Imperatives and non-imperative command strategies in Western Oromo

Girma Mengistu Desta
Addis Ababa University

Abstract
This paper investigates the forms and functions of imperative constructions and other non-imperative command strategies in the western variety of Oromo. It describes the morphological realizations of the second person and third person imperative main and dependent verbs, both in affirmative and negative paradigms. It also examines the structure of other non-imperative constructions used for directive speech acts, based on data collected from a web text corpus, native speakers and secondary sources. The analysis shows that the second person imperative is the simplest of all verb forms in Western Oromo. Unlike the third person imperative and other verb forms, it does not occur with any of the aspect markers. The anterior converb marker, third person direct and indirect object markers, and the first person pronominal subject clitic are grammatical morphemes that are compatible with both second person and third person imperative constructions. Imperative constructions are mainly used for commands and warnings, but can also be used for other speech acts, such as blessings, curses, farewells, and suggestions. Commands and warnings can alternatively be expressed through negative interrogatives and insubordinate clauses. Animal-directed commands are expressed by interjections.

Keywords
Oromo, Cushitic, imperative, command, blessing, curse, suggestion, animal-directed speech

Résumé
Cet article étudie, tant au niveau de la forme que de la fonction, les constructions impératives en oromo occidental, ainsi que d’autres mécanismes visant à exprimer des ordres sans recourir à l’impératif. Il décrit les réalisations morphologiques des paradigms des deuxième et troisième personnes de l’impératif affirmatif et négatif des verbes principaux et dépendants. En se fondant sur des données recueillies dans un corpus de textes en ligne, auprès de locuteurs natifs ainsi que dans des sources secondaires, cette étude porte également sur la structure d’autres constructions, distinctes de l’impératif, lesquelles sont aussi utilisées pour transmettre des ordres. L’analyse montre que, en oromo occidental, la deuxième personne de l’impératif est la plus simple de toutes les formes verbales. En effet, contrairement à la troisième personne de l’impératif et à d’autres formes verbales, la deuxième personne de l’impératif n’est pas marquée pour l’aspect. Quant à la marque converbale d’antérieur, aux marques d’objet direct et indirect de troisième personne ainsi qu’au pronom clitique sujet de première personne, il appert que ces éléments sont des morphèmes compatibles aussi bien avec la deuxième qu’avec la troisième personne de l’impératif. Les constructions impératives sont principalement utilisées pour exprimer des ordres et des avertissements, mais elles peuvent également être employées dans d’autres contextes, notamment pour les bénédictions, malédictions, adieux et suggestions. Les ordres et les avertissements peuvent également être rendus au moyen de constructions interronégatives ou de propositions « insubordonnées » (subordonnées employées avec une valeur de propositions indépendantes). Par ailleurs, pour adresser des ordres aux animaux, les locuteurs de l’oromo occidental ont recours à des interjections.

Mots-clés
oromo, couchitique, impératif, ordre, bénéédiction, malédiction, suggestion, interactions langagières homme-animal
1. Introduction

Oromo (endonym: Afaan Oromoo) belongs to the Lowland East Cushitic group of languages within the Afroasiatic phylum. It is spoken by at least 25 million native speakers in Ethiopia according to the last published census (Central Statistical Agency 2007) as well as by about 360,000 people in Kenya and 42,000 people in parts of Somalia that border Ethiopia (Eberhard et al. 2019). According to Feda (2015), who calculated the lexical distance between different varieties of Oromo spoken in Ethiopia, there are six dialects: the western dialect (spoken in Wollegga, Illubabor, and Jimma), the central dialect (spoken in Shoa), the northern dialect (spoken in Rayya and Wollo), the southeastern dialect (spoken in Arsi and Bale), the southern dialect (spoken in Borana and Guji), and the eastern dialect (spoken in Harar). However, there is a general consensus that the western and central dialects are quite similar to each other (Banti & Shimelis 2023). Oromo is the official language in the Oromia regional state. It is also the medium of instruction in primary schools, teachers’ training colleges, and in Oromo departments of public universities. It is written in a Roman-based orthography called “Qubee”.

The phonological inventory of the western variety of Oromo includes 24 consonants and five vowels (Gragg 1976: 174). Consonant gemination and vowel length are phonemic. The occurrence of clusters and geminate consonants is only permitted in word-medial positions. Adjacent vowels of different qualities are not allowed. Pitch phenomena have not yet been studied in detail. However, some sources indicate that the language has two level tones, high and low, with lexical and grammatical functions (Banti & Shimelis 2023: 260). Western Oromo shows concatenative morphology, in which syntactic relations and grammatical categories are signaled by the addition of affixes to stems. The language is predominantly suffxing, only some morphemes are prefixes. The language is verb-final. In verb phrases, subordinate clauses precede main clauses. In contrast, in noun phrases, modifiers (adjectives, relative clauses) and determiners follow the head noun. Possessor nouns also follow possessed nouns (Banti & Shimelis 2023: 291).

Imperatives have received some attention in previous grammatical descriptions of the different varieties of Oromo (Gragg 1976: 188; Owens 1985: 67; Stroomer 1987: 139ff.; 1995: 87ff.; Banti & Shimelis 2023: 269). Banti (2004) also uses some data from Oromo for his comparative study of Cushitic imperatives. They neither examine with which grammatical morphemes the imperative forms can combine nor do they analyze the wide range of meanings rendered by imperatives. Hence this study presents a comprehensive account of Western Oromo imperatives both from a formal and a functional perspective. In addition, it describes non-imperative command strategies that have not received any attention so far.

The paper is organized into seven sections. After this introduction, the Section 2 gives a brief account of crosslinguistic features of imperatives and non-imperative command expressions, as proposed in the typological literature. Section 3 deals with the methodological issues related to data collection and presentation. In Section 4, the formal aspects of both second and third person affirmative and negative imperatives and the grammatical morphemes that are able to combine with them are examined. The range of meanings conveyed by imperative constructions is discussed in Section 5. Section 6 deals with non-imperative command strategies. Section 7 concludes the paper.

2. A CROSSLINGUISTIC CHARACTERIZATION OF IMPERATIVES

Imperatives are verb constructions whose prototypical function is to express directive speech acts such as commands, orders, and requests, but they are also used for illocutionary forces such as invitations, exhortations, suggestions, instructions, entreaties, pleas, and advice or permissions (König & Siemund 2007: 303; Schalley 2008: 50). Whether the term “imperative” is restricted to utterances directed at the second person or also covers the first and third persons has been a topic of debate for a long time. According to Bybee et al. (1994: 179) and Payne (1997: 303), for example, an imperative is a verb form or a construction type used directly to command or request the addressee, i.e., the second person, to perform some action. However, many linguists do not agree with this narrow
definition, arguing that an action expressed by an imperative construction can also be performed by first and third persons even though it is the second person who is directly addressed (Schalley 2008: 14). They extend their definition beyond the second person to include first and third person subjects for which, traditionally, the terms “hortative” and “jussive” have been used (König & Siemund 2007: 301). Linguists advocating for a wider definition then make distinctions between “canonical” and “non-canonical” imperatives (Aikhenvald 2010: 17; 2017: 5). Whereas “canonical imperatives” are verbal forms that express speech acts directed to the second person, “non-canonical imperatives” are verbal forms that express speech acts directed to non-addressees such as the speaker (first person) or a third party (third person) (Aikhenvald 2010: 3). It is also highlighted in the literature that the most common and prototypical category of imperatives are canonical imperatives.

The analysis presented here follows the extended definition of imperatives and treats both second person-directed and third person-directed expressions. However, the terms “canonical” and “non-canonical” are not used in this paper because the western variety of Oromo lacks a special verbal form for commands directed at the first person, and the category of non-canonical imperatives includes both first and third person subjects. In the absence of a special verb form for a speech act directed at the first person, the use of the term “non-canonical imperative” would be inappropriate. Therefore, the terms “second person imperative” and “third person imperative” are used. In this paper, I consider the term “imperative” as a label for the grammatical form of an utterance and the term “command” as a label for the function of an utterance, following Aikhenvald (2010: 1).

Typologically, formal expressions of imperatives can be affixes, clitics, particles, special forms of pronouns, and periphrastic constructions (Aikhenvald 2010: 18). According to Aikhenvald (2010: 18), inflectional morphemes tend to mark the imperative of synthetic languages. In isolating and highly analytic languages, the imperative is predominantly expressed by particles. There are also languages in which a bare root or stem of the verb is used to mark the imperative. In Western Oromo, imperatives are expressed by affixes (cf. §4-§5).

The use of imperative verbs for directive speech acts such as commands, orders, and requests is crosslinguistically a universal phenomenon (Aikhenvald 2010: 38). However, languages may also use non-imperative constructions for directive speech acts. This phenomenon is mostly observed in languages without dedicated imperative forms (Aikhenvald 2010: 257). But languages with dedicated imperatives may also use non-imperative command constructions such as declarative and interrogative sentences. The purpose of using such constructions in languages with dedicated imperatives is mostly to make the speech act more polite. Depending on the language, such constructions may equally well communicate strong commands. Whether the speech act is polite or strong is understood from the context, intonation, and body language (Aikhenvald 2010: 257).

3. THE DATA

The data examined in this paper were collected from a web text corpus, native speakers, and another secondary source. Out of the 76 examples used in this paper, 37 belonging to the western dialect of Oromo were carefully selected and extracted from the text corpus built by Suchomel & Rychlý (2016) (henceforth S & R 2016 in the text). 38 examples were elicited from native speakers of the western dialect of Oromo. The remaining sentential example is from Dirribee et al. (2012). Animal-directed interjections were collected through elicitation.

