FORM AND FUNCTION OF CONVERBS IN OROMO

BY

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ABSTRACT

This study describes the form and function of converbs in Oromo. Oromo converbs usually cannot be marked for tense and mood in contrast to main verbs. There are three converb forms: the generalized converb marked by a lengthened final vowel of a conjugated perfective, imperative or jussive verb, and two invariable specialized converbs marked by the suffixes *-aa* or *-naan*. While the generalized converb usually denotes a sequence of events, the converb in *–aa* expresses a simultaneous event to the main clause verb while the converb in *-naan* is used in habitual or repetitive expressions.

The converbs most frequently denote simultaneous and consecutive events in relation to a main-clause verb but also occurs in other adverbial functions.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

1, 2, 3	First, second, third person
ABF	Autobenefactive
AGN	Agent noun
AUX.PAST	Past-tense auxiliary
CNV	Converb
CONC	Concessive
DEF	Definite
F	Feminine
FOC	Focus
GER	Gerund
HAB	Habitual
IMP	Imperative
INF	Infinitive
INST	Instrumental
IPFV	Imperfective
JUSS	Jussive
M	Masculine
NEG	Negation
NOM	Nominative
PFV	Perfective
PL	Plural
PRG	Progressive
PTCP	Participle
SG	Singular

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides background information about the Oromo people and their language. It also contains the statement of the problem, the objective of the study and its significance, scope, and methodology.

1.1 The Oromo People and Their Language

The Oromo people probably comprise the largest single ethnic group in Africa (Bender, Mulugeta and Stinson 1976:130). The Oromo is one of the major linguistic groups in Ethiopia and the major member of the Oromoid subgroup of the Lowland East Cushitic branch (Appleyard, 2006:103). They live in the eastern, central and western parts of Ethiopia "stretching from close to the Sudan border in the west, through Addis Ababa, and beyond Harar in the east, from northern Kenya in the south, up and east of the rift valley and to Wallo in the north" (Gragg, 1982: xiii).

Oromia is the largest regional state in Ethiopia in terms of population and land size. The Oromia region covers an area of 367,000 square kilometers. It has a warm and mild climate (Tolemariam, 2009:6). According to the 1994 population and housing census result, the Oromo population was 18,732,525 of which 9,371,228 were males and 9,361,297 females (CSA 1995).

Oromo is the third most widely spoken language in Africa after Arabic and Hausa (Mahdi, 1995: xi). It is spoken in most parts of Ethiopia and in northern Kenya. It has been used as a vernacular language for along time until it became the working language of the Oromia regional state in 1991 (Tolemariam, 2009:6).

There are three main dialect clusters of Oromo: (i) the central-western group, with at least nine million speakers, comprising the Mecha, Tulama, Wallo, and Raya varieties (all spoken in Ethiopia); (ii) the eastern group including Borana, Guji, Arsi and Gabra (spoken in southern Ethiopia and adjacent parts of Kenya); and (iii) Orma (spoken along the Tana river in Kenya and along the Juba River in Southern Somalia) and Waata (spoken along the Kenyan coast to the south of Orma) (Appleyard, 2006:103).

Oromo has 24 consonant phonemes and five vowels represented in the Latin-based *Qubee* orthography. Its morphology is moderately complex similar in categories and extent to other Cushitic languages (Appleyard, 2006:103f.). Oromo is a tone-accent language whereby tone does not distinguish between lexical items but is linked with morphological and syntactic categories (Appleyard, 2006:104).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Even though the converb is a major topic in descriptive linguistics, there is very little typological, cross linguistics research on converbs in Oromo language. However, earlier studies(for instance, Azeb and Dimmendaal (2006), Griefonow-Mewis (2001), Gragg (1976) and Stroomer (1995) deal with the converb as a grammatical category in Oromo, they ascribe various functions to the converbs in Oromo and call them by various names, like *gerund, participial, consecutive, serial verb* (cf. Azeb and Dimmendaal, 2006:426). The use of these various terminologies hides the well-established cross-linguistic morphological, syntactic and pragmatic features of converbal constructions. This may have to do with the fact that there are no converbs in Oromo, and thus the Oromo grammars do not provide a term for this notion. Indeed, the converb in Oromo has barely been recognized as a cross-linguistically valid grammatical category up to these days. Considering this gap, this study attempts an in-depth description of converbs in Oromo.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The general objective of this study is to identify and describe the forms and functions of converbs in Oromo. The study has the following specific objectives:

> ➢ Identify the grammatical form of the converbs in Oromo, and

➢ Describe the grammatical function of the various converbs in Oromo.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The present study represents basic research and is believed to have the following significance:

➢ It will enhance the knowledge of Oromo grammar, specifically with regard to converbs.

➢ It will contribute to the descriptive study of Cushitic languages and to linguistic typology in general.

➢ It can serve as a source of information for educational grammars on the Oromo language.

1.5 Scope of the Study

A complete descriptive analysis of a language requires the phonological, morphological, syntactic and pragmatic description of that language. However, this study limits itself to the description of the form and function of converbs, but puts only little or no attention to other categories of the verb morphology.

The data is limited to the various Oromo varieties spoken in Ethiopia; it does not consider the Oromo varieties spoken only in Kenya.

1.6 Methodology

This study is a descriptive research in nature. It relies on primary linguistic data gathered through interviews with native speakers of Oromo, as well as on published data from Oromo grammars, like Stroomer (1995), Griefenow-Mewis (2001), Owens (1985), and form Oromo dictionaries, like Hinsene (2010; 2012).

As the researcher is not a speaker of Oromo, three native speakers of Oromo were consulted during fieldwork, namely Enkoga Asefa in Jimma from 20–24October 2011, Girma Terefe in Ambo from 12–16 February 2012, and Tolosa Nemera in Neqemt from 3–7 April 2012. All three were born at the respective places. Besides their native language, Oromo, they also speak Amharic and English.

The elicitation of the data on converbs in Oromo was based on a questionnaire prepared in Amharic as Meta-language. The questionnaire contains sentences and phrases focusing on the form and function of the converb. Furthermore, one text was recorded (see Appendix).

The data were transcribed using the Oromo orthography– *qubee*, which is quite close to a phonetic representation of the language.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The first part of this section defines the converb and deals with the form and function of converb from a typological cross-linguistic perspective mainly based on Haspelmath's (1995), Nedjalkov's (1995) and Ebert's (2008). It also contains some general information about converbs in the Ethiopian context and in Oromo. The second part of this section reviews previous works on the Oromo grammar by focusing on subtopics that seem to be relevant for the description of converbal constructions.

2.1   Converb in a Cross-Linguistic Typological perspective

2.1.1 Definition of Converb

Linguists define the term *converb* differently. Morpho-syntactically, Haspelmath (1995: 3) defines converb as a non-finite verb whose main function is to mark adverbial subordinate clauses. Nedjalkov (1995: 97), in contrast, defines converb as a finite but dependent verb form that is marked by a verbal affix rather than by a free conjunction. Haspelmath's definition is supported by Ebert (2008:8) who mentions the following:

"A general converb connects two or more events and only one verb –

the last verb in SOV languages – carries finite markers."

This implies that a converb is a non-finite verb which is less finite then main-clause verbs (Ebert, 2008: 23f.). Ebert (2008: 16) mentions that person and aspect markers which are applied to fully finite verbs may also be part of converbs. However, according to Ebert (2008:16), a *prototypical* converb consists of the verb stem and a suffix; there are none of the tense-aspect or person markers that appear on the finite verb.

Syntactically converbs cannot be used in independent sentences; they generally do not express mood and tense but depend on the superordinate verb for this information. Converbs, too, often depend on their superordinate verb for the information of reference to their subject (Haspelmath 1995:23).

Haspelmath (1995: 4) considers the converb as a part of the inflectional paradigm of verbs. This indicates that a converb cannot be considered as a verb plus a complementizer or subordinator. Haspelmath (1995:5ff.) further indicates that the converb is a verb form whose main function is to modify other verbs but never occurs in argument position or as an attribute to a noun. This implies that a converb belongs to the verbal domain and is used as an adverb to modify the reference verb but never a noun.

Nedjalkov (1995:99) suggests that converbs are constituents of complex verbs often formed by non-standard means of word formation and by standard rules including (semi-) auxiliary verbs that express various aspectual meanings. It is also explained that converbs are constituents of synthetic and analytic forms that are part of the tense and aspect paradigm of the verb. This conception contrasts with Haspelmath (1995) and Ebert (2008). Nedjalkov (1995:97) distinguishes converbs from other verbs by the following criteria:

> "Converbs can occupy the position of adjuncts (adverbial), but cannot occupy the position of the only predicate of a simple sentence (without additional auxiliary elements), the position of nominal attributes, the position of a clause actant (i.e., it cannot depend on verbs such as begin, order, etc.), the position of a nominal actant (i.e., it does not occur in subject and object position)."

Similarly, Ylikoski (2003:195) also subsumes under the term converb verbal adverbs, adverbial participles, adverbial modifiers, and subordinate adverbial clauses. Nedjalkov's converb definition puts more stress on the functional role of converbs whereas Haspelmath (1995:7) focuses on non-finiteness is an important feature of converbs. Haspelmath (1995:7) also states that there is a type of subordinate construction that is neither argument nor adnominal, nor is it clearly

adverbial, which is used to convey a sequence of successive events, i.e., a clause-chaining construction, which is also expressed through converbs.

