The tree fell and broke the gourd.'

b. *aleta-siʔ*   *ʔi=paɢaar-i*   *ma*   *akataa*   *sek-i*
    village-DEF.M/F   3=be_good-PFV   but   very:3   be_far-PFV
    'The village is nice but it is very far.'

(63)

Alternative coordination is marked by *–m* (64a), but by *taakine/tookine* 'otherwise' in imperative clauses (64b).

a. *ʔirroota sakaliʔʔana haaʔta ka a kundattatiʔʔana lekkissam kindama*
    irroota   sakal=ʔ   ʔana   haad-t-a   ka   a   kudan-atta-tiʔ
    mountain   nine=2   1SG.OBJ   carry-2-IPFV.FUT   and   REL   ten-ORD-LOC
        ʔana   lekkiʃ-t-a-m   ki=n-dam-a
    1SG.OBJ   put_down-3F-IPFV.FUT-or   2SG.OBJ=1-eat-IPFV.FUT
    [The lion asked the girl] 'Will you carry me over nine mountains and put me down on the tenth or shall I eat you?'

b. *ʔaye meʔi ka diluppupa ʔaani tookine ʔokkaa dawwi*
    ʔaye   meʔ-i   ka   dila-oppupa   ʔaan-i   tookine   ʔokkaa   daww-i
    here   go_away-IMP.SG   and   field-into   go-IMP.SG   otherwise   cattle   herd-IMP.SG
    'Go away from here and go to the field or herd the cattle!'

(64)

For conjunctions that mark subordinate clauses in complex sentences, see §14.11.

14.8 Ideophones

Ideophones contain only short vowels and end in a final closed syllable. Except ɢumaʃ 'to coil, crook', all disyllabic ideophones have the same vowel in both syllables, as in *kalaw* 'to slip through'. Ideophones can be completely or partially reduplicated. Complete reduplication applies to mono- and disyllabic ideophones, and indicates that the denoted phenomenon is repeated. Partial reduplication occurs only with disyllabic ideophones, and may involve reduplicating the second syllable or geminating the consonants of the second syllable and lengthening its vowel. The first kind of partial reduplication is used to express that something is done a few times very fast. The second type is rare; it expresses a gradual ending of the phenomenon in question. For example, the simplex ideophone *piliʃ* indicates a sharp flash of light while its variant *pilliiʃ* denotes a flash of light that gradually disappears.

Ideophonic actions are expressed in a light verb construction with the verb *kiɗ-* 'to say' following the ideophone. If the ideophone is focused and only then, the verb 'to say' precedes it. Nouns can be derived only from disyllabic ideophones by the suffix -C*aata* (C being a copy of the final consonant of the ideophone), e.g. *kalaw* 'to fall fast from something'→ *kalawwaata* 'the act of falling fast from something', *muɢur* 'to slide fast into the mouth'→ *muɢurraata* 'something hard that is crushed in the mouth'.

14.9 Basic syntax

14.9.1 Simple verbal clauses

Konso is a verb-final language. A minimal verbal sentence consists of a verb for imperatives, or a subject clitic plus a verb (65a). Explicit subjects and objects precede the verb, usually in the order subject−object (Ongaye 2000: 5). Independent pronouns, as in (65b), are optionally used for emphasis. Salient objects can be completely omitted with transitive verbs (65c).

a. ʔi=xosal-t-i	b. ʔatti-χ	χarʃa	id=dam-mi	c. ʔin=ɢeed-a
3=laugh-F-PFV	2SG-NOM	beans	2=eat-IPFV.PRS	1=take-IPFV.FUT
'She laughed.'	'You eat beans.'			'I will take (it).'

(65)

The subject clitics differentiate person and clause type (see Table 14.5). The position and direction of cliticization indicate focus. The clitics can follow any constituent preceding the verb or be attached to the verb. As shown in (66), two options are available for their cliticization. Procliticization to the verb expresses verbal focus, but the pragmatic functions of the different positions of cliticization require further study.

