

# Subject clitics in Konso<sup>1</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

In Konso (Cushitic, Ethiopia), a sentence contains an inflectional element separate from the verb. This is in essence a subject clitic and a sentence type indicator. Its position is at some place in the sentence before the verb and indicative of information structure. The article provides a first full analysis of the basic properties of the subject clitic.

**Keywords:** *subject, clitics, Konso, Cushitic.*

## 1. THE SUBJECT CLITIC FORMS AND THEIR USAGE

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

In Konso, the subject clitics occur in sentences in addition to subject inflection on the verb. In (1), the subject is marked by the subject clitic *i* and again by the third person feminine marker *t* on the verb. In some examples (see (1b)), we provide a surface line before we present the morphemic representation in cases when the complex morphophonology obscures the relevant distinctions.

- (1a) *i=χosal-t-i*  
3=laugh-3F-PF  
'She laughed.'

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<sup>1</sup> Konso is a Lowland East Cushitic language spoken by roughly 300000 speakers in southern Ethiopia. It is the mother tongue of the first author who speaks the Faashe dialect which we use here. Ongaye (2013) provides a description and analysis of the language and can be consulted for background. We use the symbols of the international phonetic alphabet in a phonemic spelling. In the glosses we use the abbreviations as follows: 1 first person, 2 second person, 3 third person, 1SG first person singular, 1PL first person plural, 2SG second person singular, 2PL second person plural, 3SG.M third person masculine, 3SG.F third person feminine, 3PL third person plural, ACC accusative, AGENT agentive, ASS associative, BGND background, CAUS causative, DAT dative, DEP dependent, F feminine, IMP imperative, INST instrumental, IPF.FUT imperfective future, IPF.PRES imperfective present, LOC locative, M masculine, NEG negative, NOM nominative, OPT optative, P plural (as a value of gender), PF perfective, PL plural (as a value of number), POSS possessive, PRO pronoun, REL relative, SG singular, QUES question, PROH prohibitive, PASS passive, CONC concessive, s.c subject clitic, subj subject, obj, object, V verb.

- (1b) *ide?ti*  
*i=dɛy-t-i*  
3=come-3F-PF  
'She came.'

We use the term subject clitics but previous authors have used terms like preverbal marker (Black 1973) or person index (Sim 1977). Similar forms in related Cushitic languages have been termed indicator particles for Somali (Antinucci & Puglieli 1980), focus markers for Diraytata (Wondwosen 2005), focus particles for Oromo (Baye 1988) and selectors for South Cushitic (Whiteley 1958). Mous (2005) presents a basic overview of such elements in Cushitic. Omotic languages in the area have similar inflectional elements separate from the verb, see, for example, Azeb (2008) on Zargulla.

In a number of Cushitic languages, the subject clitics play a crucial role in syntax and Konso is one of them. Like Somali and the Southern Cushitic languages, Konso requires the presence of such an inflectional element in virtually every clause. Oromo, a close relative of Konso, is different in this respect and the comparable subject clitics are only used when the speaker decides to mark a particular constituent with a focus function. Somali is the most intensively studied Cushitic language in the domain of syntax, see Ajello (1995), Lecarme (1991), Saeed (1984), Svolacchia et.al. (1995), Frascarelli and Puglieli (2007), and (Mi'eesaa and Clamons 2009). The basic structure of a Somali clause that emerges from those studies is one of discourse configurationality in which word order is determined by pragmatic considerations. In Somali, focus particles play a crucial role. Subject clitics get attached to these focus particles and the subject clitic marks the beginning of a syntactic unit, similar but different from the verb phrase. The choice of the focus marker reflects the nature and the scope of the focus. Southern Cushitic languages also exhibit such a syntactic unit introduced by a subject clitic and the position of objects within this unit marks backgrounding but the subject clitic is not cliticised to a focus marker, see Kiessling (1989), Mous (1993). Oromo does not have such a syntactic unit; instead it has a variety of focus particles that are attached to the relevant constituent, see Elders (1989), Dabala & Meyer (2003). Konso, closely related to Oromo, has properties of both the Oromo system and the Somali type. In Konso, subject clitics play a prominent role in the expression of focus but these subject clitics do not constitute the beginning of a syntactic unit; rather they attach to the element they refer to. It is unclear whether Konso syntax can be reanalysed as having, similar to Somali, a "verbal piece", a syntactic unit bounded by the subject clitic and the verb, for which placement of constituents either before or inside the verbal piece is pragmatically salient. Nor is it clear yet whether it has a syntax that is more similar to that of Oromo in which the position of the subject clitic expresses focus on the preceding constituent. We do not intend to address these questions in this article. The purpose of this article is

rather to lay the ground work for a deeper syntactic analysis of Konso and for a comparative syntactic study of the syntax of these inflectional elements.

Konso subject clitics have been noted by previous authors (Sim 1977, Black 1973, Ongaye 2000) but these accounts are incomplete and inaccurate. The Konso subject clitics are often absorbed by the final vowel of the preceding word or the initial segment of the following word and as consequence only realised by vowel or consonant lengthening and this can easily be missed.

In this section, we present an overview of the forms of the subject clitics. In section 2, we propose the word class of the subject clitics to be a pronoun; in section 3, we present an overview of sentence types and the use of the subject clitic; section 4 deals with negation and contrast; section 5 discusses the pragmatic function of word order in relation to the subject clitics, and section 7 concludes with a summary.

## 1.2 THE SUBJECT CLITICS AND SENTENCE TYPE

Depending on the sentence type, there are different series of subject clitics. They have all in common that only person is distinguished and not gender, not number. The glottal stop of the second person is realised as gemination of the verb stem initial consonant in (2a). First person is coded by *n* and third person has no person marking. Without the subject clitics, it is difficult to distinguish between third person singular feminine and second person. The main distinction is that between independent and dependent clauses. Subject clitics in dependent clauses are characterised by a vowel *a* and those in independent clauses by a vowel *i*. Negative clauses require a third set of subject clitics which are characterised by the presence of *n*. Although these generalizations are obvious from the table below, it is also clear that separation of the forms of table 1 into smaller units does not result in a neater analysis. For example, negative *n* is not present in second person; dependent vowel *a* is used in first and second person negative subject clitics but independent *i* in the third person.

**Table 1.** *Main subject clitics.*

Person:	1st	2nd	3rd
Independent	in	iʔ	i
Dependent	an	aʔ	a
Negative	an	aʔ	in

Konso, and many other Cushitic languages, do not show agreement with the gender of the subject in these subject clitics. Neutralization of gender in subject clitics can also be observed in varieties of Romance languages (Tosco 2007, Heap 1997). In Konso and some other Cushitic languages, gender marking is crucial in third person subject inflection on the verb and gender of the third person subject does not become ambiguous by this lack of gender differentiation

in the subject clitic. In this respect, Cushitic is different from Romance. See Tosco (2007) for a principled comparison between Cushitic and Romance subject clitics and Mous (2005) for a typological overview of Cushitic subject clitics.

*Independent clauses*

Independent clauses may occur without explicit subjects. Furthermore, subject clitics occur in independent clauses irrespective of the conjugation of the verb. In the earlier examples, the verb was in the perfect, but the subject clitics are also present in imperfective sentences, (2).