Typologically, converbs are found in the SOV languages of Asia, Ethiopia and South America (Ebert 2008: 7). Concerning the origin of converbs, Coupe (2006:145) states that the term converb was first used in the linguistic description of Altaic languages.

Based on the above definitions, we can conclude that a converb is morphologically non-finite verb form that prototypically does not inflected for person, number, tense, aspect and mood. Syntactically, a converb is a dependent verb that lacks a subordinating conjunction. Converbs do not occur as a main verb in independent clauses (Nedjalkov 1995:97).Generally, a converb cannot occupy the position of finite verb forms, of a participle, of an infinitive and of a gerund; but it can occupy the position of an adverbial.

Semantically, Haspelmath (1995:7) defines converbs as forms that generally modify verbs, clauses or sentences, but not nouns or noun phrases. It is also used for clause chaining construction to convey a sequence of successive events (Haspelmath 1995:7). Converbs can be paraphrased by means of coordinate conjunctions in language that allow coordinated clauses (Haspelmath 1995:8).

With regard to the adverbial modification, a language may distinguish between different converbs which are semantically specified or may have a general converb.

2.1.2   Types of Converbs

Nedjalkov (1995:98) identifies three main types of converbs according to their syntactic function: (i) converb proper used as adverbial in a simple sentence, (ii) coordinative converb used as a coordinate predicate, and (iii) conjunctional converb used as the predicate of a subordinate clause.

On the other hand, Ebert (2008:8–15) identifies four types of converbs: a general converb (connects two or more events), simultaneous converb (describes the manner accompanying the main action), negative converb (not the same as negated converbs) and specialized converb (with special function for conditional, causal and for various temporal subordination).

Nedjalkolv (1995:99) identifies three main types of converbs according to their morpho-syntactic occurrence: (1) converbs as constituents of complex verbs (new lexical units), often formed by nonstandard means of word formation, (2) converbs as constituents of complex verbs formed by standard rules, including (semi-)auxiliary verbs that express various aspectual meanings, and (3) converbs as constituents of synthetic and analytic forms that are part of the tense aspect paradigm of the verb.

Semantically, Nedjalkov (1995:106ff.) identifies three main types of converbs:

1. Specialized converbs have one or two meanings of the adverbial type. They can be subdivided into two groups as temporal and non-temporal converbs. Temporal converbs show simultaneity, anteriority and posteriority functions while the non-temporal converbs have the fundamental meanings of manner, cause, purpose, result, concession, comparison, real and irreal condition.

2. Contextual converbs have three or more adverbial meanings that are realized under certain conditions. They can express such meaning as simultaneity, anteriority, posteriority, cause, concession, manner, condition, accompanying circumstance, goal, place and others.

3. Narrative converbs express a coordinative connection that advances the narration. They can express three or more completed actions in succession that advances the narration. The syntactic dependence relation is often not accompanied by semantic dependence. Narrative converbs are usually more frequent in texts than all other converbs together, and in some language they are more frequent than finite verbs.

Converbs have different construction types from language to language. Meyer (2012:2) states that a language might have only one general converb with a vague meaning and a variety of functions.

Nedjalkov (1995:110) distinguishes three types of converb constructions according to the coreferentiality of the subjects of the converb and the superordinate verb: same subject, different subject and varying subject construction. Same subject converbs are where the converb subject and the subject of the superordinate verb are always coreferential. In different subject converbs, the subject of the superordinate verb and that of the converb are never coreferential. The varying subject converbs occur in both constructions.

Ebert (2008:21) states that languages with same-subject and different-subject converbs also have varying subject converbs.

2.1.3   Agreement of the Converb with the Subject

There are four types of agreement cases of the converb with the subject in cross-linguistic perspective:

> "(1) All or almost all converbs of the language agree with its subject …
> (2) no converb of the language agrees with its subject … (3) some
> converbs agree, but other converbs do not agree with the subject … (4)
> one and the same converb in the language can or must agree with the
> subject under one set of conditions, but under another set of conditions,
> it cannot agree at all or only in number." (Nedjalkov 1990:116)

Morphologically, Nedjalkov (1995:116-117) identifies six main types of subject agreement markers on the converb: zero, adjectival, verbal, possessive, possessive-verbal and mixed.

2.1.4   Morphological Markers on Converbs

According to Ebert (2008:16ff.), a prototypical converb consists of the verb stem and a suffix but lacks the tense-aspect or person markers that appear on the finite verb. Generally, tense-aspect marking with converbs is rare, possibly due to the fact that converbs inherently often imply a temporal or aspectual notion (Ebert 2008:18).Converbs with person or number markers are usually of nominal origin. Some languages have fully finite verbs followed by a linker or subordinator that have the same function as converbs in other languages (Ebert 2008: 23).

2.1.5   Grammaticalization of Converbal Constructions

Hopper and Traugott (2003: xv) as quoted in Bruil (2008:31) define grammaticalization as the

> "[P]rocess whereby lexical items and constructions come in certain linguistic contexts to serve grammatical functions, and, once grammaticalized, continue to develop new grammatical functions."

This assumption is based on the fact that the origin of function words (preposition, connectives, pronouns, etc.) can be found cross-linguistically in content words (nouns, verbs, adjectives) (Bruil 2008:31). A content word does not grammaticalize overnight; it takes time for a word or construction to obtain a grammatical meaning usually by following a specific grammaticalization chain from *content item* to *grammatical word* to *clitic* to *inflectional affix* (Bruil 2008:31).

Haspelmath (1995:37–45) shows that cross-linguistically converbs grammaticalize into various grammatical markers by following certain chains. He differentiates between four grammaticalization processes of converbal constructions: The first process leads from a converb to an adposition. In this diachronic process, the object argument of the converb becomes the complement of the adposition, while the subject argument disappears completely. The second process leads from converb to adposition that, in turn, will be grammaticalized into a subordinating conjunction. Converb-derived conjunctions are infrequent and have a very special meaning. Generally, they show a relatively low degree of grammaticalization. The most frequent realization of this process happens with the converb of the verb "to say" which becomes a marker first of direct speech and then develops into a complement clause marker for verbs of utterance, and later for verbs of thinking and others (Haspelmath 1995:40).

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The third process leads from converb to applicative marker. In this process, a grammaticalized converb has become associated with its head, resulting in a head-making construction. The fourth process yields periphrastic constructions. In this process, converbs are used as main verb in aspectual constructions, especially in progressives and resultatives /perfects, to which an auxiliary is juxtaposed. The auxiliary used in such constructions is a locative or existential copula (Haspelmath 1995:43).

According to Ebert (2008:23–24), however, finite verbs plus a linker element to express periphrastic tenses may be functionally equivalent to a converb – but functional equivalence should not be an argument for subsuming a verb form under the category of converb.

Haspelmath (1995:28) deals with the similarity of infinitives to converbs, which both may arise diachronically from verbal nouns. Functionally, converbs and infinitives mark adverbial subordination. The infinitival subject is generally left implicit, as with the converbs, and is controlled by an argument of the main clause.

2.1.6 Functions of Converbs from a Cross-Linguistic Perspective

Converbs can be used to express anterior of posterior sequences, temporal overlapping, durativity, condition, concession and so on (Coupe 2006:149). According to Haspelmath (1995:7), converbs generally modify verbs, clauses or sentences but they do not modify nouns or noun phrases.

That means converbs do not take the place of verbal nouns (nonfinite verb forms specialized for argument subordination or complementation) nor participles (nonfinite verb forms specialized for adnominal subordination).

Johansson (1995:321f.) makes a basic difference between modifying and non-modifying functions of Turkic converbs. Converbs in modifying function are limited and express meanings that are connect with adverbial modifications, such as temporality, causality, concession, manner and condition. Converbs in non-modifying function are not limited. Their respective function has to be deduced from the discourse.

Another important function of converbs is clause chaining, i.e. converbs are used

> "in a more coordinative manner for linking a series of sequentially ordered predications in dependent clauses, with the sentence terminating in a matrix clause. This is often referred to as clause chaining." (Coupe 2006:146)

The converb in such clause chaining constructions are called *narrative converbs*. They are used for combining a string of successive events that incrementally advance the plot towards its end point.

Haspelmath (1995:21) also elaborates on the clause-chaining function of converbs. Several converbs can generally be combined into longer sequences with only one finite final verb on which the converbs depend. This implies that the sequence of events denoted by the converbs is used for modifying the matrix verb, i.e. Haspelmath considers the clause-chaining function of converbs also as a kind of adverbial modification.

Furthermore, König (1995:74) mentions the significance of the constituent order for the interpretation of converbal constructions for languages in which the position of the clause containing the converb is not fixed. This, for instance, is the case in English, where clauses with converbs can either precede or follow the main clause, while, e.g. in Hindi, the converb clause always precedes the main clause. This indicates that in English the constituent order plays a role for the interpretation of converbs whereas in Hindi it does not. The variation of the converb position reflects how the order of events may be relevant for understanding the semantic structure of converbs in a sentence.

Based on the above discussion, it can be concluded that converbs can mark adverbial subordination and also denote a sequence of events in clause-chaining constructions.

