Field Notes on Kono, a Southwestern Mande Lect of Forest Guinea[1]

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1. Introduction

The Kono (knu) lect described here belongs to Southwestern Mande group. It is one of minority lects of the Republic of Guinea, not to be confused with Kono of Sierra Leone (kno, Kono-Vai group). Kono is spoken by ca. 90 000 people in Lola Prefecture located in the eastern part of Forest Guinea, bordering the Ivory Coast and Liberia.

Kono is a member of the Kpelle macro-language also comprising Guinean Kpelle (gkp) and Liberian Kpelle (xpe). Since their taxonomic status is somewhat controversial, I use the terms "lect"/"variety" to refer to these three language forms. However, as I demonstrate in this sketch, Kono is lexically and grammatically distinct enough to be considered a separate language. To date, no descriptions of Kono are available.

Though it is undoubtedly a Southwestern Mande lect, Kono has some phonological and syntactic properties shared with neighbouring Southern Mande languages, e.g., first vowel elision in CVLV structures and obligatory pronominal doubling of definite noun phrases.

The data presented here were collected at several sessions with two speakers of Kono, Sèni Doré (born in 1965) and Bala Bamba (born in 1956) during my field trips to the Republic of Guinea in 2009 and 2014, where I primarily worked on Guinean Kpelle as my primary area of research. I am also very grateful to Souanan Doré and Jean Gbemou, both native speakers of Kono, as well as two anonymous reviewers for their useful comments and corrections.

Guinean Kpelle data mentioned in this paper are based on my own field materials; they pertain to the *hɔ́ɔ́kwὲlɛ̆* variety of Guinean Kpelle spoken in Nzérékoré, the capital of Forest Guinea, which I assume to be the "basic" Guinean Kpelle dialect. All information concerning Liberian Kpelle is taken from Welmers (1962) and Leidenfrost

and McKey (2005). Other sources on Guinean and Liberian Kpelle are mentioned in the references.

The following are some general typological properties of Kono:

- There are seven oral vowels and five nasal vowels.
- There are labiovelar /kp/, /gb/, /ŋm/, labialized /kw/, /gw/, /hw/, /ŋw/ and implosive /ɓ/ consonants, among others.
- Initial consonants make up a system of morphophonemic alternations with binary contrast for sonorants and three-way contrast for obstruents.
- There is a binary H vs. L tone system with contextual mid tone, H tone spread, tone polarity, downstep and downdrift.
- Basic word order is S Aux O V X.
- There are three types of possessive constructions distinguishing between kinship terms, body parts names and free nouns.
- There is inclusive vs. exclusive distinction in person markers.
- TAM markers in the auxiliary slot inflect for person and number and generally co-occur with lexical subjects.

2. Segmental phonology

Table 1. Vowels

Oral				Nasal		
Front	Central	Back rounded		Front	Central	Back rounded
i		*u*	*ŋ*	*ị*		*ụ*
e		*o*				
ɛ		*ɔ*		*ɛ̣*		*ɔ̣*
	a				*ạ*	

Comment: Word final /ŋ/ is treated as a vowel because it carries tone.

Table 2. Consonants

	Labial	Coronal	Palatal	Velar	Labiovelar	Labialized	Glottal
Voiceless stops	*p*	*t*		*k*	*kp*	*kw*	
Voiced stops	*b*	*d*		*g*	*gb*	*gw*	
Implosives	*ɓ*						
Voiceless fricatives						*hw*	*h*
Voiced fricatives	*v*			*ɣ*			
Voiced affricates		*dz* / *z*					
Oral sonorants		*ɾ, l*	*y*			*w*	
Nasal sonorants	*m*	*n*	*ɲ*	*ŋ*	*ŋm*	*ŋw*	

Comments: 1) [dz] and [z] are variants of the same phoneme.

2) /ŋm/, /nv/ and initial /ŋ/ segments only appear as a result of initial consonant alternation (2.4), they do not occur in lexical representations.

2.1. Alveolar flap /ɾ/

Kono has alveolar flap /ɾ/ occurring intervocally, represented here as *r* for typographic simplicity. Intervocalic /ɾ/ and /l/ are contrastive after word-initial labials, velars, labiovelars and labialized consonants, but only /ɾ/ occurs after word-initial coronal and palatal consonants. This restriction suggests that there are elements of consonant harmony, or "homoresonance" in Kono, which is also attested in Southern Mande languages (Le Saout 1979; Bearth 1992), but not in other Kpelle lects. In Liberian Kpelle, etymological contrast between /ɾ/ and /l/ is preserved after all initial consonants, and in Guinean Kpelle these two phonemes merged into /l/. Consider the series of cognates in Table 3; cf. also Table 4 below.

Table 3. Intervocalic /ɾ/ and /l/.

Kono	Liberian Kpelle	Guinean Kpelle	Meaning
péré	*péré*	*pélé*	'house'
kéréŋ	*kéréŋ*	*kéléŋ*	'burn'
kélê	*kélè*	*kélê*	'beat'
kplá	*kpálá*	*kpálá*	'be dry'
ɣírê	*ɣílà*	*ɣílê*	'dog'
léré	*lélé*	*lélé*	'good'

2.2. Vowel elision in stems with intervocalic /l/

In stems with intervocalic /l/ such as CVlV, CVlVŋ, CVlVV etc., the first vowel is often dropped in Kono. ClV and similar structures are not attested in other Kpelle varieties but they are typical for neighbouring Southern Mande languages, e.g., Dan-Gwɛɛtaa (Vydrine & Kességbeu 2008) and Kla-Dan (Makeeva 2012). Consider the series of cognates in Table 4.

Table 4. Vowel elision in CVlV and similar structures.

Kono	Liberian Kpelle	Guinean Kpelle	Meaning
klɔ́ŋ	*kɔ́lɔ́ŋ*	*kɔ́lɔ́ŋ*	'know'
kplě	*kpēlē*	*kpèlě*	'drink'
ɓláá	*ɓálá*	*ɓéláá*	'sheep'

2.3. Vowel shortening

CV_1V_1 stems with identical vowels, as well as stem initial CV_1V_1- structures in non-monosyllabic stems are shortened in Kono; cf. Table 5.

Table 5. CV_1V_1 shortening.

Kono	Liberian Kpelle	Guinean Kpelle	Meaning
ká	*káá*	*káá*	'see'
hě	*sēē*	*hèě*	'sit'
hwèrě	*fēērē*	*hvèèlě*	'two'

2.4. **Initial consonant alternation**

As in other Kpelle lects, initial consonants make up a system of alternations in Kono.

(1) p→m/b t→n/d k→ŋ/g kw→ŋw/gw kp→ŋm/gb hw→nv/v h→ɲ/dz

     ɓ→m   l→n   y→ɲ   w→ŋw

The alternation appears as a result of the voicing and nasalization of non-nasal consonants (given to the left) in *NC sequences. Lexical obstruents, e.g., /p/, alternate with nasal and non-nasal voiced alternants, e.g., /m/ and /b/. Non-obstruents, e.g., implosive /ɓ/, alternate with nasals, e.g., /m/.

This process has been morphologized for 1SG *ŋ́- and 3SG *ŋ̀- pronominal prefixes[2] encoding verb and postposition complements, inalienable possessors and single arguments in stative-resultative construction (6.17). 1SG and 3SG pronouns are realized as initial consonant alternation with high in 1SG or low in 3SG tone modifying lexical tone; for further details concerning tone, cf. section 3.6.