- (2a) *luukkata iddammi*  
*luukkata iʔ=dam-ni*  
fruit 2=eat-IPF.PRES  
'You (SG) eat a fruit.'
- (2b) *kulleeta-siʔ in=gʼeed-a*  
hood-DEF.M/F 1=take-IPF.FUT  
'I will take the hood.'

With explicit subject and object, the subject clitics may occur in any of the following four positions: as a proclitic to the verb as in (3a), as an enclitic to the object as in (3b), as a proclitic to the object as in (3c), or as an enclitic to the subject as in (3d), Ongaye (2013:61).

- (3a) *inuk kuufa inhaaʔni*  
*inu-ʔ kuufa in=haad-n-i*  
1PL.PRO-NOM cow.dung.pile 1=carry-1PL-PF  
'We carried a cow dung pile.'
- (3b) *inuk kuufan haaʔni*  
*inu-ʔ kuufa=in haad-n-i*  
1PL.PRO-NOM cow.dung.pile=1 carry-1PL-PF  
'We carried a cow dung pile.'
- (3c) *inuʔ ʔinkuufa haaʔni*  
*inu-ʔ in=kuufa haad-n-i*  
1PL.PRO-NOM 1=cow.dung.pile carry-1PL-PF  
'We carried a cow dung pile.'
- (3d) *inun kuufa haaʔni*  
*inu=in kuufa haad-n-i*  
1PL.PRO=1 cow.dung.pile carry-1PL-PF  
'We carried a cow dung pile.'

## Dependent clauses

Clauses with dependent verb forms have a different set of subject clitics. Such clauses also require the presence of a subject clitic as shown below.

- (4a) *inu? lan hirrinnooye impippi?ni*  
*inu-? an hir-nn-o-yye in=pi?pi?n-i*  
 1PL-NOM 1DEP run[PL]-1PL-DEP-SET 1=PL-fall-1PL-PF  
 ‘We fell while we were running.’
- (4b) *atti? akkeerrittooye ippi?ni*  
*atti-? a? keer-ni-tt-o-yye i?=pi?t-i*  
 2SG-NOM 2DEP run[SG]-IPF.PRES-2-DEP-SET 2=fall-2-PF  
 ‘You (SG) fell while you were running.’
- (4c) *ifeenan nefo a keerrittooye ipi?ni*  
*ifeena-? nefo a keer-ni-tt-o-yye i=pi?t-i*  
 3SG.F-NOM as.well 3DEP run[SG]-IPF.PRES-3F-DEP-BGND 3=fall-3F-PF  
 ‘She too fell while she was running.’
- (4d) *ifan nefó a keerriyooye ipi?ay*  
*ifa-? nefó a keer-ni-y-o-yye i=pi?ay*  
 3SG.M-NOM as.well 3DEP run[SG]-IPF.PRES-3M-DEP-BGND 3=fall-PF[3M]  
 ‘He too fell while he was running.’

## 1.3 ABERRANT PARADIGMS: JUSSIVE AND CONTINUOUS

The Negative jussive uses no subject clitic but the pronoun instead for the first person and *in* for second and third person.

- (5a) *in=dam-an*  
 2:NEG:JUS=eat-2:NEG:JUS  
 ‘(You (SG)) Don’t eat!’
- (5b) *in=dam-in*  
 3:NEG:JUS=eat-3:NEG:JUS  
 ‘Let him/her/them not eat.’

The Imperfective Present paradigm is characterized by invariant verb forms ending in *ni* with extra material in the second and third person plural. The independent subject clitic is used. In its negative counterpart, however, no subject clitic is used for the third person. The Negative Present Imperfective consists of the negative subject clitic and the affirmative verb form followed by the negative verb ‘to be’ preceded by the negative subject clitic. The negative clitic is present twice in each verb form, except for the third person where it is present only in the ending of negative ‘to be’, (Ongaye 2013:220-223).

- (6a) *ahhirri akkittan*  
*aʔ=hir-ni*                      *aʔ=kit-t-a-n*  
 2NEG=run[PL]-IPF.PRES    2NEG=be-2-IPF.FUT-P  
 ‘You (PL) do not run./You (PL) are not running.’
- (6b) *keerri info*  
*keer-ni*                      *in=kiy-o*  
 run[SG]-IPF.PRES    3NEG=be-NEG  
 ‘He does not run.’

We have no explanation why precisely the third person Negative Imperfective Present lacks a subject clitic.

## 1.4 NOMINAL AND ADJECTIVAL CLAUSES

The simplest nominal sentence consists of a noun. No third person nominal subject clitic is used in nominal sentences. For example, the noun *dakaa* can be ‘stone’ or ‘It is a stone.’ (Sim 1977:86). Juxtaposition of two term nominal phrases is interpreted predicatively, (8)-(9).

- (7) *χorma* ‘(a) bull’ or ‘It is a bull.’
- (8a) *dilaayyú \*a/\*ise dī*  
*dilaa-aayyú \*a/\*i se dī*  
 charcoal-my DEP3/3    DEM.PRO  
 ‘This is my charcoal.’
- (8b) *fartoosi \*a/\*i aχayfin*  
*farta-oosi \*a/\*i a-χayfin*  
 horse-DEM.M/F DEP3/3 of-2PL.PRO  
 ‘This horse is yours.’
- (8c) (*anti-ʔ*)    *an=Ongayi; ifá-ʔ*    *Antu*  
 (I-NOM)    1=Ongaye; he-NOM    Anto  
 ‘I am Ongaye; he is Anto.’
- (9) *fartoosiχ χannu kerayteeta*  
*farta-oosiʔ xannu ker-ayteeta*  
 horse-DEM.M/F 1PL.POSS become.old-AGENT.F  
 ‘This horse of ours is an old one (fem).’

Nominal clauses with full subject nouns have no subject clitics for third person subjects in possessive and attributive constructions but use subject clitics for speech act participants, and these contain the vowel *a* like the dependent forms. The nominal clauses without an explicit subject noun need the subject clitic instead, *an*, *aʔ*, *i*. The one-word nominal clause cannot have a subject clitic. The independent pronoun does not allow an additional subject clitic.

- (10a) *an=nama*                      *an=iskatteeta*  
 1=man                                  1=woman  
 ‘I am a man.’                      ‘I am a woman.’
- (10b) *aʔ=ʔiskatteeta*  
 2=woman  
 ‘You (SG) are a woman.’
- (10c) *Antun nama<sup>2</sup>*  
*Anto-ʔ*                      *nama*  
 Anto-NOM                      man  
 ‘Anto is a man.’
- (10d) *Antup poɣla*  
*Anto-ʔ*                      *poɣla*  
 Anto-NOM                      chief  
 ‘Anto is a chief (important leader).’
- (11a) *nama*  
 ‘It is a man/person.’
- (11b) *\*i nama*  
 (Intended: It is a man/person.)
- (12a) *ifaɣ pinanta*  
*ifa-ʔ*                      *pinanta*  
 3SG.M.PRO-NOM                      animal  
 ‘He is an animal.’
- (12b) *\*ifa=i pinanta*  
 3SGM.PRO=3 animal  
 (Intended: He is an animal.)

