K’ui tii ‘Don’t speak!’ – Morphology and syntax of commands in Ts’ixa (Kalahari Khoe) and beyond

Anne-Maria Fehn
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Anne-Maria Fehn

CIBIO, Centro de Investigação em Biodiversidade e Recursos Genéticos, *InBIO*
Laboratório Associado, Universidade do Porto, Vairão & BIOPOLIS Program in Genomics, Biodiversity and Land Planning, CIBIO, Vairão

**ABSTRACT**

The Khoe-Kwadi language family makes up part of the typological unit “Southern African Khoisan” and is currently distributed across Botswana, Namibia, Angola, Zimbabwe and South Africa. Despite a recent surge of new data from a broad range of languages, no descriptive or comparative study on the expression of commands has been undertaken. In this article, I show that the Kalahari Khoe language Ts’ixa spoken in northeastern Botswana possesses a dedicated imperative clause type characterized by lack of tam marking. Ts’ixa imperatives make use of a special kind of morphology encompassing a prohibitive marker, conjunction and subordination morpheme which appear with canonical (2nd person) and extended (1st and 3rd person) imperatives. In the domain of politeness, Ts’ixa imperatives may combine with interrogative and vocative morphology. When considered within a cross-Khoe-Kwadi framework taking into account languages from all major subgroups, it further becomes evident that many aspects of Ts’ixa imperatives can be generalized for the family as a whole. In addition, the comparative viewpoint not only reveals a historical link between interrogative and imperative morphology, but also opens up new perspectives for both genealogical and areal approaches to imperatives in Khoe-Kwadi.

**KEYWORDS**

Khoe-Kwadi, Southern African Khoisan, imperatives, comparative linguistics, language contact

**RéSUMÉ**

Recouvrant des langues actuellement parlées au Botswana, en Namibie, en Angola, au Zimbabwe et en Afrique du Sud, la famille khoe-kwadi fait partie de l'unité typologique des langues « khoisan d’Afrique australe ». Malgré l’afflux récent de nouvelles données provenant d’un large éventail de langues, aucune étude descriptive ou comparative sur l’expression des ordres n’a été entreprise. Dans cet article, je montre que la langue khoe du Kalahari, Ts’ixa, parlée dans le nord-est du Botswana, manifeste un type d’impératif spécifique, caractérisé par l’absence de marquage tam. Les impératifs en ts’ixa utilisent une morphologie particulière, comprenant un marqueur d’interdiction, une conjonction et un morphème de subordination, attestés avec les impératifs canoniques (2ème personne) et les impératifs étendus (1ère et 3ème personne). Concernant l’expression de la politesse, les impératifs Ts’ixa se combinent avec la morphologie interrogative et vocative. Dans une perspective comparative, l’examen des langues de tous les principaux sous-groupes khoe-kwadi met en évidence que de nombreuses caractéristiques des impératifs ts’ixa peuvent être généralisées à l’ensemble de la famille. Non seulement le point de vue comparatif révèle un lien historique entre la morphologie interrogative et impérative, mais il ouvre également de nouvelles perspectives pour les approches généalogiques et aréales des impératifs en khoe-kwadi.

**MOTS-CLÉS**

Khoe-Kwadi, Khoisan d'Afrique australe, impératifs, linguistique comparative, contact de langues
1. INTRODUCTION

Recent years have seen a big leap forward in the documentation of non-Bantu click languages from southern Africa commonly subsumed under the typological label “Khoisan”. Comprehensive descriptions as well as sketch grammars have become available for a considerable number of languages from the Kx’a (Dickens 2005; Collins & Gruber 2014; Heine & König 2015; Pratchett 2020a), Tuu (Güldemann 2005; 2013; Collins & Namaseb 2011) and Khoe-Kwadi families (e.g., Kilian-Hatz 2008; Haacke 2013; Visser 2013; Widlok 2013; Collins 2023; Fehn 2016; Phiri 2021), covering (almost) the entire geographical and genealogical spectrum (Map 1). Given the amount of available linguistic descriptions, surprisingly little is known about the expression of commands. Beyond occasional mentions of an imperative clause type in descriptive works, no in-depth study exploring the encoding of directive modality in southern African “Khoisan” has yet been undertaken. In this article, I intend to provide a starting point for future research by offering preliminary insights into the expression of commands and prohibitions in the Khoe-Kwadi language Ts’ixa.1

My aim is two-fold: First, I will provide a language-specific overview using both elicited and natural language data which not only makes reference to the grammatical encoding of commands and obligations, but also to the ethnographic background. Second, I will adopt a comparative perspective and consider observations made for Ts’ixa in the context of publicly available descriptions of commands in related Khoe-Kwadi languages. I will thereby consider both closely related varieties from the Khwe and Shua dialect clusters, as well as more remote relatives from across the family, including the extinct Angolan language Kwadi.

The present article is structured as follows: I start out by setting up the preliminaries, including a review of Khoe-Kwadi classification (§1.1), an introduction to the Ts’ixa speech community (§1.2), and a brief description of the typological profile of the Ts’ixa language (§1.3). In §2, I present the Ts’ixa data, starting from “canonical” (2nd person) imperatives with different levels of politeness (§2.1). I then turn to non-canonical imperative expressions directed at individuals encoded as 1st (§2.2) and 3rd person (§2.3) subjects. §3 focuses on comparative aspects (§3.1) and diachronic relations (§3.2) in the morphosyntax of imperative clauses across Khoe-Kwadi. §4 provides a short conclusion and outlook on future research.

1.1 The genealogical classification of Khoe-Kwadi

In his influential classification of the languages of Africa, Greenberg (1963) postulated a genealogical unit “Khoisan”, encompassing all non-Bantu, non-Cushitic click languages of southern and eastern Africa. This proposal has since been rejected in favour of three independent language families, Kx’a (Heine & Honken 2010), Tuu (Güldemann 2005) and Khoe-Kwadi (Vossen 1997; Güldemann 2004; Fehn & Rocha 2023), that co-exist in a linguistic area roughly delimited by the Kalahari Basin of southern Africa (Güldemann 1998; 2014). While the two eastern African click languages Hadza and Sandawe are usually considered isolates (Sands 1998), a link between Sandawe and Khoe-Kwadi has been suggested on the basis of lexical, morphological and typological evidence (Güldemann & Elderkin 2010).

The Khoe-Kwadi family (Figure 2) consists of two sister branches, Khoe and Kwadi, whereas the Kwadi branch is represented by a single language which used to be spoken around the Curoca River Basin in southwestern Angola (Westphal 1965; 1971; Güldemann 2004; Fehn & Rocha 2023). The Khoe or “Central Khoisan” languages were recognized as a family by Maingard (Maingard 1961;
Due to the association between speakers of Khoekhoe and pastoralism, a foreign origin of the herders (Bleek 1851; Lepsius 1880: 188; Meinhof 1912) and, later on, of the entire language family (Westphal 1963; 1980; Güldemann 2008; 2020) has frequently been evoked. Based on typological (Güldemann 2008; 2020) as well as extra-linguistic evidence from archaeology (e.g., Sadr 2015; Lander & Russell 2018) and human genetics (e.g., Henn et al. 2008; Pickrell et al. 2014; Pinto et al. 2016), it is now widely assumed that Khoekhoe-Kwadi languages were introduced in southern Africa by 1963), Westphal (Westphal 1962a; 1962b; 1971; 1980), Köhler (Köhler 1962; 1963; 1966; 1971; 1981), Baucom (1974) and Winter (1981; 1986) before becoming the subject of a thorough historical-comparative reconstruction by Vossen (1997). While the subdivision of Khoe into a Khoekhoe and a Kalahari Khoe branch is relatively undisputed, the further existence of an eastern and a western Kalahari Khoe unit as assumed by Vossen (1997) is doubtful (cf. Güldemann & Fehn 2017; Fehn 2020; Pratchett 2020b) and therefore not accounted for in Figure 2. Likewise, Vossen’s (1997) classification of Ts’ixa as a dialect of Shua is rejected here on the basis of my own research (Fehn 2016; 2019).
sheep herders from eastern Africa, around 2,000 BP. The details of this migration, as well as the historical relationship between the original herders and modern Khoe-Kwadi speakers – most of whom are foragers – are topics of ongoing research (Fehn et al. 2022).