2.2 Converb in the General Ethiopian Context

According to Ferguson (1976:75), the existence of converbs is a typical feature for languages of the Ethiopian linguistic area, to which Oromo belongs. According to him, converbs in the Ethiopian context are subordinate verbs that are usually inflected for person and gender, and convey the meaning 'having done VERB', 'did VERB and' or 'by doing VERB' (Ferguson 1976:71).Although Tosco (2000) generally questions the existence of an Ethiopia linguistic area based on Ferguson' (1976) features, he considers the frequent occurrence of converbs in Ethio-semitic, Cushitic and Omotic languages a "genuine areal feature" which might have originated in Cushitic languages (Tosco 2000:345). Similar findings on converbs as an areal feature for Ethiopian languages or northeastern Africa are reported in Crass and Meyer (2008) and Azeb and Dimmendaal (2006:422).

Regarding the cross-linguistic distribution of converbs, Ebert (2008:7) points out that converbs are typical for SOV languages of Asia, Ethiopia and South America. With the exception of northeastern Africa, converbs are not found in the remaining parts of Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, Southeast Asia and China (Coupe 2006:151). Azeb and Dimmendaal's (2006:394) study on converbs in Africa confirms that only the verb-final languages in northeastern Africa (Afroasiatic languages) and in the Sahel region (Nilo-Saharan languages) have converbs.

Regarding the morphology of converbs in Afro-asiatic languages, Coupe (2006:147) mentions that they are often finite but dependent verb forms, which is confirm with Nedjalkov's (1995) definition of converbs (see Section 2.1.1). Azeb and Dimmendaal (2006:428) distinguish between two types of converbs in Afro-asiatic languages based on their finiteness features:

"In some languages the suffix marking the converb may occur in combination with tense-aspect markers. Languages that form the converb from a tensed verb include Oromo, Hadiyya and Sidamo (Cushitic languages) … In other languages the converb is formed by affixing nominal inflectional morphemes to a verb root without tense-aspect or modality marking morphemes."

These nominal inflectional morphemes mark subject agreement (i.e. person, number and gender) on converbs and are distinct from subject agreement markers with inflected verb in main clauses.

2.3 Converb in Oromo

Various grammatical descriptions of Oromo (like Gragg 1976; Griefenow-Mewis and Tamene 1997; Griefenow-Mewis 2001) as well as linguistic typological studies on Oromo (like Ferguson 1976:75; Tosco 2000:345; Azeb and Dimmendaal 2006:409) assert that there is a special dependent verb form in Oromo which functions as converb.

Most of these studies consider the generalized converb with a lengthened verb-final vowel *-ee* in Oromo (see Section 2.4.1.3) as equivalent for a converb. However, various terms for this form occur in the literature, like "simple past with lengthened final vowel" (Gragg 1976:193), "converb from a tensed verb" (Azeb and Dimmendaal 2006:409), "consecutive action" (Griefenow-Mewis 2001:107), etc. This dependent verb form is often not properly described but only mentioned as a clause-combining device. On the other hand, Gragg (1976:192) uses the term *converb* to what is otherwise labeled *gerund* or *participle* (see Section 2.4.1.2.3). This might suggest that there are two converb forms in Oromo, one based on a perfective verb with lengthened vowel and the other formed by the suffix *-naan* attached to verb stems (see Section 2.4.1.2.2).

Based on the reviewed literature on the converb in Oromo, two main shortcomings could be identified. First, the terms *converb, participle* and *gerund* are sometimes used to refer to the same verbal form, sometimes to different forms in the various grammars. Furthermore, from a typological perspective, participles and gerunds can be used as nominal modifiers while converbs never occur in this function (cf. Ebert 2008:7). Second, it is basically unclear which verbal forms besides the generalized converb may also function as (specialized) converbs.

2.4 General Overview on Oromo Grammar and Non-finite verb Forms

In this section, I will describe the inflectional paradigm of the general verb forms in Oromo. Then, I will deal with studies of the converb in Ethiopian languages in general. Finally, I will focus on studies regarding converbs in Oromo.

2.4.1 Remarks on the Verb Morphology in Oromo

Debela and Meyer (2003:162) describe the sentence structure in Oromo as follows:

> "Oromo is a subject-object-verb (S–O–V) language, i.e. the verb occurs at the end and the subject is in the initial position in the sentence. The main verb can be followed by an auxiliary for specific temporal or modal modifications. Sentence and predicate adverbs follow the subject. Indirect objects tend to precede the direct object."

This indicates that adverbs (including converbs), which modify the sentence or the predicate, immediately follow the subject or precede the main verb.

2.4.1.1 Finite Verbs

In Oromo, the verb obligatorily agrees with its subject. This is clearly indicated in verbal inflection (cf. Stroomer 1995:71). Debela and Meyer (2003:162) put this as follows:

"Verbs in the indicative agree in person, gender and number with the subject.

Gender distinctions appear only in the 3rd person singular."

In the affirmative indicative (but not in the negative, as shown in Table 1), the first person singular is differentiated from the third person singular masculine by means of the morpheme *-an* (or *-n*) that normally is suffixed to the word preceding the verb. This may be a noun, as in (1), or a converb as in (2).

(1) *Gara mana̠yaalaa-n   deem-a*
    to   laboratory-1SG   go-1SG/3SG.M.PFV
    'I go to the laboratory.'

(2) *Ani   deem-ee-n   jir-a*
    I.NOM   go-1SG.PFV.CNV-1SG   exist-1SG.IPFV
    "I am gone."

Note that in (2) the 1SG marker *-(a)n* only occurs once although the two verbs – the auxiliary *jira* and the converb *deemee* – have the same 1SG subject.

Griefenow-Mewis (2001:72) mentions that the Oromo language uses different conjugations for imperfective verbs in main and subordinated clauses. For perfective verbs, the same conjugation is used for both main and subordinated clauses. Furthermore, Debela and Meyer (2003:162) and also Stroomer (1995:72) observe that, besides verbs in main and subordinate clauses, the subject agreement markers

also differ between affirmative and negative verbs, as shown in Table 1, which is adapted from Stroomer (1995:72).

Table 1: Subject Markers with Verbs in Main and Subordinate Clauses

			Main clause		**Subordinate clause**	
			IPFV	**PFV**	**PFV**	**IPFV**
1st	SG	AFF	*-(a)n …-a*	*-(a)n … -e*		*-(a)n … -u*
		NEG	*hin- …-u*	*hin- … -ne*		
	PL (*n)	AFF	*-na*	*-ne*		*-nu*
		NEG	*hin- …-nu*	*hin- … -ne*		
2nd (*t)	SG	AFF	*-ta*	*-te*		*-tu*
		NEG	*hin- …-tu*	*hin- … -ne*		
	PL (*n)	AFF	*-tani*			
		NEG	*hin- …-tani*	*hin- … -ne*		
3rd	SG F (*t)	AFF	*-ti*	*-te*		*-tu*
		NEG	*hin- …-tu*	*hin- … -ne*		
	M	AFF	*-a*	*-e*		*-u*
		NEG	*hin- …-u*	*hin- … -ne*		
	PL (*n)	AFF	*-ani*			
		NEG	*hin- …-ani*	*hin- … -ne*		

Generally, the form of the subject markers in Table 1 suggest that only the second person is marked by the element *t whereas the first and third persons are unmarked. Plural number seems to be associated with the element *n, while singular number is unmarked. Feminine gender is marked by the element *t but only in the third person singular. The combination of these elements can distinguish

between the various persons, numbers and genders except for two ambiguities. First, the 1SG and 3SG.M use identical markers. Only the addition of the morpheme *-(a)n* for 1SG subjects in affirmative clauses helps to distinguish between these two persons. Second, the 2SG and the 3SG.F are homonymous due to the fact that the person marker for the second person **t* coincides with the feminine gender marker for the 3SG.F **t.*

The distinction between the various clause types is made through the vowel following the person-number-gender suffixes, except for the 2PL and 3PL, which use a single marker for all affirmative clauses. With regard to imperfective verbs, affirmative main clause verbs (except for 2/3PL and 3SG.F) are marked by the vowel *-a* which changes to *-u* in affirmative subordinate clauses. The vowel *-u* is also found with negative main clause imperfective verbs whereas in negative subordinate clauses with an imperfective verb an invariable form *hin … -ne* occurs for all persons. Affirmative perfective verbs in main clauses and in subordination (except for 2/3PL) are uniformly marked by the vowel *-e,* while negated perfective verbs (in main clauses and in subordination) are marked by the invariable form *hin … -ne.* Consequently, negative indicative verbs with the exception of negated main clause imperfective verbs do not distinguish between persons, numbers, and genders of their subjects nor between perfective and imperfective aspect in subordination. Furthermore, the form of negated main clause imperfective verbs is identical with affirmative subordinate imperfective verb. Only the unstressed prefix *hin-* which is

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obligatorily attached to negated verbs, and the syntactic position of the verbs help to distinguish between the two conjugations.

Note, however, that a stressed clitic *hín-* can immediately precede affirmative main clause verbs (cf. Griefenow-Mewis 2001:75 f.; Stroomer 1995:77; Bender, Mulugeta and Stinson 1976:138).