Different types of nominal clauses are all constructed in the same way: predicational (or canonical) nominal clauses are illustrated in (10); specificational (or inverse) constructions in (8), and equative (or identity) in (8c), using terminology from Mikkelsen (2005). The same holds for temporal (13) and possessive (14) nominal clauses. Locatives require the verb ‘to be’, (16).

- (13) *palawwaʔ ʔawwi*  
*palawwa-ʔ*                      *awwi*  
 Saturday-NOM                      today  
 ‘Today is Saturday.’
- (14a) *init tikaawu*  
*iniʔ*                      *tika-aawu*  
 DEM.M/F                      house-1SG.POSS.M/F  
 ‘This is my house.’

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<sup>2</sup> The fact that the nominative case clitic *ʔ* is present is clear from equivalent clauses such as *Maartini-n nama* ‘Martin is a man/person.’, *Pawloosi-n nama* ‘Paulos is a man/person.’

- (14b) *tikaawu ini*  
house-1SG.POSS.M/F  
'My house is this one' (I was talking about my house and this is what we talked about; this is mine.)
- (15a) *dila-adi*  
field-3SG.POSS  
'His/her field' or 'It is his/her field.'
- (15b) *Samuʔeeliχχatta kollissaampayta*  
*Samuʔeeli-ʔ χatta kollissaampayta*  
Samuel-NOM long.ago teacher  
~*χatta Samuʔeeli-ʔkollissaampayta*  
~*Samuʔeeli-ʔkollissaampayta χatta*  
'Samuel was a teacher long ago.'
- (16a) *Samuʔeeliʔ ʔarjaa minʔee ʔa*  
*Samuʔeeli-ʔ arjaa minʔi=i ʔa*  
Samuel-NOM Arba Minch=3 be-PF  
'Samuel is in Arba Minch.'
- (16b) *Samuʔeeliʔ ʔurmalaappaa ʔa*  
*Samuʔeeli-ʔ urmala-oppa=i ʔa*  
Samuel-NOM market-in=3 be-PF  
'Samuel is in the market.'
- (16c) *Samuʔeelit tika ʔa*  
*Samuʔeeli-ʔ tika=I ʔa*  
Samuʔeeli-NOM house=3 be-PF  
'Samuel is at home.'

Negation in nominal clauses is marked by the clause final clitic *-nnin*. The clause only contains a subject clitic if the subject is a speech act participant, which is in line with the affirmative nominal clause. All the nominal clauses presented above can be negated this way.

- (17a) *senit tuuyyawwaannima χarχarayaa*  
*seniʔ tuuyyawwaa-nnin-ma χarχarayaa*  
DEM.PL pigs-NEG-but warthogs  
'These are not pigs but warthogs.'
- (17b) *an=akim-itta-nnin*  
I=physician-AGENT.SG.M-NEG  
'I am not a physician.'

## 1.5 ADJECTIVAL CLAUSES

Adjectival clauses use the independent (verbal) subject clitics and behave like verbs in this respect (18-19). The negative adjectival clause uses the negative subject clitics and the negative verb 'to be'. Like in nominal clauses, the third person subject in a negative adjectival clause is not followed by a subject

selector but the final negative verb ‘to be’ is, (18b). See Ongaye (2013:62-64) for more details.

- (18a) *tapayta-asi?*      *i=paḡaar-i*<sup>3</sup>  
 mouse-DEM.M/F 3=be.good-PF  
 ‘This mouse is good.’
- (18b) *in=deḡ-ḡer-i-nna*  
 1=PL-be.tall-PF-1PL  
 ‘We are tall.’
- (192) *ankutteenfo*  
*an=kutt-i-an-kiyo*  
 1NEG=be.big-PF-1NEG-be.1SG.NEG  
 ‘I am not big.’
- (19b) *ḡerin kittu*  
*ḡer-i=in*      *kit-t-u*  
 be.tall-PF=3NEG be-3F-NEG  
 ‘She is not tall.’

## 1.6 ALLOMORPHY IN THE SUBJECT CLITICS

In addition to the complete assimilation of the glottal stop of the second person subject clitic, the nasal of the first person nominal subject clitic assimilates completely in place of articulation to the next obstruent if it is encliticized to the next word; it remains *n* before a glottal stop and it completely assimilates to a next resonant or glide (Ongaye 2013:48-50).

- (20a) *an=iskatteeta*  
 1NOM=woman  
 ‘I am a woman.’
- (20b) *aḡḡawreelayta*  
*an=ḡawreelayta*  
 1=glutton  
 ‘I am a glutton.’ (Sim 1977:87)
- (20c) *allammitta*  
*an=lammitta*  
 1=eldest.son.of.second.wife  
 ‘I am the eldest son of the second wife.’
- (20d) *imḡurty*  
*in=fur-t-u*  
 3NEG=untie-3F-NEG.IPF.FUT  
 ‘She will not untie.’ (Ongaye 2013:50)

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<sup>3</sup> It is impossible to leave out the subject clitic here.

- (20e) *inɔ́apa*  
*in=ɔ́ap-a*  
 1=have-PF  
 ‘I have (it).’

When the subject clitic is not the first word in the sentence, it usually cliticizes to the left, often leaving nothing but vowel length of the preceding word as trace. The subject clitic docks leftwards onto the preceding word, the subject in this case, and results in lengthening the final vowel; on other words, in connected speech, the presence or absence of the subject clitic is indicated by a long or short final vowel of the subject. This is valid both for subject clitics that begin in *a* and those that begin in *i*.

## 2. THE PRONOMINAL NATURE OF SUBJECT CLITICS

Nearly all clauses require the presence of a subject clitic. The subject of a sentence may be left out because it can be recovered from the presence of the subject clitic and an inflectional element on the verb. For example, in (21a), we have the overt subject *inantasi* ‘the girl’, the subject clitic *i* and the verbal inflectional suffix *-t*. Thus, the presence of the subject clitic and the inflectional suffix on the verb enable a speaker to drop the subject of the sentence, (21b). It is in this sense that we claim that the subject clitic is a subject pronoun with the option to drop the pronoun. The same is true for speech act participants, see (22a, b), the variants of (21a, b) with the addition of a personal pronoun.

- (21a) *inantasiχχarfa idamti*  
*inanta-si?*    *χarfa*    *i=dam-t-i*  
 girl-DEF.M/F    beans    3=eat-3F-PF  
 ‘The girl ate (cooked) beans.’
- (21b) *χarfa ?idamti*  
*χarfa*    *i=dam-t-i*  
 beans    3=eat-3F-PF  
 ‘She ate beans.’
- (21c) *\*dam-t-i*  
 eat-3F-PF  
 (Intended: She ate (it).)
- (22a) *attil luukkata iddammi*  
*atti-?*                    *luukkata*    *i?=dam-ni*  
 you (SG)-NOM    fruit    2=eat-IPF.PRES  
 ‘You (SG) eat a fruit.’
- (22b) *antik kulleetasi? ?ingeeda*  
*anti-?*                    *kulleeta-si?*                    *in=geed-a*  
 1SG.-NOM    hood-DEF.M/F                    1=take-IPF.FUT  
 ‘I will take the hood.’