1.2 The Ts’ixa speech community

Ts’ixa is a Kalahari Khoe language spoken by ca. 200 individuals in the village of Mababe in the Ngamiland region of northern Botswana. The Ts’ixa speech community exclusively consists of former hunter-gatherers who belong to the ethnographic macro-unit commonly referred to as “San”, “Bushmen” or “Basarwa”. The term Ts’ixa transparently traces back to the expression ts’íí.xà ‘having buttocks’ and is commonly understood to be a xenonym coined by a closely related neighbouring community, the Bugakhwe, to refer to the inhabitants of Mababe. Speakers of Ts’ixa do not consider this term derogatory and agreed to its use for the language and speech community in scholarly publications. Their preferred term of self-reference is Xuukhoe ‘people left behind’ which is also in use among various Khwe-speaking communities of the Okavango River Basin. The unit Ts’ixa is further subdivided into three subgroups or extended families referred to as Handakhoe ‘people of the plains’, Hiyokhoe ‘people of the forest’, and Danisi, with the latter term referring to the descendants of formerly Shua-speaking migrants from the east.

The Ts’ixa led a fully nomadic life until their hunting grounds were turned into conservation areas during the 1960s. Village elders were still born and socialized in a hunter-gatherer lifestyle and retain a profound knowledge of their natural environment, traditions and social values. While the Ts’ixa community has a history of headmen going back to the time before sedentarism, their social organization is predominantly egalitarian, with few differences between the individual rights of men and women. Although the younger generation is progressively adapting to a westernized lifestyle and has partially gained access to higher education, many traditions are still observed, including joking and taboo relationships, female initiation rites, traditional dances and healing.

Ts’ixa is still used as a medium of everyday communication by most villagers over 40, and during my fieldwork (2010-2013), even children had at least a passive knowledge of the language. All villagers are bilingual in Setswana, and those younger than 50 are usually fluent in both spoken and written English. Speakers of Ts’ixa also understand and speak the neighbouring Khoe language Bu-
gakhwe, and those having relatives in the east often have a passive knowledge of Shua. Hence, Ts’ixa is exposed to contact influence from both related (Shua, Khwe) and unrelated (Setswana, English) languages.

1.3 Typological features of Ts’ixa

Languages of the Kho-Kwadi family generally display a preference for verb-final constituent order in pragmatically unmarked clauses (Heine 1976). While speakers of Ts’ixa clearly favour SOV in elicitation contexts, OSV and especially SVO appear with almost equal frequency in narrative texts, suggesting that the constituent order is affected by the information structure of the clause. While the basic constituent order in the noun phrase is head-final, pragmatic considerations may trigger inversion. Ts’ixa nouns are optionally marked by portmanteau morphemes encoding person, gender and number (PGN). These clitics serve the function of specific articles and attach to about 75% of the language’s noun phrases.

Ts’ixa distinguishes between three syntactic verb classes, according to the number of core participants they may take: intransitives, transitives and S/O-ambitransitives. Ditransitives in the sense of Kittilä (2006), i.e., with two objects treated like the single object of a transitive predication, are not attested. Subject and direct object are optionally case-marked by means of the above-mentioned PGN clitics, which (in singular and plural, but not in dual) display a nominative-accusative distinction. The direct object is optionally marked by the postposition (ʔ)à, which interacts with the argument’s information-structural properties (Fehn 2017; McGregor 2018). Oblique (peripheral) participants are obligatorily marked by a set of semantically specified postpositions.

Like other Khoe languages, Ts’ixa has a rich suffixed morphology: Derivational affixes attach to both verbs and nouns, and a subset of the language’s tense-aspect morphemes is linked to the verb stem via the so-called juncture morpheme (Elderkin 1986; Heine 1986; Vossen 2010). Predicates may be simple or complex. Complex predicates display semantic features similar to serial verb constructions and involve two or more verbs, which are connected by the juncture morpheme (Fehn 2016; Güldemann & Fehn 2017; Fehn & Phiri 2022).

Some features like a preference of SVO over SOV in narrative texts, inverted constituent order in the noun phrase, verb-like modifiers and the absence of ditransitive constructions suggest past substrate influence from a dialect of the Kx’a language !Xun (Fehn 2016).

2. Expressing commands in Ts’ixa

Ts’ixa expresses commands and obligations, but also advice, pleas and wishes, by using the imperative. The imperative is here understood as a specific clause type with morphosyntactic properties not shared by other clause types, i.e., declarative and interrogative (see, e.g., König & Siemund 2007 on basic clause types). The imperative can be oriented towards 1st, 2nd and 3rd person subjects. Therefore, Ts’ixa does not formally differentiate between “canonical” imperatives (§2.1), and hortative (§2.2), jussive or optative (§2.3) expressions.

A finite verb phrase in declarative and interrogative clauses requires the presence of a grammatical formative encoding tense, aspect or modality (tam). This formative may either be a particle preceding the verb stem, or a suffix (1a-c). The majority of tense-aspect markers are portmanteau morphemes encoding temporal and aspectual notions, as well as mood. While Ts’ixa has a dedicated interrogative morpheme, the clause final particle ré (1d), declarative clauses do not require a clause type marker.

(1) Examples of declarative and interrogative clauses in Ts’ixa

a. Declarative: Imperfective
   
   tí kò  gã̄̄̄̄̄̀ kàà táó.tàò=mà
   1SG |PFV try-VOL drive=SG.M

   ‘I want to try driving.’ (elicited)
b. Declarative: Hodiernal Past
\[ \text{ʔáj。ȃ.kʰóè ʔã ̄ ã́-káxオȃ-n。ȃ t。ȃ kʰッȃ・ȃ=n。ȃ ʔà k'ó。ȃ=m̄ móláò} \]
headman know-CAUS-1-PST person=PL.C ACC new=SG.M law
\[ \text{kà kà} \]
ATTR MPO

‘The headman informed the people about the new law.’

c. Declarative: Subjunctive
\[ \text{k'olóí=sà ʔé.m ̀ hĩ̄ĩ́ ʔíté n。ȃá=ḿ} \]
car=SG.M 3SG.M SBJV do NEG DEM.REF=SG.M

‘He is not capable of fixing the car himself.’ (elicited)

d. Interrogative
\[ \text{ǂˀórゥȃ tú ʔ。ȃná-há rè?} \]
sourplum 2PL.C know:J-PRF Q

‘Do you know sourplums?’

The Ts’ixa imperative follows a cross-linguistically common pattern in using the simple verb stem, which may consist of the bare root or of a root plus derivational affix (Aikhenvald 2010: 18; Aikhenvald 2017: 5; Devos & Van Olmen 2013: 44; König & Siemund 2007: 303). Imperative clauses are incompatible with TAM marking and therefore clearly distinct from declarative clauses which are defined by the presence of at least one TAM morpheme or a copula-like element. As will be seen, the distinction between interrogative and imperative is less clear-cut: the interrogative particle rè may be part of an (unmarked) imperative clause if the speaker wishes to be more polite (§2.1). While Ts’ixa does have a dedicated imperative morphology which includes a conjunction nà, a prohibitive particle tíí, and a subordination marker kè, an imperative morpheme as such is absent. Infrequently, the particle (ʔ)è occurs, possibly as a result of contact influence from Khwe or Shua (see §3.1).

