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SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS

MARKING OF SYNTACTIC RELATIONS IN KUNAMA

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This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Angesom Abadi entitled: *Marking of syntactic relations in Kunama* and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Arts (MA) complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to present a description of the morphosyntactic marking of syntactic relations in Kunama (Shukre). To accomplish this objective basic techniques of marking syntactic relations like case marking, adpositional marking, and constituent order are discussed and applied to Kunama. The study adopts Basic Linguistic Theory as its theoretical framework and all the descriptions are from the perspective of this theory. In the case marking section the study reaches the conclusion that there are two core cases called nominative and objective as well as many peripheral cases. The characteristics of all these cases are discussed in detail. Constituent order (SOV) helps to identify arguments. Finally, the language has also a very rich system of possession-marking constructions.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-----|----------------------------------|
| - | affix boundary |
| = | clitic boundary |
| ∅ | zero marking |
| * | ungrammatical phrase or sentence |
| 'a | stress |
| á | high tone |
| à | low tone |
| 1 | first person |
| 2 | second person |
| 3 | third person |
| A | transitive subject |
| ABL | ablative |
| Adj | adjective |
| ALL | allative |
| AO | aorist |
| BEN | benefactive |
| cf. | compare with |
| CJ | conjunction |
| COM | comitative |
| CMP | comparative |
| COP | copula |
| D | possessed (possessee) |
| DO | direct object |

| | |
|----------------|----------------------------|
| DST | distal |
| DU | dual |
| Eu | euphonic initial k- |
| EXC | exclusive (1PL) |
| GEN | genitive |
| INC | inclusive (1PL) |
| INS | instrumental |
| IO | indirect object |
| lit. | literally |
| LOC | locative |
| NEG | negation |
| NOM | nominative |
| NP | noun phrase |
| O | transitive object |
| OBJ | objective case |
| PER | perlative |
| PL | plural |
| POSS | possessive |
| PRX | proximal |
| R | possessor |
| S | intransitive subject |
| S _a | 'active' S, marked like A |
| S _o | 'stative' S, marked like O |
| SG | singular |
| V | verb |

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

THE PEOPLE AND THE LANGUAGE

1.1 THE PEOPLE

1.1.1 Nomenclature

The term Kunama refers both to the people and the language.

The Kunama are called by many different names by other tribes around them. The (non-local) Arabs give them the name Baaza or Baazen/Baazayn. They are called Baada or Baaden in the local Arabic dialect, and they also use this name themselves as an alternative self-designation. And the neighboring Nara people give them the name Diila (Thompson 1983:281).

The word Kunama has many suggested etymologies. Thompson (1983:281) mentions Ke-naama or Kwe-naama, 'men I call them, those whom I call people'. And Reinisch, cited in Bender (1996:5), proposes 'people-mixed', which Bender considers best. There are other suggested etymologies which I got from the Kunama in Tigray themselves. Firstly, the name Kunama is taken to mean 'It was better if I moved away'. This is related to the fact that they were moving from place to place to hide themselves from enemies. Others think they inherited the name Kunama from the name of the wife of their king Bada or Baza, known as Queen Kuname. They believe they are called by the name of the queen as they are a matriarchal society.

1.1.2 Location

The Kunama people live both in northern Ethiopia and in western Eritrea. The Kunama in Ethiopia are located in Tigray region in the Northwestern and Western zones. Specifically, they are found in the predominantly lowland areas of both zones: in the Northwestern zone in localities called Shimblina, Ademeyti, Geza Mek'er, Medabe, Geza Adura, Eirdi Weyane and Ment'ebt'eb, and in the Western zone in areas known as Adi Goshu and Adebay or Hilet Koka.

Within the lowlands, the Kunama of Tigray prefer to live in forested, relatively hilly areas, to protect themselves against possible attacks from other tribes. Their houses are sparsely scattered within their villages. On the top of the houses are symbols to represent which tribe the occupants belong to, whether Sema, Guma, Shiwa or Kalewa.

The Kunama in Eritrea live in the western part of Eritrea in a roughly rectangular area, with the Gash and Setit Rivers to the north and south (respectively) and the Sudan border on the west; on the east their villages extend into the northernmost part of Tigray province (Thompson 1983:281).

1.1.3 Population

According to the 2007 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Central Statistical Agency Population and Housing Census report there are 4,860 people who belong to the Kunama ethnic group in the Northwestern and Western zones of Tigray province.

1.1.4 Cultural attributes

The Kunama are a distinct people with their own unique traditions, culture and life style.

“The Kunama ... [of Eritrea] live in fairly large villages of round grass huts. They cultivate mainly sorghum, millet, and sesame, the latter as a cash crop. Plowing is done with a yoke of oxen with a wooden plow; they traditionally have a tabu against using iron for the plow share. They raise cattle, sheep, goats, donkeys, and chickens, and have dogs and cats” (Thompson 1983:284).

The Kunama of Tigray also fit Thompson’s description (above) except that they use iron for the plow. They are an agricultural and pastoral society. As Birhane (2011:124) states, 90% of the people live on agriculture and the other 10% live by making handicrafts.

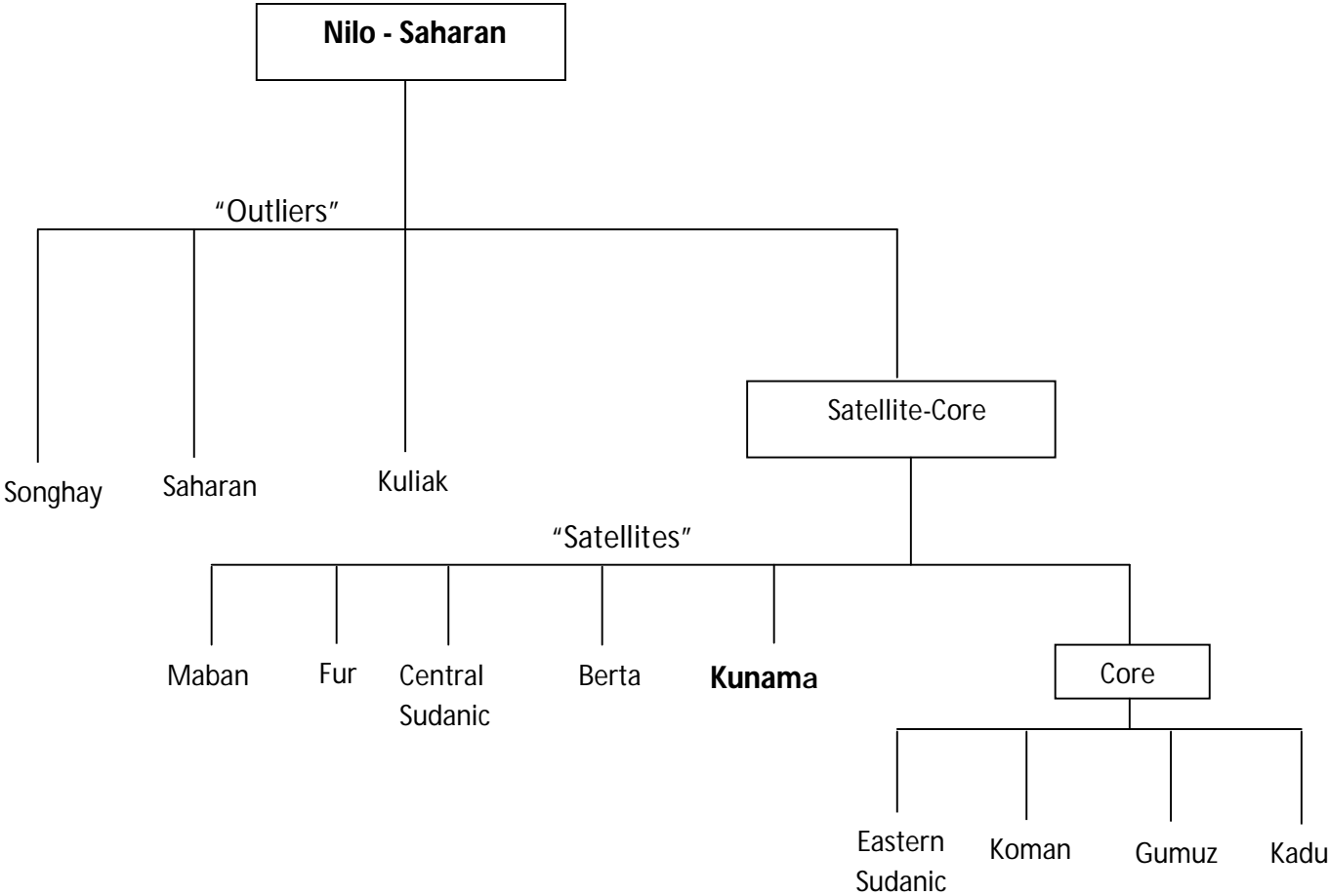
Though they are rapidly assimilating culturally to the Tigrigna-speaking society around them, the Kunama people are (still) known for their unique traditional medicines, hunting habits, handicraft products, matrilineality, and their absorbing wedding and burial ceremonies.

Before 1934 the Kunamas in Tigray practiced their own religion. It was a set of beliefs including the worship of graves, tombstones and big trees. But in 1934, according to Birhane (2011:32-33), most of the Kunamas of Tigray were baptized by a priest named Abune Isak’ and became Orthodox Christians.

Concerning their physical appearance, Thompson (1983:284) describes the Kunama as "mixed in physical type: generally of medium height, light-bodied, Negroid to Caucasoid in facial features, dark brown, with tightly curled black hair."

1.2 THE LANGUAGE

According to Bender (1996:5) the language is called by the native speakers as *Kù'nàmà àu'rà* 'Kunama speech' or *Kù'nàmà ḡèel'à* 'Kunama tongue'. Kunama is a Nilo-Saharan language. With regard to its genetic classification, Bender strongly rejects the earlier placement of Kunama under Greenberg's former Chari-Nile sub-family, presenting Kunama instead as coordinate with Maba, F[u]r, Central Sudanic, Berta and a large group which he terms 'Core Family' (1996:6).



(Adapted from Bender 2000: 54-55)

Short explanations of the four main dialects of the language, namely Marda, Barka, Aymasa and Tika, are given below; additionally, brief discussion of the Tekeze-Setit and Tigray dialects is presented as they are directly related with the present study. But recall that each discussion of the dialects is based on Thompson (1983:282-284) and the explanation of the districts and dialects is as they were in the 1960's. (I was, for obvious reasons, not in a position to go to Eritrea to personally bring these descriptions up-to-date.)

Marda

The Marda are found east of Barentu in Eritrea, on the southern side of the Asselemba or Libaan mountains and extending to the flat highlands of Sera.

Marda is the dominant and most prestigious dialect. This is because the high chiefs of the Kunama were Marda and used it for cultural and religious purposes; in addition, the Swedish missionaries used it for translating the Bible and other publications.

Barka

The Barka dialect is spoken south of Barentu in the mid-section of the Gash (Sona) River.

There is some difference between Barka and Marda; for example, there is more elision in Barka.

Aymasa

The Aymasa are located lower down the Gash River towards western Eritrea. Aymasa differs strongly from Marda in sandhi elision of sounds between words, and in vocabulary and phonology.

Lakatakura –Tika

The Lakatakura area is located in southwest Eritrea towards Um Hajar. Their dialect is called Tika (tiika). It is different from Marda, although the two are mutually intelligible with some difficulties.