There are also full independent pronouns. Case is distinguished on them in first and second person singular only. The full independent pronouns distinguish person (1, 2, 3), gender (M/F in third person) and number (in all persons). Their categorization is different from the subject clitics.

**Table 2.** Full Independent Pronouns.

<i>person</i>	<i>nominative</i>	<i>absolutive</i>
1SG	anti	ana
2SG	atti	ke~tʃe
3SGF	ifeeta <sup>4</sup>	
3SGM	ifa	
1PL	inu~ino	
2PL	ifina	
3PL	ifoonna	

The Konso personal pronouns have two sets of forms in the singular, one for non-focussed subject, the other for other cases: focussed S, O, IO, O of postposition, *anti/ana* (1SG), *atti/ke* (2SG), *ifa/ifi* (3SG.M). For example, the second person non-focussed subject pronoun *atti* is used in the clause introducer in (23a) but the other second person pronoun, *ke*, is used in the direct quote where it has object function. In the next example, (23b) the focussed second person pronoun in the clause introducer is of the second type.

(23a) *atti? ŋkkiite, iŋki ddaafa*  
*atti-ʔ iʔ=ki d-t-e, in=ke-ʔ ddaafa*  
 2SG-NOM 2=say-2-PF 1=2SG.O-dat give-IPF.FUT  
 ‘You SAID: “I will give you (something).”’ (adapted from Uusitalo 2007)

(23b) *kee ki dē, iŋki d ddaafa*  
*kee ki d-ay-e, in=ke-ʔ ddaafa*  
 2SG.O:CLF say-PF-BGND 1=2SG.O-DAT give-IPF.FUT  
 ‘(It is) YOU (who) said, “I will give you (something).”’ (adapted from Uusitalo 2007)

The full independent pronoun has pronominal properties. It can refer to a third person referent just like the subject clitic can, (24a, b). After a full independent pronoun, a subject clitic is still needed, (24b).<sup>5</sup> But a full pronoun cannot be used after an explicit subject, (24c, d). Thus, the syntactic behaviour of the full independent pronoun and the subject clitic are different. The subject clitic can be used to refer to a subject in the same clause, the independent pronoun can only replace a full subject in the clause. One could also claim: the full independent pronoun is a noun and the subject clitic is a pronoun.

<sup>4</sup> There are also other forms of the 3SGF: *ifeetta*, *ifeeda*, *ifeedda*, and *ifeenna*. Also for third plural: *ifoota*, *ifootta*, *ifooda*, and *ifoodda*.

<sup>5</sup> This is not the case in cleft constructions.

- (24a) *ġimayta iχosalay*  
*ġimayta* *i=χosal-ay*  
 old.man 3=laugh-PF  
 ‘An old man laughed.’
- (24b) *ifa-ʔ* *ʔ=χosal-ay*  
 he-NOM 3=laugh-PF[3M]  
 ‘He laughed.’
- (24c) \**ġimayta ifa χosal-ay*  
 old.man he laugh-PF[3M]
- (24d) \**ġimayta ifa i=χosal-ay*  
 old.man he 3=laugh-PF[3M]

Additional evidence that the independent (pro)nouns are in fact nouns comes from morphology: The independent (pro)nouns can receive nominal suffixes such as demonstratives, *ifeennaasiʔ* ‘this her’. Independent (pro)nouns are one of the few constituents that can receive (nominative) case and behave like names in that respect (Ongaye 2013:113).

- (25a) *ifeennaʔ ʔikalti*  
*ifeenna-ʔ* *i=kalt-i*  
 3SG.F.PRO-NOM 3=return.home-3F-PF  
 ‘She returned home.’ (Ongaye 2013:67)
- (25b) *Kappooliʔ ʔapittu ʔiġoffay*  
*Kappoole-ʔ* *Apitto* *i=ġoff-ay*  
 Kappoole-NOM Apitto 3=pinch.SG-PF[3M]  
 ‘Kappoole pinched Apitto once.’ (Ongaye 2013:113).

In a sequence of clauses, the choice for the subject clitic rather than an independent personal (pro)noun indicates continuity of subject. In (26) the use of the subject clitic *i* links the two questions; the choice for the pronoun *ifa* would make the second question independent from the preceding. In this case, the use of the subject clitic rather than the pronoun indicates continuity of the subject. The subject clitic cannot be left out because, without an explicit subject, the subject clitic takes up this role. In this usage, the subject clitic behaves as a pronoun while the independent personal (pro)noun acts only as a contrastive (pro)noun.

- (26) *aappaayshin maanaa ammayitta d dāmmi? i/ifaʔ ʔawta pisa putteena i/dāmmee*  
*aappaa-ayʃin* *maana=i* *ammayitta-ʔ* *dām-niʔ* *i=/ifa-ʔ*  
 father-POSS.2PL what=3 breakfast-DAT eat-IPF.PRES 3=/he-NOM
- awta pisa putteena i=/dām-ni-eʔ*  
 day all enjera 3=/eat-IPF.PRES-QUES  
 ‘What does your father eat for breakfast? Does he eat enjera every day?’

### 3. SUBJECT CLITICS AND SENTENCE TYPE

Most types of clauses require the presence of a subject clitic. The sentence/clause types which do not allow the presence of a subject clitic are cleft sentences, subject relative clauses, imperatives and jussives.

**Table 3.** *Sentence type and presence/absence subject clitic*

<i>sentence type</i>	<i>1/2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>negation 3</i>
Independent clauses	+	+	+
Negative Imperfective	+	-	n.a
Dependent clauses	+	+	+
Question word questions	+	+	+
Clefts	-	-	n.a.
Polar questions	+	+	+
Imperatives and jussives	-	n.a.	+
Nominal clauses	+	-	+
Adjectival sentences	+	+	+
Object relative clauses	+	+	+
Subject relative clauses	-	-	+

+: subject clitic obligatory, (+): subject clitic optional, -: subject clitic excluded; n.a. not applicable.

#### 3.1 QUESTIONS

The subject question words such as *ayno* ‘who?’ and *maana* ‘what?’ require the use of a subject clitic immediately after it (32a) when such clitics as dative and locative are absent. After the question words ‘who?’ and ‘what?’ leaving out the subject clitic is ungrammatical (32b). The same is true for moving the subject clitic from the question and docking it to a following word, (32c). The construction should not be confused with the one with the dative clitic *-ʔ* ‘for whom?’, compare (32d-e) with (32e-f). When the question word *ayno* asks for the dative argument, it receives the dative clitic *-ʔ*. After question word ‘who’, dative and locative clitics occur before the subject clitics, (32g-h). The same is true for other question words such as *ayfa* ‘where?’, (32i). When the question word *ayfa* ‘where?’ asks for the locative, it occurs with the locative clitic *-ʔ*.