2.1 Canonical imperatives (2nd person Subject)

Canonical (2nd person) imperatives in Ts’ixa are expressed by means of the bare (2a-b) or derived (2c) verb root. The subject pronoun is considered implicit and usually dropped (2a-b), but tends to be expressed when multiple individuals are addressed (2c). Word order in imperative clauses is flexible and aligns with the intended information-structural properties of the utterance. Imperative clauses may be verb-final (2a, 2c) or verb-initial (2b). In (2c), given as reply to the question ‘What shall I boil?’, the object has been fronted and occurs in the focus slot before the openly expressed subject.

(2) Examples for “canonical” imperatives in Ts’ixa

a. \[ \text{sékùélé ʔò kátù} \]
school DIR go

‘Go to school!’ (elicited)

b. \[ \text{lée ʔlùū=sì ň=sà ʔà} \]
taste food=SG.F DEM.PROX=SG.F ACC

‘Taste this food!’

c. \[ \text{k’óxá=mà tö kxăbá.ıkxăbá-kàxù} \]
meat=SG.M 2PL.C boil-CAUS

‘Boil the meat!’

---

3. An anonymous reviewer rightfully observes that imperative expressions are by definition context-specific and therefore derive their TAM value from the context of the communication itself.
Ts’ixa does not have a dedicated clause type marker signalling imperative clauses. Very rarely, a particle (ʔ)è appears, which was presumably borrowed from Khwe or Shua where it functions as a vocative and imperative marker (3a) (cf. §3.1: (16)). The Ts’ixa vocative rè is formally identical with the interrogative marker and may even share the same historical source (see §3.2). However, when used as vocative, rè appears right after the subject, and not in clause-final position (compare (1d)). The vocative occasionally appears with overt 2nd person subjects in imperative clauses (3b). Imperatives with a vocative subject pronoun are considered more polite than those without a (vocative) subject pronoun.

(3) “Marked” imperatives in Ts’ixa
a. Imperatives with the (borrowed) particle (ʔ)è
gàò è nà màùù
look IMP CONJ.IMP see
‘Look and see!’

b. Imperatives with a vocative pronoun
tsà rè gàò
2SG.M VOC look
‘Look!’

Ts’ixa uses a dedicated conjunction nà to link verbs in imperative clauses (4a). In declarative and interrogative clauses, other strategies are used, including complex predicates in which individual verb stems are linked by means of the juncture morpheme (4b-c), the conjunction ʔà (4c), and the discourse referential marker tʰí.à (4d).

(4) Strategies of verb linkage in Ts’ixa
a. Imperative: nà
hàà nà dzàà
come CONJ.IMP taste
‘Come and taste!’

b. Declarative: complex predicate
cʰè-tà kóñò sà kò gàì-à kʰàà màà=xì ?ò
fall.off-NEG.IPfv when 2SG.F IPfv pick.up-J give parent=SG.F DIR
γà=sì ∥ú=m-kàΧù
DEM.REF=SG.F nurse-CAUS
‘When (the umbilical cord) does not fall off, you pick up (the child) and give it to the mother, (so that) she makes it nurse.’

c. Declarative: tà
k’àà.k’òè=mà k’ãà=m ñèò.kèòè kàà ʔà glàà.k’òè=sì ts’àà-tà
man=SG.M beat-J repeat CONJ woman=SG.F steal:J-PST
‘(They) tortured the man and kidnapped the woman.’

d. Declarative: tì.à
lèbo=tè=m tò k’èè tì.à !’àrà.!”àrà-sì
bottle=SG.M PST fall DRM break-REFL
‘The bottle fell and broke.’ (elicited)

4. A conjunction nà is widespread in languages of the Bantu family (see, e.g., Nurse 2006). However, a direct borrowing from a Bantu language into Ts’ixa seems unlikely, given the relatively wide distribution of a dedicated imperfective conjunction nà in languages of the Kalahari subgroup of Khoe-Kwadi (see also (19) in §3.1).
Along similar lines, the dedicated prohibitive morpheme *tíí* is restricted to imperative clauses (5a). In declarative and interrogative clauses, the default negation particle *ʔíté* (5b), and the negated imperfective *-tã̀* (5c) appear.

(5) Negation strategies in Ts’ixa

a. Imperative: *tíí*

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{person}=\text{sg.m} & \quad \text{listen} \quad \text{PROH} \quad \text{brain} \quad \text{IPFV} \quad \text{be.sick} \\
\text{‘Don’t listen to this man, he is mad!’}
\end{align*}
\]

b. Declarative (default): *ʔíté*

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{beer} & \quad \text{1SG} \quad \text{FUT} \quad \text{drink} \quad \text{NEG} \\
\text{‘I will never drink beer.’}
\end{align*}
\]

c. Declarative (Imperfective): *-tã̀*

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{dog}=\text{sg.m} & \quad \text{IPFV} \quad \text{bad} \quad \text{ADVZ} \quad \text{look-REFL} \quad \text{but bite-NEG.IPFV} \\
\text{‘The dog looks dangerous, but it does not bite.’ (elicited)}
\end{align*}
\]

In addition to a dedicated conjunction and negation particle, Ts’ixa imperative morphology also includes a particle *kè* (6), which is tentatively interpreted as a clause-final subordination marker (but see §3.2).

(6) The subordination particle *kè*

a. *kè*

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{let} & \quad \text{3PL.C} \quad \text{eat.meat} \quad \text{meat}=\text{sg.m} \quad \text{get.hungry-PST} \quad \text{SUB.IMP} \\
\text{‘Let them eat the meat, (because) they are hungry.’}
\end{align*}
\]

b. *kè*

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{let} & \quad \text{3SG.M} \quad \text{go} \quad \text{that.thing} \quad \text{3SG.M} \quad \text{do-J-PST} \quad \text{NEG} \quad \text{SUB.IMP} \\
\text{‘Let him go, (because) he is innocent (lit. he didn’t do that thing).’}
\end{align*}
\]

The genuine way to express obligation, i.e., ‘you must do X’, is a simple imperative clause (7a). Especially younger speakers also tend to use the Tswana verb *tsónèlà ~ tsónàlà* which is grammatically treated as an accomplishment verb (Fehn 2016: 134–136 on lexical verb classes), i.e., its unmarked meaning is ‘to become obliged’. It therefore requires use of the past/perfect suffixes *-nà* (7b) or *-hã ~ -ha* (7c). In the available data, use of *tsónèlà ~ tsónàlà* is restricted to 2nd person subjects and it is not clear whether it can be used with imperatives directed at 1st or 3rd person subjects. To express obligation for 1st person subjects, the volition suffix *-kàà* appears to be the preferred choice (10c-d).

(7) The expression of obligation in Ts’ixa

a. *sà kà*  

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{2SG.F} & \quad \text{POSS} \quad \text{parent}=\text{PL.C} \quad \text{ACC} \quad \text{obey} \\
\text{‘You must obey your parents.’}
\end{align*}
\]

b. *tsà*  

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{2SG.M} & \quad \text{1SG} \quad \text{ACC} \quad \text{meat} \quad \text{MPO} \quad \text{buy-J-BEN-MUST-PRF} \\
\text{‘You must buy meat for me.’ (elicited)}
\end{align*}
\]
c. tsá kâ̄-tsônàlà-nà-hà Mâ̄û ṣò
   2SG.M go-must-J-PRF Maun DIR
   ‘You must go to Maun.’

While there are various means to mitigate the effect of commands in Ts’ixa, all of them are firmly rooted within the imperative clause type. One possibility to appear more polite, the use of a vocative pronoun, has already been discussed above (3b). Other options include the addition of tsá/sá tí jirâ ‘I ask you (m/f) to’, commonly translated as ‘please’ (8a), and the formulation of the command as a question, either solely by intonation (8b) or by adding the interrogative particle rè (8c). Following cross-linguistically common patterns (Aikhenvald 2017: 3), advice also falls within the semantic spectrum of the imperative, but requires addition of the clause-initial particle hĩ̄̄.nā.