In stems with initial lexical obstruents, the nasal alternant appears in 1SG while voiced non-nasal appears in 3SG, e.g., for lexical /h/ in *hɔ́ŋɔ́* 'nose': *é-hɔ́ŋɔ́* 'your nose', *ɲɔ́ŋɔ́* 'my nose', *dzɔ̀ŋɔ̀* 'his nose'; for lexical /k/ in *kɔ́ɣɔ́* 'leg': *é-kɔ́ɣɔ́* 'your leg', *ŋ́ɔ́ɣɔ́* 'my leg', *gɔ̀ɣɔ̀* 'his leg'[3]. Though this requires further phonetic investigation, in stems with initial lexical non-obstruents, /ɓ, l, y, w/, as well as those with initial lexical nasals /m, n, ɲ, ŋw/[4], the initial nasal is pronounced slightly longer in both 1SG and 3SG forms,

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[2] In Liberian and Guinean Kpelle, these alternations also mark definiteness, but there is no such marker in Kono; cf. 5.4.

[3] Alternants for obstruents are always the same for 1SG and 3SG prefixes in Guinean Kpelle and as such, these forms are only differentiated by tone, e.g., *é-húŋɔ́* 'your nose', *zúŋɔ́* 'my nose', *zùŋɔ́* 'his nose'; *é-kɔ́ɣɔ́* 'your leg', *gɔ́ɣɔ́* 'my leg', *gɔ̀ɣɔ̀* 'his leg'. However, in Liberian Kpelle, a nasal appears with an alternated consonant in 1SG form yielding a three-way contrast. The difference may be represented as C_1- for lexical consonant, $\text{Ń}C_2$- for 1sg, C_2- with low tone for alternated consonant, e.g., *í-hūā* 'your nose', *ńzūā* 'my nose', *zùa* 'his nose'; *í-kɔ́ɔ́* 'your leg', *ŋ́gɔ́ɔ́* 'my leg', *gɔ̀ɔ́* 'his leg'.

[4] Other nasals – /ŋm/, /nv/ and word initial /ŋ/ – are never lexical; they only occur as a result of the alternation.

with high or low tone depending on the pronoun, e.g., *é-lèě* 'your mother' with initial lexical /l/, but *ńéè* 'my mother' – *ǹèě* 'his mother'; for lexical /ɲ/ in *ɲíní* 'breast': *é-ɲíní* 'your breast', *ɲ́íní* 'my breast', *ɲ̀ìnǐ* 'her breast'.

The alternation also occurs synchronically following a word final nasal /ŋ/. In this case, the /ŋ/ is deleted and the following word appears with a nasal initial consonant, e.g., *ɲíŋ kɔ́ɔ̀* [ɲí ŋɔ́ɔ̀] 'tooth', lit. 'teeth bone'.

3. Tone

There is a binary H vs. L contrast with occasional contextual M in Kono. The two tonal elements H and L make up five basic fixed lexical patterns or melodies: /H/, /L(H)/, /LHL/, /HL/, /L/, as shown in (2) for CVCV structures (however, longer structures, e.g., CVCVCV, have no restrictions on tone combinations).

(2) /H/   *kɔ́ɣɔ́* 'leg'
     /L(H)/   *hùyǒ* 'meat'
     /HL/   *yírê* 'dog'
     /LHL/   *yɔ̀wâ* 'axe'
     /L/   *ɲàlè* 'cat'

I adopt the following conventions in this paper. Tonal melodies are given in slashes: the /H/ melody. Tonal elements comprising tonal melodies are written without brackets: H tone. Surface realizations are given in square brackets. Hyphens mark a syllable boundary in surface representations when needed, e.g., /HL/ is realized as [H-HL] on CVCV as in *yírê* 'dog'.

(H) represents an underlying floating H, which always follows a linked L in a /L(H)/ melody. It is marked with haček on final vowel in the orthography: *pǎ* 'to kill', *hùyǒ* 'meat', *mɔ̀ŋ̌* 'hear'. Phonetically, /L(H)/ is realized as low level tone; I mark it as [L°] in the surface transcription. For the sake of clarity, the conventions for /L(H)/ are represented in (3):

(3)   Underlying: /pa/   Orthographic: *pǎ*   Surface: [pà°] (level L)
                     |
                   L   H

(L) is a floating low tone that is specific for person markers encoding alienable possession – see 3.2 and 4.1. It is marked with a ` sign after the stem.

The /HL/ pattern is realized as [H-HL] on CVCV stems and as [H-L] on CVV stems.

The following tonal rules exist in Kono: downdrift (3.1), downstep (3.2), contour simplification (3.3), tonal polarity (3.4) and H spread (3.5). I discuss the propagation of prefixal high and low tones in 3.6.

3.1. **Downdrift**

Downdrift is a general phonetic phenomenon whereby every next high tone is pronounced lower after a low tone and every next low tone is pronounced lower after a high tone, e.g., *Hɛ́ní àà pá ɓɔ̀* [Hɛ́ní àà pā ɓɔ̀] 'Hɛni has come here'.

3.2. **Downstep**

Downstep occurs when high tone is pronounced lower after a low tone, which in turn, is deleted. This occurs at least in three types of phonetic environments in Kono.

First, downstep takes place after a falling contour on word final syllable [-HL] in /HL/ and /LHL/ melodies; final L of the contour is then deleted; cf. contour simplification in 3.3. This is shown in (4).

(4)   -HL + /H/ → [-H] + ![H]: /yírê ká/ → [yíré ˈká] 'to see a dog'

This type of downstep is also attested in Guinean Kpelle (cf. Konoshenko 2014).

The second type of downstep is unique to Kono; it is attested on ClV(ŋ) stems with an elided vowel (see 2.2) and bearing lexical /H/ melody. In such stems, H tone is downstepped in alternated prefixal 3SG forms described in 2.4, e.g., for lexical *klɔ́ŋ́* 'know' in (5-6):

(5)   [ŋá Hɛ́ní klɔ́ŋ́] 'I know Hɛni'.
(6)   [ŋá !glɔ́ŋ́] 'I know him/her'.

There is no downstep in (5), where the verb appears in its lexical form. In (6), H tone of the verb with 3SG object prefix is downstepped. I assume that this form is underlyingly /*gɔ̀lɔ́ŋ́/, which is how it is actually realized in Guinean Kpelle. The downstep occurs after the first vowel is elided[5].

Finally, downstep occurs after alienable possessive markers. Except for the 3SG marker with only linked L given in (7), they all bear linked H and presumably, floating (L) triggering downstep on the following noun with /H/, as in (8); cf. also 5.1.

(7)   /ŋɔ̀ ɓláá/ → [ŋɔ̀ ɓláá] 'his sheep'
(8)   /ŋ̀ ɓláá/ → [ŋ́ ˈɓláá] 'my sheep'

3.3. Contour simplification

Contour simplification is a process whereby any word final (i.e., linked to word final syllable) falling sequence HL becomes [H] before another tone.

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[5] Surprisingly, ClV(ŋ) stems behave differently as opposed to stems with no elision such as *kéréŋ́* 'burn': prefixal low tone is spread on its entire stem yielding /L(H)/ melody: [náá gèrèŋ˚] 'I have burnt it', rather than the expected [*gèréŋ́]. I have no explanation for this discrepancy at present.

When word final -HL is followed by L, which may be /L/, /L(H)/ or /LHL/, its L is absorbed into the following L (9).

(9)   -HL + /L/ → [H] + [L]: /yírê kà/ → [yíré kà] 'saw a dog'

When followed by H – /H/ or /HL/, final L of the contour is deleted and the following H is downstepped (cf. 3.2).[6] Since contours are always simplified before H or L, they only occur utterance finally or in isolation.

3.4. **Tonal polarity**

Tonal polarity is a property of resultative person markers (sections 4.3, 6.7). Their tone is always the opposite of the following tone, as shown in (10-11).

(10)   [àà pá] 'he has come'
(11)   [áá hè̊] 'he sat down'

The tone of adverb *nii* 'yet', used in negative resultative construction (6.8) and of the future marker *kɛɛ* (6.12) is the opposite of the preceding tone:

(12)   [hó   nìì   pá-nî]
       2SG.B.NEG   yet   come-STAT
       'You have not come yet'.
(13)   [hò   níí   pá-nî]
       3SG.B.NEG   yet   come-STAT
       '(S)he has not come yet'.

Thus, both progressive and regressive polarity is attested in Kono.