- (32a) *aynun kollifay*  
*ayno=in kollif-ay*  
 who=1 teach.CAUS-PF[3M]  
 ‘Whom did I teach?’
- (32b) *\*ayno kollif-ay*  
 who teach.CAUS-PF[3M]  
 (Intended: Who taught (it))
- (32c) *\*aynu in=kollif-ay*  
 who 1=teach.CAUS-PF[3M]  
 (Intended: Whom did I teach?)
- (33d) *aynuf faalanni?*  
*aynu=? faalaɗ-ni*  
 who=2 like-IPF.PRES  
 ‘Whom do you like?’
- (32e) *aynuƙ kollissi?*  
*ayno=? kollif-t-i*  
 who=2 teach:CAUS-2-PF  
 ‘Whom did you teach?’
- (32f) *aynu?in kollifay*  
*ayno-?=in kollif-ay?*  
 who-DAT=1 teach.CAUS-PF[3M]  
 ‘For whom did I teach?’
- (32g) *aynu?in kollifayee*  
*ayno-?=in kollif-ay-ee?*  
 who-DAT=1 teach.CAUS-PF[3M]-QUES  
 ‘Did you say for whom I taught?’
- (32h) *maana=n \*in kollif-ay?*  
 what=1 1 teach.CAUS-PF[3M]  
 ‘What did I teach?’/ ‘What was it that I taught?’
- (32i) *ayfa-?in \*in kollif-ay?*  
 where-LOC=1 1 teach.CAUS-PF  
 ‘Where did I teach?’

Final vowel lengthening of the subject question words does not mean there is a presence of underlying subject clitic. Rather, it indicates that the question is constructed as a cleft, (33). Clefts do not admit subject clitics.

- (33a) *ayno-o \*i nam-oosi? \*i iff-ay*  
 who-CLF 3 man-DEM.M/F 3 kill-PF[3M]  
 ‘Who is it that killed this man?’
- (33b) *opa aynoo deyay*  
*opa aynu-o dey-ay*  
 ASS who-CLF come-PF[3M]  
 ‘Who (and their associates) came?’

- (33c) *ayno-o kal-ay-ee?*  
 who-CLF come.home-PF-QUES  
 ‘Did you say who came?’

It is possible to question more than one constituent in one clause, (34). In such clauses use is made of the cleft construction.

- (34a) *ayno-o maana pidɗ-ay*  
 who-CLF what buy-PF[3M]  
 ‘Who bought what?’

- (34b) *aynoo aynug ɓiday*  
*ayno-ó aynu-? ɓid-ay*  
 who-CLF.OBJ who-NOM beat-PF[3M]  
 ‘Who beat whom?’ (lit., ‘Who is it that who beat?’)

Negative interrogative sentences contain negative subject clitics, (35b). Negative clefts are equally possible.

- (35)a. *ayno-o dila ɓot-ay?*      b. *ayno-o dila=n ɓot-i-n*  
 who-CLF farm dig-PF      who-CLF farm=3NEG dig-PF-NEG  
 ‘Who is it that dug a farm?’      ‘Who didn’t dig a farm?’

- (36)a. *aynoo \*i nam-oosi \*i iff-ay*      b. *ayno-onam-oosi?=in iff-i-n*  
 who:CLF 3 man-DEM 3 kill-PF      who-CLFman-DEM.M/F=3NEG kill-PF[3M]-NEG  
 ‘Who was it that killed this man?’      ‘Who was it that didn’t kill this man?’

- (37)a. *maanaa kod-a*      b. *maana-n kod-i-n*  
 what:3 do-IPF.FUT      what-3NEG do-PF-NEG  
 ‘What will he do?’      ‘What was it that he did not do?’

Polar (yes/no) questions contain a subject clitic and receive Y/N questioning intonation on a final vowel *-ee*, see (38a). Polar question with an explicit subject also contain a subject clitic as in (38b). Content questions can also receive this final questioning clitic and the intonation in order to render the question an echo question, see (32g) and (33c) above.

- (38a) *i=kóllif-ay-ee?*  
 3=teach:CAUS-PF[3M]-QUES  
 ‘Did he teach?’

- (38b) *Antu-? ?i=kóllif-ay-ee*  
 anto-NOM 3=teach-3PF-QUES  
 ‘Did Anto teach?’

## 3.2 NEGATIVE CLAUSES

Negative sentences contain a (negative) subject clitic. In the example sentence (39), the negative subject clitic in the main clause is *in* which is cliticized to the

left and loses its vowel. The negation is already marked in the conjugation of the verb. Thus, negation is marked twice.

- (39) *nama a ifa ġaarġaarriyon ġapo. umma namaa ifa waliġun ġapo.*  
*nama a ifa ġaarġaar-ni-yo=in ġap-o. umma nama-a*  
 person REL 3SG.M help-IPF.PRES-3M.DEP=3NEG have-NEG either person-REL  
*ifa waliġ-o=in ġap-o*  
 3SG.M companion-DEP=3NEG have-DEP  
 ‘He [was alone and] did not have anybody to help him; he did not have anybody to live with.’ Adapted from Daudey & Hellenthal (2004: Story 3-2,3)

All negative clauses contain negative subject clitics. These are identical for dependent and independent clauses. Negative imperatives and negative optatives require a negative subject clitic and the verb has a negative imperative or optative marker.

- (40a) *ġoyraasi? ġimmuran*  
*ġoyra-asi? i?=*mur-an**  
 tree-DEM.M/F 2NEG=cut[SG]-NEG.IMP  
 ‘(You (SG/PL)) Do not cut the tree!’
- (40b) *in=*hir-in**  
 3neg=run[PL]-NEG.OPT  
 ‘Let them not run.’

Prohibitive clauses have a final conjugated verb ‘to be’ with a negative subject clitic, (41).

- (41) *opa annin ġan*  
*opa aan-ni=in kiy-a-n*  
 PROH go-IPF.PRES=3NEG be-IPF.PRES-P  
 ‘It is forbidden to go (in).’

Negative adjectival clauses have a negative subject clitic which is absent for third person subjects, and the adjective is followed by a verb ‘to be’ with its negative subject clitic.

- (42a) *andereenġo*  
*an=*der-i* an=*kiy-o**  
 1NEG=be.tall-PF 1NEG=be-NEG  
 ‘I am not tall.’
- (42b) *der-i in=*kit-t-u**  
 be.tall-PF 3NEG=be-3F-NEG  
 ‘She is not tall.’

The negative subject clitics that occur with overt object in the next example is optional, (43). The sentence is interesting because it is the sole instance of more

than one subject clitic in one clause. We consider the negative endings of verbs to be grammaticalised endings in which the negative subject clitics to the verb ‘to be’ have developed into an amalgamated inseparable verbal ending.

- (43) *atti? ʔaddillaa ʔagʕonneekkittu*  
*atti-ʔ (aʔ=)dillaa aʔ=ʕot-ni aʔ=kit-t-u*  
 2SG.PRON-NOM 2NEG=fields 2NEG=dig-IPF.PRES 2NEG=be-2-NEG  
 ‘You (SG) do not work on fields.’

The negative subject clitics are characterised by the presence of an ending *n* in the third person. A different marker *n* is added to “complementizers” such as *oo* ‘if, when’, *awta* ‘when’ and others to express certainty but to a lesser degree than the sentence without *n*, Ongaye (2004:25). The exact function and status of this marker is still ill-understood.