(8) Polite commands and advice in Ts’ixa

a. with jirâ ‘ask for’
   tsá tí jirâ ٥k’â̄m.٥k’â̄m tsá câ̄-tå̄=sè
   2SG.M 1SG ask.for knock 2SG.M enter-NEG.IPV=ADVZ
   ‘Please knock before you enter (lit. I am asking you to knock before entering).’ (elicited)

b. Question without rè (but with rising intonation)
   tí kà ٥ʔū=mā dzūū?
   1SG poss hair=SG.M cut.hair
   ‘Could you cut my hair (lit. Cut my hair)?’ (elicited)

c. Question with rè and rising intonation
   tsá hâ̄.kâ̄-nâ̄-mâ rè tí
   2SG.M bring-J-BEN Q 1SG
   ‘Could you bring me (some coins)?’

d. with clause-initial hĩ̄̄.nā
   hĩ̄̄.nā ٥kâ̄.kâ̄m.٥kâ̄ ʔà tān
   PART early.morning LOC get.up
   ‘You should get up early in the morning to see lions.’

The preferred way to formulate polite commands is by what may be considered a fusion of imperative and interrogative clause types (8b-c). While intonation and even clause type marking match the interrogative (cf. 1d), the absence of TAM marking is typical of the imperative. It is not clear whether the politeness considerations in Ts’ixa are a genuine feature of the speech community’s ethnolinguistic repertoire, or a recent contact feature introduced through westernized schooling and interactions with tourists. Cross-linguistically, it appears that societies with a mainly egalitarian social organization either lack dedicated imperative expressions (Aikhenvald 2017: 11–12) or use them without associations of dominance and impoliteness (Aikhenvald 2017: 34–35). The latter is certainly also true for Ts’ixa where formulaic expressions like greetings and well-wishes are commonly encoded by the imperative. Ex. (9) provides the widely used formulaic exchange used to say goodbye.

(9) Saying goodbye in Ts’ixa

a. kâ̄=sè kâ̄
   good=ADVZ go
   ‘Go well!’ (said by person who is staying behind)
b. \( kā̑̚=sè \) \( kā̕ū \)
good=ADV stay

‘Stay well!’ (said by person who is leaving)

2.2 Commands directed at 1st person subjects

For commands directed at a first person (inclusive) subject, the term “hortative” is sometimes used, particularly in languages with dedicated morphosyntactic means to express canonical and non-canonical imperatives (e.g., Overall 2017 on the Peruvian Chicham language Aguaruna). Here, hortative is used more generally for a semantic subtype of commands commonly translated with ‘let’s do X’ which is formally expressed by the imperative. The 1st person dual or plural subject pronoun is always overt and cannot be omitted (10a-b).

(10) Hortative expressions in Ts’ixa

a. \( lè \) \( gùnî \) \( ʔò \) \( kā̕ū \)
   1PL.M hunt DIR go
   ‘Let’s go hunting!’ (elicited)

b. \( kʰúṁ \) \( Kʰʷáï \) \( ʔò \) \( k̃̃ũ̀ \) \( tìí \)
   1DU.C Khwai DIR go PROH today
   ‘Let’s not go to Khwai today!’

Weaker hortative expressions or suggestions best translated with ‘we should do X’ are usually expressed as questions, i.e., with the interrogative particle \( rè \) (11a-b). The expression of an obligation (‘we need to do X’) involves the volition suffix -\( kàà \) following the derived or underived verb (11c-d). In other respects, the morphosyntax of all clauses given under (10) follows the imperative scheme, including lack of TAM marking and use of the dedicated imperative morphology, such as the conjunction \( nà \) (11b).

(11) Suggestions and obligations

a. \( ʔ.\text{xúà} \) \( ʔà \) \( tsé \) \( ñ̃ũ̀ \) \( rè? \)
   here LOC 1PL.C stay Q
   ‘Should we stay here?’

b. \( tsé \) \( c’āá \) \( nà \) \( kā̕ū \) \( rè? \)
   1PL.C exit CONJIMP go Q
   ‘Should we go away?’

c. \( lè \) \( kà \) \( kë̄=mà \) \( lè \) \( ñ̃̃ĩ̀-á \) \( cēé-tì-kū-kàà \)
   1PL.M poss belt=SG.M 1PL.M pull-J pull-DUR-COLL-VOL
   ‘We need to tighten our belts.’ (elicited)

d. \( glà\text{nà}=dzì \) \( m̃̃ĩ=dzà \) \( tsé \) \( tsxēé-xû-tì-kū-kàà \)
   leaf=PL.F DEM.DIST=PL.F 1PL.C tear-COMPL-DUR-COLL-VOL
   ‘We need to tear off those leaves.’

In some imperative clauses with 1st person subjects, irrespective of whether the intended meaning is a command (12a), an obligation (12b) or a goal (12c), the suffix -\( tïgërè \) appears. When co-occurring with the volitional suffix, -\( tïgërè \) precedes -\( kàà \) (12b). The origin, semantic scope, and usage frame of -\( tïgërè \) will require further research.
The suffix -tígèrè

a. \[ \text{lé } \text{lxé-tígérè kálásâ } \text{là } \text{nà } \text{ɛ̀jë=mà } \text{tábû-kâxù} \]
   \[ 1\text{PL.M lop-SFX branch ACC CONJ.IMP fire=SG.M burn-CAUS} \]
   ‘Let’s lop (some) branches and get the fire burning.’

b. \[ \text{ǀáò kà } \text{ŋgél} \text{kà } \text{tsé } \text{kò } \text{hûn-kà=dças} \]
   \[ \text{money ATTR month MPO 1PL.C IPFV do-INST=PL.F} \]
   \[ \text{tsé } \text{lûm-kâxù-tígérè-kàà} \]
   \[ 1\text{PL.C short-CAUS-SFX-VOL} \]
   ‘We need to reduce the money we are spending each month.’ (elicited)

c. \[ \text{ŋûn=mà } \text{tsé } \text{♩aá-xù-tígérè } \text{ŋgúu } \text{tsé } \text{kò } \text{ŋlûn-kàà } \text{kónò} \]
   \[ \text{place=SG.M 1PL.C clear-COMPL-SFX house 1PL.C IPFV build-VOL when} \]
   ‘We have to clear the place if we want to build a house.’

2.3 Commands directed at 3\text{rd} person subjects

The imperative clause type in Ts’ixa also permits for 3\text{rd} person subjects, usually when a jussive or optative reading is intended (13a). Imperative clauses with 3\text{rd} person subjects are most common in reported speech featuring the quotative particle tʰù (13b-d). tʰù usually follows the complement clause and most likely derives from a verb tʰii ‘be thus’ (cf. also Fehn 2016: 263). The verb tʰù retains certain properties of a verb, such as the ability to receive tense-aspect marking as in (13c) where the verbum dicendi has been elided. Embedded imperative clauses cannot receive tam marking and display imperative morphology, such as the prohibitive particle tii (13d).