The sentential data in this paper are presented in a four-line format. In the first line, the data are written in Qubee, the official Oromo orthography. The second line presents the morpheme-by-morpheme segmentation, transcribed with IPA symbols and tone marking. The IPA symbols are used in the second line because they are more convenient than the orthography to show the underlying morphological structure of the words. However, vowel length is not represented by the IPA length mark (ː) but by double vowels. This is because, vowel length sometimes has grammatical function, and long vowels need to be segmented into different morphemes. The third and fourth lines are used for the interlinear glosses and the free translation, respectively.
4. Formal realization of imperatives

In Western Oromo, both second person and third person imperatives are expressed by inflectional morphemes attached to the verb stems. In the following subsections, I will describe the form of imperatives in affirmative and negative sentences. The following table summarizes the imperative markers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Affirmative</th>
<th>Negative (hin-verb stem-(ij)n-imp)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Main verb</td>
<td>Converb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2sg</td>
<td>-i, -u, -dï</td>
<td>-ii, -úu, -dúu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2pl</td>
<td>-aa, -dää</td>
<td>-aa, -dää</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3sg</td>
<td>haa-</td>
<td>haa-</td>
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<tr>
<td>3pl</td>
<td>haa-</td>
<td>haa-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 makes clear that on affirmative main verbs and converbs, suffixes and prefixes are used as markers of the second and third persons, respectively. However, all imperative markers are suffixes on negative main verbs and converbs.

4.1 Second person imperative

The second person imperative verb is the simplest and the formally least marked of all verb forms. It consists only of a verb root and the second person imperative marker. Unlike on the third person imperative, grammatical categories such as aspect are not marked on the second person imperative verb. Markers of the second person imperative are portmanteau morphemes that simultaneously mark the grammatical categories of mood, i.e., imperative, person, i.e., second person, and number, i.e., singular or plural.

In the affirmative paradigm, the regular second person singular imperative marker on main verbs is the low-toned -i (1). The low-toned -i may occur with a high tone when it is followed by another morpheme, e.g. the additive morpheme in (8). With so-called “imperative-only” main verbs, the second person singular marker is the lexically conditioned allomorph -ú̥ (2), which is high-toned, but devoiced.1 The imperative-only verbs, which occur only in the affirmative paradigm, are motion verbs such as kótt- 'come', been- 'go' and hóoʔ- 'take'. The suffix -dï is a phonologically conditioned allomorph of -ü attached to verb roots of the structure *Caat- (3), to benefactive middle verb stems (4), and to inchoative verb stems (5). The benefactive middle and the regular inchoative verb stems are marked by -(a)at.3

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1. In contrast, in Boraana Oromo, the regular second person imperative marker -i is also used with imperative-only verbs (Stroomer 1995: 79).
2. *Caat- verb roots in Oromo like baat- 'carry', kaat- ‘run’, and paat- ‘eat’ seem to have been formed from CV-roots and a frozen middle morpheme -at. This assumption is based on the fact that the synchronic language has a nominal counterpart ba'aa 'load' for the verb baat- 'carry, bear for oneself'. ba'aa could be morphologically analyzed as ba-aat (bear-NMLZ) 'load', the glottal stop inserted between the vowels being epenthetic to break up an illicit sequence of three vowels. Further investigation is needed to corroborate this hypothesis.
3. Owens (1985: 63) states that, in Harar Oromo, the benefactive middle -at (labelled “subject-reflexive”) has the form -add in the first person singular perfective and imperfective and the second person singular imperative. In the analysis presented here, however, I consider the benefactive middle to be consistently -at and the -a to be part of the imperative marker, i.e., -du. The geminate -dd is a result of assimilation, i.e., -at-du > -ad-du.
1. *Yeroo hundumaa warra kaaniif ulfina kenni.*
   jeróo húnd-úmá-á wárrá káan-iif ulf-iná kénn-i
time all-FOC-POSS people other-DAT weight-NMLZ give-2SG.IMP
   ‘Always respect others (lit. time of all, give weight to other people)!’ [S & R 2016: 4980124]

2. *Yeroo barbaaddetti kottu.*
   jeróo bárbáad-t-é-tti kótt-ú
   time want-2-PF-LOC come-2SG.IMP
   ‘Come at the time you want!’ [S & R 2016: 3666075]

3. *Biddeena keenya har’aa nuuf laadhu.*
   biddéená kéeɲɲa harʔá-á nu-uf láat-dû
   food 1PL.Poss today-POSS 1PL-DAT give-2SG.IMP
   ‘Give us our daily (lit. of today) food!’ [S & R 2016: 1363284)

4. *Ati garuu yeroo soomtu mataa kee dibadhu; fiula kees dhiqadhu.*
   ati gárúu jeróo sóom-t-Ø-u matáa kée
   2SG.SBJ however time fast-2-sg-ipf head 2SG.Poss
díb-át-dû fíulá kée-s dík-ˈá-t-dû
   apply_lotion-mid-2SG.IMP face 2SG.Poss-ADD wash-mid-2SG.IMP
   ‘And you, however, apply lotion to your head and wash your face when you fast!’
   [S & R 2016: 2801161, 2801165]

5. *Gorsa siif kennametti jabaadhu, ...*
   górsa si-if kénn-ám-é-ttij dʒáb-ˈá-t-dû
   advice 2SG.OBJ-DAT give-PASS-PF-LOC strong-INCH-2SG.IMP
   ‘Become strong at the advice you are given!’ [S & R 2016: 3028439]

With imperative converbs, the second person singular imperative markers occur as -ii (6) and -úu (7) or -ɗúu (8). The lengthening of the imperative vowels has additional clause coordinating (chaining) function.4

   dák-ˈii wáan kˈáb-t-Ø-u guргúr-ii
   go-2SG.IMP.CVB thing hold-2-SG-IPF sell-2SG.IMP.CVB
   wárrá déeg-áa-dá-af-is kénn-i
   people be.poof-NMLZ.M-LNK-DAT-ADD give-2SG.IMP
   ‘Go and sell whatever you have (lit. hold) and give it to the poor!’ [S & R 2016: 1534873,1534877]

7. *... hammuma dhumaatti kottuu nu geggeessi.*
   hámm-úma düm-á-a-tti kótt-úu nu géggeess-i
   until-FOC end-NMLZ-POSS-LOC come-2SG.IMP.CVB 1PL accompany-2SG.IMP
   ‘Come and accompany us up to the end!’ [S & R 2016: 4315104]

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4. In Oromo, the lengthening of the perfective aspect marker -e to -ee has the same clause-coordinating function in declarative sentences.
... taa’ii, nyaadhuu, dugii gammadis.

Sit-2SG.IMP.CVB eat-2SG.IMP.CVB drink-2SG.IMP.CVB be.happy-2SG.IMP-ADD

‘Sit down and eat and drink, and be happy as well!’ [S & R 2016: 2331466]

The regular second person plural imperative marker in the affirmative paradigm is the high toned -áa (9). It is used for second person plural or honorific second person singular addressees. With *Caat-verb roots (10), benefactive middle verb stems (11), and inchoative verb stems (12), the second person plural imperative is realized as -ɗáa. The same imperative markers are used on converbs with a clause-chaining function (13)-(14).

(9) Boqonnaa ga’aa argachuu akka danleesanitti yeroodhaan raftaa.

Boqonnáa ga’aa gáʔ-áa ɗák’-áa láfá fóʔ-ám-áa táʔ-úu-ʃée-s qor-át-á gáʔ-áa

‘Sleep in time so that you can get (lit. be able to see) enough rest!’ [S & R 2016: 4450395]

(10) Dhaqaa nyaata fo’amaa nyaadhaa.

Dhaqáa nyáata foʔ-áam-áa píat-dáa go-2PL.IMP.CVB food select-PASS-NMLZ.M eat-2PL.IMP

‘Go and eat selected food!’ [S & R 2016: 2209868]

(11) Lafattiin midhaan kan magarsitu ta’uushees qoradhaa!

Lafattíin midháan kán mágár-s-it-u láfá kána irrátí rakk-ín-ní isíin arg-át-á jáb-áat-á

‘Inquire (check) whether (lit. that) the land is able to grow crops!’ [S & R 2016: 3332621]

(12) ... lafa kana irratti rakkinnt isin argata; garuu jabadhaa.

láfá kána irrá-tíi rakk-in-ní isíin árg-át-á jáb-áat-á jáb-áat-á

‘You may face a problem (lit. a problem may see/get you) in this world; but be strong!’ [S & R 2016: 1955133]

(13) Mul’ata Yohaannis dhaqaa ilaalaaa.

mulʔ-át-á jóháan-nís dák’-áa iláal-áá reveal-MID-NMLZ John go-2PL.IMP.CV B look.at-2PL.IMP

‘Go and read (lit. look at) the revelation of John!’ [S & R 2016: 1927179]

(14) Kitaaba kana bitadhaa yaadannoo seenaat kaa’aa.

kitáabá kána bit-áat-dáa jáb-át-nóó book this.OBJ buy-2PL.IMP.CVB remember-MID-NMLZ

‘Buy this book and keep it for the memory of history!’ [S & R 2016: 2299152]
In the negative imperative (prohibitive) paradigm, the second person singular imperative is unmarked on the main verb (15) but realized as a low-toned -ii on the clause-coordinating dependent verb (converb) (16). The second person plural imperative marker is -aa on both main (17) and co-subordinate verbs (18). Negation is expressed by a bipartite negative marker hin-...-(í)n. If present, the imperative marker follows the suffixal negative morpheme. As a result, the imperative marker does not come in contact with the benefactive and inchoative morpheme and the condition for the use of the second person plural imperative allomorph -dáa is never met.