Thompson (1983:283), drawing on Castelnuovo, says that “Tika is the Kunama name for the Setit River.” The Kunama of Western Tigray zone call their form of Kunama a Tika dialect; their territory is directly contiguous with that of the Tika dialect of Eritrea.

Other Kunama dialects of Eritrea are Iliit (illiit), spoken north of the Gash River near Haikota, and Bitama, spoken west and north of Teseney.

Tekeze-Setit and Tigray including Shukre

Thompson (1983:283) says “I have no information about any Kunama that live along the Tekazze-Setiit River or in Tigray, except that they are sometimes visitors to Inda-Sillase.”

Thompson (1976:600) also explains that “Information about the dialect of Kunama of the Setit (seti:t) area is still lacking.”

The dialect of Kunama examined in this thesis is from the Northwestern zone of Tigray in Ethiopia, which is not included in Thompson’s discussion. The Kunama of this area, and other Kunama as well, call this dialect *ǰúkrè ǰèel’á* ‘Shukre tongue’. I will refer to it as “Shukre dialect”.

1.2.1 Phonology overview

According to Bender (1996:6-8), ejectives or labiovelar segments do not exist among the segmental phonemes of Kunama. He presents the list of consonantal phonemes of Marda Kunama as follows:

Table 1: Consonants

| | Labial | Alveolar | Palatal | Velar | Glottal |
|---------------------|--------|----------|---------|-------|---------|
| Voiced stop | b | d | dʒ | g | |
| Voiceless stop | | t | tʃ | k | |
| Voiceless fricative | f | s | ʃ | | h |
| Voiced nasal | m | n | ɲ | ŋ | |
| Voiced lateral | | l | | | |
| Voiced approximant | | r | | | |
| Voiced glides | w | | y | | |

Thompson (1983:287) says there are five distinctive vowels (i, e, a, o, u) which can occur with their corresponding long forms (ii, ee, aa, oo, uu), and diphthongs are also common in the language.

Table 2: Vowels

| | Front | Back |
|-------|-------|------|
| Close | i | u |
| Mid | e | o |
| Open | a | |

(Adapted from Thompson 1983:287)

With regard to suprasegmentals, vowel and consonant length, tone, stress and intonation are identified in Kunama. Regarding vowel length, Thompson (1983:289) has doubts whether distinctive length is found lexically or not, since there seems to be a correlation with stress; but Bender (1996:8) says that vowel length does occur in some grammatical features. He then explains that vowel harmony exists in Kunama in the verbal system with the vowels *i/u*. According to Thompson (1983:291) there are two level tones, namely high and low; tone functions both lexically (minimal tone-pairs) and grammatically. Thompson also says that stress has lexical function (ibid.); from my data, I can state that it also has grammatical function.

Note that most of the tone patterns in this thesis except the grammatical ones are necessarily given tentatively.

1.2.2 Morphology overview

Number

As Bender (1996:12) and Thompson (1983:292) observe, Kunama marks singular and plural with the suffixes *-a* and *-e* respectively. In addition, Kunama (Shukre) has a dual marker *-amme* to refer to two real entities. The number markers cannot be omitted.

| | | |
|------------|------------|---------------|
| a. tamarga | b. tamarge | C. tamargamme |
| tamarg-a | tamarg-e | tamarg-amme |
| rabbit-sg | rabbit-pl | rabbit-du |
| 'A rabbit' | 'Rabbits' | 'Two rabbits' |

Gender

There is no grammatical gender¹ in Kunama (Bender 1996:13 and Tucker and Bryan 1966:340).

Verbal conjugations

There are two conjugational verb types in Kunama, called suffixing (Type I) and pronominal prefixing (Type II) (Bender 1996:24).

¹ Biological gender distinction is made by special lexical terms that distinguish the genders. Examples: *admità* 'female goat', *adubtà* 'cock', *a'dà* 'boy', *kifà* 'girl'.

The following table shows the pronominal affix paradigms of the two verbal types of the language. The table is for the Shukre dialect; for the Marda dialect (see Meseret 1983:25-26).

Table 3: Pronominal affix paradigms for the two verbal types.

| Person | Type I verbs | Type II verbs |
|------------|--------------|---------------|
| 1SG | -na | na- |
| 1EXC DU | -má | má- |
| PL | -ma | ma- |
| 1INC DU | -dí | ka- |
| PL | -di | ká- |
| 2SG | -n | ni- |
| 2DU | -n | mé- |
| 2PL | -n | mí- |
| 3SG | -s | i- (ø-) |
| 3DU | -n | mí- |
| 3 PL | -n | o- |

1.3 Theoretical framework

This study uses Basic Linguistic Theory as a theoretical framework.

1.3.1 What is Basic Linguistic Theory?

Basic Linguistic Theory is a theory of linguistics recently developed by R.M.W. Dixon to be employed in language descriptions.

Basic Linguistic Theory refers to a linguistic theoretical framework that helps to describe and analyze human language not in an a priori way but based on inductive, typologically grounded generalizations. As Dixon says, "Basic linguistic theory provides a flexible, analytic framework in terms of which the grammar of each individual language can be formulated" (2010a:182). Elsewhere he says "The term Basic Linguistic Theory has recently come into use for the fundamental theoretical concepts that underlie all work in language description and change, and the postulation of general properties of human languages" (1997:128).

Regarding its origin Dixon states that Basic Linguistic Theory arose first from the work of the Sanskrit and Greek grammarians between 3,000 and 2,000 years ago. This descriptive framework developed and expanded as new languages from different parts of the world came to be described (2010a:3).

A similar point is made by Dryer (2001:1) concerning the origin of basic linguistic theory:

Unlike many theoretical frameworks in linguistics, which are often ephemeral and pass quickly into obsolescence, basic linguistic theory is a cumulative framework that has slowly developed over the past century as linguists have learned how to describe languages better. It is grounded in traditional grammar and can be seen as having evolved out of traditional grammar.

According to Dixon, Basic Linguistic Theory considers linguistics as a branch of natural science (Dixon 2010a:1-4), comparing linguistics with other natural fields like biology, geology, chemistry and physics. He explains that as we need in any scientific discipline to start from the beginning and have to actively engage in it to master it, so too in linguistics the same applies to the study of the complex phenomenon of language.

Allied to this, he presents Basic Linguistic Theory as a science that views a given language openly and flexibly and treats each language as its own complete linguistic system.

Continuing his discussion, he says that description, explanation, prediction and evaluation are the fundamental concepts for any science. These all can be implemented in analyzing a language according to Basic Linguistic Theory. Description deals with how a language is organized; explanation, with why some languages have a certain grammatical system but some not. And it is sometimes possible to (weakly) predict some features of a language based on hints from other features. Finally, in linguistics as a natural science it is possible to raise evaluation questions like 'Is one language easier to learn than another?' And so on.

Basic Linguistic Theory is a cumulative theoretical framework which considers every part of language description equally important and where each part is highly integrated with the others (Dixon 2010a:310). This means that a complete characterization of a language should give equal emphasis to all

components of grammar. And since Basic Linguistic Theory is a science, the linguist (like any scientist) should study and make comparison of grammatical patterns across individual languages (2010a:5).

1.3.2 Resemblance and difference of Basic Linguistic Theory from other theoretical frameworks

Basic Linguistic Theory has both similarity and difference from other theoretical frameworks like traditional grammar, structuralism and generative grammar. According to Dryer (2006:210-211), Basic Linguistic Theory differs from most other current theoretical frameworks by its conservativeness. In other words, unlike many theoretical frameworks that take only limited cognizance of previous ideas of language description, Basic Linguistic Theory accepts many ideas from earlier traditions and some from new traditions. It tries to remove some defective features of traditional grammar like describing all languages on the model of some "favored" languages (like Latin or English), and it augments the descriptions with new and necessary concepts that are absent in traditional grammar. Basic Linguistic Theory describes each language in its own terms, which is its legacy from structuralism. Generative grammar has also had an influence on Basic Linguistic Theory, but only indirectly, that is, through typology, given that most typologists have been trained in generative grammar (Dryer 2006:211-212).

Dixon (2010a:2-3) points out that Basic Linguistic Theory differs from formal theories (like generative grammar) because formal theories view a language from the perspective of only a few ideas or limited aspects. Furthermore, generativists formulate a theory based on selected grammars of selected languages. However, this is often not effective, partly because they don't have the ability to distinguish good grammatical descriptions from poor ones, as they lack the experience of writing grammars. According to Dryer (2006:226), the proponents of formal theory claim that Basic Linguistic Theory is too imprecise and too vague. Dryer (2006:228) responds by noting that Basic Linguistic Theory is deliberately flexible and is not intended to be a restrictive theory: new developments can easily be accommodated without the need of revising the theory.

1.4 Objective of the study

The objective of the study is to make a basic description of the morphosyntactic marking of syntactic relations in Kunama (Shukre).

1.5 Significance of the study

Kunama is a relatively neglected and under-studied language. Almost nothing has been done on the marking of syntactic relations in the language (Bender 1996 has only 7 pages on syntax altogether). In addition, König (2008:67) says "There is not enough data available to make any statements about the use of nominative and/or accusative [in Kunama]." Moreover, the Kunamas in Tigray

are now engaged in preparing teaching materials in their language and they will hopefully be able to use the results of the present study as a reference material.

1.6 Scope of the study

This thesis deals only with the Shukre dialect of Kunama, spoken in the Northwestern zone of Tigray, and it treats only its syntactic relations.

1.7 Methodology

The basic method employed was linguistic fieldwork to elicit data from native speakers of the dialect, supplemented by materials from written sources.

Prior to the fieldwork several hundred appropriate words, phrases and sentences for the elicitation of data were prepared. The list was initially prepared in English, and most of the items were properly translated into Tigrigna which both the researcher and the informants speak and understand. The data was gathered from Gebremariam Tsegay, Gebru Beyene, Birhane Haileselassie, and Kidanemariam Tesfay. All are native speakers of the language with a good command of English as well as Tigrigna.

My results were transcribed, glossed, and analyzed using standard descriptive techniques drawing on Basic Linguistic Theory.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Most of the topics discussed in this chapter are presented from the perspective of Basic Linguistic Theory.

2.1 What are syntactic relations?

Some of the different approaches to syntactic or grammatical relations and what they have within them are presented as follows:

There is an immense literature devoted to “syntactic relations” (also known as “grammatical relations”), from various theoretical stances, and there is no point in trying to do more than giving a few basic references and briefly summarizing a few key points.

Useful and insightful discussion of the topic can be found in, e.g., Payne (1997, chapter 7); Andrews (2007, volume 1, chapter 3); Marantz (1984); Dixon (1994, chapter 1; 2010a, chapter 3; 2010b, chapter 13); Dryer (1997; 2007); Blake (2004, chapter 3).

The basic idea is expressed simply by Payne (1997:129): “Grammatical relations (GRs) are often thought of as relations between **arguments** and **predicates** in a level of linguistic structure that is independent (or “autonomous”) of semantic and pragmatic influences”. In the normal case,

which is what I will be concerned with in this thesis, the predicate is the verb, and the arguments are the NPs (obligatory and optional) that accompany the verb.

Following is a representative sample of statements about syntactic relations from a number of linguists:

The three basic syntactic relations according to Dixon (1994:6), are S, A and O; he calls them universal syntactic-semantic primitives.