(66)

a. *ʔinuk kuufa inhaaʔni*
   inu-ʔ   kuufa   in=haaɗ-n-i
   1PL-NOM   cow_dung_pile   1=carry-1PL-PFV
   'We carried cow dung pile.'

b. *ʔinuk kuufan haaʔni*
   inu-ʔ   kuufa=in   haaɗ-n-i
   1PL-NOM   cow_dung_pile=1   carry-1PL-PFV
   'We carried cow dung pile.'

c. *ɁinuɁ Ɂinkuufa haaɁni*

inu-Ɂ	in=kuufa	haaɗ-n-i
1PL-NOM	1=cow_dung_pile	carry-1PL-PFV

'We carried COW DUNG PILE.'

d. *Ɂinun kuufa haaɁni*

inu=in	kuufa	haaɗ-n-i
1PL=1	cow_dung_pile	carry-1PL-PFV

'WE carried cow dung pile.'

14.9.2 Nominal clauses

Nominal clauses have the order subject−predicate. A minimal nominal sentence consists of just a noun that can be interpreted predicatively: *χorma* 'bull' or 'It is a bull.' A subject clitic is used for discourse participants but not for third person subjects. An independent pronoun as subject receives nominative case.

a.

Ɂinu-Ɂ	*Ɂan=χormadaa*
1PL-NOM	1=bulls

'We are brave (lit. we are bulls).'

b.

kappooli-χ	*χorma*
Kappoole-NOM	bull

'Kappoole is brave.'

c. *nama tokkak keera*

nama	tokka-Ɂ	keera
person	one-NOM	thief

'One person is a thief.'

d. *ɓayranta pinanta a neeɗ-a*

leopard	animal	REL	be_bad-M/F

'A leopard is a bad animal.'

(67)

14.9.3 Relative clauses

Relative clauses with a relativized subject as head and those with a non−subject head are structurally different. In clauses with a relativized subject, the subject clitic is not attached to the relative verb and conjugation of the latter is reduced. In the perfective, most verbs agree with the default 3M in *-ay*, except for second persons and the 3F; the suffix *-eeɁ* marks plural gender.

Ɂinnaa-siniχ χala ɗey-ay-eeɁ=in Ɂakk-ay

child-DEF.PL	yesterday	come-PFV-PLG=1	see-PFV

'I saw the child who came yesterday.'

(68)

Relative clauses with a relativized non−subject constituent require the relative/genitive marker *a* after an indefinite head noun, but it is lacking with definite head nouns. The head noun is not represented in the relative clause (which is commonly known as a gap strategy). The head noun can also be omitted.

a. *Ɂanti-Ɂ Ɂokkatta a kat-am-ay=in Ɂakk-ay*

1SG-NOM	COW	REL	sell-PASS-PFV=1	see-PFV

'I saw a cow that was sold.'

(69) ↳

b. *Ɂanti-Ɂ Ɂokkatta-sik kat-am-ay=in Ɂakk-ay*

1SG-NOM	COW-DEF.M/F	sell-PASS-PFV=1	see-PFV

'I saw the cow that was sold.'

14.9.4 Cleft sentences

Konso has a cleft construction consisting of a subject followed by a subject relative clause. All future imperfective verbs in cleft sentences, for instance, simply end in *-a* without subject clitics (70a):

a. ʔana-a   karmaá   iʃʃ-a
   1SG.ACC-REL lion:ACC   kill[SG]-IPFV.FUT
   'It is me who will kill a lion.'

b. ʔana-a   dam-mi
   1SG.ACC-REL eat-IPFV.PRS
   'It is me who eats (it).'

(70)

The perfective verbs in cleft sentences are given in Table 14.12. If the subject is an independent pronoun, its non-subject form is used.