According to Bender, Mulugeta and Stinson (1976:137), an indicative verb in Oromo has two main forms, namely the imperfective for uncompleted actions and the perfective for completed actions regardless of time. The imperfective refers in general to present and future tenses, but also for habitual or ongoing actions in the past. Furthermore, Oromo has two other verbal categories in main clauses, namely the jussive (to expresses a command or request for 1st and 3rd person subjects) and the imperative (to addresses a command for 2nd person subjects) (cf. Debela and Meyer 2003:163).

The imperative is marked by the suffix *-i* for singular subjects (with the exception of the autobenefactive stem) and *-aa* for plural subjects, as shown in the following examples (cf. also Griefenow-Mewis 2001:71; Owens 1985:67):

(3) *Deem-i!*
   go-2SG.IMP
   'Go!'

(4) *Deem-aa!*

    go-2sPL.IMP

    'Go!'

The imperative singular of the autobenefactive stems is marked by the suffix-*u*.

(5) *Jiraadh-u!*

    live.ABF-2SG.IMP

    'Live!'

(6) *Jabaadh-u!*

    be_strong.ABF-2SG.IMP

    'Be strong!'

The jussive, which occurs with 1st and 3rd person subjects, is marked by the preverbal element *haa* and the vowel *-u* attached to the person, number, gender marker – except for the 2/3PL which are marked by the invariable suffixes *-tani* and *-ani*, respectively (see Table 1). The following examples for the jussive are taken from Griefenow-Mewis (2001:74):

(7) *Inni   haa   deem-u!*

    he.NOM   JUSS go-3SG.M.JUSS

    'He shall go!'

(8) *Isaan   haa   deem-ani!*
    they.NOM   JUSS   go-3PL.JUSS
    'They shall go!'

(9) *Ani   haa   deem-u!*
    I.NOM   JUSS   go-1SG.JUSS
    'I shall go!/Let me go!'

Note that the element *-(a)n* as marker for 1SG subjects does not occur with jussive verbs.

The imperative and jussive are negated by the invariable form *hin-…-in*, except for the negated 2PL, which is *hin-…-inaa* (cf. Bender, Mulugeta and Stinson 1976: 138).

2.4.1.2 Non-Finite Verbal Forms

In contrast to finite verbs, non-finite verbal forms do not distinguish between various aspect/mood forms or between person, number and gender. Griefenow-Mewis (2001:70) distinguishes between three non-finite verbal forms in Oromo, namely the infinitive, the active participle and the gerund. These forms are also mentioned in other descriptions of Oromo.

2.4.1.2.1   Infinitive

The infinitive in Oromo is marked by the suffix *-uu* attached to the verb stem (Griefenow-Mewis 2001:70):

(10) *arg-uu*
     see-INF
     'to see'

Among others, the infinitive is used in a number of periphrastic constructions denoting aspectual nuances of the verb, like progressivity.

2.4.1.2.2   Participle

The active participle is formed by adding the suffix *-aa* to the verb stem (Griefenow-Mewis 2001:70):

(11) *deem-aa*
     go-PTCP
     'going'

With some verbs, the active participle is also used to form masculine agent nouns, as in (12), which is taken from Griefenow-Mewis (2001:70):

(12) *barsiis-aa*
     teach-PTCP
     i. 'teaching'
     ii. 'teacher (M)'

According to Griefenow-Mewis (2001:78 f.) the active participle is commonly used in a periphrastic construction with the extential verb *jir-* or the past-tense auxiliary *tur-*to denote a progressive action:

(13) *Ati*   *deem-aa   jir-ta*
    you.SG.NOM go-PTCP   exist-2SG.IPV
    'You are going.'

(14) *Inni*   *deem-aa   tur-e*
    he.NOM   go-PTCP   AUX.PST-3SG.M.PFV
     'He was going.'

Gragg (1976: 192) calls the non-finite verb marked by *-aa* the "present participle".
According to him, it is used to express simultaneous actions:

(15) *hojjet-aa   nyaat-a*
    work-PTCP   eat-3SG.M.IPFV
    'He eats while working.'

Owens (1985:151ff.) also calls the non-finite verbal form marked by *-aa* a
participial, which is used to denote an action that takes place at the same time as
the action of the main clause occurs:

(16) *suutaa utaal-aa   at   na   arki-te*
    slowly jump-PTCP you.SG.NOM me   see-2SG.PFV
     'You saw me while jumping slowly.'

2.4.1.2.3   Gerund

The gerund, which conveys the meaning 'after having VERB', is formed by adding the suffix *-naan* to the verb stem (Griefenow-Mewis 2001:70):

(17) *deem-naan*

    go-GER

    'after having gone'

Gragg (1976: 187, 192) calls the non-finite form in *-naan* first "gerund" but then he uses the term "converb". According to him, this form is used to denote a posterior action, i.e. to express that the event of the main clause follows the event encoded by the gerund/converb:

(18) *mana   adeem-naan raf-i*

    house go-GER   sleep-2SG.IMP

    'Go home and sleep!'

Bender, Mulugeta and Stinson (1976:147) also use the term "gerund" for this non-finite form that denotes posterior actions. However, according to them, it can only be used when the subject of the two combined clauses are the same. This seems not to be correct, as shown in Owens' (1985) example (19) below.

Owens (1985:151) calls the non-finite form marked by the suffix *-naan*[1] "perfective". Its function is to show that the action/state is finished before that of

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[1]   Actually, Owens (1985:151) analyzes this suffix as consisting of two parts: the 1PL suffix *-n* and the suffix *-aan(i)*.

the main verb, which is often interpreted as a condition/cause for the action in the main clause:

(19) *hedhuu of-naan   pholis-nii   na   dhaab-e*
     much   drive-GER police-NOM me stop-3SG.M.PFV
     'Because I was driving fast, the police stopped me.'

Owens (1985:151) also remarks that this non-finite form can only co-occur with main clause verbs in the past, which contradicts Debela and Meyer's (2006) example (20) below.

According to Debela and Meyer (2006:74 ff.), the suffix *-naan* is a converb marker for denoting highly probably conditions (usually with main clause imperfective verbs, cf. example (20)) or causal clauses (usually with main clause perfective verbs, cf. example (21)).

(20) *deem-naan hin-argi-ta*
     go-GER   FOC-see-2SG.IPFV
     'If you go you will see (him) (as usual).'

(21) *Tulluu-n   deem-naan dhuf-te*
     Tulluu-NOM go-GER   come-2SG.PFV
     'Because Tullluu left, you came.'

2.4.1.3 Consecutive Events

Oromo has a special verbal conjugation to mark dependent verbs that denote a sequence of consecutive events (see (22)) or are used as adverbial modifiers (see (23)) (Griefenow-Mewis 2001: 107):

(22) *Ani   deem-ee-n   deebi'-e*
     I.NOM go-1SG.PFV.CNV-1SG return-1SG.PFV
     'I went and came back.'

(23) *Daf-tee   hin-dhuf-ne*
     be_quick-3SG.F.PFV.CNV   NEG-come-NEG.PFV
     'She didn't come quickly.' (lit: She hurried up and didn't come).

According to Griefenow-Mewis (2001: 107), only the last verb is marked for aspect/tense and polarity while the preceding verbs marked by a lengthened final vowel are devoid of such information. Therefore, these verbs with a lengthened final vowel are dependent verbs (or non-finite verb) which cannot occur alone in a main clause. I will call this dependent verb form *generalized converb*.

As shown in (22) and (23), the generalized converb differs from non-finite verbal forms, as discussed in Section 2.4.1.2, through the use of subject markers followed

by the perfective aspect vowel *-e* (see Section 2.4.1.1), which is lengthened here. However, Owens (1985:215) shows that the generalized converb is devoid of aspect/tense information as its interpretation depends on the aspect of the main clause verb:

(24) *Anaa-tuu dhuf-ee   deem-e*
     I-FOC   come-1SG.PFV.CNV go-1SG.PFV
     'It is I who **came** and went.'

(25) *Boruu   as   dhuf-ee   taa'-a*
     tomorrow here   come-3SG.M-PFV.CNV stay-3SG.M.IPFV
     'Tomorrow he will come and stay here.'

In grammatical descriptions of Oromo, the generalized converb is usually not considered to be a converb, but described variously. Griefenow-Mewis (2001:107), Owens (1985: 214) and Stroomer (1995:102) consider it a coordinative construction to indicate consecutive actions, while Gragg (1976:193) describes it as "simple past, with a lengthened final vowel", which should "corresponds to the converb construction in Amharic". Besides clause coordination, the generalized converb is also used to denote adverbial modifications Stroomer (1995:102) Griefenow-mewis (2001:98).

(26) *Ilmoolee   hoolaa   baay'is-ee*   *jaallat-a*
     children   sheep   be_much-3SG.M-PFV.CNV   love-3SG.M.IPFV
     'He loves the lambs very much.'

Owens (1985:74) also states that the generalized converb acts as complements to

jir- 'exist' and the past-tense auxiliary *tur-* to form a present or past perfect,

respectively:

(27) *Inni*   *adeem-ee*   *jir-a*
     he.NOM   go-3SG.M.PFV.CNV   exist-3SG.M.IPFV
     'He is gone.'

(28) *Inni*   *adeem-ee*   *tur-e*
     he.NOM   go-3SG.M.PFV.CNV   AUX.PAST-3SG.M.PFV
     'He had been gone.'