Marantz (1984:3) says grammatical relations have been in every grammatical theory starting from Panini until the present. They are intimately connected with semantic roles and with cases and structural relations.

Further, their character and function is stated by Andrews. He says a grammatical relation is a primitive ingredient of sentence structure and a grammatical function which is essential for the working of a language (2007:134).

Grammatical relations are structural relationships which have an essential role in the functioning of grammatical principles but are abstract with regard to semantic and/or pragmatic properties, according to Andrews (2007:165).

In the same topic Dryer states that grammatical relation is a term that should be viewed beyond some limited set of relations like subject and object. Though there are a lot of similarities among languages with regard to syntactic

relations, they are language-specific and unique to every language (1997:121-122).

According to (e.g.) Andrews (2007:133), Payne (1997:129) and Dixon (2010a:125), the most common formal techniques to specify grammatical relations are: case marking, adpositional marking, participant reference marking on verbs, constituent order, and context (no formal mark).

2.2 Types of marking of syntactic relations

Every clause has an internal structure, with a predicate (generally a verb) and a number of arguments. Some of those arguments are core arguments, which are required and must be either stated or inferred from the context, while others are peripheral arguments, which are optional (Dixon 2010a:97). Generally the core arguments of a sentence are S, A, and O, as discussed below.

Across the languages of the world clauses fall into two major types: intransitive with one core argument (S), and transitive with two core arguments (A, O).

| CLAUSE TYPE | PREDICATE | CORE ARGUMENTS |
|--------------|--------------|--|
| Intransitive | intransitive | S (intransitive subject) |
| Transitive | transitive | A (transitive subject) and O (transitive object) |

(Dixon 2010b:116)

The other, non-core arguments of a predicate are (for most verbs) optional. These are called peripheral arguments, and include a variety of adverbial notions, as will be discussed below.

Now, let us see the types of marking of core arguments and peripheral arguments.

A. Marking of core arguments

Dixon (2010a:125-126) states there are three basic ways of marking a core argument:

A) Marking on a full NP which realizes the argument. This is implemented using a system of case affixes or clitics or an adposition.

B) Marking by a bound pronominal which realizes the argument. The bound pronominal marker is typically attached to the verb or verbal auxiliary, but in some languages it may be cliticized to the first constituent of the clause.

C) Constituent order

Some languages order the phrasal constituents in a clause in a relatively constant order, like AOV/SV, or OVA/SV order. This mechanism, therefore, helps to distinguish O from A and/or S.

Dixon further explains that there are languages which apply none of the above three mechanisms. Who is doing what to whom is deduced from common knowledge and/or the discourse or context.

B. Marking of peripheral arguments

Peripheral arguments may specify space, time and a variety of other adverbial or adverb-like roles, which vary from language to language: instrument, accompaniment, recipient, beneficiary, ablative and so on (Dixon 2010a: 126-127). They are often referred to us as “semantic” cases, including the spatial “local” cases (Blake 2004:33). Such arguments are typically marked by case affixes or adpositions. Language-specifically, there are some nouns for which zero-marking may be possible. This is often true for proper names of places; and in English there is just one noun, namely *home*, that can be used alone with allative or locative sense. Thus:

- a. She's going home.
- b. *She's going to home. (Dixon 2010a: 127)

2.2.1. Case marking

Case refers to a system of marking dependent nouns for the type of relationship they bear to their heads: the relationship of a noun to a verb at the clause level, or of a noun to an adposition or to another noun at the phrase level (see e.g. Blake 2004:1). Traditionally the term refers to inflectional marking, but in an extended sense it could also be used for adpositional marking. König (2008:5) adopts this definition but gives more detail about what the term “inflectional” can mean:

A case system is an inflexional system of marking nouns or noun phrases for the type of relationship they bear to their heads. Inflexional systems are expressed by affixes, tone, accent shift, or root reduction.

2.2.1.1. Case systems

The three basic core syntactic relations A, S and O can be organized in several possible ways across languages.

The possible patternings can be diagrammed as follows:

I.

| |
|---|
| A |
|---|

| |
|---|
| S |
|---|

| |
|---|
| O |
|---|

II.

| |
|---|
| A |
|---|

 =

| |
|---|
| S |
|---|

| |
|---|
| O |
|---|

III.

| |
|---|
| A |
|---|

| |
|---|
| S |
|---|

 =

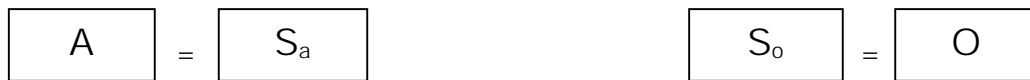
| |
|---|
| O |
|---|

(Adapted from Dixon: 2010b:119)

According to Dixon (2010b:119-121) the majority of languages mark A and S in the same way (nominative case) and O is marked differently (accusative) as in row II. As in row III about one-quarter of the world's languages group S and O in the same way (absolute) and A differently (ergative). It is extremely unusual to find languages where A, S, and O are all differently marked— a tripartite

system as in row I. And there are many languages that mark S, A, and O identically (with zero).

In addition, case marking in many languages can be based on both syntactic and semantic parameters. The best-known of these systems is the one diagrammed below, in which the S argument of an intransitive verb is marked like transitive A (S_a) if the S acts volitionally, but is marked like transitive O (S_o) if the S essentially lacks control over the activity. This marking is called split-s marking, or stative-active marking.



(Dixon: 2010b:120-121)

Dixon (2010b:121) explains that there is a variant on this. In some languages one and the same intransitive verb can show either of the above marking patterns depending on the situation-specific semantics: one may fall deliberately or by accident, with the S marked (respectively) like either A or O. This is called a fluid-S system.

2.2.2 Adpositional marking

Grammatical relations, especially peripheral relations, are very often marked within the NP by a separate word or clitic, not by an affix on the noun. This word or clitic is an adposition (preposition or postposition). In many languages one can view these adpositions as jointly constituting a kind of non-inflectional case-marking system (cf. Andrews 2007:43).

In many languages, adpositions may themselves require their object to take a certain inflectional case-affix:

Preposition—[N-Affix] or

[N-Affix]—Postposition.

Since inflectional case affixes are usually suffixes (not prefixes), the construction Preposition—[N-Affix] creates no problems in distinguishing what is the preposition and what is the affix. However, in the reverse construction [N-Affix]—Postposition there is a real possibility of confusion: both the “affix” and the “postposition” came directly after the noun, and it may be difficult to tell them apart.²

Another important distinction is made by Dryer (2007:499): between case affixes and (what he calls) adpositional clitics. In some languages a “case” morpheme may appear to be an affix, but its host-word within the NP may vary: typically it will attach to the last word of the NP, *whatever* the word appears to be. Thus we might have: N-Case

[N-Adj]-Case.

In such a situation, Dryer argues, the position of the case morpheme is defined by the syntax, not the morphology. This positional flexibility is exactly the defining characteristic of a clitic as opposed to an affix. Therefore, Dryer calls

² Much of the content of this section is the outcome of personal communication with Prof. Orin Gensler.

such a case morpheme a “postpositional clitic” (probably the same concept as “enclitic”).

2.2.3 Cross-referencing

In cross-referencing or agreement systems, a verb or verbal auxiliary hosts bound affixes, which provide information about some of the grammatical properties (person/number/gender) of an NP in a certain syntactic relation to its head (Dixon 1994:42). Unlike case-marking, where the syntactic relation is marked on the dependent element (the noun argument), cross-referencing is a head-marking strategy: the mark appears on the head, typically the verb (see e.g. Andrews 2007:145).

Since, with cross-referencing, the verb typically has obligatory affixes that tell the grammatical features of subject and object, in such languages the verb together with its pronominal markers or affixes can stand alone as a complete sentence (Dixon 1997:122).

2.3 Previous studies on Kunama

A brief overview of previous studies on the Kunama language is presented below. Most of these studies have been on the Marda dialect.

Bender (2001): An English-to-Kunama lexicon.

Bender (1996): This is the latest and most complete treatment of the language. Bender's *Kunama* contains an introduction, which gives the prior sources on the language and provides grammatical and lexical evidence situating Kunama in the Nilo-Saharan family, and presents an outline of phonology, morphology and syntax.

Thompson (1983 and 1989): These are studies, respectively, on the Kunama phonology and noun phrase (1983) and the Kunama verb phrase (1989).

Tucker and Bryan (1966): This is a 12-page outline (pp. 336-347) of topics on the grammar of Kunama in their book *The Non-Bantu languages of North-Eastern Africa*. Their sketched is based on the work of Castelnuovo del Zappa and R.C. Stevenson.

There are also several BA senior essays (no MA theses, to my knowledge) written by undergraduate students of Addis Ababa University. All are on the Marda dialect, using the same single native speaker as an informant.

Nikodimos (1987): This study is written by native speaker of the language (Marda dialect) and it deals with the people and their language. In addition to the description of some grammatical elements it has a lot of explanation about the general features of the language.

Brutawit (1984): This study is a contrastive analysis of Kunama and Amharic segmental phonemes. It predicts the errors that can be committed by Kunama speakers when they speak Amharic by comparing the consonant and vowel

phonemes that are absent in the Kunama sound system but are found in Amharic.

Meseret (1983): This study deals with Kunama (Marda) verb inflection. The study classifies the verbs of Kunama (Marda) into prefixing verbs and suffixing verbs depending on the position of the subject affix. It also divides root verbs in two, namely root verbs that begin with a consonant and root verbs that begin with a vowel. It then explains some morphophonemic processes such as vowel fusion, vowel deletion, syllable deletion and allomorphic variation. Finally, it discusses the inflection of verbs for person, number, gender and tense.

Seyoum (1983): This is a study on the morphophonemics of nouns and adjectives in Kunama. This study has five sections that discuss briefly noun inflection, noun derivation, adjective morphology and morphophonemic processes in nouns and adjectives.

Aster (1981): This is a study on Kunama phonology. The study describes segmentals, suprasegmentals and the syllable pattern of Kunama (Marda). Some consonant and vowel contrasts and the consonant phonemes and their allophones are given in this study. In the area of suprasegmentals, consonant length, vowel length and tone are briefly discussed.

According to this study there are three contrasting tone levels: high, low, and mid. (This differs from Thompson's analysis of Kunama as a two-tone language.) Examples of the three tones:

a. má 'to weed'

ma 'love'

mà 'tooth'

b. málà 'wealth'

mala 'poison'

màlá 'to finish'

(Aster 1981:24)

Intonation and stress are not discussed by Aster at all, although especially the latter is a very significant feature in the language, as will be seen below.

CHAPTER THREE

ANALYSIS OF MARKING OF SYNTACTIC RELATIONS

This chapter presents a description of the marking of syntactic relations based on the data elicited from the Shukre dialect of Kunama.

3.1 MARKING OF CORE ARGUMENTS

The basic order of clausal constituents of Kunama (Shukre) is AOV/SV; within the NP almost all modifiers follow the head noun.

(1) a. a'ba dedasi gudza nasoke

| | | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| [a'ba] _A | [ded-a= si] _{IO} | [gudza] _{DO} | na-so-ke |
| 1SG | child-SG-OBJ | stick | 1SG-give-AO |
| 'I gave a stick to a boy.' | | | |

b. asene igiske

| | |
|----------------------|-----------|
| [asene] _S | igi-s-ke |
| Asene | go-3SG-AO |
| 'Asene went.' | |

Before the marking of core and peripheral arguments are discussed some related features like definiteness are presented as follows.