Table 14.12 Cleft sentences with a perfective verb

	CLEFT	TRANSLATION
1SG	*anaa damay*	'It is me who ate (it).'
2SG	*kee damay*	'It is you who ate (it).'
3SF	*iʃeennaa damay*	'It is her who ate (it).'
3SM	*iʃaa damay*	'It is him who ate (it).'
1PL	*inoo damay*	'It is us who ate (it).'
2PL	*iʃinaa damay*	'It is you who ate (it).'
3PL	*iʃoonnaa damay*	'It is them who ate (it).'

The object is marked with a high tone in cleft sentences (70a).

In cleft sentences involving a relativized nominal clause, the relative marker is *-an*, and the non-subject pronoun functions as subject in the cleft sentence.

iʃeenna-an   akimi-tteeta
3F.ACC-REL   physician-F
'It is her who is a physician.'

(71)

14.10 Interrogative clauses

Polar interrogatives are pronounced with a rising intonation and with a lengthened final vowel; in case of long vowels intonation alone is indicative. Clause-final words ending in a consonant add the vowel *e*.

a. ʔin=ɢeed-a-a
   1=take-IPFV.FUT-Q
   'Shall I take it?'

b. ʔi=dam-i-n-e
   3=eat-PFV-PL-Q
   'Did they eat?'

(72)

Reponses to polar interrogative are *ʔaa* 'yes' and *ʔinaʔ(a)* 'no'.

Tag questions are marked by the suffix *–(i)n(n)*, i.e. single *–n* before a consonant, and geminate *–nn* before a vowel:

a. *hellaa-siniʔ*   *ʔi=malaal-i-n-in*   *kid-a-a*
children-DEF.PL   3=be_unable-PFV-PL-TAG   say-IPFV.PRS-Q
'The children are unable to do it, aren't they?'

b. *ʔiʃoonna-χ*   *χarʃa-siʔ*   *ʔi=ɗam-i-n-inn-e*
3PL-NOM   beans-DEF.M/F   3=eat-PFV-PL-TAG-Q
'They ate the beans, didn't they?'

(73)

Content questions contain the question words listed in Table 14.13.

Table 14.13 Question words

maana	'what'
ʔaytam(u)	'when'
ʔaynu	'who'
meeɢaa	'how many'
atta	'how'
maanaʔi	'why, what for'
maana malla	'why, what reason'
ʔayʃaa	'where'
ʔaχaamuʔ, aχaamaneʔ	'which one (S/F, PL)'
ʔaʔaynu	'whose (lit. of who)'

In content questions, the subject clitics are obligatorily attached to the question word:

a. *ʔaynuʔʔakkiti*   b. *maana=n   koɗ-a*
aynu=ʔ   akk-t-i
who=2   see-2-PFV   what=1   do-IPFV.FUT
'Whom did you see?'   'What shall I do?'

(74)

14.11 Complex sentences

Complex sentences include conditional and temporal clauses (see Ongaye 2004; Mous & Ongaye 2009), as well as reason/result and purpose clause.

p. 255   In conditional sentences, the subordinate clause precedes the main clause, and there is a pause between them. The conjunctions *oo*, *otoo* mark a real condition (75a), but *kanɗe* uncertain (75b) or unlikely (75c)

conditions; these distinctions do not fully come out in the English translations.

a. ʔoo=n   χonsupa   ʔaan-o   daʔta=n   kip   pidd-a
   if=1   Konso:TO   go-DEP   butter=1   2SG.DAT   buy-IPFV.FUT
   'If I go to Konso (which I plan to), I will buy you butter.'

b. ʔiʃeenna-k   kandee   ʔan-t-a   ʔiʃa   ʔi=ʔakk-it-a
   3F-NOM   if:3   go-3F-IPFV.FUT   3M.OBJ   3=see-3F-IPFV.FUT
   'If she decides to go (which is uncertain), she would see him.'

c. ʔiʃa-k   kandee   kaaʃaa-sinit   tey-ay   χorma-siʔ   ʔi=pidd-a
   3SM-NOM   if:3   money-DEF.PLG   find-PFV   OX-DEF.M/F   3=buy-IPFV.FUT
   'If he got the money (which is unlikely), he would buy an ox.'