Based on the various functions of the generalized converb (like clause coordination

(22), adverbial modification (26), and formation of the perfect (27)), Azeb and

Dimmendaal (2006:408) conclude that this verbal form is a converb in Oromo.

On the other hand, the generalized converb can be used in combination with

conjunctions like *erga … booda* 'after' or *akka* 'as' (Griefenow-mewis: 2001:114).

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(29) *Erga* *dubbis-uu* *barsiis-tee* *booda* *dubbis-uu* *shaakalsiis-i*
      after   read-INF   teach-3SG.F.PFV.CNV   after   read-INF   make_exercise-2SG.IMP

'After you taught (them) to read make them exercise to read!'

The use of conjunctions with dependent verbs is not a typical feature for that verb

to be a converb.

CHAPTER 3

ANALYSIS OF THE CONVERB IN OROMO

According to Azeb and Dimmendaal (2006:427), dependent verb forms that are used to conjoin sentences and to form complex predicates can be considered converbs. Furthermore, it was mentioned in Section 0 that converbs might be inflected but dependent verbs, or non-finite verbs. Based on these criteria, three converbs can be identified in Oromo: (i) the generalized converb which also underwent various types of lexicalization and grammaticalization, (ii) the specialized habitual converb, and (iii) the specialized progressive converb.

3.1 Generalized Converb

3.1.1 Morphology of the Generalized Converb

The generalized converb (see also Section 2.4.1.3)is based on the perfective aspect, jussive or imperative. It inflects for subject agreement and is generally marked by lengthening of the verb-final vowel, as shown in the following tables:

Table 2: Inflection of Perfective Verb and Perfective-Based Converb

Person	Perfective		Converb	
1SG	*-(a)n waraab-e*		*waraab-ee*	
	1SG fetch-1SG.PFV	'I fetched'	fetch-1SG.PFV.CNV	'I fetching'
1PL	*waraab-ne*		*waraab-nee*	
	fetch-1PL.PFV	'we fetched'	fetch-1PL.PFV.CNV	'we fetching
2SG	*waraab-de*[2]		*waraab-dee*	
	fetch-2SG.PFV	'you fetched'	fetch-2SG.PFV.CNV	'you fetching
2PL	*waraab-dani*		*waraab-danii*	
	fetch-2PL.PFV	'you fetched'	fetch-2PL.PFV.CNV	'you fetching
3SG.M	*waraab-e*		*waraab-ee*	
	fetch-3SG.M.PFV	'he fetched'	fetch-3SG.M.PFV.CNV	'he fetching
3SG.F	*waraab-de*		*waraab-dee*	
	fetch-3SG.F.PFV	'she fetched'	fetch-3SG.F.PFV.CNV	'she fetching
3PL	*waraab-ani*		*waraab-an-ii*	
	fetch-3PL.PFV	'they fetched'	fetch-3PL.PFV.CNV	'they fetching

Table 3: Inflection of Jussive Verb and Jussive-Based Converb

Person	Jussive		Converb	
1SG	*haa deem-u*		*-(a)n deem-uu*	
	JUSS go-1SG.JUSS	'I shall go'	1SG go-1SG.JUSS.CNV	'I going'
1PL	*haa deem-nu*		*deem-nuu*	
	JUSS go-1PL.JUSS	'we shall go'	go-1PL.JUSS.CNV	'we going'
2SG	*(haa deem-tu)*		*deem-tuu*	

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[2]   The stem-final voiced plosive *b* triggers the assimilation **t > d* with the subject marker.

Person	Jussive		Converb	
	JUSS go-2SG.JUSS	'you shall go'	go-2SG.JUSS.CNV	'you going'
2PL	*(haa deem-tani)*		*deem-tanuu*	
	JUSS go-2PL.JUSS	'you shall go'	go-2PL.JUSS.CNV	'you going'
3SG.M	*haa deem-u*		*deem-uu*	
	JUSS go-3SG.M.JUSS	'he shall go'	go-3SG.M.JUSS.CNV	'he going'
3SG.F	*haa deem-tu*		*deem-tuu*	
	JUSS go-3SG.F.JUSS	'she shall go'	go-3SG.F.JUSS.CNV	'she going'
3PL	*haa deem-ani*		*deem-anuu*	
	JUSS go-3PL.JUSS	'they shall go'	go-3PL.JUSS.CNV	'they going'

(Griefenow-Mewis 2001:74)

Table 4: Inflection of Imperative Verb and Imperative-Based Converb

Person	Imperative		Converb	
2SG	*deem-i*		*deem-ii*	
	go-2SG.IMP	'Go!'	go-2SG.IMP.CNV	'you going'
2SG	*bitadh-u*		*bitadh-uu*	
	buy.ABF-2SG.IMP	'Buy for yourself!'	buy.ABF-2SG.IMP.CNV	'you buying for yourself'
2PL	*deem-a*		*deem-aa*	
	go-2PL.IMP	'Go!'	go-2PL.IMP.CNV	'you going'
2PL	*bitadh-a*		*bitadh-aa*	
	buy.ABF-2PL.IMP	'Buy for yourself!'	buy.ABF-2PL.IMP.CNV	'you buy for yourself'

The subject marker for perfective verbs and converbs in Table 2 are identical, except for lengthening of the final vowel and the lack of the proclitic 1SG marker *-(a)n* with converbs. In Table 3, however, the final vowel *i* of the 2/3PL marker in the jussive is replaced by *uu* in the converb form. Furthermore, the 1SG marker *-(a)n*

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which is lacking in the jussive occurs in the converb form. In Table 4, imperative and imperative-based converbs are identical except for the lengthening of the final vowel with converbs. Note that in the singular imperative two different suffixes occur (see Section 2.4.1.1).

3.1.2 Use of the Generalized Converb

The generalized converb in Oromo expresses an action that precedes the verb of the main clause. The verb of the main clause may be in the perfective or imperfective aspect (cf. example (30) and (31)),in the jussive (cf. example (32)) or imperative (cf. example (33)).

(30) *Lematii   ban-ee   dabicha   fudhat-e*
     basket_tray open-3SG.M.PFV.CNV bread.DEF take.ABF-3SG.M.PFV
     'He opened the basket tray and took the bread.'

(31) *Lematii   ban-ee   dabicha   fudhat-a*
     basket_tray   open-3SG.M.PFV.CNV   bread.DEF   take.ABF-3SG.M.IPFV
     'He will open the basket tray and take the bread.'

(32) *Inni   bor   daf-ee   haa   dhuf-u!*
     he.NOM   tomorrow   be_quick-3SG.M.PFV.CNV   JUSS   come-3SG.M.JUSS
     'He shall come quickly tomorrow!' (lit. 'He shall be quick and come tomorrow!')

(33) *Lematii*   *ban-ii*   *(*ban-ee)*   *dabicha*   *fudhadh-uu*
      basket_tray open-   (open-   bread.DEF   take.ABF-
                   2SG.IMP.CNV   3SG.M.PFV.CNV)   2SG.IMP
      'Open the basket tray and take the bread!'

Example (33) shows that the generalized converb based on the perfective aspect cannot be combined with an affirmative reference verb in the imperative; here only the imperative-based converb can be used. However, if a negative imperative occurs in the main clause, the generalized converb has to occur in the perfective aspect:

(34) *Bor*   *daf-tee*   *hin-dhuf-in!*
      tomorrow   be_quick-2SG.PFV.CNV   NEG-come-NEG.IMP/JUSS
      'Do not come quickly tomorrow!'

Examples (30), (31), (32) and (34) show that the generalized converb based on the perfective aspect is basically devoid of tense-aspect/mood information. It obtains this information from the reference verb, i.e. in (30) the converb has a past or perfective reading, in (31) a future or imperfective reading, and in (32) a modal reading.

In the examples (30)–(34), the subject of the converb clause and of the main clause were the same. However, it is also possible to use the generalized converb in context, where the subject of the converb clause differs from that of the main clause:

(35) *Inni   gafarsa tokko ajjeess-ee   hundumti keenya foon isaa nyaan-ne*
      he.NOM   buffalo one   kill-3SG.M.   all   us   meat its   eat-1PL.
                              PFV.CNV   PFV

      'He killed a buffalo and all of us ate its meat.'

In the example (35), the subject of the converb clause is third person singular *inni* 'he' while the subject of the main clause is first person plural *hundumti keenya* 'we' which literally means *'we all, all of us'*.

The converb alone cannot form a full sentence, as shown in the following examples:

(36) **Ani*   bishaan waraab-ee* …*
      I.NOM   water   fetch-1SG.PFV.CNV
      "I fetching water…"

(37) *Ani   bishaan waraab-ee-n   dhuf-e*
      I.NOM   water   fetch-1SG.PFV.CNV come-1SG.PFV
      "I fetched water and came."

These examples show that the verb form marked by lengthening of its final vowel is a dependent verb used for conjoining events. It is therefore analyzed as converb. Besides clause chaining, generalized converb clauses are also used as adverbial modification of a main clause, as shown in the following examples:

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(38)

Ijoollumaa	*kooti*	*jalqab-ee-n*	*hama*	*har'ati*	*mana_barusmaa*	*hin-deem-ne*
childhood	my	start-1SG.PFV.CNV-1SG	until	today	school	NEG-go-PFV.NEG

'Since my childhood until today, I did not go to school.'