(15) Deebisaa sirriitti hinbeektu taanaan tilmaamaan deebii hinkennin.

deebii=sá-a sirri-ttį́ hin-béek-t-u taʔ-nāan tilmáamá-an

answer=3SG.M.OBJ-poss right-LOC NEG-know-2-IPF be-COND guess-INST
deebii

answer NEG-give-NEG-2SG.IMP

‘Don’t give an answer by guessing if you don’t know the right answer!’ [S & R 2016: 434299]

(16) ... maaltu na dhibe jettee hinrafinii akkamitti akka dirmattuuf irratti dalagi.

máal-tį́ ná dìb-e dʒed-t-ēe hin-raf-in-ii

what-FOC 1SG.OBJ bother-PF say-2-PF.CVb NEG-sleep-NEG-2SG.IMP.CVb

akka=m-íttí ákká dírmát-t-û-uf irrá-ttí dálág-i

SIM=which-LOC SIM help-2PF-APPL on-LOC work-2SG.IMP

‘Don’t say, “why should I bother”, and sleep, (but) work on how you can help (others)!’ [S & R 2016:128440]

(17) Kanaafis cimaa, ija jabaadhaa, isaan hinsodaatinna; hinna ‘inaas!

kana-af-is tʃ’im-áa idʒá dʒábat-ᾶ-đā isáan

this.OBJ-DAT-ADD be.strong-2PL.IMP eye strong-INCH-2PL.IMP 3PL

hin-sod-aat-in-āa hin-naʔ-in-āa-s

NEG-fear-INCH-NEG-2PL.IMP NEG-shock-NEG-2PL.IMP-ADD

‘And for this reason, be strong and courageous; do not be frightened (by them) and do not get shocked!’ [S & R 2016: 5064434, 5064437]

(18) wal hinceepha’inaatii ofuma ilaala ... 

wal hin-tʃ’eep’-aʔ-in-āa-tiį́ ōf-úma iláal-āa

each_other NEG-criticize-MID-NEG-2PL.IMP-ACVB self-FOC see-2PL.IMP

‘Don’t criticize each other, (but) look at (examine) yourselves!’ [S & R 2016: 267828]

The bipartite negative marker hin-...-(í)n is not only used with second person imperative verbs but also with third person imperative and any perfective verbs. However, these verb forms are structurally different. While the negative second person imperative distinguishes a plural from a singular form, all number (and person) distinction are neutralized in the other two verb types. In the negative perfective paradigm, the same verb form, e.g. hin-deem-n-e (NEG-go-NEG-PF) ‘(so.) didn’t go’, is used for all first, second, and third persons. With the third person imperative verbs, too, the same verb form hin-deem-in (NEG-go-NEG) ‘let (so.) not go’ is used for 3SG.M and 3PL (cf. §3.2. for further discussion). In the imperfective paradigm, the negative is expressed by hin-only, as in hin-déem-t-Ô-u (NEG-go-2-SG-IPF) ‘you will not go’ (Gragg 1976: 188–189). In contrast to negative perfective verbs, negative imperfective verbs maintain all of their subject and aspect markers. The absence of the negative suffix in the negative imperfective verb forms may be the cause of the neutralizations.
In summary, the regular affirmative second person imperative markers on main verbs are -i and -åa for singular and plural, respectively. With imperative-only verbs, the second person singular is -u, while the second person plural imperative remains the same: -åa. *Caat-verb roots and middle and inchoative verb stems bear -dí and -dåa for affirmative singular and plural imperative, respectively. Converbs that are dependent on imperative verbs are marked by -ii, -iu, and -diu. In the negative imperative, the singular is unmarked, and the plural is invariably marked by -åa.

The imperative markers in the western dialect of Oromo are largely the same as those forms used in other dialects (cf. Owens 1985: 67; Stroomer 1995: 72, among others). But some variation has been observed in the southern (Booranaa) dialect, where, in contrast to the eastern and western dialects, the regular second person marker -i is also used for imperative-only verbs such as kött- ‘come’ and bëen- ‘go’ (Stroomer 1995: 79).

In his comparative study of Cushitic imperatives, Banti (2004) identifies three groups of Cushitic languages based on the morphemes they use in the second person imperative: (i) languages with Ø, (ii) languages with -i, and (iii) languages with both Ø and -i. In this typology, Oromo belongs to the languages with -i in the second person imperative. However, Banti’s (2004) categorization has certain limitations because his comparison does not take the negative imperative forms into account. If the negative imperative is considered, Western Oromo becomes a language with both Ø and -i second person imperatives since the second person singular is unmarked in the negative paradigm. With regard to the second person singular imperative morphemes used with imperative-only verbs, *Caat-verb roots, and middle and inchoative verb stems, Western Oromo well fits to Omoo-Tana languages like Dhaasanach (Banti 2004) and Oromoid languages like Konso (Ongaye 2013: 164). The use of -a or -aa for the second person plural imperative is very common across Cushitic. According to Banti (2004), many of the languages belonging to three of the four main groups of Cushitic, e.g. Bilin, Kemant, Saho, Oromo, Dhaasanac, Rendille, Harso and Burunge, mark this form either by -a or -aa.

4.2 Third person imperative
The third person imperative (jussive) is a type of non-canonical imperative (Aikhenvald 2010: 47). It is understood as an indirect command to a third person via an addressee. In Western Oromo, the affirmative third person imperative forms an inflectional paradigm distinct from the second person imperative.5 While the second person imperative is expressed by different suffixes for the singular and plural subjects, the third person imperative is invariably marked by the prefix haa-. In the affirmative third person imperative paradigm, subjects are indexed on the verb by agreement suffixes which are also used with the perfective and imperfective verbs. Unlike the second person imperatives, the third person imperative verb is able to combine with aspect marking suffixes. The aspect markers are -û for singular subjects (19) and -i for plural subjects (20). Lengthening the aspect suffixes marks third person imperative conversbs, as in (21) and (22).

(19) … abban manaas … haadha manaas isaa akka ofii isaatitti haajaallatu; haati manaas abbaa manaas isheetiif ulfina haakennititu.
   abbaa-n máñ-a haadha maná-a isá-a ákká ofii 
   father-NOM house-poss man-obj-poss isn-obj self
   isa-a-ti-itti̥ haa-jáall-át-Ø-û háad-ni máñ-a-s
   3SG.M-poss-lnk-loc 3IMP-love-INCH-3SG.M-IPF mother-NOM house-poss-add

5. The use of the third person imperative marker haa- as a marker of the hortative is not common in the western dialect of Oromo. Instead, verbs in the imperfective form such as ni-åñ[nán]=dëem-a (ACL.M-1SG.SBJ=go-IPF) ‘I (will) go’ and hin-dëem-n-a (ACL.M-go-PL-IPF) ‘we (will) go’ are used. However, as a result of the standardization process, which started in 1991, haa- is being introduced to mark the first person plural hortative (Dabala & Meyer 2003: 163).
Imperatives and non-imperative command strategies in Western Oromo

'…let a husband (lit. father of a house) … love his wife (lit. mother of a house) as much as he loves himself, and let the wife respect (lit. give weight to) her husband.' [S & R 2016: 379465 & 379474]

(20) \(\text{fuúl-ní lámá-an súñ wál haa-fákk-áat-án-i}\)

‘Let those two pages (lit. faces) become similar.’ [S & R 2016: 59059]

(21) \(\text{tʃ’áaltúu-n búná haa-dánf-ís-t-uu ati máná qúlqúll-éeʔ-s-i}\)

‘Let Chaltu make (lit. boil) coffee, and you clean the house.’ [Elicited]

(22) \(\text{isáan kitaabíttʃá haa-bít-át-án-ii k’árʃíi kén-n-i-if}\)

‘Let them buy the book themselves, and you give them money.’ [Elicited]

In Western Oromo, the third person imperatives are negated by the bipartite negative marker \(\text{hin-}\ldots\text{-ín}\). A verb stem to which \(\text{hin-}\ldots\text{-ín}\) is circumfixed does neither have the third person imperative marker \(\text{haa-}\) nor any of the subject agreement and aspect markers. The subject is either understood from the linguistic or extra-linguistic context, or expressed by independent nominal or pronominal subjects. Like in the affirmative, the suffix \(-\text{ii}\) marks the converb, as demonstrated in Table 2 below. Using an invariable negative verb form across different persons, genders, and numbers is also a strategy used in the perfective main verb paradigm (Gragg 1976: 188).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Pronoun</th>
<th>Main verb</th>
<th>Converb</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3SG.M</td>
<td>inni</td>
<td>hin-duf-in</td>
<td>hin-duf-in-\text{ii}</td>
<td>‘Let him not come.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3SG.F</td>
<td>jfeen</td>
<td>hin-duf-in</td>
<td>hin-duf-in-\text{ii}</td>
<td>‘Let her not come.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3PL</td>
<td>isaan</td>
<td>hin-duf-in</td>
<td>hin-duf-in-\text{ii}</td>
<td>‘Let her not come.’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the above description, one can observe that the negative form of the third person imperative verbs is identical to the second person singular imperative verb form. But the second person plural negative imperative differs from these forms in that the subject is marked by \(-\text{áa}\) after the negative suffix.