(13) Jussive and optative expressions in Ts’ixa

a. \[ \text{ʔé.m̀ } \text{k̃û̀ } \]
   \[ 3\text{SG.M go} \]
   ‘He should go/ He may go.’

b. \[ \text{♩ûû=mà } \text{kà } \text{♩ûû=mà } \text{k’arû-♩ûû } \text{tô } \text{jûrû } \text{ʔé.♩ûû} \]
   \[ \text{parent=SG.M POSS parent=SG.M boy-DIM PST ask.for 3PL.M} \]
   \[ \text{ɛ̀jë=dças } \text{ʔû } \text{ɛ̀jë=mà } \text{ʔû } \text{cáá } \text{tû} \]
   \[ \text{firewood=PL.F ACC fire=SG.M LOC enter QUOT} \]
   ‘The grandfather asked the little boys to add firewood to the fire.’

c. \[ \text{T’elâtûle=sí } \text{kûû } \text{tû-nû-hû } \]
   \[ \text{Thelathile=SG.F gather.firewood QUOT-J-PRF} \]
   ‘Thelathile (told the children) to gather firewood.’

d. \[ \text{tsé } \text{kà } \text{dàô=dças } \text{tsé } \text{♩ûû-nû } \text{ʔé.n } \text{tsé } \text{ʔû } \text{kûmà} \]
   \[ \text{1PL.C POSS track=PL.F 1PL.C kill-PST 3PL.C 1PL.C ACC pursue} \]
   \[ \text{tii } \text{tû} \]
   \[ \text{PROH QUOT} \]
   ‘We covered our tracks, so that they would not follow us.’

5. There erroneously given as tii.
3. A cross-Khoe-Kwadi perspective

In the following two sections, an expanded perspective on the expression of imperatives in the Khoe-Kwadi language family will be provided. As many known Khoe-Kwadi languages are already extinct or severely endangered, an attempt was made to assemble as many examples as possible from a maximally wide range of sources. In part owing to the exploratory nature of the present article, in part to the limited amount of data available, I will restrict myself to the morphological representation of canonical imperatives directed at 2<sup>nd</sup> person subjects. §3.1 presents a general overview of imperative clauses and morphology, and §3.2 looks at Khoe-Kwadi imperative morphology from a diachronic perspective while also considering contact influence from languages of the Kx’a and Tuu families within the Kalahari Basin typological area (Güldemann 1998; Güldemann & Fehn 2017). Although occasional reference to typological features attested elsewhere is made, a thorough assessment of the observed patterns in a cross-linguistic framework is beyond the scope of this work and will hopefully form the subject of future studies.

To facilitate comparison, all data taken from published or archival sources has been transliterated to match IPA standards, and glossing has been adapted. When deemed necessary, the original transcription is provided in brackets < >.

3.1 A comparative overview of imperatives in Khoe-Kwadi

From the available data, it seems clear that the use of zero marking to express canonical imperatives is a cross-Khoe feature. All varieties surveyed displayed imperatives directed at 2<sup>nd</sup> person subjects with the following features:

1. absence of TAM marking
2. optional use of a dedicated clause type marker
3. optional expression of pronominal subjects

Examples of unmarked imperatives for all major subgroups and language complexes of the Khoe branch of Khoe-Kwadi (see Figure 2) are provided in (14).

(14) Unmarked imperatives across Khoe

Kalahari Khoe: Khwe
a. á.á, tʃá tí ṭá ḫx'áá
   no 2SG.M 1SG ACC wait
   ‘No, you have to wait for me!’ (Khwe; Kilian-Hatz 2008: 122)

b. tsá tí ṭá=m=m áã=má
   2SG.M call DEM=SG.M child=SG.M
   ‘Call the boy!’ (|Ani; Heine 1999: 63)

Kalahari Khoe: Shua

c. ṭáá mári ci ṭò
   bring money 1SG DIR
   ‘Bring the money to me.’ (G|oro; Westphal n.d. a)

d. tí càã.hú ʧò ělxáó ṭúú.
   1SG brother DIR spear take.to
   ‘Take the spear to my brother.’ (Deti; Westphal n.d. b)

Kalahari Khoe: Tshwa

e. yii k’oo.xo kaxu ka ělx’um-a-xu.
   DEM meat knife with cut-J-COMPL
   ‘Cut this meat with a knife.’ (Tjwao; Phiri n.d.)
f.  <khonwa nyɔo>
    xɔm  wa  jũũ
  ground LOC sit
  ‘Sit on the ground!’ (Hiechware; Dornan 1917: 71)

Kalahari Khoe: Giui-Gǁana

g.  c’uũ-xα  kãũ
    beautiful-ADVZ go
  ‘Go well!’ (Kua; Collins 2023: 36)

Kalahari Khoe: Naro

h.  ǂõõ
    eat
  ‘Eat!’ (Naro; Visser 2013: 198)

Khoekhoe: Nama-Damara

i.  mu
    see
  ‘See!’ (Nama; Hagman 1977: 146)

Khoekhoe: Haiǁom

j.  ma  te  tsi  ko
    give 1SG 2SG.M EMPH
  ‘Do give it to me [now]!’ (Hailom; Widlok 2013: 349)

Khoekhoe: !Ora

k.  !ae
    wait
  ‘Wait!’ (!Ora; Meinhof 1930: 60)

Westphal’s Kwadi field notes (Westphal n.d. c) include only few examples for imperative clauses. In two of the examples available (15a-b), the bare, unmarked verb-stem appears. The third example contains a postverbal element -ʔα which may be an optional imperative marker, but is most likely linked to (indirect) object-indexing. While the addressees in (15a) and (15c) are not overtly expressed, (15b) features a pronominal subject of the 2nd person dual.

(15) Unmarked imperatives in Kwadi

a.  <xwã!>
    xũã
  ‘Dance!’ (Westphal n.d. c)

b.  <uwa xwã!>
    u.wa  xũã
    2DU dance
  ‘Dance (you two)!’ (Westphal n.d. c)

c.  <tanǀ’öká’a>
    ta  Ꙁ kã-ʔα
    1SG fire:?SG.M give-?
  ‘Give me fire!’ (Westphal n.d. c)

6. The Giui-Gǁana variety referred to as “Kua” by Collins (2023) is not identical with the Tshwa dialect of the same name described in Vossen (1997), but genealogically close to Glana (C. Collins, p.c.).
While all Khoe-Kwadi languages have zero-marked imperatives, not all languages automatically link absence of TAM morphology with this particular clause type. For example, zero-marked verb forms in Khwe are also used to express thetic events (Kilian-Hatz 2008: 121), although imperative is still considered the “default interpretation” (Kilian-Hatz 2008: 123).

Some of the Khoe languages surveyed also make optional use of a morpheme which could be interpreted as an imperative clause type marker (16). While the most common position for the imperative marker is clause final, it may also occur in clause-second (Gloro (16c)) or clause-initial position (Kua (16g)). An imperative marker ṭè, è or wè also used as vocative is found in Khwe and Shua (16a-e) (Kilian-Hatz 2008: 124; Heine 1999: 64; Westphal n.d. a; n.d. d). The very limited Tshwa data did not reveal any overt imperative marking, save for the singular appearance of an element ho in Hiechware (16f) which may be cognate with Naro o (16h). The Khoekhoe varieties Nama and Haiǁom both use a particle re (16i-k), which has additional connotations of politeness (i.e., ‘please’) in Nama (Hagman 1977: 146; Haacke 2013: 335–336).