(39)

gala	*hat-anii*	**golaaw-anii**	*hin-deem-an*
camel	steal-3PL.PFV.CNV	bend-3PL.PFV.CNV	NEG-go-3PL.IPFV

'After stealing a camel, it is impossible to go bowing.'

(Data from Abdurrahman 2002:29)

(40)

Boolla	*keessatti*	**kurf-ee**	*du'-e*
hole	into	fall-3SG.M.PFV.CNV	die-3SG.M.PFV

i. 'I fell into a hole and died.'
ii. 'He died because he fell into a hall'

In case like (40), the converb clause can be understood as denoting a preceding event to the main clause event or its cause, i.e. the converb has no clearly defined function but its interpretation depends on the discourse contexts. Therefore, it is considered to be a generalized (or general) converb.

Generalized converb clauses can be focused by attaching the suffix –*ti* to the converb, as in (41):

(41)

Ishee-n	*mana_baankii- rraa*	*liqii*	*fuut-tee-ti*	*makiina*	*bit-e*
she.NOM	bank-from	loan	take-3SG.F.PFV.CNV-FOC	car	buy-3SG.F.PFV

'SHE TOOK A CREDIT FROM THE BANK and bought a car.'

Iterative or intensive events in converb clauses can be expressed by reduplicating the converb:

(42) *Hantuut-ni*   *dhal-tee*   *dhal-tee*   *eegeen haf-naani oo-te*
     mouse.NOM give_birth-   give_birth-   tail   remain-   cry-
         3SG.F.PFV.CNV 3SG.F.PFV.CNV   HAB.CNV 3SG.F.PFV
     'The mouse gave birth again and again and cried when only (her) tail remained.'

                                      (Data from Abdurrahman 2002:41)

It was mentioned above, that with imperative verbs in main clauses, the generalized converb must occur in its imperative-based form shown in Table 3. Depending on the verb, the final vowel may be *i* or *u* with singular subjects, but is uniformly *a* with plural subjects:

(43) *Ati*   *mana gal-ii*   *harka dhiqadh-uu*   *buna dhug-i!*
     you.SG.NOM house enter-   hand wash.ABF-   coffee drink-
                 2SG.IMP.CNV   2SG.IMP.CNV   2SG.IMP
     'Enter the house wash your hands and drink coffee!'

(44) *bay'is-aa*   *fiig-a!*
     make_much-2SG.IMP.CNV   2SG.IMP
     'Run quickly!'

However, it is also possible to utter a sequence of commands simply by juxtaposing them without lengthening of the final vowel of verbs in non-final clauses:

(45) *Deem-i   nyaadh-u!*
　　　go-2SG.IMP　eat-2SG.IMP
　　　'Go (and) eat!'

The jussive-based generalized converb is used as complement to certain subordinating conjunctions, like *utuu* 'when, while, if':

(46) *Utuu   kitaaba dubbis-tuu   laaqana nyaat-ti*
　　　when   book   read-3SG.F.JUSS.CNV   lunch   eat-3SG.F.IPFV
　　　'While she is reading a book, she eats lunch.'

(47) *Caaltuu-n   utuu   fiig-duu   kuf-te*
　　　Chaltu-NOM   when   run-3SG.F.JUSS.CNV   fell-3SG.F.PFV
　　　'Chaltu fell while she was running.'

The jussive-based converb occurs in a subordinate clause marked by the conjunction *utuu*. The combination of jussive-based converb and *utuu* indicates that the state of affairs in the converb clause starts before the state of affairs in the main clause, but the two states overlap for a certain time (Meyer 2006:74). Instead of the jussive-based converb also the perfective-based converb can occur in a subordinate clause marked by *utuu*, but then denotes a concessive clause:

(48) *Utuu   nyaat-ee   iyyuu   hin-fayy-u*
     when   eat-3SG.M.PFV.CNV   CNC   NEG-recover-3SG.M.IPFV.NEG
     'Even if he eats, he won't recover.'

                                             (Data from Debela and Meyer 2006:82)

The jussive-based converb can also occur as negated verb, which is marked by the circumfix *hin-… -in* for all persons except the 2PL which is negated by *hin-… -inaa* (see Section 2.4.1.1):

(49) *Utuu   Caaltuu-n   hin-deem-inii   dhuf-e*
     when   Chaltu-NOM   NEG-go-SBJ:NEG.CNV   come-3SG.M.PFV
     'He came before Chaltu went.'

(50) *Utuu   cirree   hin-nyaat-inii   deem-e*
     when   breakfast   NEG-eat-SBJ:NEG.CNV   go-3SG.M.PFV
     'He went without eating breakfast.'

In negation, the jussive-based converb clause marked by the conjunction *utuu* represents temporal adverbial clauses denoting the notion of 'before VERB' or 'without VERB' depending on the context.

It is also possible to negate the imperative-based converb, which then also encodes the meaning 'before/without VERB':

(51) *Laaqana   hin-nyaat-inii   kott-u!*

      lunch   NEG-eat-IMP.CNV   come-2SG.IMP

      'Come without eating lunch!/Come before eating lunch!'

The perfective-based converb, in contrast, cannot be negated.

3.1.3   Lexicalization and Grammaticalization of the Generalized Converb

3.1.3.1 Lexicalized Verbal Compounds

Certain combinations of converb and reference verb in Oromo are acquiring a specific semantic meaning that cannot always straightforwardly be derived from the semantics of the two verbs. Examples for such compounds are given in Table 5:

Table 5: Lexicalized Verbal Compounds with a Generalized Converb

Compound		Component Verbs	
oolee bul- (Hinsene 2012:402)	'stay for a long time'	*ool-*	'be or stay at a place'
		bul-	'spend the night'
lootee gal- (Hinsene 2012:384)	'penetrate illegally, infiltrate'	*loos-*	'creep'
		gal-	'enter'
hojjatee bul- (Hinsene 2012:270)	'earn a living'	*hojjadh-*	'work for onself'
		bul-	'spend the night'
dhaq galii (Hinsene 2012:539)	'round trip'	*dhaq-*	'go'
		gal-	'enter'

No other lexical element, like adverbs can intersect between the component verbs of the verbal compounds:

(52) *Inni har'a ool-ee   (*har'a) bule*
   he.NOM today stay-3SG.M.PFV.CNV (today) spend_night-3SG.M.PFV
   'He stayed for a long time.' (lit: He stayed and spent the night)

The time adverb *har'a* 'today' cannot be intersected between the converb *oolee* and the main-clause verb *bule* in (52) whereas in non-lexicalized converb–reference verb constructions, other elements might be intersected, as in the following example:

(53) *Inni bor daf-ee   fardaan dhuf-a.*
   he.NOM tomorrow be_quick-3SG.M.PFV.CNV horse.INST come-3SG.M.IPFV
   'He comes quickly by horse tomorrow.'

The compounds with a generalized converb ending in the invariable long vowel *–ee* can also be nominalized to agent nouns by attaching the suffix *-aa* to the second component verb. The nominal *qotee bulaa* 'peasant', for instance, developed out of the following compound verb:

(54) *Ababaa-n **qot-ee**   **bul-e***
   Abebe-NOM plow-3SG.M.PFV.CNV stay-3SG.M.PFV
   'Abebe got a living by plowing.'

Examples for compound agent nominalization are given in the following table:

Table 6: Agent Nouns Derived from Verbal Compounds with a Generalized Converb

	Agent noun		**Meaning of Component Verbs**
(a)	*horsisee bulaa* Hinsene (2010:522)	'pastoralist'	breeding + get a living
(b)	*qotee bulaa* Informant	'peasant'	plowing + get a living
(c)	*hojjetee nyaataa* Informant	'laborer'	working + eat
(d)	*kashalabbee jooraa* Hinsene (2012:306)	'vagabond, roomer'	roaming + get feeding
(e)	*cufee nyaataa* Informant	'stingy'	closing + eat
(f)	*beekee maraataa* Informant	'pretend to be crazy'	knowing + becoming crazy
(g)	*dafee qaqqabaa* Informant	'speedy succor'	being fast + reach
(h)	*dhaabbatee hafaa* Informant	'old maid'	erecting + remain

Semantically, agent nouns like *qotee bulaa* 'peasant' are gender-neutral and can denote male or female representatives. In one case, however, the feminine form of the agent noun with the suffix *-tuu* was recorded, namely *lootee galtuu* ('creeping' + 'enter') 'infiltrator' (Hinsene 2010:329). This shows that the 3SG.M agreement marker on the converb lost its actual function and does not distinguish between

masculine and feminine gender any more. Some of these agent nouns can also be used as adjective modifiers, like *dafee qaqqabaa poolisii* 'emergency task force police'.