As discussed in §3, the forms to mark the second person imperatives in Western Oromo show similarities with the forms used in the Oromoid and Omo-Tana groups of the Lowland East Cushitic languages. But the forms used to mark the third person do not show much resemblances. While Oromo exclusively uses a prefix to mark the affirmative third person imperative, the other related languages employ suffixes (cf. Banti 2004; Ongaye 2020: 20).
4.3 Grammatical morphemes (in)compatible with imperative verbs

4.3.1 Subject agreement markers

Imperative verbs also differ from other verb forms in the grammatical morphemes they are (in)compatible with. For instance, the perfective and imperfective aspect markers and the sets of subject agreement markers used with the perfective and imperfective main and dependent verbs are not compatible with second person imperative verbs. Subject agreement is co-marked by the imperative morphemes themselves. However, the third person imperative verbs share the agreement suffixes with the perfective and imperfective verbs, as shown in Table 3 for the verb déem- ‘go’ (cf. morphemes in bold). This is because haa- does not indicate the number and gender of the subjects.

Table 3 — Agreement markers on perfective, imperfective and imperative verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PF</th>
<th>IPF</th>
<th>2IMP</th>
<th>3IMP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1SG</td>
<td>déem-Ø-e</td>
<td>déem-Ø-a</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2SG</td>
<td>déem-t-e</td>
<td>déem-t-a</td>
<td>déem-i</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3SG.M</td>
<td>déem-Ø-e</td>
<td>déem-Ø-a</td>
<td>- haa-déem-Ø-u</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3SG.F</td>
<td>déem-t-e</td>
<td>déem-t-i</td>
<td>- haa-déem-t-u</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1PL</td>
<td>déem-n-e</td>
<td>déem-n-a</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2PL</td>
<td>déem-t-an-(i)</td>
<td>déem-t-u</td>
<td>déem-áa</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3PL</td>
<td>déem-an(-i/u)</td>
<td>déem-u</td>
<td>- haa-déem-án(-i/u)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another grammatical morpheme that is compatible with the perfective (23) and imperfective (24), but not with the second person (25) and third person (26) imperative verbs, is the high-toned affirmative main clause marker hín-. Consider the following examples.

(23) Abdiin hindeeme.
    abdíi-n hín-déem-e
    Abdi-NOM ACLM-GO-PF
    ‘Abdi went.’ [Elicited]

(24) Abdiin hindeema.
    abdíi-n hín-déem-a
    Abdi-NOM ACLM-GO-IPF
    ‘Abdi goes/will go.’ [Elicited]

(25) *Ati hindeemi.
    ati hín-déem-i
    2SG.SBJ ACLM-GO-2SG.IMP
    Intended meaning: ‘Go (2SG)!’

(26) *Abdiin hinhaadeemu.
    abdíi-n hín-háa-deem-u
    Abdi-NOM ACLM-3IMP-GO-IPF
    Intended meaning: ‘Let Abdi go.’

The grammatical morphemes in the following sections occur frequently with imperative verbs.

---

6. The occurrence of the affirmative main clause marker hín- with the perfective and imperfective verbs is obligatory when the sentence consists of only a subject and a main verb, and optional when the verb phrase contains objects and adjuncts. According to Dabala & Meyer (2003: 166–170), its attachment to the main verb in the presence of objects and adjuncts has rather a pragmatic function and marks contrastive focus. But I consider it as an optional affirmative clause marking prefix since it contrasts with the low-toned negative clause-marking prefix hín-.
4.3.2 The anterior converb marker

The anterior converb is a dependent verb that expresses an event before the event expressed by the main verb (Sheyanova 2019: 238). While the anterior converb marker on both the second person and third person imperative verbs is -(V)Vtii in Western Oromo, it is -naan with perfective verb forms (Banti & Shimelis 2023: 269). Its function is to indicate that an action is completed prior to the event expressed by a subsequent dependent or main verb. General converbs, which are expressed by lengthening the aspect-marking vowels, differ from these anterior converbs in that the former do not strictly impose a temporal sequence in which the actions are completed. In other words, the action described by the -(V)Vtii -final converb necessarily precedes the action expressed by the following (imperative) verb (Dabala & Meyer 2003: 187). The following examples demonstrate the compatibility of the anterior converb marker -(V)Vtii with the affirmative second person (27), the affirmative third person (28), the negative second person (29), and the negative third person (30) imperative verbs.

(27) Ati yoo guutuu ta’uu barbaadde dhaqii waan qabdu hunda gurguriitti hiyyeeyyiif kenni.
    ati jóo ꜱ海内外 tância bárbáad-t-Ø-e dák’-ii
2SG.SBJ if fill-ADJR want-2SG-PF go-2SG.IMP.CVB
    wáan k’áb-t-Ø-u húndá ꜱ海内外-ii hijj-eejjìi-f
thing hold-2SG-IPF all sell-2SG.IMP-ACVB poor-PL-DAT
kenn-i
give-2SG.IMP
‘If you want to become absolute (lit. full) (Christian), go and sell whatever you have, and then give it to the poor!’ [S & R 2016: 685612]

(28) Inni komee isaa nutti haahimatuutii ati cal jedhi.
    ínní kómée ísá-a nú-ttí haa-hím-át-u-utii
3SG.M.SBJ complaint 3SG.M.OBJ-POS 1PL-LOC 3IMP-tell-MID-IPF-ACVB
    ati tʃ’ál jéɗ-i
2SG.SBJ be_quiet.ideo say-2SG.IMP
‘Let him tell us his complaint (first) and you keep quiet!’ [Elicited]

(29) Hintaa ‘inaatii hojii hojjedhaa.
    hin-taaʔ-in-aa-tii hóddʒ-ii hóddʒ-át-dàa
NEG-sit-NEG-2PL.IMP-ACVB work-NMLZ work-MID-2PL.IMP
‘Do not be idle (lit. do not sit, i.e., stand up) and then do something!’ [Elicited]

(30) Isheen hindufinitiiti mana haa’eegdu.
    ifée-n hín-duf-in-ii tii máńa hâaʔeeg-t-u
3SG.F-NOM NEG-come-NEG-ACVB house 3IMP-monitor-F-IPF
‘Let her stay at home (lit. let her avoid coming) and monitor the home area.’ [Elicited]

As can be understood from the translations in the above examples, actions expressed by the verbs to which -(i)itii is attached are actions performed before the actions expressed by the clause-final verbs. In some earlier grammatical descriptions of Western Oromo, the morpheme -(V)Vtii is analyzed as a contrastive focus marker attached to imperative converbs to show a sequence of actions (Dabala & Meyer 2003: 182; Eshetu 2021: 42). But since the function of the morpheme is to show a strict temporal sequence of actions and not simply an emphasis on an action, I consider it to be an anterior converb marker used with imperative verbs.

7. The function of -naan is not limited to anterior converb marking. It also serves as a conditional clause marker in the protasis of conditional constructions (Debela & Meyer 2006: 71), see (15).
4.3.3 The third person object markers

Verbs in Western Oromo show agreement with their subjects (Owens 1985: 222; Banti & Shime-lis 2023: 267). Generally, objects are not marked on verbs. However, there are some exceptions in which verbs systematically agree with their direct and indirect objects in the third person. The direct and indirect object markers in the third person are -Vn and -Vf with verbs ending in a short vowel, and -nii and -fii with verbs ending in a long vowel. As can be seen from the following examples, the suffixes are able to combine with second person (31-34) and third person (35-36) affirmative imperative verbs. Their occurrence is obligatory when an accusative case-marked direct object or a dative case-marked beneficiary object is omitted, and mostly optional when the objects are present. The direct and indirect object markers on the verb are identical to the accusative and dative case markers on noun phrases (cf. (34) and (38)). The indirect object marker usually occurs with the quotative verb dzẹđ- ‘say’, as in (31) & (35).

(31) “Afaankee narraa qabi!” jedhiin.
afàan-kée nárrá-a qab-i dzẹđ-i-in
mouth-2SG.POSS 1SG.OBJ-ON-ABL hold-2IMP say-2IMP-3DO
‘Tell her/him to shut her/his mouth (not to speak to you) (lit. hold your mouth from me)!’ [S & R 2016: 2539182]

(32) Rafiuusaa dura yeroo hunda seenaa tokko dubbisiif.
ráf-vn-sá-a dúrá jeróo húndá seenáa tókko dúbbís-i-if
read-2IMP-3DO
‘Always read one story to him before he sleeps!’ [S & R 2016: 887901]

(33) Gonkuma koolugaltummaan nutti hintolu jedhaanii.
gónk-úma koolu-gal-t-úmmáa-n nú-ttí hin-tol-Ø-u
ever-FOC defect-enter-F-NMLZ-NOM 1PL-LOC NEG-comfort-3SG.M-IPF
dzẹđ-áa-nii
say-2PL-IMP-3DO
‘Tell (lit. say) her/him/them that we are never comforted by emigration.’ [S & R 2016: 208383]

(34) Kanaaf ijoolee keessaniiif mirga kennaafii.
kana-af ídʒooolléé keessán-iiif mirga kénn-áa-fii
this.OBJ-DAT children 2PL.Poss-DAT right give-2PL.IMP-3IO
‘For this (reason), give right to your children.’ [S & R 2016: 2303886]

(35) Gurbichi (intalattiidhaan) natti heerumi haajedhuun.
gurb-íttʃ-í intala-ttíi-dá-an ná-ttí héerúm-i
boy-SGVM-NOM girl-SGV.F-LNK-ACC 1SG.OBJ-LOC marry_a_woman-2SG.IMP
hàa-dzẹđ-ú-un
3IMP-say-IPF-3DO
‘Let the boy tell the girl, “Marry me (lit. to me)”.’ [Elicited]

8. The third person direct and indirect object markers are also compatible with perfective and imperfective verb forms.
(36) *Warra kaaniif yeroodaan nyaata isaan ga’u haakennumuf.*

wárra káan-iif jeróó-da-an náátá isáan
family other-DAT time-LNK-INST food 3PL
gáʔ-u haa-kénn-ú-uf
reach-IPF 3IMP-give-IPF-3IO

‘Let him give other people (lit. family) enough food (lit. food that reaches them).’