(16) Marked imperatives across Khoe
Kalahari Khoe: Khwe (ȑè)
a. jāá ṭè
come IMP
‘Come!’ (Khwe; Kilian-Hatz 2008: 126)
b. kāų ḍè Váę (kà)
go IMP home LOC
‘Go home!’ (ǁAni; Heine 1999: 63)
Kalahari Khoe: Shua (wè ~ è)
c. ḗêmèrè wè tí ċò ṭàā bucket IMP 1SG DIR bring
‘Bring the bucket to me.’ (Gǀoro; Westphal n.d. a)
d. múū ġlōō xàm wè
see big lion IMP
‘Look at the big lion!’ (Nata-Shua; Westphal n.d. d)
e. lií tó wè
sing 2PL.C IMP
‘Sing!’ (Deti; Westphal n.d. b)
Kalahari Khoe: Tshwa (ho)
f. <ama ǁkhaho>
ʔama ǁx’aa ho
pot wash ?IMP
‘Wash the pot!’ (Hiechware; Dornan 1917: 71)
Kalahari Khoe: Giuí-Gǀana (nà)
g. nà cuá kāų
IMP NEG go
‘Don’t go!’ (Kua; Collins 2023: 36)
Kalahari Khoe: Naro (o)
h. ḍoxobe.kx’am te o
open 1SG IMP
‘Open (for) me!’ (Naro; Visser 2013: 198)
K'ui tii ‘Don’t speak!’ – Morphology and syntax of commands in Ts’ixa (Kalahari Khoe) and beyond

Khoekhoe: Nama-Damara (re)

i.  nyaa re
dance IMP
‘Please dance!’ (Nama; Haacke 2013: 336)

Khoekhoe: Haiǁom (re)

j.  ha re
come IMP
‘Come!’ (Haiǁom; Widlok 2013: 349)

Khoekhoe: !Ora (re)

k.  ʔau re
give IMP
‘Give (me)!’ (!Ora; Meinhof 1930: 60)

While the Zimbabwean Tshwa variety Tjwao does not seem to have a dedicated imperative clause type marker, a special set of 2nd person pronouns different from declarative clauses is used whenever the subject is overtly expressed (17a-b). A similar phenomenon has been observed in the Giui-Gǀana variety Kua by Collins (2023: 36), who dubs this special paradigm “subjunctive” (17c-d).

(17) 2nd person declarative and “subjunctive” pronouns in Tjwao and Kua

a.  tʃa kua ti.a tʰũũ-kaxu
2SG.M IPFV 1SG.ACC injure-CAUS
‘You are making me (meaning: my head) hurt.’ (Tjwao; Phiri n.d.)

b.  tʃi kx’ui-a kũũ tii, tʃi tʃee.tʃee na kũũ
2SG.M talk-J go PROH 2SG.M listen CONJ.IMP go
‘Don’t walk talking, walk and listen!’ (Tjwao; Phiri n.d.)

c.  sá è kwà k̃̀ũ̀
2SG.F SBJ PROG go
‘You are going.’ (Kua; Collins 2023: 172)

d.  sì ciúa kâž
2SG.F NEG go
‘You don’t go!’ (Kua; Collins 2023: 38)

Negated imperative or prohibitive clauses are found across the Khoe subgroup of Khoe-Kwadi, but not all languages actually display a dedicated prohibitive marker. The most widespread prohibitive morpheme, the clause-final particle tii ~ cii, is found in Khwe, Ts’ixa (5), Shua, Tshwa and Giui-Gǀana. In some languages, tii ~ cii can optionally be combined with the imperative marker (e.g., Gloro (18c); Deti (18e)). The Tshwa dialect Hiechware has an additional prohibitive marker, the clause-initial particle g|ana, which can appear on its own (18g), but is also found combining with tii (18h). In the Giui-Gǀana variety Kua, the generic negation morpheme ciú (18j) may be used instead of cii (18i). It appears that ciú (but not cii) can co-occur with the clause-initial imperative marker nà (18j). In Naro (18k) and Khoekhoe (18n-p), the imperative is negated by means of the clause-initial negation particle tàá. While tàá is a dedicated prohibitive morpheme in Nama, it is a general negation particle in Naro (Visser 2013: 199–200) and Hailom (Widlok 2013: 163; 350), and a negator of imperative and subordinate clauses in !Ora (Meinhof 1930: 55). Naro makes use of an additional prohibitive marker xūū which follows the verb and can either replace (18l) or accompany tàá (18m). It may be assumed that xūū derives from the verb xūū ‘leave behind, come from, stop’ (Visser 2001:
While *tàâ* co-occurs with the imperative * rè* in both Nama (Hagman 1977: 147) and Hailom (Widlok 2013: 351), none of the prohibitive morphemes in Naro can co-occur with the imperative * o* (Visser 2013: 200).

Prohibitive clauses across Khoe

Kalahari Khoe: Khwe (*tí*)

a. *tává-è, * m̀.m̀, *fáá *íáá *ti*
   
   uncle-VOC no 2SG.M eat PROH
   
   ‘Uncle, no, don’t eat it!’ (Khwe; Kilian-Hatz 2008: 128)

b. *hàâá *ti*
   
   come PROH
   
   ‘Don’t come!’ (1Ani; Heine 1999: 64)

Kalahari Khoe: Shua (*tíí*)

c. *jìiì * hàá *é * céé *tíí*
   
   wood ACC IMP pull PROH
   
   ‘Don’t pull the log!’ (Gloro; Westphal n.d. a)

d. *làà k’dàá *tìí *nà * t’àáá *tìí *k’ááá*
   
   bad meat 1SG.ACC give PROH CONJ.IMP good:cop 1SG.ACC give
   
   ‘Don’t give me bad meat, give me good!’ (Nata Shua; Westphal n.d. d)

e. *líí * tíí *tó * wè*
   
   sing PROH 2PL.C IMP
   
   ‘Don’t sing now!’ (Deti; Westphal n.d. b)

Kalahari Khoe: Tshwa (*tíí*)

f. *fíí * karo-ra *gam-a-xu * tíí*
   
   2SG.M stone-PL throw-J-COMPL PROH
   
   ‘Don’t throw the stones!’ (Tjwao; Phiri n.d.)

g. <|gana tsaa hwee> *g|ana ts’aa * xue
   
   PROH water run.away
   
   ‘Do not run away from the water!’ (Hiechware; Dornan 1917: 73)

h. <|gana chi kwi thii> *g|ana * tfíí * k’uìí * (º)tíí
   
   PROH 1SG speak PROH
   
   ‘Don’t talk to me!’ (Hiechware; Dornan 1917: 73)

Kalahari Khoe: Glui-Glana (*cüí, cúá*)

i. *Thabo=m̀ * c’òá * q’úü * cüí
   
   Thabo=SG.M COM talk PROH
   
   ‘Don’t talk to Thabo!’ (Kua; Collins 2023: 36)

j. *(nà) * cúá * Thabo=m̀ * c’òá * q’úü
   
   IMP NEG Thabo=SG.M COM talk
   
   ‘Don’t talk to Thabo!’ (Kua; Collins 2023: 36)
Kalahari Khoe: Naro (táá, xūū)

k. táá  tséé
default conjunction
work  PROH
‘Don’t work!’ (Naro; Visser 2013: 200)

l.  tséé  xūū
work  PROH
‘Don’t work!’ (Naro; Visser 2013: 200)

m. táá  tséé  xūū
NEG  work  PROH
‘Don’t work!’ (Naro; Visser 2013: 200)

Khoekhoe: Nama-Damara (táá)

n. táá  !ūū
PROH  go
‘Don’t go!’ (Nama; Hagman 1977: 147)

Khoekhoe: Haiǁom (ta)
o. ta  tu  !ao  re
NEG  2PL.C  fear  IMP
‘Don’t be afraid!’ (Haiǁom; Widlok 2013)

Khoekhoe: !Ora (ta)
p. ta  ǀχ’a
PROH  steal
‘Don’t steal!’ (!Ora; Meinhof 1930)

Data on conjoined imperatives is fragmented and does not allow for a comprehensive assessment of the situation across Khoe. While the Ts’ixa imperative conjunction nà (4) is widely attested in Kalahari Khoe, including Khwe (19a), Shua (19c-e), Tshwa (19f) and Gui-Gìna (19g), the data is not always sufficient to say whether the particle is strictly dedicated to imperative contexts or may also appear elsewhere. In the Gui-Gìna variety Kua, nà stands in complementary distribution with the default verbal coordination marker à: nà appears in imperative clauses, and à elsewhere (Collins 2023: 40). A similar analysis may also hold for Ts’ixa, and possibly for various dialects of Khwe, Shua and Tshwa. Other strategies of coordinating verbs or clauses in the imperative include use of generic conjunctions (Khwe (19b); Naro (19h)), or simple juxtaposition (Naro (19i)). No data on conjoined imperatives could be retrieved from languages of the Khoekhoe cluster, i.e., Nama-Damara, Haiǁom and !Ora.