In some cases, verbal compounds with the habitual converb ending in *-naan* (see Section 0) can also be derived to agent nouns, as shown in the following table:

Table 7: Agent Nouns Derived from Verbal Compounds with a Habitual Converb

	Agent noun		Meaning of Component Verbs
(a)	*qonnaan bulaa* Hinsene (2010:526)	'peasant'	plowing + get a living
(b)	*dafqaan bulaa* Hinsene (2012:142)	'worker'	working + get aliving
(c)	*fedhaan seenaa* Informant	'volunteer'	wishing + enter
(d)	*weeraraan seenaa* Informant	'intruder'	invading + enter

Verbal compounds consisting of the generalized converb marked for a 3PL subject and an infinitive as second component are sometimes used to denote abstract entities:

Table 8: Combination of Generalized Converb Plus Infinitive

	Nominals	Gloss	Source
(a)	*deebisanii dhaabuu* Hinsene (2012:152)	'rehabilitation'	returning + constitute
(b)	*haamanii dhahuu* Informant	'combine harvester'	mowing + grind
(c)	*tarssaasanii hodhuu* Informant	'surgery'	operating + repair

3.1.3.2   Grammaticalization of Generalized Converbs

3.1.3.2.1   Adverbs Grammaticalized from Converbs

A number of generalized converbs grammaticalized totime or manner adverbs. The generalized converb of the verb *fid-* 'catch', for instance, has acquired the meaning 'together with', which can also be expressed by the postposition*wajjin* 'with':

(55) *Barataa   fid-ee   dhuf-a*

    student   catch-3SG.M.PFV.CNV   come-3SG.M.IPFV

    'He will come together with a student.'

Some of the converbs almost grammaticalized into adverbs are shown in the following table:

Table 9: Time and Manner Adverbs Grammaticalized from Generalized Converbs

	Adverb[3]		**Source**
Time Adverbs			
(a)	*bulee*	'finally'	*bul-* 'spend the night'
(b)	*darbee darbee*	'occasionally'	*darb-* 'pass, exceed the limit'
(c)	*marsee marsee*	'after along time'	*mars-* 'go around'
(d)	*oolee bulee*	'in the long run'	*ool-* 'stay'
			bul- 'spend the night'
(e)	*oolee oolee*	'at least'	*ool-* 'stay'
Manner Adverbs			
(f)	*beekee*	'on pupose'	*beek-* 'know'
(g)	*callisee*	'pointless'	*callis-* 'be quiet'
(h)	*daddafee*	'fast'	*daddaf-* 'immediately'
(i)	*turee*	'stay for a long time'	*tur-* 'be delayed'
(j)	*deebisanii*	'again'	*deebis-* 'retun'
(k)	*jalqabee*	'starting from'	*jalqab-* 'start'
(l)	*gonkumaa*	'absolutely'	*gonkis-* 'be tough'

Most of the adverbs in Table 9 only agree with an invariant 3SG.M subject regardless of the actual subject or at least exhibit a strong preference for the 3SG.M:

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[3] All data in this table are taken from informants.

(56) | *Kaleessa* | *(irra)* | *jalqab-ee* | *bun-ni* | *mi'aa'-ee-r-a*
| yesterday | (from) | start-3SG.M. | coffee-NOM | be_expensive-3SG.M.PFV.CNV-AUX.exist-3SG.M.IPFV
| | | PFV.CNV | |

'Since yesterday coffee is expensive.'

3.1.3.2.2 Present and Past Perfect

The perfective-based generalized converb can combine with the auxiliary *jir-* 'exist'
(in the imperfective aspect) or the past tense auxiliary *tur-*(in the perfective aspect)
to form an anterior or perfect tense.

(57) *Mana fincaanii deem-ee-r-a*
toilet   go-3SG.M.PFV.CNV-AUX.exist-3SG.M.IPFV
'He has gone to toilet.'

(58) *Fuula koo dhiqadh-ee-r-a.*
face   my   wash.ABF-1SG.PFV.CNV-AUX.exist-1SG.IPFV
'I have washed my face.'

The combination of perfective-based converb and the imperfective of the auxiliary
jir-'exist' in main clauses represent the present perfect which isused to express
actions that occurred in the past but are continuing to the moment of speech.
Perfective main-clause verb, in contrast only indicate the actions took place in the
past without any implication for the moment of speech. Compare (59) and (60):

(59) *Sayyuu   koo kaleessa   jimma   ga'-te*
     sister_in_law my yesterday Jimma reach-3SG.F.PFV
     'My sister-in-law arrived in Jimma yesterday.'

(60) *Sayyuu   koo kaleessa   jimma   ga'-tee-ti*
     sister_in_law my yesterday Jimma reach-3SG.F.PFV.CNV-(AUX.exist)-3SG.F.IPFV
     'My sister-in-law has arrived in Jimma (and is still in Jimma).'

The combination of perfective-based converb and the perfective of the past-tense auxiliary *tur*-in main clauses represent the past perfect which is used to express actions that occurred prior to another event in the past:

(61) *Inni   markaatoo ga'ee   tur-e*
     he.NOM   Merkato   reach-3SG.M.PFV.CNV   AUX.PAST-3SG.M.PFV
     'He had arrived at Merkato.'

With regard to morphology, both the auxiliary *jir-* and *tur-* inflect for subject agreement, whereas with the auxiliary *jir-* the first syllable *ji*is usually omitted in the present perfect construction, as shown in Table 10:

Table 10: Present Perfect Construction

		Full Forms	**Constricted Forms**
SG	1	*Ani deemeen jira* 'I have gone'	*Ani deemeera* 'I have gone'
	2	*Ati deemtee jirta* 'You have gone'	*Ati deemteerta* 'You have gone'
	3M	*Inni deemee jira* 'He has gone'	*Inni deemeera* 'He has gone'
	3F	*Ishiin deemtee jirti* 'She has gone'	*Ishin deemteerti* 'She has gone'
PL	1	*Nuti deemnee jirra* 'We have gone'	*Nuti deemeerra* 'We have gone'
	2	*Isin deemtanii jirtu* 'You have gone'	*Isin deemaniirtu* 'You have gone'
	3	*Isaan deemanii jiru* 'They have gone'	*Isaan deemaniiru* 'They have gone'

(Data taken from Griefenow-Mewis 2001:76)

The present perfect has no negative form. Instead the negative perfective verb is used, as in the following examples

(62) *Laaqani   ga'-ee-r-a*
     lunch.NOM   reach-3SG.M.PFV.CNV-AUX.exist-3SG.M.IPFV
     'Lunch is ready.'

But:

(63) *Laagani   hin-ga'-ne*
      lunch.NOM   NEG-reach-PFV.NEG
      'Lunch is not ready.'

The negative past perfect tense is expressed by the negative perfective plus the inflected past-tense auxiliary *tur-*, whereby the two verbs are simply juxtaposed:

(64) *Yeroo-n   mana   ga'-e-ti   inni   kitaab-icha   hin-deebis-ne   tur-e*
      when-1SG   house   arrive-   he.NOM   book-DEF   NEG-return-   AUX.PAST-3SG.M.PFV
                         1SG.PFV-FOC   PFV.NEG
      'He had not yet returned the book when I arrived home.'

3.1.3.2.3   Experiential Perfect

The combination of perfective-base converb plus the verb *beek-* 'know' in main clauses is a periphrastic construction denoting the experiential perfect, which expresses the idea of that the action referred to by the converb was at least fulfilled once by the subject:

(65) *Mana barnotaa dhuf-tee   beek-taa?*
      school   come-2SG.PFV.CNV know-2SG.IPFV.Q
      'Have you ever come to school?'

In negation, the verb *beek-* is negated while the converb occurs in the positive form:

(66) *Dhuf-ee*   *hin-beek-u*
     come-1SG.PFV.CNV NEG-know-1SG.IPFV.NEG
     'I have never come.'

3.2 Specialized Converbs

3.2.1 HabitualConverb

The habitual converb is formed by attaching the suffix *-naan* to the verb stem. This
converb does not inflect for subject agreement or polarity:

(67) *Inni*   *qarshii*   *argan-naan*   *bad-e*
     he.NOM money get.ABF-HAB.CNV disappear-3SG.M.PFV
     'He (as usual) disappeared after having received money.'

(68) *Ciimani* *hojja-naan*   *qarshii* *baayee* *argat-tu*
     hard   work-HAB.CNV money much   get.ABF-2PL.IPFV
     'If they work hard, you will (usually) get more money.'

The habitual converb refers to events which took place prior to the reference
verb whereby the entire situation described by such sentences is considered
as a habitual or repetitive situation.

In combination with an imperfective main-clause verb, the habitual converb
can also get the reading of a real condition (cf. Debela and Meyer 2006:75):

(69) *Barbaan-naan   hin   bit-ta*
        like-HAB.CNV   FOC   buy-2SG.IPFV
        'Whenever you want you buy it.'

If the habitual converb is combined with a perfective main-clause verb, it might also denote the cause for the event in the main clause:

(70) *Tulluu-n   deem-naan   dhuf-te*
        Tullu-NOM   go-HAB.CNV   come-2SG.PFV
        'Because Tullu left, you came.'

Note the habitual converb also occurs in lexicalized compounds (see Section 3.1.3.1).

3.2.2   Progressive Converb

The progressive converb is characterized by the suffix-*aa* which is attached to the verb stem. This converb does not inflect for subject agreement or polarity. A progressive converb construction denotes that the action of the converb takes place simultaneously with the action of the verb in the main clause.

(71) *Inni   nyaat-aa   gara hojji   deem-a*
        he.NOM   eat-PRG.CNV   to   work   go-3SG.M.IPFV
        'He goes to work while eating'

                                                    (Mohammed and Zaborski 1990: 68)

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(72) *Caalaa-n farda guluf-aa   dhuf-e*
     Challa   horse gallop-PRG.CNV come-3SG.M.PFV
     'Challa came galloping a horse.'