[S & R 2016: 4345069]

Owens (1985: 119) describes the third person direct and indirect object markers as “instrumental and dative verbal case markers”. This is probably because the suffixes are identical with the case markers on noun phrases, as mentioned earlier. However, it appears challenging to treat them as “verbal case markers” because case is generally not assumed to be a verbal grammatical category. Furthermore, case markers can in fact be attached to relative verbs, just as they attach to other nominal modifiers.

But note that all verbs in the above examples are main verbs. Owens (1985: 119) also analyzes the suffix -ni in Harar Oromo (which has the same function as -(V)n(i) in the western dialect of Oromo) as an instrumental case marker, irrespective of whether it is attached to nouns or verbs. This analysis is probably proposed because the instrumental is marked by a similar morpheme, *(V)n(i)*. However, the suffix that is attached to nouns or pronouns in constructions such as (37-38) is better analyzed as an accusative case marker because the grammatical function of nouns (37) or pronouns (38) marked by *(V)n(i)* is that of a direct object.

(37) ... *namichaan, “Ka’itiitii siree kee fudhadhuu mana keetti gali!”* jedheen.

nam-íchá-an káʔ-i-itii sírée kee fud-át-duu máná
man-SGVM-ACC stand-2SG.IMP-ACVB bed 2SG take-MID-2IMP house
kée-tti gál-i dʒéɗ-é-en
2SG-LOC enter-2SG.IMP say-PF-3DO

‘He told the man, … “Stand up and take your bed and go (lit. enter) home!’’’ [S & R 2016: 2963205]

(38) *Ibsaa dhaamsiitii rafi siin jechuu kooti*

if-s-áa dāam-s-i-itii raf-i si-in
light-CAUS-NMLZ.M put-OUT-CAUS-2SG.IMP-ACVB sleep-2SG.IMP 2SG.OBJ-ACC
dʒéɗ-úu kóo-ti
say-VN 1SG.POSS-COP

‘What I am saying to you is, “Put out the light and then sleep!”’ [S & R 2016: 2057007]

The morphemes attached to the verbs in (31-36) are best considered third person object markers, since their function is to refer to direct and indirect (incl. beneficiary) objects. They can only refer to third person participants, mostly when the overt objects noun phrases are omitted as a result of shared knowledge between the speaker and the hearer.

4.3.4 The first person singular pronominal enclitic

As mentioned earlier, the subject of a clause is marked by different sets of agreement suffixes on the main and dependent verbs (Gragg 1976: 188). However, there is an exception to this general rule in which the first person subject is marked by a pronominal enclitic *(a)n ‘I’ on one of the constituents preceding the verb, as seen in (39-43).
(39) Sangaan bite.
\[
\text{sangáa}=\text{n} \quad \text{bit-e} \\
\text{ox}=\text{1SG.SBJ} \quad \text{buy-PF}
\]
‘I bought an ox.’ [Elicited]

(40) Intalaafan sangaa bite.
\[
\text{intálá-af}=\text{án} \quad \text{sángáa} \quad \text{bit-e} \\
\text{girl-DAT}=\text{1SG.SBJ} \quad \text{ox} \quad \text{buy-PF}
\]
‘I bought the girl an ox.’ [Elicited]

(41) Qarshii kuma sagaliinan intalaaf sangaa bite.
\[
\text{k’árjíi} \quad \text{kúmá} \quad \text{ságál-ín}=\text{án} \quad \text{intálá-af} \quad \text{sángáa} \quad \text{bit-e} \\
\text{money thousand nine-INST}=\text{1SG.SBJ} \quad \text{girl-DAT} \quad \text{ox} \quad \text{buy-PF}
\]
‘I bought the girl an ox for (lit. with) nine thousand Birr (Ethiopian currency).’ [Elicited]

(42) Kaleessan qarshii kuma sagaliin intalaaf sangaa bite.
\[
\text{kaléessá}=\text{n} \quad \text{k’árjíi} \quad \text{kúmá} \quad \text{ságál-ín=án} \quad \text{intálá-af} \quad \text{sángáa} \\
\text{money thousand nine-inst} \quad \text{girl-DAT} \quad \text{ox} \quad \text{buy-PF}
\]
‘Yesterday I bought the girl an ox for (lit. with) nine thousand Birr.’ [Elicited]

(43) Gabaa dhaqeen qarshii kuma sagaliin intalaaf sangaa bite.
\[
\text{gabaa} \quad \text{ɗák’-éé}=\text{n} \quad \text{k’árjíi} \quad \text{kúmá} \quad \text{ságál-ín} \quad \text{intálá-af} \\
\text{market} \quad \text{go-PF.CVB}=\text{1SG.SBJ} \quad \text{money} \quad \text{nine-thousand-INST} \quad \text{girl-DAT} \\
\text{sángáa} \quad \text{bit-e} \quad \text{ox} \quad \text{buy-PF}
\]
‘I went to the market and bought the girl an ox for (lit. with) nine thousand Birr.’ [Elicited]

The above examples reveal that the first person singular subject marker is encliticized to the direct object in (39), to the indirect object in (40), to the instrumental adjunct in (41), to the adverb in (42), and to the converb clause in (43). The pronominal clitic has the tendency to be hosted by the leftmost constituent in the verb phrase. The cliticization of the first person singular pronoun to different constituents before the verb is a strategy used to disambiguate between first person singular and third person singular subjects. Consider the following examples.

(44) Sangaan bite.
\[
\text{sangáa}=\text{n} \quad \text{bit-e} \\
\text{ox}=\text{1SG.SBJ} \quad \text{buy-PF}
\]
‘I bought an ox.’ [Elicited]

(45) Sangaa binne.
\[
\text{sangáa} \quad \text{bit-n-e} \\
\text{ox} \quad \text{buy-1PL-PF}
\]
‘We bought an ox.’ [Elicited]

(46) Sangaa bite.
\[
\text{sangáa} \quad \text{bit-Ø-e} \\
\text{ox} \quad \text{buy-3SG.M-PF}
\]
‘He bought an ox.’ [Elicited]
In (44), the first person singular subject marker =n is attached to the object. The first person plural subject is marked by -n on the verb in (45). The third person singular masculine is expressed by a zero morpheme in (46). If the first person subject clitic is removed from the object noun in (43), it creates ambiguity between first and third person singular subjects because these persons are not marked on the verb. If -n were attached to the verb in the first person singular, it would create ambiguity between first person singular and first person plural subjects. Therefore, the first person singular clitic is systematically attached to constituents other than the verb to avoid such ambiguities.

The first person singular clitic can also be attached to second (47-48) and third person (49-50) imperative verbs as the final verbs of reported speech complements.

(47) *Kottun siin jedhe.*
    kótt-ú=n  si-in  dʒéɗ-e
    ‘I said to you, “Come!”’ [Elicited]

(48) *Hinsodaatinaan isiniin jedhe.*
    hin-sod-aat-in-áa=n  isin-iin  dʒéɗ-e
    ‘I said to you (PL), “Don’t be frightened!”’ [Elicited]

(49) *Waqayyo siif haakennun jedhe.*
    waak'ájjó  sí-if  haa-kénn-ú=n  dʒéɗ-e
    ‘I said to you, “May God bless you with something (lit. may God give you)!”’ [Elicited]

(50) *Hamaan si hinargatinan jedhe.*
    hám-áa-n  sí  hin-arg-at-in=án  dʒéɗ-e
    ‘I said to you, ‘May you not come across difficult situations (lit. may troublesome (things) not see you)!’’ [Elicited]

5. The functions of imperatives

Imperatives are often taken to be commands imposing obligations on the addressee(s) by virtue of linguistic conventions (Condoravdi & Lauer 2012: 37). The prototypical function of imperatives is to tell what the addressee(s) should or should not do. However, imperatives have a wide range of pragmatic functions that go beyond commands. They can also be used for directive speech acts such as requests, pleas, advice, good wishes, imprecations, recommendations, warnings, instructions, invitations, and permissions (Aikhenvald 2010: 198–199). In Western Oromo, second person and third person affirmative and negative imperative clauses can be used for directive speech acts such as commands, warnings, blessings, curses, farewell, requests, invitations, and suggestions. In the following subsections, I describe the uses of imperatives by classifying them into two groups. The criterion for the classification of the directive speech acts is their (in)compatibility with command-softening interjections such as maaloo ‘please’, mee ‘I suggest’ and the suffix -kaa, as a marker of a neutral stance.