3.5. **H spread**

Linked H tone of /H/ spreads on the following /L/ melody, which becomes [HL], as shown in (14). The domain of this rule is a syntactic constituent: verb phrase, noun phrase and postpositional phrase.

(14)   /H/ + /L/ → [H] + [HL]: /ɓláá kà/ → [ɓláá kâ] 'saw a sheep'[7]

However, there is no expected change after floating (H) in /L(H)/:

(15)   /L(H)/ + /L/ → [L] + [L]: /wòlǒ tò/ → [wòlò tò] 'sang a song'

H tone, either linked in /H/ or floating in /L(H)/, also affects the immediately following /L(H)/ melody, though only in the verb phrase. In this case, the tone of the

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[6] This process is not usually labelled "contour simplification", but I mention it here because it is functionally similar to the previous one, i.e., L absorption

[7] Verbs in (14) and (15) get underlying /L/ in Affirmative Past construction – cf. 3.7, 6.3.

verb becomes higher than flat low, but lower than high. I label it "contextual mid-tone":[8]

(16) /H/ + /L(H)/ → [H] + [M]: /ɓláá hèɣě/ → [ɓláá hēɣē] 'to take a sheep'

(17) /L(H)/ + /L(H)/ → [L] + [M]: /wòlǒ tǒ/ → [wòlò tō] 'to sing a song'

3.6. **Surface realization of 1SG and 3SG tone prefixes**

1SG person prefix is marked by consonant alternation and prefixal[9] high tone (cf. 2.4). Prefixal high tone is born by initial nasal alternant and also spreads on stem, partly replacing its tone. Prefixal H spreads vacuously on stems with initial H: *kóɣɔ́* 'leg' – [ŋ́ɔ́ɣɔ́] 'my leg'. All /L/ stems and nouns with lexical /L(H)/ switch to /HL/: *ɲàmǎ* 'blood' – [ɲámâ] 'my blood'. Verbs with lexical /L(H)/ receive contextual M. Interestingly, resultative person markers, which undergo tonal polarization (3.4), are realized with H in this case: for *wàǎ* 'wash' [áá ŋ́wāā] 'he washed me', similar to [áá ŋ̀wàà˚] 'he washed him(self)'. Thus, resultative markers ignore prefixal tone and polarize against the stem tone, which functions similarly to phonological L.

3SG person prefix is marked by consonant alternation and prefixal low tone (cf. 2.4). For stems with initial lexical non-obstruents /ɓ, l, y, w/ and nasals, prefixal low tone is realized on initial nasal alternant in 3SG form. Stems with initial lexical obstruents have non-nasal alternants in 3SG form; cf. 2.4. Prefixal low tone spreads vacuously on stems with initial L, e.g., *ɲàmǎ* 'blood' – [ɲàmà˚] 'his/her blood' and it changes lexical /H/ to /L(H)/: *kóɣɔ́* 'leg' – [gòɣɔ̀˚] 'his/her leg'. However, ClV stems with /H/ patterns are downstepped in this case (cf. 3.2).

3.7. **Morphologically assigned tones as input to surface rules**

Tonal rules apply on lexical tones as well as on morphologically assigned tones. For example, in (17) above, the verb *tǒ* 'fall' has lexical /L(H)/ melody. In (15) the verb is assigned a replacive /L/ tonal morpheme, completely overriding lexical tones in past construction (see section 6 on basic TAM constructions). Both lexical and – in specific constructions – grammatical melodies serve as input or underlying structure in

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[8] What seems to happen here is L plateauing between two floating (H) tones, so the resulting tone is contextual M. The same tonal change yielding a contextual mid tone is attested in *tɔ́ŋɔ́nàálɔ́ì* dialect of Guinean Kpelle described in (Konoshenko 2008). In *hɔ́ɔ́kwèlě* dialect, which I later chose as representative of Guinean Kpelle and described in (Konoshenko 2014), /L(H)/ changes to /H/ in such environment.

[9] The term "prefixal" is etymologically rather than synchronically adequate because there are no segmentable pre-stem markers in 1SG and 3SG, but they can be reconstructed as 1SG *ŋ́- and 3SG *ŋ̀- prefixes. However, I use this term because H in 1SG and L in 3SG spread from the left word boundary and do not replace the stem tone completely, in contrast with the replacive /L/ pattern (cf. 3.7).

the case of phonological operations discussed in this section. In the following, I mark underlying tones in language examples, except for forms with 1SG and 3SG prefixes and those few cases where I am unsure about underlying tones.

4. Person markers

There are several morphosyntactic types of person markers in Kono: strong pronouns (4.1), person indexes (4.2), predicative (4.3), possessive (4.4), locative (4.5) and conjunctive (4.6) person markers. The general property of all these types is the difference between exclusive and inclusive forms, which is also characteristic of Guinean Kpelle but is not attested in Liberian Kpelle.

4.1. **Strong pronouns**

Strong (free, emphatic) pronouns are the only type of person markers in Kono that can be regarded as pronouns *sensu stricto*. They are used in focus constructions, with copulas and as second conjuncts in noun phrase coordination (5.6).

Table 6. Strong pronouns.

1SG	2SG	3SG	1PL.EXCL	1PL.INCL	2PL	3PL
ɲá	*ɓíé*	*yà*	*nɔ̀wá*	*gɔ̀wá*	*káá*	*dɔ̀wá*

4.2. **Person indexes**

Person indexes encode verb and postposition complements, inalienable possessors and single arguments in stative-resultative construction (cf. 6.17); 1SG and 3SG markers are realized as initial consonant alternation with high and low tone, respectively (cf. 2.4, 3.6). They do not co-occur with full noun phrases in the same syntactic position, except for possessive construction with kinship terms (5.1), or in cases when the noun phrase has a definite marker (5.4), or the noun phrase is encoded by person index with quantifier *hénɛ́* 'all' (5.5), or when there are conjoint noun phrases (5.6).

Table 7. Person indexes.

1SG	2SG	3SG	1PL.EXCL	1PL.INCL	2PL	3PL
(íɲ-)	*é-*	*(ìŋ-)*	*nŭ-*	*gŭ-*	*ká-*	*dŭ-*

4.3. Predicative person markers

Predicative person markers, often called subject pronouns, are portmanteau forms encoding person-number and TAM meanings. Historically, they appeared as a result of fusion between person markers with auxiliaries or predicative markers. Crucially, most such markers co-occur with subject noun phrases in the same clause; they function as local agreement markers if there is an overt subject noun phrase (18) and as anaphoric markers without an overt subject (19). Therefore, I label them predicative person markers rather than subject pronouns.

(18) *Gɔ̀pú aa pá.*
      Gɔpu 3SG.RES come
      'Gopu has come'.

(19) *Aa pá.*
      3SG.RES come
      '(S)he has come'.

In all TAM constructions where they appear, basic negative person markers do not co-occur with full lexical 3SG subjects containing no definiteness marker. In (20), a default negative marker is used that is underlyingly toneless; in (21), a basic negative person marker is used after a lexical subject with definiteness marker –*kí*. In (22), basic negative person marker is used anaphorically.

(20) *Hɛ́ní ho é-klɔ́ŋ́.*
      Hɛni NEG 2SG-know
      'Hɛni doesn't know you'.

(21) *Lóhòrò-kí hò Hɛ́ní klɔ́ŋ́.*
      child-DEF 3SG.NEG Hɛni know
      'The child doesn't know Hɛni'.

(22) *Hò é-klɔ́ŋ́.*
      3SG.NEG 2SG-know
      '(S)he doesn't know you'.

The difference between the uninflected default marker and 3SG marker is that the tone of the former is spread from the subject (cf. 23-24), while the latter always surfaces with low tone. Thus, the default negative marker is inherently toneless in Kono (cf. *hó* in Guinean Kpelle, *fé* in Liberian Kpelle).

(23) *Pépèè* [*hò*] *Hɛ́ní klɔ́ŋ́.*
      Pepee NEG Hɛni know
      'Pepee doesn't know Hɛni'.