In some contexts, like in (72), the progressive converbfunctions as an adverb of manner.

CHAPTER 4

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This chapter summarizes and concludes the discussion from the previous chapters on form and function of converbs in Oromo. It was shown that the form and function of converb in Oromo has not been well studied. Thus, the major aim of this study was to present a detailed description of converbs in Oromo.

The study is divided into four chapters. The first chapter contains an introduction about the Oromo people and their language as well as the statement of the problem, the objective of the study, the significance of the study, its scope and the methodology of the study. Chapter two reviews the typological literature for the study of converb as well as relevant previous works Oromo. In that chapter, I tried to describe the converb from a cross-linguistic perspective and to provide a general overview on Oromo verb morphology including the gerund, participle and verbal noun.

In the third chapter, I presented the basic description of converbs in Oromo. I explained the morphology of converbal construction in Oromo converb and their use.The lexical verbal compounds and nominalization of converbal constructions are also discussed in that chapter.

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Based on this study, the following conclusion can be forwarded: In Oromo, the converb is a non-finite verb form which can be used for adverbial subordination, conditional expression, progressive actions, and clause chaining. The most common converb in Oromo is based on a perfective verb whose last vowel is lengthened. It is used for adverbial modification as well as for clause chaining, and takes part in various kinds of lexicalizations and grammaticalizations. Beside a verb in the perfective, also a verb in the imperative or jussive can occur with a lengthened final vowel in converb function. Due to its frequency and various functions it is called generalized converb.

The other kind of converb is the habitual converb marked by the suffix *-naan*. It is also a non-finite verb form whose main function is to denote overlapping events, which usually or frequently take place. The third kind of converb is the progressive converb marked by the suffix *-aa* and denotes events that are simultaneous to the reference verb. The habitual and progressive converbs are considered specialized converbs due to their specific meaning and more restricted occurrence. In contrast to the generalized converb, the specialized converbs do not inflect for person, number and gender as well as tense-aspect.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE WITH NAMES OF INFORMANTS

The Oromo equivalents of the following Amharic words, phrases and sentences were provided by Enkoga Asefa, Girma Terefe, and Tolosa Nemera.

No	Words, Phrases and Sentences
1	ሄጅ…
2	በልቼ…
3	እኔ ሄጃለሁ::
4	እኔ ሄጅ ነበር::
5	ሄጅ ተመለስኩ::
6	እሱ ይምጣ
7	እነሱ ይምጡ
8	ፈጥኖ አልመጣም::
9	ፈጥና አልመጣችም::
10	መጥቼ የሄድኩት እኔ ነኝ::
11	እሱ ነገ እዚህ መጥቶ ይቆያል::
12	ዘለው ሄዱ::
13	ዘሎ ገባ::
14	ሄዲል::
15	ሄዶ ተኛ::
16	ከሄድህ ታገኘዋለህ::
17	ቶሉሳ ስለሄደ አንተ መጣህ::
18	ፍጥኜ በመንዳቴ ፖሊስ አስቆመኝ::
19	እየሄድክ ነው::
20	እየሄድክ ነበር::

21	እኔ ውሃ ቀድቼ መጣሁ።
22	እኔ ውሃ ቀድቼ...
23	እሱ መጽሐፍትን አንቡቦ ተኛ።
24	ውሎ አደረ።
25	ውሎ አድሮ ይመጣል።
26	ዞሮ ዞሮ መጣ።
27	አበበ አርሶ አደር ነው።
28	ለማ አርብቶ አደር ነው።
29	የኢትዮጵያ ህዝብ ሰርቶ አዳሪ ነው።
30	ሰራተኛው ለመንግስት ገብሮ ይበላል።
31	ወሮ በላ በከተማው በዝቷል።
32	ሰውየው አውቆ አበድ ነው።
33	ጫላ አብሮ አደግ ጓደኛዬ ነው።
34	ልጅቷ � ቀር ናት።
35	ፈጥኖ ደራሽ ፖሊስ መጣ።
36	የዛሬው ጉዞ ደርሶ መልስ ነው።
37	ገበሬው አጭዶ መውቃት አልቻለም።
38	ሀኪሙ ቀዶ ጥገና አደረገ።
39	መሶቡን ከፍቶ ዳቦ ወሰደ።
40	መሶቡን ከፍቶ ዳቦ ይወስዳል።
41	መሶቡን ከፍተህ ዳቦውን ውሰድ።
42	መጥቶ መጽሐፍን ወሰደ።
43	ሰርቆ ያዙት።
44	ሩጦ ሄደ።
45	አንቀው ገደሉት።
46	ከአባቱ ጋር አብሮ መጣ።
47	ከአባቱ ጋር አብርን እንጫዳለን።
48	እንግዳ ይዞ መጣ።
49	እንግዳ ይዘህ ና!
50	እንግዳ ይዞ ይመጣል።

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51	እዚህ አገር መጥተህ ታውቃለህ? መጥቼ አላውቅም፡፡ አልመጣሁም ነበር፡፡
52	እዚህ አገር መጥቶ ያውቃል፡፡ አልመጣም ነበር፡፡ መጥቶ ነበር፡፡
53	መጥታ ነበር፡፡ አልመጣችም ነበር፡፡
54	ፋጤማ ገበያ ሄዳ ልብስ ገዛች፡፡
55	እሱ ጎሽ ገድሎ ስጋ በላን፡፡
56	ተማሪዎችን ይዞ መጣ፡፡
57	ተማሪዎችን ይዞ ይመጣል፡፡
58	ተማሪዎችን ይዘህ ና!
59	እሱ መርካቶ ደርሶአል፡፡
60	ከእንቅልፌ ተነስቻለሁ፡፡
61	ወደ ሸንት ቤት ሄጃለሁ፡፡
62	ሬቴን ታጥቤአለሁ፡፡
63	የእንጀራ እህቴ ትናንትና ጅማ ደርሳለች፡፡
64	ምሳ ደርሷል፡፡
65	ምሳ ደርሷል?
66	ቢበላም አልተሻለውም፡፡
67	አይጥ ወልዳ ወልዳ ጀራቷ ሲቀር ሲጥ አለች፡፡
68	ግመል ሰርቆ አጎንብሶ አይሁንም!
69	ሰው መጣ ነገር መጣ!
70	ገንዘቡን ተቀብሎ ጠፋ፡፡
71	እነሱ ጠንክረው ከሰሩ ብዙ ገንዘብ ታገኛለህ፡፡
72	እየበላ ወደ ስራ ሄደ፡፡
73	ጫላ ፈረስ እየጋለበ መጣ፡፡
74	መጽሐፍ ስታነብ ምሳዋን በላች፡፡
75	ጫልቱ ስትሮጥ ወደቀች፡፡
76	ጫልቱ ከመሜዲ በፊት እሱ መጣ፡፡
77	ቁርሱን ሳይበላ ሄደ፡፡
78	ፈጥነህ ሩጥ፡፡
79	ጠንክርህ ስራ፡፡
80	ሄደህ ብላ፡፡
81	እንዳትበላ!
82	አትብላ!

83	ከልጅነቴ ጀምሮ ትምህርት ቤት አልሄድኩም።
84	ላንተ ብዬ ነው።
85	ከዚህ ሳምንት ቀጥሎ አዲሱ አመት ይገባል።
86	ከበደ ገመዱን ቀጥሎ ጨርሰው።
87	ማር ፍጹሞ አልስም።
88	መጽሐፍ፦ን የደበኩት አውቂ ነው።
89	ድሮ አውቀው ነበር።
90	ቀድሞ አውቀው ነበር።
91	የቀድሞ ፕሬዝዳንት፦
92	ሂድ!
93	ኑር!
94	ጠንካራ ሁን!
95	አስተምር!
96	አስተማሪ
97	ለማየት
98	መሄድ

RECORDED TEXT

The following text was taken from Hinsene (2003:2) and recorded with Girma Terefe:

Barcumi inni tokko kan abbaa alangee, kaan immoo kan abukaatoo himatamtuuti. Dhaddachichi waa'ee balaa tiraafikii qaqqabeefi yakki ajjechaa raaw'atame kan akkamiifaa akka ta'e dhag'uu namoota barbaadaniin guutamee jira ture. Himanni ajjechaa inni kun adda ture. Abbaan alangichaa Gas Veenabil matuma isaattiyyuu name addaati.Name jaafoo, rifeensi isaa akka harroomuu ta'ee areeda dheeraa qabuudha.Immoo dureessa lafa qonnaa fuduraa gara kibbaatii qabu fakkaatas.Garuu immoo gonkumaa gara kibbaa deemee hin beeku. Darbee darbee waanti tokko tokko bitaacha wayita itti ta'u ni mul'ata. Garuu

sammuun isaa akka kompiyuutarii si'ataadha.Shamiziin ammayyummaan itti darbe gara mormaa irratti gogaa ta'e ol dhaabatufi kittaa adiin, mallattoo bonaafi gannaa Gas Veenabil.

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work. This thesis has not been presented for any academic study in any other university, and all sources of material used for this wok are clearly acknowledged.

Name: ZELALEM GIRMA ABATE

Signature፡ ~~ZgA ዘላለም ግርማ አባተ~~

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