5.1 Directive speech acts incompatible with command-softening interjections

5.1.1 Commands and warnings

A command is an expression that is intended to make someone do something or refrain from doing something (Condoravdi & Lauer 2012: 38). It can be directed to first, second, or third person participants. Commands addressed to the second person are referred to as direct commands. Those that are
addressed to the first and third persons are generally referred to as indirect commands. In Western Oromo, a command can be directed only to second and third person subjects. A command addressed to the second person is expressed by second person imperative verbs both in the affirmative (51) and negative (52) paradigms. The negative imperative is traditionally referred to as “prohibitive”. An indirect command addressed to the third person is expressed by a third person imperative verb form in the affirmative paradigm (53) and by an invariable verb form in the negative paradigm (54). Such utterances are often accompanied by an imperious voice. Whether the expressions are commands can also be understood in the communicative context.

(51) **Ana irraa fagaadhaa, sokkaa!**

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ana} & \quad \text{irr}-\text{a} & \quad \text{fag}-\text{at}-\text{dáa} & \quad \text{sókk-áa} \\
\text{lSG.OBJ} & \quad \text{on-ABL} & \quad \text{far-INC-H-2PL.IMP} & \quad \text{go-2PL.IMP}
\end{align*}
\]

‘Be far from me, go (away)!’ [S & R 2016, 3310295, 3310298]

(52) **Kanaafuu hinrafnuu hinrafinaa!**

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{kana-af-úu} & \quad \text{hin-ráf-n-uu} & \quad \text{hin-ráf-in-áa} \\
\text{this.OBJ-2SG-FOC} & \quad \text{NEG-sleep-3PL-IPF.CVB} & \quad \text{NEG-sleep-NEG-2PL.IMP}
\end{align*}
\]

‘And for this reason, we don’t sleep, and you (too) do not sleep!’ [S & R 2016, 1479225]

(53) **Wanta gaarii ta’e haahojjetani.**

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{wántá} & \quad \text{gaaríi} & \quad \text{táʔ-} & \quad \text{e} & \quad \text{haa-hóddy-át-án-i} \\
\text{thing} & \quad \text{good} & \quad \text{become-PF} & \quad \text{3IMP-work-VBLZ-PL-IPF}
\end{align*}
\]

‘Let them do something good!’ [S & R 2016, 1098488]

(54) **Isaan bor ganama natti hindhufin!**

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{isáan} & \quad \text{bor} & \quad \text{ganama} & \quad \text{na-tti} & \quad \text{hin-duf-in} \\
\text{3PL} & \quad \text{tomorrow} & \quad \text{morning} & \quad \text{lSG.OBJ-LOC} & \quad \text{NEG-come-NEG}
\end{align*}
\]

‘Let them not come to me tomorrow morning!’ [Elicited]

A warning in Western Oromo can typically be conveyed by utilizing the same expressions as in (51-54). The context shows whether the expression is a command or warning.

### 5.1.2 Blessings and curses

Blessings and curses are expressions of good and bad wishes. They can be regarded as “performatives to the degree that people accept them as having effect” (Kreider 1998: 186). In Western Oromo, blessings and curses appear typically in the form of imperatives: (55) and (56) are blessings expressed by affirmative second person and third person imperative constructions. (57) and (58) are curses expressed by affirmative second person and third person imperative constructions. Negative second and third person constructions are given in (59) and (60). While (59) is an expression of a blessing, (60) is an expression of a curse.

(55) **Maanguddoonnis ... umurii dheeradhu! Akka abaaboo kanaa daraari! Guddadhulu! Ofii mul adhu! jedhanii eebisban.**

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{maangudd-óot-ní-s} & \quad \text{umúrii} & \quad \text{deer-á-t-dú} & \quad \text{ákklá} & \quad \text{ábaabóo} \\
\text{elder-PL-NOM-ADD} & \quad \text{age} & \quad \text{long-INC-H-2SG.IMP} & \quad \text{SIM} & \quad \text{flower}
\end{align*}
\]

káná-a \quad \text{dáráar-i} \quad \text{gudd-at-dú} \quad \text{ofi-i(f)} \quad \text{mul?-at-dú}

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{this.OBJ-POSS} & \quad \text{bloom-2SG.IMP} & \quad \text{big-INC-H-2SG.IMP} & \quad \text{self-DAT} & \quad \text{appear-MID-2SG.IMP}
\end{align*}
\]
dʒeɗ-an-ii       eebb-is-an
say-PL-PF.CNV    bless-CAUS-PL
‘And the elders … blessed [a person] by saying, “Live long, bloom like this flower, grow up, be famous (lit. appear by yourself)”.’ [S & R 2016: 2018262, 2018267, 2018272]

(56)  Jaalala hiriyaa siif haalaatu! Halagaan fira siif haata ’u! Buddeen kee guddaa haata ’u!
dʒaalálá    hírijáa       si-if   haa-láat-u     halagáa-n
love       friend.Poss     2SG.OBJ-DAT 3IMP-give-IPF stranger-NOM
fírá       si-if           haa-táʔ- u     buddéen   kée     gudd-áa
relative    2SG.OBJ-DAT   3IMP-be-IPF   food     2SG.Poss     big-M
háa-táʔ- u
3IMP-be-IPF
‘May (God) bestow upon you the love of friends; may a stranger turn out to be your relative; may your life flourish (lit. may your food become big)’. (Dirribee et al. 2012: 43)

(57)  Boolla dhaqi!
bóollá       dák’-i
grave    go-2SG.IMP
‘May you die out (lit. go to the grave).’ [Elicited]

(58)  Iji kee haajaamu!
ídʒ-i       kée       haa-jáam-u
eye-NOM     2SG.Poss     3IMP-blind-IPF
‘May your eyes be blind.’ [Elicited]

(59)  Hinrakkatinaa! horii of harkaa hindhabinaa!
hin-rakk-at-ín-áa   horii of harka-a
NEG-get_problem-MID-NEG-2PL.IMP money self hand-POSS
hin-dáb-in-áa
NEG-miss-NEG-2PL.IMP
‘May you never have problems; may wealth come into your hands (lit. do not miss money from your hands).’ [Elicited]

(60)  Gowwaan hindhalatin; dhatalullee hinguddatin.
gowwáa-n       hin-dhal-at-in     dhál-át-ú-llée
coward-NOM    NEG- be_born-MID-NEG be_born-MID-IPF-FOC
hin-gudd-at-in
NEG-big-INCH-NEG-2SG.IMP
‘May a coward not come into being (lit. not be born), if (by chance) s/he comes into being, may s/he die out (lit. not grow up).’ [S & R 2016: 124608, 124612]

Similar to the situation with commands and warnings, differentiating between commands and blessings or curses cannot be done on the basis of the verb form, as imperatives serve both functions, but it is exclusively based on extralinguistic knowledge.
5.1.3 Farewells

Farewells are only addressed to second person subjects and hence exclusively expressed by affirmative second person imperative verbs (61). Negative second person imperative verbs and affirmative or negative third person imperative verbs are excluded in this function. Furthermore, an imperative verb used for a farewell cannot be modified by a command-softening interjections, as in (62).

(61) *Nagaan bulaa!
    nagáa-n búl-áa
    peace-INF pass_night-2PL.IMP
    ‘Good night (lit. pass the night with peace).’ [Elicited]

(62) *Maaloo nagaan bulaa!
    máaloo nagáa-n búl-áa
    please peace-INF pass_night-2PL.IMP
    ‘Please, good night (lit. please pass the night with peace).’

For more information on expressions of farewell in Oromo see Baye (1997).

5.2 Directive speech acts compatible with command-softening interjections

5.2.1 Requests and invitations

A request is a type of directive utterance in which the speaker wants the addressee to do or refrain from doing something. It differs from a command in that it does not assume the speaker to have control over the addressee (Kreidler 1998: 190). In Western Oromo, requests are expressed by second person affirmative (63) and negative (64) imperative verbs, just like commands. They are distinguished from commands by the use of command-softening interjections such as máaloo ‘please’ and the soft voice associated with the utterance.

(63) Yaa isa bara baraan jiraattuu máaloo cubbuu koo irráa na dhíqi!
    jaa isa bara bárá-an džír-áät-t-ú-u
    O 3SG.M.OBJ era era-INF exist-INCH-2-IPF-VOC
    máaloo tʃ’ubbúu kóo na írrá-a dík’-i
    please sin 1SG.PSS 1SG.OBJ on-ABL wash-2SG.IMP
    ‘O eternal (lit. he who lives from era to era), please wash my sin away from me.’
    [S & R 2016: 4639584]

(64) Yaa gooftáa, máaloo cubbuu kana isaanitti hinlakkkaa’in!
    jaa gooftáa máaloo tʃ’ubbúu kána
    O Lord please sin this.OBJ
    isaan-itti hin-lakk-aaʔ-ín
    3PL-LOC NEG-COUNT-INCH-NEG
    ‘O Lord, please do not count this sin on them.’ [S & R 2016: 4778694]

An invitation is expressed by affirmative second person imperative verbs (65). Prohibitive constructions are not used for invitations. The use of non-second person imperative verbs for invitations is possible (66) but infrequent. Instead, a second person imperative verb is used in a reported speech form (67). Invitations can contain the interjection máaloo ‘please’ to show politeness.
5.2.2 Suggestions

A suggestion is a type of utterance in which the speaker gives his/her opinion to the addressee as to what the addressee should or should not do (Kreidler 1998: 190). In Western Oromo, an invitation is expressed by an imperative verb combined with the command-softening interjection *mée ‘I suggest’. Both second person and third person verbs in their affirmative (68-69) and negative forms (70) can be used for suggestions.