(24) *Yàràmɔ́* [*hó*] *Hɛ́ní klɔ́ŋ́.*
      Yaramɔ NEG Hɛni know
      'Yaramɔ doesn't know Hɛni'.

Basic negative person markers are used with overt subjects in 3PL (25), as well as with singular noun phrases bearing a definite marker as shown above (5.4), noun phrases encoded by person index with quantifier *hɛ́nɛ́* 'all' (5.5) and conjoint noun phrases (5.6).

(25) *Ń́máráŋàà dùhó é-klɔ́ŋ́.*
      1SG\friend.PL 3PL.NEG 2SG-know

'My friends do not know you'.

(26) *Dùhó   é-klɔ́ŋ̂.*

3PL.NEG   2SG-know

'They do not know you'.

Neutral person markers (6.15) have the same rules of co-occurrence with lexical subjects.

Existential person markers, which are used in non-verbal predication, e.g., for localization, as well as in affirmative progressive verbal construction (6.9), do not co-occur with full noun phrases in subject position (27-28), except for noun phrases with definite markers (5.4), noun phrases encoded by person index with quantifier *héné* 'all' (5.5) and conjoint noun phrases (5.6).

(27) *Héní   ká   nɔ́ɔ́   yírí-nî.*

Hɛni   be   sauce   cook-STAT

'Hɛni is cooking a sauce'.

(28) *Gá   nɔ́ɔ́   yírí-nî.*

3SG.EXI   sauce   cook-STAT

'She is cooking a sauce'.

It should be noted that the paradigm of existential markers is made up of person markers and two different predicators, *ká* and *nà*. Interestingly, *ká* occurs with low tone person markers and *nà* with high tone person markers (cf. Table 8). However, only the *nà* marker is used in negative progressive construction (6.10).

A full paradigm of predicative person markers in Kono is given in Table 8.

Table 8. Predicative person markers.

	Series	1SG	2SG	3SG	1PL.EXCL	1PL.INCL	2PL	3PL
Affirmative	I. Basic positive	*ŋá ~ ŋ́*	*é*	*è*	*nǔ*	*gǔ*	*ká*	*dǔ*
	II. Resultative[10]	*naa*	*ɓaa*	*aa*	*nwaa*	*gwaa*	*kaa*	*daa*
	III. Existential	*ńnà*	*énà*	*gá*	*nùká*	*gùká*	*kánà*	*dùká*
	IV. Future	*ŋ́géé*	*kéé*	*wèé*	*nùké*	*gùké*	*káká*	*dùké*
	V. Imperative	–	*ø*	*ɓò*	–	*gò ~ kà gó*	*kà*	*dù*
	VI. Neutral	*ŋ́gé*	*ké*	*kè*	*nùké*	*gùké*	*káká*	*dùké*
Negative	VI. Basic negative	*mó*	*hó*	*hò*	*nùhó*	*gùhó*	*káhó*	*dùhó*
	VII. Prohibitive	*máháá*	*háá*	*hàà*	*nùháá*	*gùháá*	*káháá*	*dùháá*
	VIII. Conditional	*nàà*	*ɓàà*	*àà*	*nwàà*	*gwàà*	*kàà*	*dàà*

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[10] The tone of resultative markers is polarized depending on the tone of the following word (3.4).

The main affirmative and negative TAM constructions with predicative person markers are described in section 6.

4.4. **Possessive person markers**

Possessive person markers are used in alienable possessive construction. They function as deictic/anaphoric markers and co-occur with full noun phrases in the possessor position (cf. 5.1).

Table 9. Possessive person markers.

1SG	2SG	3SG	1PL.EXCL	1PL.INCL	2PL	3PL
ɲ̀	*wɔ́*	*ŋɔ̀, ŋ̀*	*nùá*	*gùá*	*káá*	*dùá*

4.5. **Locative person markers**

Locative person markers are fused with the locative postposition *ma* 'on'. They function as deictic/anaphoric markers (30, 32) and co-occur with lexical complements, with some restrictions (29, 31).

Similarly to basic negative markers discussed in 4.3, locative person markers do not co-occur with singular full noun complements, except for noun phrases with definite markers (5.4), noun phrases encoded by person index with quantifier *hɛ́nɛ́* 'all' (5.5) and conjoint noun phrases (5.6). A "default" uninflected form of the postposition is used following singular complements (29). Locative markers are optionally used with plural nouns as complements (31).

(29)   *Pépèè   wɔ́ɔ́   ká   Hɛ́ní   ma.*
     Pepee   love   be   Hɛni   on
     'Hɛni loves Pepee'.

(30)   *Pépèè   wɔ́ɔ́   ká   mà.*
     Pepee   love   be   3SG.on
     '(S)he loves Pepee'.

(31)   *Pépèè   wɔ́ɔ́   ká   lééplɛ̰̀à̰-ŋàà   mà / dùmá.*
     Pepee   love   be   child.PL-PL   on / 3PL.on
     'Children love Pepee'.

(32)   *Pépèè   wɔ́ɔ́   ká   dùmá.*
     Pepee   love   be   3PL.on
     'They love Pepee'.

As with basic negative predicative and neutral person markers, the difference between the 3SG locative marker and the uninflected "default" marker is that the former always has low tone as in (33), while the tone of the latter is spread from the

complement (cf. 34-35). Thus, *ma* is lexically toneless in Kono (cf. *ɓà* in Guinean Kpelle, *mà* in Liberian Kpelle).

(33) *Ɓaa*   *lḛ̀ɛ̌*   *lóhòrò-kí*   [*mà*].

    2SG.RES   forget   child-DEF   3SG.on

    'You forgot the child'.

(34) *Ɓaa*   *lḛ̀ɛ̌*   *Pépèè*   [*mà*].

    2SG.RES   forget   Pepee   on

    'You forgot Pepee'.

(35) *Ɓaa*   *lḛ̀ɛ̌*   *Hɛ́ní*   [*má*].

    2SG.RES   forget   Hɛni   on

    'You forgot Hɛni'.

A full paradigm of locative person markers is given in Table 10.

Table 10. Locative person markers.

1SG	2SG	3SG	1PL.EXCL	1PL.INCL	2PL	3PL
má	*ɓíê*	*mà*	*nùmá*	*gùmá*	*kámá*	*dùmá*

4.6. Conjunctive person markers

Conjunctive person markers are used for noun phrase conjunction (see 5.6).

Table 11. Conjunctive person markers.

1SG + 3	1PL + 3	1 + 2	2 + 3	3 + 3
nà	*nwà*	*gwà*	*kà*	*dà*

5. Noun phrase

The order of nominal modifiers in the noun phrase is as follows:

(36) Possessor NP – possessed NP – attributive modifier – numeral/plural marker – demonstrative – definiteness marker

5.1. Possessive constructions

As in many other Mande languages, nouns are classified into two major groups in Kono: free and relational; the latter group comprises kinship terms and body part names. The difference between free and relational nouns is two-fold. First, relational nouns are almost always used with a possessor. Second, relational and free nouns are used with different series of person markers encoding possessor, so-called person indexes (4.2) and possessive markers (4.4) respectively.

Inalienable possession markers used with relational nouns are person indexes that also encode verb and postposition complements, as well as single arguments in

stative-resultative construction (6.17). 1SG and 3SG meanings are encoded by consonant alternation with high and low prefixal tones, respectively (cf. 2.4, 3.6).

Within relational nouns, there is a syntactic distinction between kinship terms and body part names in possessive constructions: person markers co-occur with possessors of kinship terms, but not of body part names. This yields three types of possessive constructions in Kono, given below for the nouns *ɓláá* 'sheep', *lèĕ* 'mother' and *kɔ́ɣɔ́* 'leg'.

Table 12. Possessive constructions.