- (44) *Antu oo(-n) ʕonsu-pa kal-o Armaasu-ʔ=é konfa piɖɖ-a*  
 Anto CONJ(-?) Konso-to go-DEP Armaaso-DAT=3 shorts buy-IPF.FUT  
 ‘If Anto goes to Konso, he will buy shorts for Armaaso.’

### 3.3 NON-SUBJECT RELATIVE CLAUSES

All non-subject relative clauses contain a subject clitic which occurs as initial element of the relative clause, (45).

- (45a) *piitaan oppaɖdaladay Faafé*  
*piita [a=in-oppa-ʔ dalad-ay] Faafé*  
 place REL=1-in-LOC be.born-PF[3M] Fasha  
 ‘The place where I was born is Fasha.’
- (45b) *konfaseen ʕata kappoolip piɖɖay ikeray*  
*konfa-siʔ a=in ʕata kappoole-ʔ piɖɖ-ay i=ker-ay*  
 shorts-DEF.M/F REL=1 long.ago kappoole-DAT buy[SG]-PF[3M] 3=be.old-PF[3M]  
 ‘The shorts that I bought for Kappoole long ago got worn out.’
- (45c) *konfaseen an Kappooliʔ anpiɖɖin ikatamay*  
*konfa-siʔ a=in Kappoole-ʔ an=piɖɖ-i-n i=kat-am-ay*  
 shorts-DEF.M/F REL=1 Kappoole-DAT 1NEG=buy[SG]-PF-NEG 3=sell-PASS-PF[3M]  
 ‘The shorts that I hadn’t bought for Kappoole was sold.’

If we change first to second person in (46) we get *piitaaʔ ʔoppa*, and for third person we get *piitaa oppa*; the subject clitics merge with the vowels of the preceding element. Ongaye (2013:206-208) gives the independent series of the subject clitics as underlying form but the vowel coalescence in his examples rather suggest the dependent forms *an*, *aʔ*, *a* for 1st, 2nd, 3rd person, respectively.

- (46) *piitaaʔ ʔoppa dʔdalatti Faaʔe*  
*piita [aʔ-oppa-ʔ dʔalad-t-i] Faaʔe*  
 place REL:2-in-LOC be.born-2-PF Fasha  
 ‘The place where you were born is Fasha.’

### 3.4 SUBJECT RELATIVE CLAUSES

In subject relative clauses, the subject clitic is not present and the verb conjugations are different. In the Perfect, the verb is reduced in the sense that the third person masculine ending is used for all subjects except for second persons and third persons feminine. An extra morpheme *-eeʔ* marking P gender is added (47a). The negative subject relative does require the subject clitic, (47b).

- (47a) *innaasiniχ ʔala dɛyayeeʔin akkay*  
*innaa-siniʔ ʔala dɛy-ay-eeʔ=in akk-ay*  
 child-DEF.P yesterday come-PF[3M]-P=1 see-PF[3M]  
 ‘I saw the child who came yesterday.’

- (47b) *innaasiniχ ʔala andeyineeʔin akkay*  
*innaa-siniʔ ʔala an=dɛy-i-n-eeʔ=in akk-ay*  
 child-DEF.P yesterday REL.3NEG=come-PF-NEG-P=1 see-PF[3M]  
 ‘I saw the child who did not come yesterday.’

Subject relative clauses can follow an independent (pro)noun, and the relative clause again does not take a subject clitic. There are different person suffixes for different tenses in the subject relative, and these are markedly deviant from the common verb inflections. The morpheme *-yo* 1SG/3SG.M in the Present Imperfective (Ongaye 2013:202), is such an example.

- (48) *ana a urmalaapa anniyoo ifa akkay*  
*ana a urmalaa-opa an-ni-yo-ó ifa*  
 1SG.PRO.ACC REL market-to go-IPF.PRES-1SG/3SG.M-CLF 3SGM.PRO.ACC  
*akk-ay*  
 see-PF[3M]  
 ‘It is me who was going to the market who saw him.’

The verb form in the subject relative clause is markedly different from the verb form in other clauses in three aspects: (1) the subject marking is very restricted, (2) the aspect marking is by suffixes that do not resemble the common ones, (3) the verb form, or rather the clause, receives a final gender agreement marker *-eeʔ* for P gender head nouns parallel to P gender agreement marker *-aaʔ* in adjectives. On these grounds, it is warranted to analyse the verb forms in subject relative clauses as participles and not to attach clause status to them. If they are not clauses, it makes sense that they do not contain sentence constituting elements which we have claimed the subject clitics to be.

Similar properties can be observed in subject relatives in other Cushitic languages. In Somali for example subject clitics cannot be used in subject relative clauses and the subject agreement on the verb is highly reduced with the form for 3sg.m also used second person singular and plural and for third person plural (Banti 2011: 36).

### 3.5 CLEFTS

Cleft sentences are very similar to subject relative clauses and likewise prohibit the use of subject clitics (Ongaye 2013:69ff).

- (49) *kee damay*  
*ke-a*                      *dam-ay*  
 2SG.PRO.ACC-REL    eat- PF[3M]  
 ‘It is you (SG) who ate (it).’

The verb in the cleft clause does not distinguish person and the subject is the general or absolutive pronoun. The initial morpheme *a* in (50) marks the sentences as subordinated and is not a subject clitic; it does not change for other subjects. The same morpheme *a* is used in genitive constructions and to introduce relative clauses.

- (50a) *keé kalay*  
*ke-e*                      *kal-ay*  
 2SG.PRO.ACC-CLF    return.home-PF[3M]  
 ‘It’s you (SG) who returned home.’
- (50b) *ifeenna-a*                      *dam-ay*  
 3SGF.PRO.ACC-CLF    eat-PF[3M]  
 ‘It is her who ate it.’

### 3.6 DEPENDENT CLAUSES

Dependent clauses, i.e. clauses with a verb in dependent conjugation ending in *o*, have a subject clitic that contains *a*. The conjunction *oo* requires a dependent verb form in *o*; the conjunction *ee* does not. These former dependent clauses do not contain a subject clitic for third persons on the conjunction *oo*; we assume it is absorbed by *oo*. It is impossible to test this because we cannot construct clauses with other material between *oo* and the subject clitic. The subject (clitic for the speech act participants) is always immediately after *oo*. With these conjunctions, the first and second persons contain the subject clitics marked by *n* and *ʔ*, respectively.

A similar problem arises with the conjunction *ka* ‘and’. There is no subject clitic after *ka* in (51) and we have observed this often after the conjunction *ka*

but not after other conjunctions, not even after *ifu?* ‘and’. One line of analysis is to assume that the subject clitic is absorbed by *ka* and its underlying presence in *ka* is what prevents any occurrence of a subject clitic later in the clause. But if the third person subject clitic *i* were underlying present and absorbed by *ka* we would expect the vowel of *ka* to be long and it is not. Moreover, we would expect the first and second person subject clitics to emerge, as they do with the absorbed clitic *i* in the conjunction *oo* but there are never first and second person subject clitics on *ka*. We therefore conclude that clauses introduced by *ka* have no subject clitic and behaves differently from *oo* which requires the subject clitic to be immediately after it –if 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> person- and absorbs the third person subject clitic *i*. We have no explanation for the fact that the conjunction *ka* excludes the use of subject clitics. The verb form in the *ka*-clause does not seem to be reduced in any way while other clauses that lack subject clitics show signs of a lesser degree of finiteness on the verb.