(68) *Mee yaada kana gadi fageenyaan naaf ibsi.*

mée jáadá kána gadi fag-ɛɛŋná-an na-af
I_suggest idea this.OBJ down far-NMLZ-INST 1SG.OBJ-DAT
íf-s-i
light-CAUS-2SG.IMP
‘I suggest that you explain (lit. enlighten) this idea in depth for me.’ [S & R 2016: 837642]

(69) *Gurbichi mee bor haadhufu.*

gurb-ítʃ-i mée bór haa-ɗuf-ų
boy-SGV.M-NOM I_suggest tomorrow 3IMP-come-IPF
‘I suggest that you let the boy come tomorrow.’ [Elicited]

(70) *Mee bor hindeminnaa.*

mée bór hin-deem-ín-áa
I_suggest tomorrow NEG-go-NEG-2PL.IMP
‘I suggest that you don’t go tomorrow.’ [Elicited]
Another command-softening interjection used to express the speaker’s neutral attitude towards a suggested action is the suffix -\textit{kaa}, as seen in (71) and (72). The morpheme indicates that the speaker leaves the decision about the feasibility of the suggested action to the addressee. The speaker is not committed to the realization of the suggested action.

(71) \textit{Ati garuu mee waan naaf yaadde naaf hojjhukaa.}
\begin{verbatim}
ati gárúu mée waan ná-af jaad-t-e na-af hoddʒ-á-t-dú-kaa
\end{verbatim}
\textit{‘But you, please do whatever you thought for me (i.e., the decision is yours).’ [S & R 2016: 4319032]}

(72) \textit{Yoo sangaaan bitadha jedhe haabitatukaa!}
\begin{verbatim}
jóo sángáa=n bit-át-dá dʒeɗ-e haa-bít-át-ú-kaa
\end{verbatim}
\textit{‘If he wants to buy (lit. if he says I will buy) an ox, let him buy (i.e., the decision is up to him).’ [Elicited]}

6. NON-IMPERATIVE COMMAND STRATEGIES

6.1 Negative interrogative and insubordinate clauses

Western Oromo employs negative interrogative (73-74) and affirmative (75) or negative (76) insubordinate clauses for strict orders and warnings. Insubordinate clauses are conventionalized main clauses that appear formally as subordinate clauses (Evans 2007: 376). In Western Oromo, they are always subordinated by \textit{akka}, a subordinating conjunction also used as a simulative preposition elsewhere. Structurally, the insubordinate clauses are complements of verbs like \textit{si-in jed-é-era} (\textit{2SG.OBJ-ACC say-PF-AUX}) ‘I/he said to you’, which are not explicitly mentioned but understood from the context.

(73) \textit{Namicho asii hindeemtuu?}
\begin{verbatim}
nám-íttʃ-o asi-i hin-déem-t-Ø-ú-u
\end{verbatim}
\textit{‘Hey man, go away from here! (lit. don’t you go from here?)’ [Elicited]}

(74) \textit{Utúun isinii hindhufin hinbaddanii?}
\begin{verbatim}
uñú=n isín-ii(f) hin-ɗuf-ín hin-bád-t-án-i-i
\end{verbatim}
\textit{‘Disappear before I come (lit. don’t you disappear before I come for you?)’ [Elicited]}

(75) \textit{Qarshíi koo bor ganama akka naaf fiddu.}
\begin{verbatim}
k’árʃíi kóo bor ganáma ákká ná-af fid-t-Ø-u
\end{verbatim}
\textit{‘Bring my money tomorrow morning (lit. that you bring my money tomorrow morning).’ [Elicited]}

(76) \textit{Isin gonkuma seera akka hincabsine.}
\begin{verbatim}
isin gónk-úma séerá ákká hin-tʃ̄áb-s-ín-e
\end{verbatim}
\textit{‘Never violate rules (lit. that you didn’t break the law).’ [Elicited]}

\textit{[S & R 2016: 4319032]}
Directive speech acts expressed by these constructions differ from those expressed by imperative verb forms in that they compel the addressee to do something or to refrain from doing something. While imperatives communicate simple orders, negative interrogative and insubordinate clauses are perceived as entailing a threat of punishment or other negative consequences. Negative interrogative clauses have an imperious tone of voice when they are used for warnings. Using negative interrogative clauses for warnings is a common phenomenon in Cushitic languages such as Konso (Ongaye 2020: 414) and Omotic languages such as Maale (Azèb 2001). For one Cushitic language, Kambaata, a dedicated, so-called “apprehensive” verb paradigm for warnings and threats has been reported (Treis forthcoming). Such forms are not attested in Western Oromo.

6.2 Animal-directed interjections

In Western Oromo, commands addressed to pets, domestic animals, and birds are expressed by a sub-type of interjections referred to as “conative”. Conative interjections are often defined as terms that are either used to grab the listener’s attention or aimed at compelling the addressee to act or respond in a way that the speaker desires (Ameka 1992: 113). In terms of origin, interjections can be categorized as “primary” – i.e. terms which cannot be used in any other way – or “secondary” – i.e. terms that belong to other word classes but can also be used non-elliptically as one-word utterances (Ameka 1992: 113). Semantically, animal-directed conative interjections aim at making animals move, calm down, or not move. According to Andrason & Akumbu (2024: 6), these can be further categorized into dispersals (used to chase animals away), directionals (used to modify the movement of animals in terms of inception, termination, direction, speed, and manner), and summonses (used to call animals). For animal commands, both primary (P) and secondary (S) conative interjections with dispersal, directional, and summoning functions are attested in Western Oromo. The first thorough study of formal (phonetic and morphological) and functional (pragmato-semantic) aspects of conative animal calls in Macha (Western) Oromo was conducted by Andrason et al. (2024). The following sections add to the existing body of knowledge by describing the tonal patterns and the origins of both previously documented and newly discovered interjections. It also refines or revises the description of some forms. Since a significant portion of animal-directed interjections function as both dispersals and directionals, these two semantic types are discussed together in §6.2.1. Section 6.2.2 provides a description of summonses.

6.2.1 Dispersal and directional interjections

Dispersals and directionals, which are used to chase, initiate, sustain, and accelerate motion or which alter movement directions, have extra-high (ṽ) tones paired with short vowels. Interjections used for stopping and calming down working animals use extra low (ṽ) tones associated with long or extra-long vowels. Extra-long vowels and extra-high and extra-low tones are employed with interjections but are not a part of the language’s regular phonology (see Andrason et al. 2024 for a detailed discussion of other phonetic and morphological features of Western Oromo interjections). The inventory of dispersal and directional interjections is provided in Table 4. Forms linked by “~” are alternative expressions. Interjections marked with a superscript (n) have the property of being replicated indefinitely. Interjections without the superscript (n) are not repeated. Consonants represented by more than two symbols (particularly [rrr]) have durative quality, meaning they can be uttered for an extended period of time. Whistles of different pitches can also be used to chase, accelerate or stop animals (see also Andrason et al. 2024). Interjections denoted by “(NI)” have been newly identified. The remaining ones are already provided in Andrason et al. (2024).

10. Ameka (1992: 113) makes a distinction between expressive interjections that primarily communicate the speaker’s cognitive and emotive state, phatic interjections whose primary function is to establish and maintain communicative contact, and conative interjections which primarily invite an action or response from another party in the interaction.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Animal</th>
<th>Qubee orthography</th>
<th>IPA</th>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calf</td>
<td>emme</td>
<td>[ʔɛmmɛʔ]</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>chase away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cat</td>
<td>bis</td>
<td>[bîs]</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>chase away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>ha</td>
<td>[hā]</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>start, sustain movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>haa [n]</td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
<td>calm down, stop movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken</td>
<td>kut</td>
<td>[kūt]</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>chase away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donkey</td>
<td>che [f]</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>start, sustain movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>oosh</td>
<td>[ʔōooʃʃʃ]</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>calm down, stop movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog</td>
<td>bayi (NI)</td>
<td>[bāj]</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>chase away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ushut</td>
<td>[ʔufūt]</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>incite to attack</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qab(i)</td>
<td>[k’āb(i)]</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>incite to attack</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arraa (NI)</td>
<td>[ʔarrāa] [n]</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>encourage to sustain chasing a prey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goat and</td>
<td>ush ~ kis ~</td>
<td>[ʔūf] ~ [kīs] ~</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>chase away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sheep</td>
<td>kale ~ chu</td>
<td>[kālēʔ] ~ [ʧū]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kiph ~ kiphiddar</td>
<td>[kīb] ~ [kīp’iddārrr]</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>initiate to fight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horse</td>
<td>toph [t]</td>
<td>[tōɓ] [p]</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>start, sustain, accelerate movement (gallop)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mox (NI)</td>
<td>[mōt']</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>start, sustain movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>teesh</td>
<td>[tēeʃʃʃ]</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>calm down, stop movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mule</td>
<td>mac [m]</td>
<td>[māt’]</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>start and sustain movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>teesh</td>
<td>[tēeʃʃʃ]</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>calm down, stop movement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. According to Andrason et al. (2024: 7), horses are also the target of this interjection. In the dialect I speak, using it for a horse is not appropriate. The following well-known saying supports the claim: tʃ’absītun fard’a ʔollāattiin “tʃ’” dʒetti ‘Someone who enjoys undermining (everything) uses the term tʃ’ to chase away a neighbor’s horse’.