(75)

Concessive conditional clauses are marked with the conjunction *kandě punu* or *kandě nefu* (76). A constituent can intervene between the two parts of the conjunction:

a. kande   punu   maaʃood-a   ʔisi   teymi-n=in-tʃ-o
   if   even   be_drunk-IPFV.FUT   self.3   forget-IPFV-PRS=3.NEG-be-NEG.IPFV
   'He does not lose consciousness even if he is drunk.'

b. kande   maaʃood-a   punu   ʔisi   teymi-n=in-tʃ-o
   if   be_drunk-IPFV.FUT   even   self.3   forget-IPFV-PRS=3.NEG-be-NEG.IPFV
   'He does not lose consciousness even if he is drunk.'

(76)

The suffix *-n*, whose semantic and grammatical function is not yet clear, can be attached to the conditional conjunctions. If the suffix *-n* is lacking, the subject clitics must be attached to the conjunctions. But if *-n* is present, the subject clitics can appear on other sentence constituents (see Ongaye 2013b: 201).

Temporal clauses are marked with the conjunctions *awta*, *oo/otoo* or *ee/etee*. The conjunction *awta* may co-occur with an imperfective (77a) or perfective (77b) verb. The conjunction *ee/etee* occurs only with a perfective verb (77c).

a. ʔawtaa   deʔ-t-o   ʔana   kawpa   ʔerk-i
   when:3   come-3F-DEP   1SG.OBJ   to   send-IMP.SG
   'When she comes, send her to me!'

b. ʔoo kaltee maanaa koʔti
   ʔoo=i   kal-t-i-e   maana=i   koɗ-t-i
   when=3   return_home-3F-PFV-BACKGROUND   what=3   do-3F-PFV
   'What did she do when she came home?'

c. ʔeetee   ʔokkatta-siɗ   dal-ay   karru-ʔ   ʔakataa   χasooɗ-ay
   when:3   COW-DEF.M/F   give_birth-PFV   squirrel-NOM   very:3   be_happy-PFV
   'When the cow gave birth, the squirrel became very happy.'

(77)

p. 256 Reason (cause) and result (effect) clauses are marked by *ɢoota* 'concerning' plus *malla* 'because', the latter occurring at the end of the subordinate clause.

(78)

a. ɠootaa   ɗuttan-ay   mallaa   kirpa   ɗiin-ni
   concerning:3 be_full-PFV because:3 song dance-IPFV.PRS
   'He is dancing because his stomach is full.'

b. karratta ɠootaa   ʔilattumaa ɠap-u   mallaa   pinaanaa pun-ni
   squirrel concerning:3 wisdom   have-DEP because:3 animals win-IPFV.PRS
   'The squirrel beats other animals because it has wisdom.'

Purpose clauses are marked by the conjunction *akkaa … malla.*

ʔakkaa=k   karma   ʔikass-u   malla-k   kaasa piɗɗi-t-i
in_order=2 lion   kill:2-DEP because=2 gun   buy-2SG-PFV
'You bought a gun in order to kill a lion.'

(79)

Notes

1   This areal feature is also present in Diraytata and the Dullay languages with which Konso has intense contact.
2   When complex morphophonology obscures the relevant distinctions, a morphemic line is added to the surface line.
3   The particle *a* also functions as relativizer, see §14.9.3.
4   A number of neighboring languages also have a punctual: Gawwada (Tosco 2007c), Ts'amakko (Savà 2005: 213–215), and Diraytata (Black 1974). See Ongaye (2009) for an overview of this areal feature.
5   This reduplication can only refer to plurality and never to a partitive or to intensity (as was the case with the pluractional, see §14.5.1.4).