(19) Conjoined imperatives in Kalahari Khoe

Kalahari Khoe: Khwe

a. jāā  nà  lx’aō  ti  à
   come  CONJ.IMP  help  lsg  acc
‘Come and help me!’ (Khwe; Kilian-Hatz 2008: 287)

b. jāā  nó  lx’aō  ti  à
   come  CONJ  help  lsg  acc
‘Come and (then) help me!’ (Khwe; Kilian-Hatz 2008: 287)
Kalahari Khoe: Shua

c. ñàā ŋglóà tíí ná k’òxú ŋglóà
fish cook PROH CONJ.IMP meat cook
‘No, don’t cook fish, cook meat.’ (Gǁoro; Westphal n.d. a)
d. |’àn k’òxú tâ k’âà tíí ná t’úñè tâ k’âà
bad meat 1SG.ACC give PROH CONJ.IMP good: Copp 1SG.ACC give
‘Don’t give me bad meat, give me good!’ (Nata-Shua; Westphal n.d. d)
e. ñàā ŋjóà tíí ná k’òxú ŋjóà è
fish cook PROH CONJ.IMP meat cook IMP
‘No, don’t cook fish, cook meat.’ (Deti; Westphal n.d. b)

Kalahari Khoe: Tshwa

f. tsàā na xum |xe ŋnà
enter CONJ.IMP ground loc sit
‘Come in and sit down.’ (Tjwao; Phiri n.d.)

Kalahari Khoe: Giui-Glana

g. šè qχ’úッȃ nà k̃̃ũ̀
3SG.C eat CONJ.IMP go
‘Eat and go!’ (Kua; Collins 2023: 40)

Kalahari Khoe: Naro

h. hàà nãkà têè kx’áà
come CONJ tea drink
‘Come and drink tea!’ (Naro; Visser 2013: 391)
i. !śõ̀ sů sîí tsêè
walk go work
‘Go and start working!’ (Naro; Visser 2013: 388)

There is not enough data to elaborate further on cross-Khoe patterns of expressing commands, including dedicated morphology for subordinate clauses. It is, however, worth mentioning that Naro has a clause-final particle k̃̃ which marks subordinate clauses that provide a reason for the command expressed in the accompanying imperative clause (Visser 2013: 393) (20). As shown in (6), ke also appears in Ts’ixa and probably displays full form-function correspondence with its counterpart in Naro.

(20) The subordination particle k̃̃ in Naro

| xuū tè tsàà=r kō k̃̃ |
leave 1SG be.sick=1SG CONT SUB.IMP
‘Leave me, (because) I am sick!’ (Visser 2013: 393)

3.2 Diachronic perspectives on Khoe-Kwadi imperative morphology

The results of the survey presented in §3.1 reveal that not only Ts’ixa, but all Khoe-Kwadi languages use a cross-linguistically common pattern by expressing canonical imperatives through the unmarked verb stem (cf. also Aikhenvald 2010: 18; Aikhenvald 2017: 5; Devos & Van Olmen 2013: 44; König & Siemund 2007: 303). However, it is not clear for all languages whether zero-marking is inextricably linked to the imperative clause type (as in Ts’ixa), or also allows for other readings, such as theticity or perfective (cf. Khwe, Kilian-Hatz 2008: 121). A historical assessment of the relationship
between absence of TAM morphology and the imperative would therefore require a better synchronic appraisal than is presently available. Along similar lines, more data from a large number of languages would be needed to evaluate the extension of imperative morphology to commands directed at 1st and 3rd person subjects. The available information from Ts’ixa (this study), Khwe (Kilian-Hatz 2008: 121) and Nama (Hagman 1977: 146–148; Haacke 2013: 335–336) suggests that the Khoe imperative can be used with 1st, 2nd and 3rd person subjects.

No dedicated imperative marker can be reconstructed for proto-Khoe-Kwadi or proto-Khoe. However, most Khoe languages make optional use of a clause-initial, clause-second or clause-final particle which may be interpreted as an imperative clause type marker. From a comparative perspective, the attested imperative markers partially overlap with vocative and interrogative morphology. The cross-linguistically common “intimate connection” between imperatives and vocatives (Aikhenvald 2010: 48) may therefore be expanded to all addressee-oriented forms in Khoe, i.e., imperative, vocative and interrogative (see also Overall 2017 for similar observations on Aguaruna). In this semantic framework, at least two particles with a link to imperative morphology, (ʔ)e and re, are attested across Khoe. A third particle or suffix, (-ʔ)o, either has a more limited distribution, or displays a broader semantic scope including declarative and subordinating morphology (Table 1).

Table 1 — Cross-Khoe morphology displaying a link to imperative clause type marking (Sources: Kilian-Hatz (2008) for Khwe, Fehn (2016) for Ts’ixa, Westphal (Westphal n.d. a; n.d. b; n.d. d) for Shua, Phiri (2021) and Dornan (1917) for Tshwa, Collins (2023) for Gǀui-Gǀana, Visser (2013) for Naro, Hagman (1977) and Haacke (2013) for Nama-Damara, Meinhof (1930) for !Ora, and Widlok (2013) for Hai|om)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Khwe</th>
<th>Ts’ixa</th>
<th>Shua</th>
<th>Tshwa</th>
<th>Gǀui-Gǀana</th>
<th>Naro</th>
<th>Nama</th>
<th>Hailom</th>
<th>!Ora</th>
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</thead>
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<td>(ʔ)e</td>
<td>VOC, IMP</td>
<td>VOC, IMP</td>
<td>VOC, INTER</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>VOC</td>
<td>VOC</td>
<td>?</td>
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<tr>
<td>re</td>
<td>INTER</td>
<td>INTER, VOC</td>
<td>INTER</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>IMP</td>
<td>IMP</td>
<td>IMP</td>
<td>IMP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(-ʔ)o</td>
<td>?SUB</td>
<td>?SUB</td>
<td>?DECL (Deti)</td>
<td>?IMP</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>IMP</td>
<td>?SUB</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The particle (ʔ)e is most widely attested as a vocative marker following nouns and pronouns, i.e., in Khwe (Kilian-Hatz 2008: 82–83), Shua (Westphal n.d. a; n.d. b; n.d. d; own data), Tshwa (Phiri n.d.), Naro (Visser 2013: 387), and Nama (Hagman 1977: 149; Haacke 2013: 339). If the expression of vocatives is assumed to be its main function, the marking of imperative (Khwe, Shua) and interrogative (Tshwa) clauses are best considered semantic extensions and therefore secondary functions of the particle. While the distribution of (ʔ)e would technically allow for a proto-Khoe reconstruction as vocative, borrowing from an unrelated language within the Kalahari Basin linguistic area (Güldemann 1998; Güldemann & Fehn 2017) cannot be excluded. For example, the Groot Laagte variety of the !Xun dialect !Kx’aol’ae displays a vocative suffix -è (Pratchett 2020a: 67), but lack of data on !Xun vocatives in general makes it difficult to assess whether !Kx’aol’ae borrowed from Khoe or the other way around. Following a different trail, all !Xun dialects display a proximal demonstrative *è which follows the head noun (Heine & König 2015: 153–155) and may have been reinterpreted by Khoe speakers as vocative in the sense of (e.g.) ‘you here!’ . Yet another candidate for a link with the Khoe form is the imperative suffix -we which appears with 2nd person plural subjects in the Tuu language Nuu (Collins & Namaseb 2011: 57) and shows full formal correspondence with the Shua imperative marker we (16c-e).