(51) *kuta-si?*      *ʔi=keer-ay*      *ka*      *hellaa-siniG*      *gaG-ganiin-ay*  
 dog-DEF.M/F    3=run[SG]PF[3M]    and      children-DEF.P    PL-bite[SG]-PF[3M]  
 ‘The dog ran and bit the children.’

(52) *oo=n kal-o,*                      *piifaa=n*      *dām-a*  
 CONJ=1    return.home-DEP    lunch=1      eat-IPF.FUT  
 ‘If I return home, I will eat lunch.’

(53) *ook kalto, piifaa*n* i d dāmta*  
*oo=ʔ kal-t-o,*                      *piifaa*    *iʔ=dām-t-a*  
 CONJ=2    return.home-2-DEP    lunch    2=eat-2-IPF.FUT  
 ‘If you (SG) return home, you will eat lunch.’

(54a) (*ka*) *oo*      *pat-o*      *kammaa-yye*      *karraa ka kii-ni*  
 and    when:3    lose-DEP    behind-BGND    squirrel    and say-IPF.PRES  
 ‘Then, when he disappears, the squirrel says...’

(54b) *otoo dam-foo-yye*              *ka*      *loollaa-sini?*      *kal-foo-yye,*  
 when:3 eat-CAUS-DEP-BGND    and    cattle-DEM.P    go.home-CAUS-DEP-BGND  
*karraa i=kii-ni*  
 squirrel 3=say-IPF.PRES  
 ‘When it feeds them and the cattle go home, the squirrel says,...’ (Daudey & Hellenthal 2004; story 7-12)

Concessive dependent clauses are marked by *a...kapaa*, and the subject clitics are added to the *a* part of the marker. Again, for third persons, we assume that the subject clitic is absorbed by *a* as it is not otherwise represented, (55). However, for first and second persons, the subject clitics are added to *a* and marked by *n* and *ʔ*, respectively. This is shown in (56a-b).

(55) (*ifa-ʔ* )              *a*      *sookad-u*      *kapaa faGaa-ʔ*      *aan-ay*  
 (3SG.M.-NOM)    CONC    go.to.field-DEP    CONC    drink-DAT    go-PF[3M]  
 ‘Instead of going to the field, he went to drink faGaa.’

- (56a) *a=n loḠḠaa-n an-n-u kapaa mottooḠaa-n an-n-a*  
 CONC=1 legs-INST go-1PL-DEP CONC car-INST go-1PL-IMP.PL  
 ‘Instead of going on feet, let us go by a car.’
- (56b) *a=? ʔessi kal-t-u kapaa, aye muk-i*  
 CONC=2 this.time return.home-2-DEP CONC here sleep-IMP.SG  
 ‘Instead of going [to your] home this time [of the night], spend the night here!’

The dependent subject clitics *an*, *a?* and *i?* precede the conjunction *ka* for first persons, second persons and third persons, respectively. It is worth mentioning that the form of the subject clitics for first and second persons is homophonous with that of the negative subject clitics in independent sentences. Moreover, they are homophonous with the affirmative subject clitics of the nominal clauses (see Section 1.4).

- (57) *se diḵ kammaa anka tikaadīpa aanay ka ifa akkay*  
*se diḵ kammaa an=ka tika-aḏi-opa aan-ay ka ifa akk-ay*  
 this after 1=and house-3SG.POSS-to go-PF[3M] and he see-PF[3M]  
 ‘And after that, I went to his house and found him [there].’
- (58) *akka anti ka maana koḏi*  
*aḏi=ka aan-t-i ka maana koḏ-t-i*  
 2=and go-2-PF and what do-2-PF  
 ‘And then you (SG) went there and did what?’
- (59) *.....ikka assi meḏawni.*  
*---iḏi=ka assi meḏaw-ni*  
 3=and like.this be.sweet-IPF.PRES  
 ‘And it is sweet like this.’ (Daudey & Hellenthal 2004; story 6)

### 3.7 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The subject clitic occurs only once in a clause. For speech act participants, the subject clitic is an alternative to the subject pronoun. The syntactic status of the subject clitic for a speech act participant is different from the one for a third person.

The subject clitic is obligatory in most clauses. Subject clitics are never used in imperative clauses because they are pragmatically different. They are directed to a speech act participant and are actual at the referent point in time. As a consequence, they do not need a sentence constituting element (Sasse 1991) and hence no subject agreement, no tense/aspect marking and no subject clitic.

Subject clitics are never used in clefts and in subject relative clauses. They are obligatory in object relative clauses. Clefts and subject relative clauses have in common that the verb is in a reduced form and can be interpreted as a participle. Subject relative “clauses” are non-finite and hence do not require a subject clitic. Clefts can be analysed as nominal clauses and there is no subject clitic for third person subjects in nominal clauses.

Third person subject clitics are never used with the Negative Present Imperfective tense but that verb form already contains a subject clitic in the grammaticalized ending of the inflected verb ‘to be’ including subject clitic. We have no principled analysis of why the Negative Present Imperative paradigm does not require a subject clitic for the third person. We would seek an explanation for this anomaly in its grammaticalisation history deriving from a complex construction in which the second and negation part did contain a selector and the first part originated in a cleft.

#### 4. THE FUNCTION OF THE SUBJECT CLITIC, WORD ORDER AND SCOPE

In our discussions in the preceding sections, we have seen that in addition to the differences in the forms of the subject clitics in various sentence/clause types, the subject clitics also show variation of occurrence in some clause types. In this section, thus, we attempt to describe the functions of the subject clitics. The selective focus is on the object if the subject clitic follows the object as in (60c), compare it to (60a) where the subject clitic precedes the object. In (60b) the subject clitic adds the sense that the action is witnessed by the speaker and that the speaker can assert its truth. This modal function of the subject clitic can be seen as an extension of the selective focus use: assertion of the truth is one of the common grounds for singling out one element from a structured set.

- |       |   |    |   |    |  |
|-------|---|----|---|----|--|
| (60a) | in=iʃin akk-ay<br>1=2PL-see-PF[3M]<br>‘I saw YOU (PL).’ | b. | iʃin in=akk-ay<br>2PL 1=see-PF[3M]<br>‘I did see you (PL).’ | c. | iʃin=an akk-ay<br>2PL=1 see-PF[3M]<br>‘It’s you that I saw.’ |
|-------|---|----|---|----|--|

The following examples are further evidence for the fact that the occurrence of the subject clitic with different constituents of a sentence yields difference in meanings of the sentences.

- (61a) *ifeetaʒ ɔyrannee unta tumti*  
*ifeeta-ʔ ɔyra-nn=i unta tum-t-i*  
 3SGF-NOM wood-INST=3 millet thresh-3F-PF  
 ‘It is with a stick that she threshed millet.’

- (61b) *ifeetaʒ ɔyran untaa tumti*  
*ifeeta-ʔ ɔyra-n unta=i tum-t-i*  
 3SGF-NOM wood-INST millet=i thresh-3F-PF  
 ‘It is millet that she threshed with a stick.’