Kunama does not have definite or indefinite articles (Bender1996:16). However, definiteness or indefiniteness is represented by other means in the language. First, demonstratives are used to express definiteness. Demonstratives occur in

Kunama as independent demonstratives and dependent demonstratives. The following table shows the independent demonstratives:

Table 4: Independent demonstratives

| Number | Proximal demonstratives | Gloss | Distal demonstratives | Gloss |
|----------|-------------------------|---------|-----------------------|---------|
| Singular | 'ama | 'this' | wa'ma | 'that' |
| Plural | 'aye | 'these' | 'waye | 'those' |

One could split these independent demonstratives into two base morphemes: 'a and wa', proximal and distal respectively, followed by *ma* singular or *ye* plural.

The dependent demonstratives are affixes:

Table 5: Dependent demonstratives

| Independent demonstratives | | Singular | Dual | Plural |
|----------------------------|------|------------|----------|--------|
| Proximal | this | - am - | - a-amme | - ay - |
| Distal | that | - om -/-o- | - o-amme | - oa - |

Definiteness can be signaled in Kunama (Shukre) by using the dependent demonstratives, which are thus employed both as demonstratives and as definiteness indicators. Consider the examples in (2).

(2)

a. Proximal

| | | |
|----------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| abiɟama | abiɟaamme | abiɟoae |
| abiɟ-am-a | abiɟ-a-amme | abiɟ-oa-e |
| man-PRX.SG-SG | man.PRX.SG-DU | man-PRX.PL-PL |
| ‘This/the man’ | ‘These/the two men’ | ‘These/the men’ |

b. Distal

| | | |
|----------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| abiɟoma | abiɟoamme | abiɟaye |
| abiɟ-om-a | abiɟ-o-amme | abiɟ-ay-e |
| man-DST.SG-SG | man-DST.DU-DU | man-DST.PL-PL |
| ‘That/the man’ | ‘Those/the two men’ | ‘Those/the men’ |

The definite marker in Kunama (Shukre) is apparently not optional. That is, if we are referring to some specific A, S or O then it needs to be marked for definiteness. And A, S, and O are all marked for definiteness in the same way.

Basically there is no real indefinite article in Kunama (Shukre) but *éllà*, the numeral for ‘one’, can be (optionally) used as indicator of indefiniteness in an NP.

(3) a. dèdèllà yookè

| | |
|--|-------------|
| dèd-éllà | yoo -ø-kè |
| child-one | come-3SG-AO |
| ‘A child came.’ (lit. ‘One child came.’) | |

b. èlèllà komínítikè

èl-éllà ko-míníti-kè

tree-one PASS-cut-AO

‘A tree is cut.’ (lit. ‘One tree is cut.’)

The citation form of these nouns is *dédá* ‘child’ and *èlá* ‘tree’ but as illustrated in (3a) and (3b), there is an elision of the singular marker suffix *-a*.

The core cases that are identified in Kunama (Shukre) are nominative (NOM) and objective (OBJ). These will be discussed in turn in the following two subsections.

3.1.1 The Nominative case

The nominative³ codes A and S in the same way, while O is coded differently. The nominative is marked (but optionally) by the suffix *-ma* in Kunama (Shukre). Consider the following structures:

(4) a. birhanema dirara kiŋke

birhane-ma dirara k-i-ŋ-ke

birhane-NOM dinner Eu-3SG-eat-AO

‘Birhane ate dinner.’

³ According to Thompson (1983:298) the nominative is marked by suffixes *-m/-dem* for nouns, and by *-dem* (not *-m*) for pronouns.

b. gagoma isindi koke

gago-ma isindi k-ø-o-ke

gago-NOM yesterday Eu-3SG-come-AO

‘Gago came yesterday.’

c. angwama igiske

angwa-ma igi-s-ke

hyena-NOM goes-3SG-AO

‘A hyena went.’

d. morkama lafa kirke

morka-ma lafa k-i-ŋ-ke

lion-NOM goat Eu-3sg-eat-AO

‘A lion ate a goat.’

e. abifama dedosi semá kisaske

abifa-ma ded-om=si semá k-i-sas-ke

man-NOM child-DIS.SG-OBJ story Eu-3SG-tell-AO

‘A man told a story to the child.’

As shown in the examples under (4) the suffix *-ma* encodes A and S. And it is co-referenced by agreement marker on the verb. An interesting point here is that *-ma* is attached only to nouns but not to pronouns.

(5) u'nu (*-ma) buta kitakè

u'nu-ma buta k-i-ta-kè

3SG-NOM ox Eu-3sg-buy-AO

‘He/she bought an ox.’

(6) ímame (*-ma) mísanakè

ímame-ma mí-sana-kè

3DU-NOM 3DU-work-AO

‘They both worked.’

The subject suffix *-ma* is optional; the nominative can also be covertly marked by a null morpheme. All of the sentences in (4) can omit *-ma*; conversely, the following sentences may include *-ma*.

(7) birhane utʃukè

birhane-∅ u-tʃu-kè

birhane-NOM 3SG-die-AO

‘Birhane died.’

(8) hawe butasi kitakè

hawe-∅ buta=si k-i-ta-kè

hawe-NOM ox-OBJ Eu-3SG-buy-AO

‘Hawe bought an ox.’

(9) asene sonasi kiafassè

asene-∅ sona=si k-i-afas-sè

asene-NOM sona-OBJ Eu-3SG-kill-AO

‘Asene killed Sona.’

(Note that in example (7) the 3SG subject prefix *i-* is changed into *u-* because of the *u* in the verb stem, which is vowel harmony.)

Another way of marking the nominative case is by using the suprasegmental⁴ feature of tone. Here the object tone pattern (also the citation form) may be considered the basic, unmarked pattern; it ends with a final mid tone. The nominative is signaled by adding a high tone on the last syllable of the subject noun (not the last syllable of the whole NP). For example:

(10) a. daka kisaske

daka k-i-sas-ke
woman-OBJ Eu-3SG-tell-AO
'He told a woman (something).'

b. daká isaske

daká i-sas-ke
woman-NOM 3SG-tell-AO
'A woman told (him).'

(11) a. morka iake

morka i-a-ke
lion-OBJ 3SG-kill-AO
'He killed a lion.'

b. morká kiake

morká k-i-a-ke
lion-NOM Eu-3SG-kill-AO
'A lion killed him.'

⁴ Bender (1996:13) says "Inflectional case is lacking in Kunama unless Banti's tone-marked example proves to be correct: nom. aylá intíke 'A cow saw him' vs. ac. ayla kintíke 'He saw a cow'." I have not investigated the factors controlling the presence versus absence of *k-* in these examples.

If a modifier is added to a noun in the nominative case the nominative high tone remains on the nominative subject, as in (12a) with *daká*; it does not occur phrase-finally, cf. *fáǰà* with final low tone. If a modifier is added to the object, the unmarked structure in (10b) and (11b) is apparently not possible; instead, the construction with *=si* is used, as in (12b) (see section 3.1.2 below).

(12) a. *daká fáǰà isaske*

daká *fáǰà* *i-sas-ke*
 woman-NOM beautiful 3SG-tell-AO
 ‘A beautiful woman told (him)’

b. *daka fáǰà=si kisaske*

daka *fáǰà=si* *k-i-sas-ke*
 woman beautiful-OBJ Eu-3SG-tell-AO
 ‘He told a beautiful woman.’

3.1.2 The Object (Direct and Indirect) case

It is difficult to establish a grammatical difference between so-called Direct object and Indirect object in Kunama (Shukre). Both are marked (but only optionally) with the enclitic *=si*. A clear difference exists only in one context: if the sentence has both a recipient (indirect object) and a patient (direct object), then the recipient must be marked with *=si* and the patient cannot take *=si*. In sentences with only one object, on the other hand, “direct” and “indirect” objects behave the same. The single object (direct or indirect) may be marked

with =*si*, but may also be zero-marked. The discussion below will present examples of these various patterns.

In sentences with only one object the enclitic =*si* codes either a direct or an indirect object. Consider the following examples that show direct object marking:

(13) a. a]roma sonasi kiafase

a]ro-ma sona=si k-i-afa-se
ashro-NOM sona-OBJ Eu-3SG-kill-AO
'Ashro killed Sona.'

b. unu kwa maidasi luike

unu kwa maida =si lu-i-ke
3SG person beautiful-OBJ wait-3SG-AO
'lit. He/she waited (for) a beautiful person.'

c. gedzi arkubasi kiake

gedzi arkuba=si k-i-ta-ke
gegi camel-OBJ Eu-3SG-buy-AO
'Gegi bought a camel.'

The indirect object or the recipient of an action is also signaled in Kunama (Shukre) by the same enclitic =*si*⁵. First, this marker =*si* can occur in a sentence which has *only* an indirect object (but no overt direct object). For example:

⁵ Thompson (1983:298) says that the suffix –*si* "to, for" shows the receiver of the action or indicates accusative or dative.

(14) dakasi kisaske

daka=si k-i-sas-ke
woman-OBJ Eu-3SG-tell-AO
'He told a woman (something).'

(Compare 10a, without =si in the same meaning.)

In sentences with two explicit objects, =si must appear, once only. It marks the indirect object, as in (15). The direct object cannot take =si.

(15) a. gagama dedosi sèmá kisaske

gaga-ma ded-o =si sèmá k-i-sas-ke
gaga-NOM child-DIST.SG-OBJ story Eu-3SG-tell-AO
'Gaga told a story to the child.'

b. a'ba dedasi gudza nasoke

a'ba deda =si gudza na-so-ke
1SG child-OBJ stick 1SG-give-AO
'I gave a stick to a child.'

c. u'nu kwa maidasi ifoke

u'nu kwa maida =si i-fo-ke
3SG person beautiful-OBJ 3SG-give-AO
'He/she gave to a beautiful person.'

d. a'ba deda andomsi damakiʃa gudʒa nasoke

a'ba deda and-om=si damakiʃa gudʒa na-so-ke

1SG child big-DST.SG-OBJ small stick 1SG-give-AO

'I gave a small stick to the big child.'

e. asene sonasi kitaba iʃoke

asene sona=si kitaba i-ʃo-ke

asene sona-OBJ book 3SG-give-AO

'Asene gave a book to Sona.'

f. asene eʃoke sonasi kitaba

asene e-ʃo-ke sona=si kitaba

asene 3SG-give-AO sona-OBJ book

'Asene gave a book to Sona.'

All the constructions in example (15) show that, when the sentence has both a direct and an indirect object, the indirect object is coded by the enclitic =*si* whereas the direct object is left unmarked. As also stated above the enclitic =*si* is optional if there is only one object (direct or indirect). On the other hand, the presence of =*si* enables the sentence to assume non-standard constituent orders, as in (15f), where the verb occurs not finally but medially, immediately after A; here the flexibility of the order of constituents in the sentence is the result of the addition of the enclitic =*si*. (See section 3.4 below).

As noted above if both direct object and indirect object appear in a sentence, the indirect object gets priority to be marked with =*si*. It is not possible to mark

both the direct object and the indirect object at the same time using this marker, cf. (16).

(16) a. gebru birhanesi gudza kiʃoke

gebru birhane=si gudza k-i-ʃo-ke

gebru birhane-OBJ stick Eu-3SG-give-AO

‘Gebru gave a stick to Birhane.’

b.* grado tolisi gudzasi kiʃoke

grado toli=si gudza=si k-i-ʃo-ke

grado toli-OBJ stick- OBJ Eu-3SG-give-AO

‘Grado gave a stick to Toli.’