	Anaphoric possessor	Lexical possessor
Alienable (with free nouns)	*ŋɔ̀ ɓláá* 'his/her sheep' *dùá` ɓláá* 'their sheep'	*Hɛní ŋɔ̀ ɓláá* 'Hɛni's sheep' *lééplɛ̀à̀ dùá` ɓláá* 'children's sheep'
Inalienable (with kinship terms)	*nèĕ* 'his/her mother' *dŭlèĕ* 'their mother'	*Hɛní nèĕ* 'Hɛni's mother' *lééplɛ̀à̀ dŭlèĕ* 'children's mother'
Inalienable (with body part names)	*gɔ̀ɣɔ̆* 'his/her leg' *dŭkɔ́ɣɔ́* 'their legs'	*Hɛní kɔ́ɣɔ́* 'Hɛni's leg' *lééplɛ̀à̀ kɔ́ɣɔ́* 'children's legs'

In non-anchoring possessive constructions, the head noun is marked with /L/ melody:

(37) *màà̀ŋ kɔ̀ɔ̀*

    rice   bone\L

    'rice grain'

5.2. Plural marking

There are two plural markers in Kono: *-ni* for kinship terms and usually *-ŋaa*[11] for other nouns (however, cf. (41) with *-ni* marking *ŋɔ̀ɔ̀* 'bird').

(38) *é-léɣê-nì* 'your elder siblings'; *yírê-ŋàà* 'dogs'; *wòlŏ-ŋáà* 'songs'

Some human nouns have irregular plural forms; these are given in Table 13.

Table 13. Irregular plural forms.

Singular form	Plural form	Meaning
nú / ní	*núáà*	'person'
hìnènû	*hìnàà*	'man'
nèènû	*nèàà*	'woman'

---

[11] I am not sure about the underlying tones of these markers, which may have surface forms [-nî] / [-nì] and [-ŋáà] / [-ŋàà]. More data are needed to discover how tonal rules work in these cases. Surface tones are represented in (38).

Singular form	Plural form	Meaning
lókòrò	*lééplɛ̀à̰*	'child'
námû	*námlà̰à̰*	'chief'
dzòɣómúŋ	*dzówáà ~ dzòɣóɓláà*	'organizer of male initiation'
máráŋ	*máráà ~ máráŋàà*	'friend'

Irregular plural forms may be reinforced by a regular plural marker: *lééplɛ̀à̰-ŋaa* 'children'.

5.3. **Demonstratives**

yà 'this', *yàméŋ* 'that'

5.4. **Definiteness marker**

Definiteness is marked by the definite article *-kí* or sometimes *-ɣí* after vowels and *-í* after word final *-ŋ*:

(39) *yá* 'river' – *yá-kí* 'the river'; *máráŋ* 'a friend of mine' – *máráŋ-í* 'my friend' (selected among friends of other people).

NPs with a *-kí* marker are always followed by resumptive pronominals, regardless of their syntactic position, i.e., direct objects, possessors of body part names, postposition complements and single arguments in stative-resultative construction (6.17; cf. section 4 on the distribution of person markers in Kono). This is illustrated for direct object position in (40-42):

(40) *Ɓò   ŋɔ̀ɔ̌-kí   gbɛ̀!*
2SG.IMP   bird-DEF   3SG\hunt
 'Hunt the bird!'

(41) *Ɓò   ŋɔ̀ɔ̌-ni-kí   dǔ-kpɛ́!*
2SG.IMP   bird-PL-DEF   3PL-hunt
 'Hunt the birds!'

(42) *Ɓò   ŋɔ̀ɔ̌   kpɛ́   / * gbɛ̀!*
2SG.IMP   bird   hunt   3SG\hunt
 'Hunt a bird!'

In (40-41), a definite noun phrase in direct object position is doubled by 3SG (40) and 3PL (41) person prefixes. This is not possible for indefinite noun phrases as shown in (42).

Obligatory doubling of definite noun phrases is a very interesting syntactic property of Kono, which is not attested in other Kpelle varieties. However, it occurs in neighbouring Southern Mande languages, e.g., Dan-Gwɛɛtaa (Vydrine & Kességbeu 2008:70-71).

5.5. Quantifying expressions

I have collected the following quantifying words, represented here with their surface tones: *héné* 'all', *tɔ̀nɔ̀* 'one', *hwèrè* 'two', *hàɓà* 'three', *nááŋ* 'four', *lɔ́ɔ́lú* 'five', *mèŋdà* 'six', *mèhèrà* 'seven', *mèhàɓà* 'eight', *mènááŋ* 'nine', *pòù* 'ten'.

When there is quantifier *héné* 'all', person indexes, but not lexical noun phrases, are doubled by resumptive pronominals, regardless of their syntactic position, e.g., direct objects (43-44):

(43) *Ǐŋ   dǐ-héné dǐ-kà   Lɔ̀ràà.*
      1SG.B 3PL-all   3PL-see\L   Lola

      'I saw them all in Lola'.

(44) *Ǐŋ   ŋ́áráà   héné kà   Lɔ̀ràà.*
      1SG.B 1SG\friend.PL   all   see\L   Lola

      'I saw all my friends in Lola'.

5.6. Noun phrase conjunction

Noun phrase conjunction is encoded by conjunctive person markers (cf. section 4.6 for the full paradigm).

Noun phrases are conjoined with an inclusory strategy (Haspelmath 2007:33) following a 1>2>3 person hierarchy. The conjoint participant higher in the hierarchy is encoded by a conjunctive person marker, while the participant lower in the hierarchy is expressed by a full noun phrase (45) or a strong pronoun (46) following the person marker.

(45) *Nà   Héní nǔ   pà.*
      1SG+3   Hɛni 1EXCL.B   come\L

      'I and Hɛni came'.

(46) *Nà   yà   ɓó   pà.*
      1SG+3   3SG.AUT   FOC   come\L

      'I and he came'.

First person exclusive markers distinguish between two and more than two participants, cf. (45) and (47).

(47) *Nwà   Héní nǔ   pà.*
      1PL+3   Hɛni 1EXCL.B   come\L

      'We and Hɛni came', but *'I and Hɛni came'.

Other conjunctive person forms are ambiguous as to whether there are two or more participants:

(48) *Dà   Héní dǔ   pà.*
      3+3   Hɛni 3PL.B   come\L

'He and Hɛni came' (2) or 'They and Hɛni came' (>2)

Two full noun phrases are conjoined by *dà* (47).

(49) *Yàràmɔ́ dà Hɛ́ní dǔ pà.*

    Yaramɔ 3+3 Hɛni 3PL.B come\L

    'Yaramɔ and Hɛni came'.

All examples discussed here may also have a comitative interpretation, whereby the second participant is interpreted as accompanying the first one, e.g., 'Yaramɔ and Hɛni came' or 'Yaramɔ came with Hɛni' (in 49).

Similarly to noun phrases with definite markers (5.4) and person indexes with the quantifier *hɛ́nɛ́* 'all' (5.5), conjoint noun phrases are always doubled by person markers, regardless of their syntactic position, e.g., direct objects:

(50) *Ŋá* [*dà Hɛ́ní*] *dǔ-kà.*

    1SG.B 3+3 Hɛni 3PL-see\L

    'I saw him/them and Hɛni'.

6. Verb phrase

The basic word order is (S) Aux O V X. Verb phrase consists of two essential elements in Kono: Aux, which may be realized as a predicative person marker (4.3) or as an uninflected predicative marker, e.g., after a lexical subject in negative constructions (57), and V, the verb. When there is no lexical subject, Aux is always realized as a predicative person marker. In what follows, I only provide special comments for those constructions that pattern differently with and without a lexical subject, (cf. 4.3), but they are by default the same. In transitive constructions, there is also a direct object before the verb. A third argument in ditransitive construction is encoded by a postpositional phrase following the verb.[12]

In various TAM constructions, the verb can have either lexical tone or low melody marked as /L/, which completely replaces lexical tone. In other constructions, the verb appears with lexical tone and a suffix. In this section, the basic Kono TAM constructions are described; each affirmative construction type is followed by its negative counterpart.