- (61c) *ifeetaʒ ɔyran unta itumti*  
*ifeeta-ʔ ɔyra-n unta i=tum-t-i*  
 3SGF-NOM wood-INST millet 3=thresh-3F-PF  
 ‘She did thresh millet with a stick.’

The subject clitic indicates selective focus; that is, it presupposes a structure of distinguishable comparable entities and selects one from it. Many languages show focus marking precisely for question words; Konso does too.

The subject clitic can never follow the verb; it rarely precedes an explicit subject. There is one exception to this last observation, namely, the subject clitic in subordinate clauses. Examples (62) and (63) are dependent clauses with an explicit subject following the subject clitic. Conjunctions also may appear after the subject of the conjoined clause; thus in example (63) the subject clitic *a* can be replaced by the conjunction *oo* ‘when, if’ which may appear either before or after the subject *karmaa* ‘lion’.

(62) *an anti pato kapaayye*  
*an anti-? pat-o kapaayye*  
 1DEP I-NOM lose-DEP near-BGND  
 ‘Instead of me disappearing.....’

(63) *oo karmaa pat-o kammaayye*  
 3DEP lion lose-DEP behind-BGND  
 ‘When the lion disappears,.....’

The subject clitic is cliticised to a preceding noun phrase or to the following verb. There is a difference in meaning between cliticization to the verb or to the preceding noun phrase. Cliticization to the verb results in verb focus or assertion of truth of the clause, (65), (66).

(64) *damta ayinnewip pidfiti*  
*damta ayinnew=i? pidfit-i*  
 food quickly=2 buy-2-PF  
 ‘You quickly bought food.’

(65) *damta=p-pidfit-i* vs *damta ip=pidfit-i*  
 food=2-buy-2-PF food 2=buy-2-PF  
 "You bought food." "You bought food."

(66) *damta=n pidfit-ay* vs *damta im=pidfit-ay*  
 food=1 buy-PF[3M] food 1=buy-PF[3M]  
 "I bought food." "I bought food."

In the absence of a prosodic study, we cannot say how the subject clitic placement correlates (or not) with a pause or break. In particular, we would like to investigate potential breaks (|) in the following structures:

1. | s.c obj V
2. obj s.c | V
3. obj | s.c V
4. subj | s.c V
5. | subj V
6. subj obj s.c | V
7. subj s.c | obj V
8. | subj obj V



However, contrastive focus on the object can be arranged by changing the order of the object and the instrument, that is, by moving the instrumental closer to the verb, or by moving the object to a position preceding the instrumental, (73). It is not yet clear to us which of the two movements bring about the contrast, not whether there is designated focus position.

- (71) *ifeetaŋ ɓoyran unti tumti*  
*ifeetá-ʔ ɓoyra-n unta=i tum-t-i*  
 she-NOM stick-with millet=3 thresh-F-PF  
 ‘She threshed the millet with a stick.’ (eyewitness account)
- (72) *ifeetaŋ ɓoyran iʔunta tumti*  
*ifeetá-ʔ ɓoyra-n i=unta tum-t-i*  
 she-NOM stick-with 3=millet thresh-F-PF  
 ‘She threshed the millet with a stick.’ (eyewitness account)
- (73) *ifeetaŋ ɓoyra untanne itumti*  
*ifeetá-ʔ ɓoyra unta-nne i=tum-t-i*  
 she-NOM stick millet-with 3=thresh-F-PF  
 ‘She threshed with a stick the millet, not something else.’

In negative sentences, where the subject clitic is compulsory, the position of the subject clitics indicates the negated element which precedes. For example, in the corrective statements below the subject clitic follows the corrected noun phrase and is obligatory, (74), (75).

- (74) *attí amaraɓɓaa patta ah=haasawanneekkittu*  
 you-NOM Amharic only NEG2=speak.be.DEP:NEG  
*ma inkilsaɓɓaa nefu ih=haasawan-ni*  
 but English also 2=speak-IPF.PRES  
 ‘You speak not only Amharic but also English.’
- (75) *an amaraɓɓaa an haasawa-nin-ʔó ma inkilsaɓɓaa=n haasawa-ni*  
 1SG Amharic NEG1 speak-IPF.PRES.NEG-be but English=1 speak-IPF.PRES  
 ‘I don't speak Amharic but I do speak English.’

In negative clauses, the negative subject clitic cannot follow the subject, see (76). The negation is always negating part of the verb phrase: either the object or the verb itself. If the negative subject clitic is attached to the verb it negates the verb, see (77).

- (76) *ifa-(\*n) ɓaarɓaar-o=n ɓap-o. Namaa ifa walif-o=n ɓap-o.*  
 he-(NEG) help-DEP=3NEG have-NEG man.REL 3SG.M companion-DEP=3NEG  
 have-NEG.  
 ‘He did not have anybody to help him. He did not have anybody to live with.’  
 (Daudey & Hellenthal; story 3-2,3)
- (77) *ifa-n nama-si=n akkin(i) ifa nama-si in=akkini*  
 he-NOM man-DEF.M/F=3NEGsee:NEG he man-DEF.M/F 3NEG=see:NEG  
 ‘He didn't see the man’, ‘He didn't SEE the man.’

Thus, negative subject clitics never refer to the subject if there is an object in the clause. The subject clitic is immediately after a focussed adverb such as ‘now’ in the following example.

- (78) *anti?* *ʔamma* *asu* *kodaasi?* *dikkifay*  
*anti-ʔ* *amma=in* *asu* *kodaa-si?* *dikkif-ay*  
1-NOM now=1 just work-DEF.M/F finish-PF[3M]  
‘I have just finished the work now.’

The subject clitic is immediately after the conjunctions *oo* ‘if’, *kandē* ‘if’ and *a* of *a...kapaa*; it is also immediately after the question word and it precedes the conjunction *ka* ‘and’. The positioning after question words may suggest a focus function of the subject clitic assuming that the question words are inherently focussed but the parallel with placement immediately after other initial sentence elements such as conjunctions suggest a more structural restriction.

## 5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Subject clitics do not express selective focus on the subject. When positioned after the subject their presence indicates positive assertion of the sentence. When the subject clitic appears after a non-subject constituent, it expresses selective focus on this constituent. When preceding the verb and cliticized to it, it expresses selective focus on the verb. There is a limit to the distance between the subject clitic and the verb; there is no such limit to the distance between a subject pronoun and the verb.

Konso has a number of other pragmatic strategies in addition to the subject clitics and their placement. Very common is the use of a syntactic clitic *-yye* glossed as marker of background. In stories, clauses are often repeated to give the background for the next information unit. Both strategies are illustrated in (79). "Cleft" sentences in the form of a subject relative clause are used as a strategy to focus the subject, see (67) above.

- (79) *ka* *duttan-i-n.* *Oo* *duttan-i-n* *kammaa-yye* *i=kal-i-n*  
and satisfy-PF-PL when satisfy-PF-PL after-BGND 3=return-PF-PL  
‘...and they had enough. After being satisfied, they returned home.’ (Daudey & Hellenthal 2004: 17)

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