Regarding the order of words in a noun phrase,⁶ in (18) the direct object ‘stick’ is modified by the adjective ‘small’ and their sequence is N-Adj (stick small). This is the normal order. But it is also possible to have the order Adj-N (small stick) as in (17a) = (15d), where the adjective ‘small’ precedes the direct object ‘stick’. On the other hand, the Adj-N order is not possible if the object (direct or indirect) is marked by the enclitic =*si* as in (17b), where the indirect object ‘child’ is coded by the enclitic =*si*. Note also that it is not possible to have [Adj=*si*-N] or [N=*si*-Adj] construction as in (17c, d); the element =*si* must be phrase-final.

⁶ These statements about word order inside the NP seem to apply specifically for sentences that have *two* objects. Preliminary elicitation with sentences having *one* object seem (strangely) to yield different results. This is a topic for future investigation.

(17) a. a'ba deda andomsi damédá gudza nasoke

a'ba deda and-om=si damédá gudza na-so-ke
1SG child big-DST.SG-OBJ small stick 1SG-give-AO
'I gave a small stick to the big boy.'

b. *a'ba anda dedasi gudza damédá nasoke

a'ba anda deda=si gudza damédá na-so-ke
1SG big child-OBJ stick small 1SG-give-AO
'I give a small stick to a big boy.'

c. * a'ba andasi deda gudza damédá nasoke

a'ba anda=si deda gudza damédá na-so-ke
1SG big-OBJ child stick small 1SG-give-AO
'I give a small stick to a big boy.'

d. * 'ime dedasi anda gudza damédá osoke

'ime deda=si anda gudza damédá o-so-ke
3PL child-OBJ big stick small 3PL-give-AO
'They give a small stick to a big boy.'

The reason why I call =si an enclitic rather than a suffix is because, as in (18) and (19), it occurs once only, in phrase-final position; it will not attach to the Head Noun unless the Head Noun itself is phrase-final.

(18) a'ba deda andosi gudza damédá nasoke

aba deda and-o=si gudza damédá na-so-ke
1SG child big-DST.SG-OBJ stick small 1SG-give-AO
'I gave a small stick to the big child.'

(19) u'nu deda damédá maídosi gudza anda kiʃoke

u'nu deda damédá maíd-o=si gudza anda k-i-ʃo-ke

3SG child small beautiful -DST.SG-OBJ stick big Eu-3SG-give-AO

'He/she gave a big stick to the small beautiful child'

These two examples both show the structure [N Adj-(Adj)] =*si*.

This enclitic (unlike the nominative *-ma*) is also used with pronouns. Pronoun examples are shown in (20), and summarized in table 3:

(20) a. u'nu a'ba^sso^ʒo kasoke

u'nu a'ba=si so^ʒo k-a-so-ke

3SG 1SG-OBJ kiss(n.) Eu-1SG-give-AO

'He/she kissed me.' (lit He/she gave me a kiss.)

b. u'nu imesi so^ʒo 'kiʃoke

u'nu ime=si so^ʒo 'k-i-ʃo-ke

3SG 3PL-OBJ kiss(n.) Eu-3SG-give-AO

'He/she kissed them.' (lit. He/she gave them a kiss.)

c. u'nu u'nusi so^ʒo 'kiʃoke

u'nu u'nu=si so^ʒo 'k-i-ʃo-ke

3SG 3SG-OBJ kiss(n.) Eu-3SG-give-AO

'He/she kissed him/her.' (lit. He/she gave him/her a kiss.)

d. u'nu émamesi so^ʒo 'kesoke

u'nu émame=si so^ʒo 'k-e-so-ke

3SG 2DU-OBJ kiss(n.) Eu-2DU-give-AO

'He/she kissed you two.' (lit. He/she gave you a kiss.)

e. u'nu kímamesi soŋo kasoke

u'nu kímame=si soŋo k-a-so-ke

3SG 1INC.DU-OBJ kiss(n.) Eu-1INC.DU-give-AO

'He/she kissed us two.' (lit. He/she gave us a kiss.)

The following table shows the full set of nominative and objective forms of the pronouns of Kunama (Shukre):

Table 6: Nominative and objective pronouns

| Person | | Nominative pronouns | Objective pronouns |
|--------|----|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1SG | | a'ba | a'ba=si |
| 1EXC | DU | 'ame | 'ame=si |
| | PL | áme | áme=si |
| 1INC | DU | kímame | kímame=si |
| | PL | 'kime | 'kime=si |
| 2SG | | éna | éna=si |
| 2DU | | émame | émame=si |
| 2PL | | éme | éme=si |
| 3SG | | u'nu | u'nu=si |
| 3DU | | ímame | ímame=si |
| 3PL | | ime | ime=si |

3.2 MARKING OF PERIPHERAL ARGUMENTS

The optional or non-core arguments, often called peripheral arguments, include cases like instrumental, benefactive, ablative, comitative, vocative etc. The peripheral case markers of Kunama Shukre are discussed in this section.

3.2.1 The Benefactive case

The benefactive is a peripheral argument that refers to someone who benefits from an action (Dixon 2010a:332). The suffix *-sidamo* marks the benefactive in Kunama (Shukre). It is conceivable that this suffix should be split into two morphemes: *-si-damo*, with the object marker =*si*. But no other case ending includes *-si-* as part of itself.

(21) batʃu abasidamo ésená kimínike

batʃu aba-sidamo ísáná k-i-mínì-ke

bachu 1SG-BEN work Eu-3SG-do-AO

‘Bachu did work for me.’

(22) u'nu a'basidamo sandasi iákaskè

u'nu a'ba-sidamo sanda=si i-ákas-kè

3SG 1SG-BEN donkey-OBJ 3SG-hit-AO

‘He/she hit a donkey for me.’

3.2.2 The Instrumental case

The instrumental case marks the tool or an entity by means of which an action is done (Blake 2004:154). The instrumental⁷ in Shukre is marked by the suffix *-mu*, as in the following:

⁷ Bender (1996:15) says that the instrumental marker for Kunama (Marda) is *-bu*.

(23) batʃu angwasi túkwámu kiafassè⁸

batʃu angwa=si túkwá-mu k-i-afas-sè

bachu hyena-OBJ gun-INS Eu-3SG-kill-AO

‘Bachu killed a hyena with a gun.’

(24) fegima laʃasi gudʒa andamu iákaskè

fegi-ma laʃa=si gudʒa anda-mu i-ákas-kè

fegi-NOM goat-OBJ stick big-INS 3SG-hit-AO

‘Fegi hit the goat with a big stick.’

(25) 'ime elasi fasomamu gènkè

'ime ela=si fas-om-a-mu gè-n-kè

3PL tree-OBJ axe-DST.SG-SG-INS cut-3PL-AO

‘They cut a tree with the axe.’

(26) u'nu tajasi kiramu kilikè

u'nu taja=si kira-mu k-i-li-kè

3SG dog-OBJ rope-INS Eu-3SG-tie-AO

‘He/she tied a dog with a rope.’

Note that when the Head Noun marked for instrumental case has a modifier the only possible construction is [N-Adj]-*mu*; reversing the order (i.e. [N-Adj]) or inserting the instrumental suffix in between noun and adjective leads to ungrammaticality.

⁸ Note here that the aorist or non-future marker *-kè* is changed into *-sè* by total progressive assimilation. This is one of the features of Shukre whereby it differs from Marda. And in Shukre it is usually with low tone.

The instrumental may also mark a “human instrument”, as in (27a), where Asene is the human means for Sona’s death, and the knife is the inanimate means; and in (27b), where only the human means is mentioned.

(27) a. sonama asenemu andžeramu kutʃuke

sona-ma asene-mu andžera-mu k-u-tʃu-ke
 sona-NOM asene-INS knife-INS Eu-3SG-die-AO
 ‘lit. Sona died by Asene by a knife.’

b. makuma asenemu kutʃuke

maku-ma asene-mu k-u-tʃu-ke
 maku-NOM asene-INS Eu-3SG-die-AO
 ‘lit. Maku died by Asene.’

3.2.3 The Comitative

The comitative in Shukre, which denotes accompaniment or to be along with, is coded by the suffix – *ttè*.

(28) aba aifattè suga māmíkè

aba aifja-ttè suga má-mí-kè
 1SG sister-COM market 1DU-go-AO
 ‘I went to market with my sister.’

(29) lafa ailettè gássè

lafa ail-e-ttè gá-s-sè
 goat cow-PL-COM go-3SG-AO
 ‘A goat went with cows’

(30) grari i'wattè gássè

grari i-'wa-ttè gá-s-sè

grari 3SG.POSS-father-COM go-3SG-AO

‘Grari went with his father.’

(31) gedzi iniṅattè mímokè

gedzi i-niṅa-ttè mí-mo-kè

geji 3SG.POSS-mother-COM 3DU-come-AO

‘Geji came with her mother.’ (‘lit. Geji with her mother they came.’)

(32) batʃu tajattè kòkè

batʃu taja-ttè k-ø-ò-kè

bachu dog-COM Eu-3SG-come-AO

‘Bachu came with a dog.’

The principles controlling number agreement on the verb with comitatives are not clear to me; the verb is singular in (29, 30, and 32) but dual in (28, 31) and (36a) below, although the sentences all have (apparently) identical structure.

The suffix *-ttè* cannot be used to mark inanimate things like goods that someone carries. In other words, things unable to move by themselves are not marked for this case. An inanimate accompanier is marked with \emptyset .

(33) batʃu asuga 'iṅṅa barneta 'iṅṅa yooke

batʃu asuga 'i-ṅṅ-a barneta 'i-ṅṅ-a yoo-ø-ke

bachu shoes 3SG-that.of-SG hat 3SG-that.of-SG come-3SG-AO

‘Bachu came with his shoes and with his hat.’ (lit. ‘Bachu his shoes his hat came.’)

(34) u'nu túkwá 'iηηa yooke

u'nu túkwá 'i-ηη-a yoo-ø-ke
3SG gun 3SG-that.of-SG come-3SG-AO
'He came with his gun.' (lit. 'He his gun came.')

(35) asene gudza 'iηηa gássè

asene gudza 'i-ηη-a gá-s-sè
asene stick 3SG-that.of-SG go-3SG-AO
'Asene went with his stick.' (lit. 'Asene his walking stick went.')

The comitative case marker, interestingly, is similar but not identical to the coordinating conjunction "and": 'with' is *-ttè* (geminate *t*, low tone), while 'and' is *-'te* (non-geminate *t*, non-low tone, stressed). Note the morphological and syntactic differences between sentences (36a) and (36b).

(36) a. asene sonattè mímokè

asene sona-ttè mí-mo-kè
asene sona-COM 3DU-come-AO
'Asene came with Sona.'

b. asene'te sona'te mímokè

asene-'te sona-'te mí-mo-kè
asene-CJ sona-CJ 3DU-come-AO
'Asene and Sona came.'

The use of *-te* as a conjunction is not mentioned by Bender or Thompson. Perhaps it represents a further grammaticalization of comitative *-ttè* in Shukre Kunama.