6.1. **Affirmative stative**: basic affirmative person markers + verb with lexical tone

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[12] As demonstrated in Konoshenko (2014), postpositional phrases are clause adjuncts in Guinean Kpelle and are therefore outside verb phrases. I assume this to also be the case in Kono, though I have not applied relevant tests to check whether this is true.

(51)   *Máráŋàà*   *dǔ*   *é-klɔ́ŋ́.*

    1SG\friend.PL   3PL.B   2SG-know

    'My friends know you'.

6.2. **Negative stative**: basic negative person markers + verb with lexical tone (default negative marker *ho* after lexical subject)

(52)   *Mó*   *Yàràmɔ́*   *klɔ́ŋ́.*

    1SG.B.NEG   Yaramɔ   know

    'I don't know Yaramɔ'.

6.3. **Affirmative past**: basic affirmative person markers + verb with /L/

(53)   *Máráŋàà*   *dǔ*   *é-klɔ̀ŋ̀.*

    1SG\friend.PL   3PL.B   2SG-know\L

    'My friends used to know you'.

6.4. **Negative past**: basic negative person markers + verb with /L/ (default negative marker *ho* after lexical subject)

(54)   *Mó*   *Yàràmɔ́*   *klɔ̀ŋ̀.*

    1SG.B.NEG   Yaramɔ   know\L

    'I didn't know Yaramɔ'.

6.5. **Affirmative habitual**:

1) Basic affirmative person markers + verb with *-à* suffix.

(55)   *Lóhòrò-kí*   *è*   *tǒ-à*   *yèrě*   *hénɛ́.*

    child-DEF   3SG.B   fall-HAB   day   all

    'The child falls all the time'.

2) Basic affirmative person markers + *kèâ* + verb with *-nî* suffix.

(56)   *Hɛ́ní*   *è*   *kèâ*   *pá-nî*   *ɓɔ̀.*

    Hɛni   3SG   HAB   come-STAT   here

    'Hɛni often comes here'.

6.6. **Negative habitual**:

1) Basic negative person markers + verb with *-à* suffix (default negative marker *ho* after lexical subject).

(57)   *Hɛ́ní*   *ho*   *tǒ-à.*

    Hɛni   NEG   fall-HAB

    'Hɛni doesn't fall'.

2) Basic negative person markers + *kèâ* + verb with *-nî* suffix (default negative marker *ho* after lexical subject).

(58)   *Hɛ́ní*   *ho*   *kèâ*   *ɓá*   *mě-nî*   *yèrě*   *hénέ.*
       Hɛni   NEG   HAB   rice   eat-STAT   day   all
       'Hɛni doesn't eat rice every day'.

The semantic differences between the two pairs of affirmative and symmetric negative constructions require further clarification. Both constructions can be used with the adverbial modifier *yèrě hénέ* 'every day'.

However, my consultant Bala Bamba indicated that in the first construction, the situation tends to be interpreted as generic, while the second construction refers to a sequence of regular concrete situations. This interpretation can be corroborated by the following examples:

(59)   *Lέέplὲ̰à*   *dùhó*   *tŏ-à.*
       child.PL   3PL.B.NEG   fall-HAB
       'Children don't fall'.

(60)   *Lέέplὲ̰à*   *dùhó*   *kèâ*   *tŏ-nî.*
       child.PL   3PL.B.NEG   HAB   fall-STAT
       'Children don't often fall'.

Thus (59) means that the situation doesn't take place at all, while (60) means that it occurs sometimes.

    6.7. **Affirmative resultative**: resultative person markers + verb with lexical tone.

(61)   *É-léγê-ni*   *daa*   *pá,*   *dùká*   *kólî.*
       2SG-younger.sibling-PL   3PL.RES   come   3PL.EXI   yard.LOC
       'Your younger siblings have come, they are in the yard'.

    6.8. **Negative resultative**: basic negative person markers + verb with *-nî* suffix (default negative marker *ho* after lexical subject).

(62)   *Mó*   *nii*   *pá-nî.*
       1SG.B.NEG   yet   come-STAT
       'I have not come yet'.

    6.9. **Affirmative progressive**: existential person markers + verb with *-nî* suffix (default marker *ká* after lexical subject (cf. 27, 69).

(63)   *Ńnà*   *wòlŏ*   *tò-nî.*
       1SG.EXI   song   throw-STAT
       'I am singing a song'.

6.10. Negative progressive: basic negative person markers + *nà* + verb with *-nî*
suffix (default negative marker *ho* after lexical subject).

(64) *Mó   nà   wòlǒ   tò-nî.*

1SG.B.NEG be   song   throw-STAT

'I am not singing a song'.

6.11. Affirmative future: future person markers + *pá* + verb with lexical tone.

(65) *Hɛ́ní   wèɛ́   pá   klô   ké   tínáá.*

Hɛni   3SG.FUT   come   work   do   tomorrow

'Hɛni will work tomorrow'.

As in many other languages, the verb *pá* 'come' is grammaticalized into a future
marker, though it is still also used as a lexical item.

6.12. Negative future: basic negative person markers + *kɛɛ* + *pá* + verb with lexical
tone (default negative marker *ho* after lexical subject).

(66) *Mó   kee   pá   wááɣɔ̀ɔ̀   tèɣě   é-pɔ́.*

1SG.B.NEG   FUT   come   money   give   2SG-to

'I will not give you money'.

6.13. Imperative: imperative person markers + verb with lexical tone.

(67) *Kà   pá!*

2PL.IMP   come

'You (pl.) come!'

Note that there may be no person marker in 2SG: (*Bò*) *pá!* 'Come!'

6.14. Prohibitive: prohibitive person markers + verb with /L/.

(68) *Hàà   pà.*

3SG.PROH   come\L

'Let him not come'.

6.15. Neutral: neutral person markers + verb with /L/ (default marker *ké* after
lexical subject).

(69) *Hɛ́ní ká hìě-nî,   Yàràmɔ́ kɛ   wòlǒ tò.*

Hɛni be walk-STAT Yaramɔ NEUT song throw\L

'Hɛni is walking, and Yaramɔ is singing a song'.

When there is a full noun phrase in the subject position, a predicative marker
appears in its default, lexically toneless form. Its surface tone is spread from the subject.

When there is no lexical subject, the 3SG anaphoric marker *kè* with low tone is used (cf. basic negative person markers (4.3) with similar distribution).

This construction is used in non-initial predication to encode simultaneous actions for processes and subsequent situations for single events[13].

6.16. **Conditional**: conditional person markers + verb with /L/.

(70) *Níê-ni   dàà   pà,   ŋéɛ́   ɓláá   tèɣè   dŭ-pɔ́.*
elder.sibling-PL   3PL.COND   come\L   1SG.FUT   sheep   give\L   3PL-to
'If my elder siblings come, I will give them a sheep'.

Unfortunately, I have not checked negative conditional construction.

6.17. **Stative-resultative**: person index + verb with VOCALIC suffix + *ɓó.*

This construction has non-nominative argument alignment and is characteristic of South-Western Mande languages. There is no predicative marker after the lexical subject and the anaphoric subject is encoded by person indexes, which are otherwise used in various non-subject positions including direct objects (4.2).

The verb appears with a vocalic suffix and a predicative particle *ɓó.* The form of vocalic suffix depends on the final vowel of the verb; however, my data are not sufficient for providing a complete description here. I have only checked qualitative verbs that receive a stative interpretation in this construction. In other Kpelle varieties, dynamic verbs are also used in this construction with a resultative interpretation. For this reason, I tentatively also labelled it "stative-resultative" in Kono.

(71) *Hɛ́ní léŕé-ɛ́   ɓó.*
Hɛni   be.beautiful-STAT   PRED
'Hɛni is beautiful'.

Note that verbs with a vocalic suffix can also be used attributively:

(72) *nèènû   léŕé-ɛ*
woman   be.beautiful-STAT
'beautiful woman'

Stative-resultative construction has two negative counterparts in Kono, both with nominative alignment. The first is negative resultative (cf. 6.8 and (73) below).