12. In Andrason et al. (2024: 4), this interjection is described as ending in the bilabial plosive [p]. However, upon verification with several native speakers, I discovered that the consonant is, in fact, a bilabial implosive [ɓ]. It is an allophone of the bilabial ejective /p’/ occurring in word-final position. For instance, the word [kipp’ee] ‘goat or sheep fight’ is realized as [kīb] when it is used as an interjection.
Imperatives and non-imperative command strategies in Western Oromo

Oxen

- **ooha ~ oofa**  
  [ʔȍohá] ~ [ʔȍofá]  
  S  
  calm down, stop movement

- **giph (NI)**  
  [gɪɓ]  
  P  
  move back off a little (to pull out a ploughshare stuck in a plant root or rock)

- **bo’**  
  [bøʔ]  
  S  
  move straight forward (to create the first furrow)

- **ya’(NI)**  
  [jāʔ]  
  S  
  move diagonally (to create a ditch in a farm)

- **moxob (NI)**  
  [mōt’ōb]  
  S  
  move along the furrows’ ends (to plough the border area)

- **kot (NI)**  
  [kōt]  
  S  
  turn around

- **ol**  
  [ʔōl]  
  S  
  move up (to keep the furrow straight)

- **gad**  
  [gād]  
  S  
  move down (to keep the furrow straight)

- **hirr (NI)**  
  [hirr]  
  P  
  incite to fight or to mate

- **rising whistle**  
  [↗]  
  start, accelerate movement

- **falling whistle**  
  [ˉ↘]  
  stop movement

Oxpecker

- **cirr**  
  [tʃ’írríi]  
  S  
  chase away

Pigs and porcupine

- **rising whistle (long) (NI)**  
  [⋯]  
  chase away

---

When it comes to their origin, the majority of the interjections in Table 4 are primary. Those which are secondary are derived from imperative verbs, adverbs and nouns. Table 5 presents a list of these interjections along with their equivalents from other word classes.

### Table 5 — Origins of secondary interjections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interjection (IPA)</th>
<th>Equivalent term (IPA)</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[bāji]</td>
<td>[bāji(ʔ)-]</td>
<td>go out</td>
<td>verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[kīɓ]–[kīphīddārrrr]</td>
<td>[kipp’ée]</td>
<td>goat or sheep battle</td>
<td>noun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ooha]–[oofa]</td>
<td>[ʔōof-]</td>
<td>drive animal, car etc.</td>
<td>verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[tʃ’irrii]</td>
<td>[tʃ’irrii]</td>
<td>oxpecker</td>
<td>noun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[bøʔ]</td>
<td>[boʔōo]</td>
<td>furrow</td>
<td>noun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[jāʔ]</td>
<td>[jāʔa]</td>
<td>ditch in a farm</td>
<td>noun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[mōt’ōb]</td>
<td>[mot’obīi]</td>
<td>edge of a farm</td>
<td>noun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ʔōl]</td>
<td>[ʔōl]</td>
<td>up</td>
<td>adv verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[gād]</td>
<td>[gād(i)]</td>
<td>down</td>
<td>adv verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[k’āb]</td>
<td>[k’āb-]</td>
<td>catch</td>
<td>verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[kōt]</td>
<td>[kōtt-]</td>
<td>come</td>
<td>verb</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

13. The dispersal interjection [tʃ’irrii] is taken to be applied to the entire class of birds in Andrason et al. (2024: 4). However, its sole purpose is to chase away the red-billed oxpeckers ([tʃ’irrii] in Western Oromo), which pick maggots, flies, and ticks out of the pelage of their hosts. Because they also feed on the blood from the wounds of the animals (mostly cattle) and thus hinder the healing process or sometimes even cause new wounds, herders chase them away.

14. This verb is one of the imperative-only verbs discussed in §4.1.
6.2.2 Summonses

The group of summonses are tonally different from dispersals and directionals because they do not use extra-high or extra-low tones. The tones they bear are mostly those which are used in the regular phonology of the language. However, there are a few exceptions, such as the calls for goats, sheep, and calves, in which falling tones are utilized to summon the animals from a distance. Calves, goats, and sheep close to the speaker are summoned by the forms on which tones do not fall but whose syllables bear only low tones. The variant used to summon dogs from a distance has a high tone on the last syllable rather than a falling tone. It is also important to note that when falling tones are utilized, any previously short vowel becomes longer and any consonant-final interjection acquires a long vowel.

Table 6 — Summoning interjections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Animal</th>
<th>Qubee orthography</th>
<th>IPA</th>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calf</td>
<td>eem ~ emmee</td>
<td>[ʔeem]~[ʔémmêe]</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>call</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cat</td>
<td>adurr (NI) ~ urrr</td>
<td>[adúrrr]~[úrrr]</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>call</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>darr</td>
<td>[darrr]</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>call (for grazing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>level-pitched</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>repeated whistle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(NI)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>loyeekaa loyee</td>
<td>[lójée-kaa*lójée]</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>induce to go home (in the evening)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>obeek lagoon</td>
<td>[ʔóbée-lágoo]</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>induce to go to the river to drink water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(at noon)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chickens</td>
<td>kul</td>
<td>[kúl]</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>call</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog</td>
<td>!w</td>
<td>![w]</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>call</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donkey</td>
<td>kur</td>
<td>[kúrr]</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>call</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goat</td>
<td>kale ~ kalee</td>
<td>[kale]~[kálêe]</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>call</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep</td>
<td>bido ~ bidoo</td>
<td>[bidoo]~[bidôo]</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>call</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similar to dispersals and directionals, most summonses are primary interjections; a few words are, however, secondary since they synchronically have nominal or verbal equivalents. This concerns the two simple interjections for calling cats [adûrrr] ~ [úrrr] and dogs [buttʃi] ~[buttʃi], as well as the two complex interjections [lójée-kaa*lójée] (used to induce cattle to return home in the evening) and [óbée-lágoo] (used to persuade cattle to go to the river to drink water at noon) (similar forms are also reported by Andrason et al. 2024). The simple interjections [adûrrr] ~ [úrrr] and [buttʃi] ~[buttʃi] have the nominal counterparts adùrrée ‘cat’ and buttʃi ‘dog’, respectively. The complex interjections are composed of parts from different word classes. The interjection [lójée-kaa*lójée] is made up of the imperative verb loj-i (walk_slowly-2sg.imp), the melody-maintaining element -jee, and the neutral stance marker -kaa ‘suggest’ (see §5.2.2). Together they convey the meaning ‘I suggest you walk slowly (as you go home)’. The interjection [óbée-lágoo] is composed of a modified form of the verbs obaase ‘cause to drink’ and a modified form of the noun laga ‘river, stream’. When taken as a whole, they convey something like ‘it is time to go to the river and drink some water’. The two complex interjections are distinct from all the others because they are refrains of poems. They are always accompanied by several verses that are meant to encourage the herd. These poems are sung by young shepherds (children).
7. Conclusion

This paper has provided the first detailed description of forms and functions of imperatives and alternative command strategies in Western Oromo. Both second person and third person imperatives are morphologically marked, but they form different inflectional paradigms because the former is expressed by suffixes and the latter by a prefix. Second person imperatives are the simplest of all verb forms in the language. They are incompatible with aspectual morphemes unlike the third person imperative verb forms. Grammatical morphemes compatible with both second person and third person imperatives include the anterior converb marker, the third person subject and object markers, and the first person singular pronominal subject enclitic.

The primary function of second person and third person imperatives is to give direct and indirect commands, respectively. In addition to commands, both second person and third person imperatives can also be used for directive speech acts such as warnings, blessings, curses, and invitations. Some speech acts like farewells only occur with second person imperative verb forms. With command-softening interjections, second person and third person imperative verbs can be used for requests, invitations, and suggestions.

In Western Oromo, strict commands and warnings are given by non-imperative verb forms such as negative interrogative and insubordinate clauses. Primary and secondary conative interjections that fall into one of three semantic categories—dispersals, directionals, or summonses—are used to communicate commands intended for domesticate animals. These mostly make use of tonal patterns that are not common in other word classes.

The paper has shown that Western Oromo resembles the Oromoid and Omo-Taana groups of the Low Land East Cushitic branch in the forms it uses for the second person imperatives. In contrast, the third person imperatives are different across these languages. In terms of the functions of imperatives, Western Oromo shows considerable similarities with Konso, a Lowland East Cushitic language belonging to the Oromoid group.

Acknowledgements

The idea of working on the imperatives of the western dialect of Oromo was conceived during my research stay at LLACAN (Langage, langues et cultures d’Afrique), Villejuif, from October to December 2021, during one of our discussion sessions with Yvonne Treis and Ronny Meyer. Therefore, I would like to express my gratitude to both for bringing the idea to my attention. Yvonne Treis provided insightful comments on an earlier draft of this paper. Additionally, Feda Negesse deserves my appreciation for our conversation about the interjections used for animal-directed commands. I am also indebted to the CNRS (National Center for Scientific Research) for sponsoring my research stay in the programme “Soutien à la mobilité international entrante” (SMI 2021). My special thanks go to the editors of LLA (Linguistique et Langues Africaines) and to two anonymous reviewers for their insightful comments on the earlier version of this paper.
# ABBREVIATIONS

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<th>Meaning</th>
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REFERENCES