3.2.4 The Locative case

The locative is coded in Shukre by a general locative marker *-la*. (This case can mean both ‘in’ and ‘into’.) As in:

(37) birhanema banatasi datola kidoke

birhane-ma banata=si dat-o-la k-i-do-ke
birhane-NOM bread-OBJ basket-DST.SG-LOC Eu-3SG-put-AO
‘Birhane put the bread in the basket.’

(38) kwa aranta'baddala ni'ŋisse

kwa aranta 'badda-la ni'ŋi-s-se
person bed top-LOC sleep-3SG-AO
‘A person slept on a bed.’

(39) u'nu asugosi aranta ukumala kidoke

u'nu asug-om=si aranta ukuma-la k-i-do-ke
3SG shoes-DST.SG-OBJ bed bottom-LOC Eu-3SG-put-AO
‘He/she put the shoes under the bed.’

(40) áme ʃúsàsi bákála mádoke

áme ʃúsà=si báká-la má-do-ke
1EXC.DU sand-OBJ hollow-LOC 1EXC.DU-put-AO
‘We (DU) put sand in a hollow.’

Note the use of *'badda* (cf. Tigrigna *kʷiili*) and *ukuma* (cf. Tigrigna *tihti*) which are used (respectively) as locative nouns meaning “top (of)” and “bottom (of)” and hence take locative case. Except for the order of words, this is reminiscent of Tigrigna combinations like *ab(i) kʷiili ʔärat* “on top (of) a bed”.

3.2.5 The Ablative case

The ablative signals movement away from the referent of the noun phrase to which it is attached (Dixon 2010a:331). In Kunama (Shukre), ablative semantics are expressed by an independent (free) postposition *ki* ‘from’. Thus:

(41) beki suga ki kòkè

beki suga ki k-ø⁹-ò-kè

beki market ABL Eu-3SG-come-AO

‘Beki came from market.’

(42) banata sirna ki kosonana

banata sirna ki ko-ø-sona-na

bread wheat ABL PASS-3SG-make-FUT

‘Bread will be made from wheat.’

(43) fewitma birhane ki kitaba eke

fewit-ma birhane ki kitaba ø-e-ke

shewit-NOM birhane ABL book 3SG-receive-AO

‘Shewit received a book from Birhane.’

⁹The 3SG pronoun subject marker *i* changes into *ø* when it appears before or after a vowel and in some irregular verbs.

Note the semantic range covered by the ablative in these examples: source of physical motion (41), source material (42), and source of transfer (43).

In addition, a case suffix *-nkimu* can express the ablative. In general, it seems to be possible to use *-nkimu* and *ki* interchangeably without meaning difference. Thus:

(44) asenema sonankimu kitaboma kitake

asene-ma sona-nkimu kitab-om-a k-i-ta-ke
asena-NOM sona-ABL book-DST.SG-SG Eu-3SG-buy-AO
'Asene bought the book from Sona.'

(45) a'ba tewelenkimu 'latera labinake

a'ba tewe-le-nkimu 'latera labi-na-ke
1SG tewe-le-ABL letter receive-1SG-AO
'I received a letter from Tewe-le.'

The suffix *-nkimu* is also used to mark the "standard of comparison" (*than*). The postposition *ki* can also be used this way. Consider the following examples:

(46) a. u'nu a'bankimu anda

u'nu a'ba-nkimu anda
3SG 1SG-CMP big
'He/she is bigger than me.'

b. toli babu ki anda dia

tolu babu ki anda (dia)
tolu babu CMP big COP
'Toli is bigger than Babu.'

(47) birhane babunkimu damédá
 birhane babu-nkimu damédá
 birhane babu-CMP small
 ‘Birhane is smaller than Babu.’

Another way of coding what might appear to be an ablative is with the suffix *-m* or the equivalent postposition *mamo* as in (48) and (49).

(48) batʃuma ʃodam laʃa kitake
 batʃu-ma ʃoda-m laʃa k-i-ta-ke
 bachu-NOM money-ABL goat Eu-3SG-buy-AO
 ‘lit. Bachu bought a goat from the money.’

(49) batʃuma ʃoda mamo laʃa kitake
 batʃu-ma ʃoda mamo laʃa k-i-ta-ke
 bachu-NOM money ABL goat Eu-3SG-buy-AO
 ‘lit. Bachu bought a goat from the money.’

However, *-m* or *mamo* cannot be used in (41-43), and conversely *ki* cannot be used in (48). This suggests that *-m/mamo* may be a distinct case with its own distinct semantics, perhaps roughly “in exchange for”. I have not investigated this further, however.

3.2.6 The Allative

The allative case, expressing motion 'to' or 'towards' the referent of the noun it marks, is coded in Kunama (Shukre) by a suffix *-tta*, as in the following examples:

(50) dabi ʃimblinatta gássè

dabi ʃimblina-tta gá-s-sè

dabi shimblina-ALL go-3SG-AO

'Dabi went to Shimblina.'

(51) kamo kosasaitankimu itiatta gássè

kamo 'kosasai'ta-nkimu it-i-a-tta gá-s-sè

kamo school-ABL house-3SG.POSS-SG-ALL go-3SG-AO

'Kamo went to his house from school.'

(52) u'nu údosi íʃatta fássè

u'nu úd-o=si íʃa-tta fá-s-sè

3SG firewood-DST.SG-OBJ outside-ALL throw-3SG-AO

'He/she threw the firewood outside.' (lit. He/she threw the firewood to outside.)

3.2.7 The Perlative

The perlative, expressing path, is marked in Kunama (Shukre) by the suffix *-lem* ('through, along'), as in (53).

- (53) tamaga tabilalem gássè
 tamaga tabila-lem gá-s-sè
 rabbit road-PER go-3SG-AO
 ‘A rabbit went along the road.’

3.2.8 The Vocative

The vocative case is used as a form of address (Blake 2004:8). In Kunama (Marda), according to Thompson (1983:300), the particle *o* is used prenominally as a vocative particle. But in Shukre I did not find this marker or any specialized vocative particle. There are some kin terms which have special lexicalized vocative forms. These involve forms of respect. Thompson (1983:297) gives the forms in example (54), which I have also found in Shukre.

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| (54) <i>Vocative forms</i> | <i>Addressed to</i> |
| baba | very old man |
| tata | very old woman |
| ayni | older brother (cf. 3.3.5 on kin possession) |
| titi, yayo | mother by her child (“mama”) |

I also elicited the following forms from Shukre (not mentioned by Thompson):

| | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| (55) <i>Vocative forms</i> | <i>Addressed to</i> |
| nini | very old woman |
| adikifa | very old man |
| dakifa | very old woman |
| baboy | one’s father (cf. <i>baba</i> above) |

3.3 MARKING POSSESSION

Various types of relationships within the possessive construction of an NP are discussed under this topic based on the classification of Dixon (2010b:306). He speaks of the strategies for “marking an NP-internal possessive construction”, i.e., the construction where a noun occurs with another noun phrase showing a possession relationship. Following Dixon, I will label the possessor**R** as “R”, and the possessed**D** as “D”. I will separately consider cases where R is lexical versus pronominal, and where D is lexical versus pronominal. Kunama thus has four basic structural types, which I will describe in turn in the next four sections.

3.3.1. Lexical R and D: Apposition

If both R and D are full lexical NPs, then possession in Kunama (Shukre) is expressed simply by apposition. There is no marking on possessed or on possessor; it is simply that the possessed and the possessor are juxtaposed, in the order R-D (possessor-possessed). Both the R and the D can (separately) take a number suffix for singular¹⁰, dual, or plural. Except with proper names, a noun will (apparently) always take one of these number suffixes; nouns cannot appear “bare”. Consider these examples:

¹⁰ Elsewhere in this thesis I will not consistently separate off the SG suffix –a. I do do this in examples (56) and (57).

(56) a. sanda ʃima

sand-a ʃim-a
donkey-SG tail-SG
'Donkey's tail'

b. eloma naʃa

el-om-a naʃ-a
tree-DST.SG-SG branch-SG
'The branch of the tree'

c. gedʒi abiʃ-a biʃibab-a (dia)
gegi father-SG farmer-SG COP
'Gegi's father is a farmer.'

d. mido mà eteke

mido m-à e-te-ke
mido tooth-SG 3SG-break-AO
'Mido's tooth broke.'

e. nafa aranta eteke

nafa arrant-a e-te-ke
nafa bed-SG 3SG-break-AO
'Nafa's bed broke.'

(57) a. sandome ʃima gèrà

sand-om-e ʃim-a gèrà
donkey-DST.SG-PL tail-SG long
'The donkeys' long tail'

b. barase ninde

baras-e nind-e

horse-PL leg-PL

‘Legs of the horses’

c. asene konamme

asene kon-amme

asene hand-DU

‘Asene’s two hands’

d. kotabarantamme ninde

kotabarant-amme nind-e

chair-DU leg-PL

‘Legs of two chairs’

The SG suffix (on R and D) is illustrated in (56). The R is marked for plural in (57a and 57b); and for dual in (57d); the D is marked for plural in (57b and 57d) and for dual in (57c).

In this type of possession relationship there is no special marker to differentiate alienable and inalienable possession. This can be seen from examples (56d), which shows inalienable possession (‘tooth’), and (56e), which shows alienable possession (‘bed’); the structure for both examples is identical. Kunama does have a distinct strategy for inalienable possession, but it is used only for kin terms (see section 3.3.5 below).

3.3.2 Pronominal D: The “headless” possessee -**ηη**- “that.of”

This strategy is used for “headless possession”: “that of John”, where the possessee (possessed) is not stated. The concept “that.of” is expressed by the morpheme -**ηη**-¹¹, which fills the same slot as a lexical possessee. Compare:

- (58) a. [asas-a] [**kitab**-a] b. [asas-a] - [**ηη**-a]
teacher-SG book-SG teacher-SG - that.of-SG
‘book of a teacher’ ‘that.of a teacher’

Consider further the following examples:

- (59) a. asasa**ηη**a
asas-a-**ηη**-a
teacher-SG-that.of-SG
‘lit. something belonging to a teacher’
- b. asase**ηη**a
asas-e-**ηη**-a
teacher-PL- that.of -SG
‘lit. something belonging to teachers’
- c. asasamme**ηη**a
asas-amme-**ηη**-a
teacher-DU- that.of -SG
‘lit. something belonging to two teachers’

¹¹ The Arabic pronoun *ḏū* has an exactly parallel function, “that.of” or “owner of” (Orin Gensler, p.c.).

d. *asasammenɣamme*

asas-amme-ɣɣ-amme

teacher-DU- that.of -DU

‘Two things belonging to two teachers’

e. *asaseɣɣe*

asas-e-ɣɣ-e

teacher-PL- that.of -PL

‘Things belonging to teachers’

f. *asas-a-ɣɣ-amme*

asas-a-ɣɣ-amme

teacher-SG- that.of -DU

‘Two things belonging to a teacher’

The structures of all the constructions in (59) have similar sequencing of morphemes: first the possessor occurs, then the number of the possessor; then comes the pronominal possessee “that.of”, and finally a morpheme that indicates the number of possessed things.

This construction is presented by Thompson (1983:296) in a simple pattern as follows:

R — Number of R — *-ɣɣ-* “Genitive” (“that.of”) — Number of D

Thompson (1983:296) and Bender (1996:13) both refer to the morpheme *-ɣɣ-* as a “Genitive” marker, but this does not seem right. It is not an (obvious) case-

marker on the possessor, which is what a “Genitive” should be, and it *never* appears with a lexical possessee (see section 3.3.1).