(73) *Hɛ́ní ho   lèrê-nì.*
Hɛni   NEG   be.beautiful-STAT

---

[13] This construction is labelled "neutral" in Kono by analogy with an identical construction in Guinean Kpelle. In Guinean Kpelle, the "neutral" construction is opposed to so-called "consecutive" construction. While the latter is only used to mark subsequent but not simultaneous events, the former can be used for both types of events; hence, it is labelled "neutral".

'Hɛni is not beautiful'.

The second negative construction is formed with *nà* copula and *à* preposition. The verb takes a person index co-referent with the subject and the vocalic suffix:

(74) *Hɛ́ní ho nà à ǹɛ́rɛ́-ɛ́.*

    Hɛni NEG be PREP 3SG\be.beautiful-STAT

    'Hɛni is not beautiful'.

(75) *Ńíê-ni dùhó nà à dŭ-lɛ́rɛ́-ɛ́.*

    elder.sibling-PL 3PL.NEG be PREP 3PL-be.beautiful-STAT

'My elder siblings are not beautiful'.

I encountered some tonal alternations on the verb in both negative constructions and therefore, they require further investigation.

Basic TAM constructions in Kono are summarized in Table 14 below.

Table 14. Basic TAM constructions.

Affirmative stative	Basic affirmative person markers + verb with lexical tone
Negative stative	Basic negative person markers + verb with lexical tone
Affirmative past	Basic affirmative person markers + verb with /L/
Negative past	Basic negative person markers + verb with /L/
Affirmative habitual	1) Basic affirmative person markers + verb with *-à* suffix 2) Basic affirmative person markers + *kèâ* + verb with *-nî* suffix
Negative habitual	1) Basic negative person markers + verb with *-à* suffix 2) Basic negative person markers + *kèâ* + verb with *-nî* suffix
Affirmative resultative	Resultative person markers + verb with lexical tone
Negative resultative	Basic negative person markers + verb with *-nî* suffix
Affirmative progressive	Existential person markers + verb with *-nî* suffix
Negative progressive	Basic negative person markers + *nà* + verb with *-nî* suffix
Affirmative future	Future person markers + *pá* + verb with lexical tone
Negative future	Basic negative person markers + *kɛɛ* + *pá* + verb with lexical tone
Imperative	Imperative person markers + verb with lexical tone
Prohibitive	Prohibitive person markers + verb with /L/
Neutral	Neutral person markers + verb with /L/
Conditional	Conditional person markers + verb with /L/
Affirmative stative-resultative	Person index + verb with vocalic suffix + *ɓó*
Negative stative-resultative	Basic negative person markers + *nà* copula + *à* + person index + verb with vocalic suffix

6.18. **Comparison of TAM systems in three Kpelle varieties**

As shown in 6.9, a special existential person series is used in progressive construction in Kono. This series has an extraordinarily mixed paradigm, incorporating person markers fused with two different predicators, *nà* and *ká*; cf. series III in Table 8.

In Liberian Kpelle there are two progressive constructions. In the first, a special non-past series of person markers is used, which also occurs in the future and habitual construction (76). In the second one, a non-nominative subject is used with *káá* existential predicator, cognate to *ká* in Kono (77). In both constructions, the verb appears in the infinitive form with *-ì* suffix.

Liberian Kpelle

(76)   *Ŋā*   *pá-ì.*
       1SG.NONPST   come-INF
        'I am coming'.

(77)   *Ŋ́gáá*   *pá-ì.*
       1SG\be   come-INF
        'I am coming' (Leidenfrost & McKey 2005:67).

In Guinean Kpelle there is only one affirmative progressive construction, identical to the second progressive construction in Liberian Kpelle (78). Note that in transitive predications, both anaphoric subject and object are encoded by non-nominative person indexes (79).

Guinean Kpelle

(78)   *Gáá*   *pá-ì.*
       1SG\be   come-INF
        'I am coming'.

(79)   *Gáá*   *dèɣě-ì.*
       1SG\be   3SG\cut-INF
        'I am cutting it'.

Future person markers, presumably fused with the verb *ké* 'do', form a separate series in Kono (6.11). No such series is attested in other Kpelle varieties. In both Liberian and Guinean Kpelle, future construction is derived from progressive construction by adding the infinitive form of the verb *pá* 'come'.

Liberian Kpelle

(80)   *Ŋā*   *pá-ì*   *pá-ì.*
       1SG.NONPST   come-INF   come-INF
        'I will come'.

(81) Ŋgáá   pá-ì   dā   kɔ́rí-ì.
      1SG\be come-INF 3SG\some   look_for-INF
      'I will look for some' (Leidenfrost & McKey 2005:69).

GUINEAN KPELLE

(82) Gáá   pá-ì   Pépèè   tólú-ì.
      1SG\be come-INF Pepee   call-INF
      'I will call Pepe'.

Another salient feature contrasting Kono with the other Kpelle varieties is the lack of affirmative and negative habitual (or non-past) person markers.

To sum up, the Kono TAM system differs considerably from TAM systems in Liberian and Guinean Kpelle.

7. Greetings

(83) *Ɓàà ŋúŋ́ / ŋúɔ̂?* – 'Good morning!' Lit. 'You (sg.) have woken up?', addressing a single person.

(84) *É yíí kpɛ̀ɛ̀?* – 'Good morning!' Lit. 'You (sg.) have slept well?', addressing a single person.

(85) *Kàà ŋúŋ́ / ŋúɔ̂?* – 'Good morning!' Lit. 'You (pl.) have woken up?', addressing more than one person.

(86) *Ká yíí kpɛ̀ɛ̀?* – 'Good morning!' Lit. 'You (pl.) have slept well?', addressing more than one person.

(87) *É túgâ!* – 'Good afternoon!', addressing a single person.

(88) *Ká túgâ* – 'Good afternoon!', addressing more than one person.

(89) *É túɣó kpɛ̀ɛ̀?* – 'Good afternoon!' Lit. 'You (sg.) have spent the day well?', addressing a single person.

(90) *Ká túɣó kpɛ̀ɛ̀?* – 'Good afternoon!' Lit. 'You (pl.) have spent the day well?', addressing more than one person.

(91) *É mámá é hèɣè!* – 'Thank you!', addressing a single person.

(92) *Ká mámá ká hèɣè!* – 'Thank you!', addressing more than one person.

8. Swadesh lists for Kono, Guinean Kpelle and Liberian Kpelle

In this section, 100-word Swadesh lists for the three Kpelle varieties are provided[14]. When the lexemes are etymologically identical in the three idioms, they are given in plain type. Lexemes that are identical in Guinean Kpelle and Kono, but are distinct from those in Liberian Kpelle, are given in italic. Lexemes that are identical in Liberian Kpelle and Kono, as opposed to those in Guinean Kpelle, are given in bold. When a

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[14] For the sake of uniformity, I have modified the orthography in Liberian Kpelle data taken from Leidenfrost & McKey (2005).

Kono lexeme is different from a lexeme common for Guinea and Liberian Kpelle, it is underlined. When the three varieties have three distinct forms, they are given in bold italic.