The particle re marks interrogatives in the Kalahari Khoe languages Khwe (Kilian-Hatz 2008: 297–299), Ts’ixa (Fehn 2016: 281–283) and Shua (Westphal n.d. a; n.d. b; n.d. d; own data), and imperative in Khoekhoe (Meinhof 1930: 60; Hagman 1977: 146–148; Widlok 2013: 349). Ts’ixa
shows an extension from interrogative to vocative (Fehn 2016: 120), which probably constitutes a language-internal development. It will be remembered that the most common strategy to formulate polite commands in Ts’ixa is by way of adding the interrogative marker re to the imperative clause (8c). While not attested with questions in Nama, the appearance of re still carries connotations of politeness, suggesting that the particle’s interrogative function is the more basic one. This is also supported by data from !Xun, a language with a long history of areal contact with Kho-Kwadi languages (Güldemann 1998; Güldemann & Fehn 2017), where clause-final *re is widely attested as an interrogative marker (Heine & König 2015: 245).

Following a parallel line of argumentation, the suffix -o which appears as an imperative marker in Naro may be related to the interrogative particle o attested in Haiǁom (Widlok 2013: 350). An interrogative o has not been described for other Khoekhoe varieties, but a clause-final interrogative particle wò exists in the W2 dialect of !Xun (Heine & König 2015: 245). While the !Xun, Haiǁom and Naro forms could be conveniently linked through language contact, the argument is difficult to extend to the imperative marker ho observed in the geographically distant Tshwa dialect Hiechware (Dornan 1917). It therefore remains unclear whether the Naro and Hiechware imperatives are actually related, and, if yes, whether a link between the Hailom and !Xun interrogatives should be assumed. The issue is further complicated by the wide distribution of particles of the form (ʔ)o which display a link to subordinate clauses, transmitting the notion of ‘when, while’ in Khwe (Kilian-Hatz 2003: 152; Kilian-Hatz 2008: 318), Nama (Hagman 1977: 128–129), Haiǁom (Widlok 2013: 165) and !Ora (Meinhof 1930: 80), and of ‘because’ in Ts’ixa (Fehn 2016: 266–268). In the Shua dialect Deti, a presumably unrelated element (ʔ)o acts as declarative marker (Westphal n.d. b; own data).

As the above discussion has shown, it is difficult to reconstruct any of the attested imperative markers to the proto-Khoe stage. The interweaving of imperatives with other addressee-oriented morphology, as well as the density of contact between unrelated languages in the Kalahari Basin linguistic area creates a fuzzy situation which may only be resolved when more data from a greater variety of languages becomes available.

A less complex picture emerges with regards to the prohibitive morphology: the available data shows a quite clear-cut separation between Kalahari Khoe *tii and Khoekhoe *taa, whereas Naro aligns with Khoekhoe, possibly due to contact (Table 2). As no Kx’a, Tuu or Bantu language displays formally similar particles, it may be assumed that both *tii and *taa are genuine Khoe morphemes which may be reconstructed to the proto-Kalahari and proto-Khoekhoe stages, respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Khwe</th>
<th>Ts’ixa</th>
<th>Shua</th>
<th>Tshwa</th>
<th>Gui-Gǁana</th>
<th>Naro</th>
<th>Nama</th>
<th>Hailom</th>
<th>!Ora</th>
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<tr>
<td>*tii</td>
<td>PROH</td>
<td>PROH</td>
<td>PROH</td>
<td>PROH</td>
<td>PROH</td>
<td>PROH</td>
<td>PROH, NEG</td>
<td>PROH, NEG, SUB</td>
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<td>*taa</td>
<td>PROH, NEG</td>
<td>PROH</td>
<td>PROH</td>
<td>PROH, NEG</td>
<td>PROH</td>
<td>PROH</td>
<td>PROH, NEG, SUB</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

While Kalahari Khoe *tii appears to be a dedicated prohibitive marker, Khoekhoe *taa has a more general profile in Naro (Visser 2013: 199–200), Hailom (Widlok 2013: 351), and !Ora (Meinhof 1930: 55). Beyond the mere expression of imperative morphology, there is some reason to assume that the Kalahari Khoe prohibitive *tii is further related to an element *ti ~ *te which appears as part of future tense negators in Naro (Visser 2013: 200), Nama (Hagman 1977: 89–91; Haacke 2013: 338), Hailom (Widlok 2013: 163) and !Ora (Meinhof 1930: 55). If one is inclined to speculate, the element may even be related to the Kwadi negation particle tiʃi ~ ci or tiʃe ~ ce which is found combining with different morphological elements in declarative and interrogative clauses (Westphal n.d. c). While no
further reconstruction will be attempted here, it is still tempting to consider the possibility of Kalahari Khoe imperatives preserving archaic negation morphology.

Due to a lack of comprehensive data, it is difficult to comment on the history of other morphological elements linked to the imperative clause type. Nevertheless, some very preliminary observations may be added in order to showcase opportunities for future research:

The imperative conjunction na appears in Khwe, Ts’ixa, Shua, Tshwa and Gǀui-Gǀana (19), but seems to be absent in Naro and Khoekhoe. Its distribution may therefore merit a reconstruction to the stage of proto-Kalahari Khoe. It is unclear whether na is related to other grammatical markers of the same form which occur in the coordinating and subordinating morphology across Khoe, e.g. Naro nā(kā) (cf. Visser 2013: 390–391).

The dedicated clause-final particle ke adding background information to commands is only attested in Ts’ixa and Naro, but seems especially interesting from a historical viewpoint. In their comparative survey of clause-second structures in southern African “Khoisan” languages, Güldemann et al. (2019) show a link between the overuse of particles marking thetic, i.e., background information, and the grammaticalization of declaratives. The Nama declarative marker ke, albeit a clause-second morpheme delimiting a pragmatically marked prefield, is formally identical with the particle ke flagging background information in Naro and Ts’ixa. One may therefore speculate that the Nama declarative and the imperative subordinator ke are historically related and go back to a proto-Khoe morpheme marking theticity (which, on its part, may trace back to a copula, cf. Güldemann et al. 2019: 59). However, given the strikingly different syntactical frameworks, in combination with the fact that clause-second markers of the shape kV are widespread in the Kalahari Basin (Güldemann et al. 2019), compare, e.g., Nǀuu ke (cf. Collins & Namaseb 2011: 8–9), any further attempt to pursue a historical relationship between different particles ke in Khoe should proceed with care.

4. Conclusion

In this article, I have attempted to highlight possible areas of interest for the study of imperatives in the Khoe-Kwadi language family and beyond. As the data from Ts’ixa shows, the expression of commands can be described in terms of morphosyntax, but also needs to take into account the conversational and ethnolinguistic context in which a directive statement is made. By further adopting a comparative perspective, I have stressed the need for a comprehensive description of imperative clauses across the family. The limited data available shows a close association between imperative morphology and other addressee-oriented utterances, such as vocatives and interrogatives. While the expression of imperatives by means of unmarked verb stems could be shown to be a cross-family feature, the morphology of imperatives displayed a considerable degree of cross-linguistic variation, which may in part have been triggered by language contact. Both historical and areal perspectives on imperatives in Khoe-Kwadi therefore seem to provide promising fields for future research.

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### Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/2/3</td>
<td>1st / 2nd / 3rd person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>accusative</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADVZ</td>
<td>adverbializer</td>
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<td>attributor</td>
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<td>BEN</td>
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<td>discourse reference marker</td>
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Q question particle
QUOT quotative
REF referential
REFL reflexive
SBJ subject
SBJV subjunctive
SFX suffix
SG singular
SUB subordination
TAM tense-aspect-mood
VOC vocative
VOL volition

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