3.3.3 Pronominal R: Possessor suffixes

A pronominal possessor is marked in Kunama Shukre as a suffix on the possessed: D-Possessive suffix. For example:

(60) a. 'itaŋa to'ma konkè

'it-aŋ-a to'ma k-ø-on-kè
house-1SG.POSS-SG fire Eu-3SG-burn-AO
'lit. My house burns (with) a fire.'

b. 'wama koma gango kodia

'wama k-om-a gango kod-i-a
that man-DST.SG-SG gango friend-3SG.POSS-SG
'That man is Gango's friend.'

c. mendia etekè

mend-i-a e-te-kè
leg-3SG.POSS-SG 3SG-break-AO
'His leg broke.'

Again, as can be observed from (60a) and (60c), there is no alienable or inalienable possession distinction in this form. And again, as before, the possessed (D) can be immediately followed by the number of D which can be singular, dual or plural, as in (61). (The number of R is built into the suffix in portmanteau fashion; it is not expressed separately.)

Interestingly, this number suffix follows the entire possessed form:

[D-Possessive suffix]- Number

(61) a. ùtaŋa

ùt-aŋ-a

mouth-1SG.POSS-SG

‘My mouth’

b. 'itíe

'it-í-e

house-3PL.POSS-PL

‘Their houses’

c. 'itiamme

'it-i-amme

house-3SG.POSS-DU

‘His/her two houses.’

The paradigm of Shukre possessive suffixes is given in the following table:

Table 7: Possessive suffixes

| Person | possessive suffixes |
|------------|---------------------|
| 1SG | -aŋ-a |
| 1EXC DU | -áŋ-a / baraŋa |
| PL | -áŋ-a |
| 1INC DU | -iŋ-a / bariŋa |
| PL | -iŋ-a |
| 2SG | -e-a |
| 2DU | -é-a / barie |
| 2PL | -é-a |
| 3SG | -i-a |
| 3DU | -í-a / barea |
| 3 PL | -í-a |

The possessive suffixes as given in the paradigm refer to a singular possessee (D) because of the attachment of the singular marker suffix *-a*; this suffix can instead be *-amme* (DU) or *-e* (PL) as noted above.

Note that the possessive suffixes do not distinguish DU and PL at all; the suffix is simply “non-singular”. Interestingly, in Shukre the dual can be explicitly expressed by a construction that uses the cardinal number “two”, *bare*. Contrast the forms without *bar-*, which are ambiguous as to DU/PL.

(62) a. *baraṅa 'ita*

bar-aṅa 'it-a
two-1EXC.DU.POSS house-SG
'Our (1EXC.DU) house'

b. *bariṅa 'ita*

bar-iṅa 'it-a
two-1INC.DU.POSS house-SG
'Our (1INC.DU) house'

c. *barie 'ita*

bar-ie 'it-a
two-2DU.POSS house-SG
'Your (2DU) house'

d. *bar-ea 'ita*

bar-ea 'it-a
two-3DU.POSS house-SG
'Their (3DU) house'

e. *'itiṅa*

'it-iṅ-a
house-1EXC.DU/PL.POSS-SG
'Our (1EXC.DU/PL) house'

f. *'itiṅa*

'it-iṅ-a
house-1INC.DU/PL.POSS-SG
'Our (1INC.DU/PL) house'

g. *'itéa*

'it-é-a
house-2DU/PL.POSS-SG
'Your (2DU/PL) house'

h. *'itía*

'it-í-a
house-3DU/PL.POSS-SG
'Their (3DU/PL) house'

These dual forms can be paraphrased as, e.g.: house two-our "house of the two of us", "house of us-two"= "our (1DU) house". That is, the numeral "two" is acting as a possessee (**two** of us) but also as a possessor (house of [**two** (of us)]). Similarly, the same construction can be used with other, different cardinal numbers to specify 3, 4 etc. possessors. For instance, it is possible with *satte* 'three' as in (63).

(63) sattíe ita

satt-íe it-a
three-3PL.POSS house-SG
'A house of the three of them'

3.3.4 Pronominal R and D: Independent possessive pronouns

These convey a complete possessive meaning (like 'mine', 'hers') in an independent word: "The house is **mine**", etc. In these forms, both the R and the D are pronouns: literally "that.of-me." The structure is a combination of the structures seen in 3.3.2 and 3.3.3. The prefix in each form specifies the person/number of R; this prefix is followed by the "headless possessee" morpheme *-ηη* 'that.of', and finally a suffix at the end indicating singular, dual, or plural of the possessee. Here are two examples:

(64) a. 'itaye 'aηηe

'it-ay-e 'a-ηη-e
house-DST.PL-PL 1SG-that.of-PL
'The houses are mine.'

b. gugaroma 'iηηe

gugara-om-a 'i-ηη-e
trousers-DST.SG-SG 3SG-that.of-PL
'The trousers are his.'

The following paradigm shows the independent possessive pronouns of Shukre:

Table 8: Independent possessive pronouns

| Person/ Number of R | | Number of possessed | | |
|---------------------|----|---------------------|-------------|----------|
| | | Singular | Dual | Plural |
| 1SG | | 'a-ṅṅ-a | 'a-ṅṅ-amme | 'a-ṅṅ-e |
| 1EXC | DU | 'a-ṅṅ-a | 'a-ṅṅ-amme | 'a-ṅṅ-e |
| | PL | 'á-ṅṅ-a | 'á-ṅṅ-amme | 'á-ṅṅ-e |
| 1INC | DU | 'ki-ṅṅ-a | 'ki-ṅṅ-amme | 'ki-ṅṅ-e |
| | PL | 'ki-ṅṅ-a | 'ki-ṅṅ-amme | 'ki-ṅṅ-e |
| 2SG | | 'ə-ṅṅ-a | 'ə-ṅṅ-amme | 'ə-ṅṅ-e |
| 2DU | | 'e-ṅṅ-a | 'e-ṅṅ-amme | 'e-ṅṅ-e |
| 2PL | | 'é-ṅṅ-a | 'é-ṅṅ-amme | 'é-ṅṅ-e |
| 3SG | | 'i-ṅṅ-a | 'i-ṅṅ-amme | 'i-ṅṅ-e |
| 3DU | | 'i-ṅṅ-a | 'i-ṅṅ-amme | 'i-ṅṅ-e |
| 3PL | | 'í-ṅṅ-a | 'í-ṅṅ-amme | 'í-ṅṅ-e |

3.3.5 Kin Term Possession

In Shukre, kin terms show a variety of special inalienable possessive paradigms that (depending on the kin term) are marked sometimes by prefixes, sometimes by suffixes, sometimes both, and once by infixes. These affixes show both the possessor and the fact that R has an inalienable kin relation with D. Simplified paradigms of the possessive prefixes and suffixes of Kunama (Shukre) are given in the following table. The prefixes basically agree with what Bender (1996:19) says except that here the first person inclusive plural is marked with high tone versus low tone in Bender's treatment. The kin term suffixes are the same as the normal possessive suffixes except for 2SG -'... ia,

and for the special allomorphs of 2SG and 3SG seen with “mother”. (Here the notation - '... ia indicates that stress falls on the root.)

Table 9: Kin term possessive prefixes and suffixes

| Person | | kin term possessive prefixes | kin term possessive suffixes |
|--------|----|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1SG | | a- | -aŋa |
| 1EXC | PL | 'á- | -áŋa |
| 1INC | PL | 'kí- | -iŋa |
| 2SG | | e- | -'...ia |
| 2PL | | 'é- | -ea |
| 3SG | | i- | -'ia |
| 3PL | | 'í- | -ia |

The prefixes are *a-* for first person, *e-* for second person, *i-* for third person and *ki-* for first person inclusive. The difference is that the prefixes in singular form are all unstressed whereas in the plural form they are stressed and bear a high tone. There are no special markers for dual forms in this type of possession; the plural forms are used for the dual as well.

The possessive kin-terms paradigms show numerous irregularities. Most dramatically, there is one exceptional word in which the kin term prefixes become infixes as in (65).

(65) a. masama (-sama 'sibling')

m-a-sama

m-1SG.POSS-sibling

'My sibling'

b. 'kísa'ma

'kí-sa'ma

1INC PL.POSS- sibling

'Our sibling'

c. m'ása'ma

m-'á-sa'ma

m-1EXC PL.POSS- sibling

'Our sibling'

d. mesama

m-e-sama

m-2SG.POSS- sibling

'Your sibling'

e. m'ésama

m-'é-sama

m-2PL.POSS- sibling

'Your sibling'

f. misama

m-i-sama

m-3SG.POSS- sibling

'His/her sibling'

g. m'ísa'ma

m-'í-sa'ma

m-3PL.POSS- sibling

'Their sibling'

Note here that in the form 'kí-sa'ma, the logically expected sequence *m-ki-* has become just *ki-* (i.e. *m-ki-sama → kisma).

Another irregularity can be seen in the terms for "mother", where the root is sometimes *-nan/nin/nen-* (vowel harmony), sometimes *-ne/ni-*, and once (1SG) just *-n-*. Moreover, the 2SG and 3SG suffixes are not *-ia* but *-ŋa*; this seems to reflect an odd morphophonemic sound change $-nVn-ia \rightarrow -nV-ŋa$.

In the following kin term paradigm, the three middle columns delimited by **bold** vertical lines show irregularities ("i.e. mother; son/daughter; sibling [first paradigm]").

Table 10: Full paradigm of possessed kin terms

| | Father | Elder brother | Younger brother | Mother | Son/ Daughter | Sibling | | Grand-father | Grand-mother | Uncle |
|---------|--------|---------------|-----------------|-----------|---------------|---------|---------|--------------|--------------|--------|
| 1SG | a'wa | a'yna | a'yʃa | 'anaŋa | aykka | masama | osamaŋa | obaŋa | afaŋa | embaŋa |
| 1EXC.PL | 'áwa | 'áyna | 'áyʃa | 'áanaŋa | 'áykka | másama | osamáŋa | obáŋa | afáŋa | embáŋa |
| 1INC.PL | 'kiwa | 'ki:na | 'ki:ʃa | 'kininiŋa | kikka | kisama | osamiŋa | obiŋa | afiŋa | embiŋa |
| 2SG | e'wa | e'yna | e'yʃa | 'eneŋa | ekka | mesama | 'osamia | 'obia | 'afia | 'emia |
| 2PL | 'éwa | 'éyna | 'éyʃa | 'enenea | 'ékka | m'ésama | osamea | obea | afea | embea |
| 3SG | i'wa | i:'na | i:'ʃa | iniŋa | i'kka | misama | o'samia | o'bia | a'fia | e'mbia |
| 3PL | 'íwa | 'í:na | 'í:ʃa | 'íninia | 'ikka | m'isama | osamia | obía | afía | emia |

The same kin term possession prefixes can be used for singular, dual, and plural nouns:

(66) a. ayna

a-yn-a

1SG.POSS-sibling-SG

'My elder sibling'

b. ayne

a-yn-e

1SG.POSS-sibling-PL

'My elder siblings'

c. aynamme

a-yn-amme

1SG.POSS-sibling-DU

‘My two elder siblings’

Not surprisingly, possessed kin terms (like any other NP) can enter into larger possessive constructions, as in (67).

(67) a. anan̩aŋ̩a

a-naŋ-a-ŋ̩a

1SG.POSS-mother-SG-that.of-SG

‘One thing belonging to my mother’

b. 'é-kkeŋ̩e

'é-kk-e-ŋ̩e

2PL.POSS-son-PL-that.of-PL

‘Things belonging to your sons’

3.3.6 Predicative Possession

Possession in Kunama (Shukre) can also be expressed through a predicative possessive construction. Predicative possession is expressed in Shukre with a transitive possessive verb *iná* ‘have’ as shown in the structures given under (68), in which the R occurs as A argument and the D as O argument.

(68) a. a'ba dora nainákè

a'ba dora na-iná-kè

1SG hen 1SG-have-AO

'I have a hen.'

b. 'kime kònà menákè

'kime kònà ma-iná-kè

1EXC.PL hand 1EXC.PL-have-AO

'We have a hand.'

c. 'ime garme oinámme

'ime garm-e o-iná-mme

3PL sheep-PL 3PL-have-NG

'They don't have sheep.'

d. u'nu kotubaranta kinákè

u'nu kotubaranta k-(i)-iná-kè

3SG chair Eu-3SG-have-AO

'He/she has a chair.'

e. a'ba tagama nainákè

a'ba tagama na-iná-kè

1SG problem 1SG-have-AO

'I have a problem.'

f. kitaboma fase mudze bare kinákè

kitab-om-a fase mudze bare k-(i)-iná-kè

book-DST.SG-SG page hundred two Eu-3SG-have-AO

'The book has two hundred pages.'

g. oka séketá i:námme

oka séketá i-iná-mme

glass color 3SG-have-NEG

‘Glass has no color.’

Again there is no distinction between alienable and inalienable possession. Moreover, there is no marker to differentiate permanent and temporary ownership. Indeed, the concept ‘have’ is much broader than just ‘ownership’, as shown by (68e, f, g).

3.4 CONSTITUENT ORDER

In encoding syntactic relations, a language may use various strategies: case marking, cross-referencing, constituent order or other techniques. As described above, Kunama (Shukre) uses a number of core and peripheral case markers to identify syntactic relations. But two of the marking of core cases, namely Nominative and Objective, are optional. When these morphological case distinctions are absent another means is employed, namely constituent order.

Constituent order (often mislabeled 'word order', according to Dixon) is the order in which phrasal constituents appear within a clause (Dixon 2010a:233).

The order of constituents in Kunama (Shukre) is usually that the verb follows the subject and the object, that is, AOV/SV. And this order is relatively fixed except in some cases. Notably, when the arguments are marked with an explicit case marker it is possible to exchange their position, as for example in (15f), *asene efoke sonasi kitaba* 'Asene gave a book to Sona', where the verb occurs between the A and the two objects, the first of which bears the case-marker =si.

The usually fixed ordering of clausal constituents (phrases) within a clause helps to show which argument is A and which is O in a transitive clause. Therefore sentences like in (69) will not result in any ambiguity, even in the absence of any case marking.

(69) a. taja angwa kinke

taja angwa k-i-n-ke

dog hyena Eu-3SG-bite-AO

‘A dog bit a hyena.’

b. angwa taja kinke

angwa taja k-i-n-ke

hyena dog Eu-3SG-bite-AO

‘A hyena bit a dog.’

Scrambling the order would result in a difference in meaning. Contrast the word order flexibility of (70), which has the explicit object marker =*si*:

(70) a. taja angwasi kinke

taja angwa=si k-i-n-ke

dog hyena-OBJ Eu-3SG-bite-AO

‘A dog bit a hyena.’

b. angwasi taja kinke

angwa=si taja k-i-n-ke

hyena-OBJ dog Eu-3SG-bite-AO

‘A dog bit a hyena.’

If arguments are marked for case the order of constituents become very flexible. Consider the following examples:

(71) a. un'u itaŋa ki اساسي kitabaŋa kifoke (Subject-ABL-IO-DO-V)

un'u it-aŋ-a ki asasa=si kitab-aŋ-a k-i-fo-ke

3SG house-1SG.POSS-SG ABL teacher-OBJ book-1SG.POSS-SG Eu-3SG-give-AO

'lit. He/she gave my book to a teacher from my house.'

b. اساسي un'u itaŋa ki kitabaŋa kifoke (IO-Subject-ABL-DO-V)

asasa=si un'u it-aŋ-a ki kitab-aŋ-a k-i-fo-ke

teacher-OBJ 3SG house-1SG.POSS-SG ABL book-1SG.POSS-SG Eu-3SG-give-AO

'lit. He/she gave my book to a teacher from my house.'

c. un'u اساسي it-aŋ-a ki kitabaŋa kifoke (Subject-IO-ABL-DO-V)

un'u asasa=si it-aŋ-a ki kitab-aŋ-a k-i-fo-ke

3SG teacher-OBJ house-1SG.POSS-SG ABL book-1SG.POSS-SG Eu-3SG-give-AO

'lit. He/she gave my book to a teacher from my house.'

d. tolima asugaŋa asenesi itaŋa ki kifoke (Subject-DO-IO-ABL-V)

tolima asug-aŋ-a asene=si it-aŋ-a ki kifoke

toli-NOM shoes-1SG.POSS-SG asene-OBJ house-1SG.POSS-SG ABL Eu-3SG-give-AO

'lit. Toli gave my shoes to Asene from my house.'

e. ŋweli ma 'lateraŋa hawesi kifoke (Subject-DO-IO-V)

ŋweli-ma 'later-aŋ-a hawe=si k-i-fo-ke

shweli-NOM letter-1SG.POSS-SG hawe-OBJ Eu-3SG-give-AO

'Shweli gave my letter to Hawe.'

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

As stated at the introduction, the objective of this thesis has been to make a basic description of the morphosyntactic marking of syntactic relations in Kunama (Shukre). In order to achieve this, topics related to syntactic relations, namely case marking, possession, and constituent order have been dealt with.

In case marking core cases and peripheral cases have been treated. The core cases explored in Kunama (Shukre) are nominative and objective. The nominative can be marked by three different means: by a suffix *-ma* on nouns (but not on pronouns), by a null morpheme, or by suprasegmentals (adding a high tone on the last syllable of a subject noun).

The objective case is coded by an enclitic =*si*. It signals both (semantic) direct object and indirect object. It is optional if the sentence has only one object; if both direct and indirect object appear in a sentence, the (semantic) indirect object gets the priority to be marked (obligatorily) with =*si*. Unlike the suffix *-ma*, the enclitic =*si* can be used with pronouns.

With regard to peripheral arguments, eight different types of non-core cases are identified. These are: benefactive; instrumental, which may also mark a human instrument; comitative, which cannot be used to code inanimate things; locative; ablative, which can be signaled by several different morphemes (*ki*,

-nkimu, and *-m* or *mamo*); allative; perlativ; and vocative, which is expressed through special lexicalized vocative forms.

In this thesis various ways of possession marking in the language are explored. One way is by apposition. Full lexical R and D are juxtaposed in the order R-D, and both R and D may take a number suffix (R- Number of R-D-Number of D). Another way is by using the "headless" possessee *-ηη-* "that.of". This construction is used when D is not stated; it follows the formula: R – Number of R – *-ηη-* ("that.of") – Number of D. Possession suffixes are employed to show pronominal possession. Here the pronominal R is marked as a suffix on the D. Further, the latter two can be combined to yield independent possessive pronouns (like English "mine", etc.) that have a complete possessive meaning.

In addition to the four structures listed above, inalienable kin terms in Shukre show a variety of possessive paradigms. These paradigms differ according to the particular kin term they mark. They are sometimes prefixes, sometimes suffixes, sometimes both, and once infixes. Finally, predicative possession is expressed with a transitive possessive verb *iná* 'have'.

Regarding constituent order, the basic (canonical) order of clausal constituents is AOV/SV, which helps to identify arguments easily. This is the preferred order; but according to the elicited data of this thesis, when arguments are marked by an explicit case marker the order of the constituents becomes more flexible. In short, in the absence of case markers constituent order helps to

show which argument is A and which is O in a transitive clause without ambiguity.

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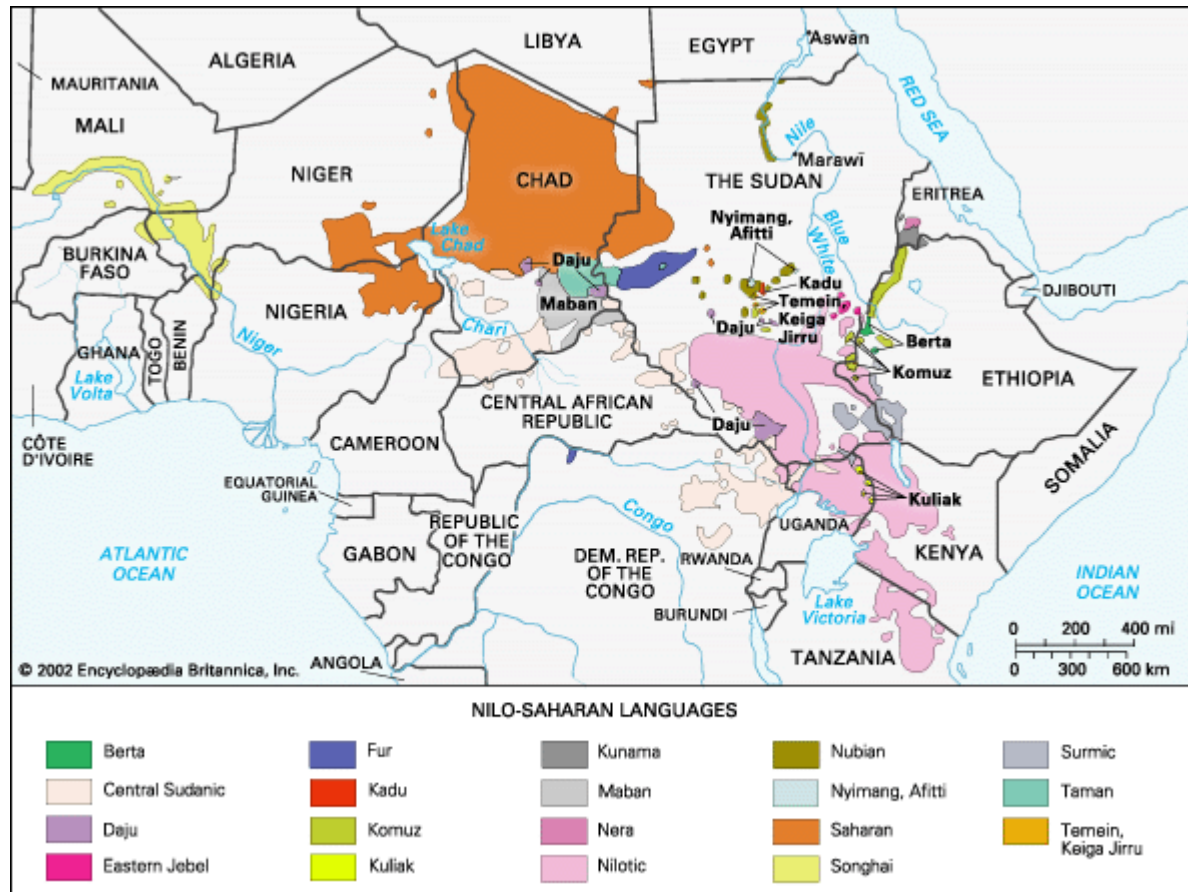
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