Table 15. Collection of 100-word Swadesh lists for the three Kpelle varieties

	English	French	Guinean Kpelle	Kono	Liberian Kpelle
1	all	tout	kéléé	<u>héné</u>	kéléé
2	ashes	cendre	lùɣǔ / lìɓǐ	lùɓǔ	lūū
3	bark	écorce	kɔ̀lɔ̌	kɔ̀lɔ̌	kɔ̄lɔ̄
4	belly	ventre	kòɔ̌	kòòlóŋ̀	kōō
5	big	grand	kéné	kéné	kété
6	bird	oiseau	ŋwènǐ	ŋɔ̀ɔ̌	ŋɔ̄nī
7	bite	mordre	ɲíŋ́	ɲíŋ́	ɲíŋ́
8	black	noir	tèǐ ~ tèɣǐ	tèɛ̌	tēī
9	blood	sang	ɲàmǎ	ɲàmǎ	ŋāa, ŋāmā
10	bone	os	kɔ́ú	kɔ́ɔ́	káó ~ káú
11	breast	sein, mamelle	ɲíní	ɲíní	ŋíní
12	burn	bruler	kéléŋ́	kéréŋ́	kéréŋ́
13	nail	ongle	yéé-kálíŋ̀	yé-káà	yéé-ɣálèŋ̀
14	cloud	nuage	*tùlò-kpíníŋ̀*	*tùnò-kpíníŋ̀*	ɣēle-kɔ̀lɔ̀ŋ̀
15	cold (be cold)	froid (être froid)	láɣí ~ láí	<u>lɔ́ɔ́ŋ́</u>	láɣí
16	come	venir	pá	pá	pá
17	die	mourir	hàǎ	hǎ	sāā
18	dog	chien	yílê	yírê	ɣílà
19	drink	boire	kpèlě	kplě	kpēlē
20	dry (be dry)	sec (être sec)	kpálá	kplá	kpálá
21	ear	oreille	wélí	<u>wóó-láɣâ</u>	wólí
22	earth	terre	pɔ́lɔ̂	pɔ́rɔ̂	pɔ́rɔ̀
23	eat	manger	mìǐ ~ mèɛ̌	mě	mīī
24	egg	oeuf	ɲáníŋ́	yááŋ́	ɣálóŋ́
25	eye	yeux	ɲéí-kɔ́ù	ɲé-kɔ́ɔ̀	ŋéí / ŋéí-gàò
26	fat	graisse	wúló	wúló	wúlɔ́

	English	French	Guinean Kpelle	Kono	Liberian Kpelle
27	feather	poil	léɣá ~ léɣé	líɣé	léɣá
28	fire	feu	ŋwɔ̌ŋ	ŋwɔ̌ŋ	ŋɔ̄ŋ
29	fish	poisson	hɔ̀ŋɔ̀lèě	ɲéé	ɲéé
30	fly	voler	kèɓéŋ ~ kòóŋ	kèɓèŋ	kòóŋ
31	foot	pied	kɔ́ɣɔ́	kɔ́ɣɔ́	kɔ́ɔ́
32	full	plein	hwéé	hwéé	féé
33	give	donner	tèɣě	téɣé	tēē
34	good	bon	lélé	léré	lélé
35	green	vert	*hvílííɓóá*	*wááléémóá*	*kpōlē*
36	hair	cheveux	ŋwùŋ-néɣâ	ŋwùŋ-níɣê	ŋūŋ-lèɣà
37	hand	main	yéé	yé	yéé
38	head	tête	ŋwùŋ̌	ŋwùŋáàŋ̀	ŋūŋ
39	hear	entendre	mèŋ̌ ~ màŋ̌ ~ mɔ̀ŋ̌	mɔ̀ŋ̌	mēni
40	heart	coeur	líí	líí	líí
41	horn	corn	míné	míné	mĩ̄lā
42	I[15]	moi	ŋé	ŋé	ŋá
43	kill	tuer	pàǎ	pǎ	pāa
44	knee	genou	ŋwúŋ́gbé ~ ŋwúmú	ŋwúŋ́-múlâ	ŋúmé
45	know	connaitre	kɔ́lɔ́ŋ́	klɔ́ŋ́	kɔ́lɔ́ŋ́
46	leaf	feuille	láá	lá	láá
47	lie	être couché	láá	lá	láá
48	liver	foie	yèlě	**líí**	**líí**
49	long	long	kwéâ ~ kwéâ ~ kwíâ	kwíê	kóyà
50	louse	pou	yɔ̀ǔ	yɔ̀ɔ̌	ɣāū
51	man	homme	hìlènû	hìnènû	sūrɔ́ŋ
52	many	beaucoup	támáá	támáá	támáá
53	meat	viande	hùyǒ	hùyǒ	sūā
54	moon	lune	ɲáníŋ́	yááŋ́	ɣálóŋ́
55	mountain	montagne	yéé	yé	yée

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[15] Here and below, a basic person series is given for pronominal meanings 'I', 'we' and 'you (pl.).

	English	**French**	**Guinean Kpelle**	**Kono**	**Liberian Kpelle**
56	mouth	bouche	láálèè	láálèè	lálēī
57	name	nom	láá	lá	láá
58	neck	cou	kɔ̀ŋ̌	kɔ̀ŋ̌	kɔ̄ŋ
59	new	nouveau	nìnè	nìnè	nīnā
60	night	nuit	*kwîí*	*kwíí-hḭ̀à̰*	kpíní
61	nose	nez	húŋɔ́	hóŋɔ́	sṵ̄ā
62	not	ne pas	hwé (hó)	hó	fé
63	one	un	tɔ̀nɔ̀	tɔ̀nɔ̀	tɔ̄nɔ̄
64	man, person	personne	nú	nú ~ ní	núú
65	rain	pluie	tùlŏ	tùnǒ	tīnā / tūnā
66	red	rouge	kpɔ̀lǔ	kpɔ̀ɔ̌	kpɔ̄lū
67	road	route	pèlě	pèrě	pērē
68	root	racine	hàmǔ	hàmǔ ~ hɔ̀ɔ̰̌	sāmē
69	round	rond	káláŋ́	káráŋ́	káráŋ́
70	sand	sable	ɲèǎ ~ ɲèɛ̌	ɲèǎ	ŋā̰yā ~ ŋḛ̄yā
71	say	dire	hwáá	hwá	fáá
72	see	voire	káá	ká	káá
73	seed	graine	kɔ́ú	kɔ́ɔ́	káō
74	sit	s'asseoir	hèǎ	hě	sēē
75	skin	peau	kɔ̀lɔ̌	klɔ̌	kɔ̄lɔ̄
76	sleep	dormir	yìǐ	yǐ	ɲīī
77	small	petit	kóló	kóró	kúró
78	smoke	fumée	lùlǔ	lùrǔ	lūrī/lūrū
79	stand	rester debout	tɔ̀ɔ̌	tɔ̌	tɔ̄ɔ̄
80	star	étoile	*péléŋ́-gɔ̀ù*	*plíéŋ́-ŋɔ̀ɔ̀*	pémééléŋ́-kàò
81	stone	pierre	kwènǐ	kɔ̀ɔ̰̌	kɔ̄nī
82	sun	soleil	hwóló	hló ~ fló	fóló
83	swim	nager	yá kɛ́lê	yá klê	yá ŋá-kɛ́lè
84	tail	queue	wóŋ́	wóŋ́	wóŋ́
85	that	ce-là	tíí	<u>méŋ̀</u>	tí
86	this	ce ci	ɲéí	<u>yà</u>	ŋí

	English	**French**	**Guinean Kpelle**	**Kono**	**Liberian Kpelle**
87	thou	tu	é	é	í
88	tongue	langue	nɛ́ŋ	nɛ́ŋ	nɛ́ŋ
89	tooth	dent	ɲíŋ	ɲíŋ / ɲíŋ-ŋɔ́ɔ̀	ɲíŋ
90	tree	arbre	wúlú	wúrú	wúrú
91	two	deux	hvèèlĕ	hwèrĕ ~ hèră	fēērē
92	walk	marcher	hìĕ	hìĕ	sīā
93	warm	chaud	hwúló	<u>hwàŋă</u>	wúléŋ
94	water	eau	yá	yá	yá
95	we[16]	nous	kú	<u>nŭ</u>	kú
96	what	quoi	lé	lé	lé
97	white	blanc	kwèlĕ	kwlèĕ	kōlē
98	who	qui	gbèê	gbê	gbéè
99	woman	femme	nèènû	nèènû	nēnî
100	yellow	jaune	ɓáhí	ɓéé	básí

When analysing the data, I largely followed recommendations in Kassian et al. (2010), also discussed in Vydrin (2013). The results of pairwise cognate comparisons of the Kpelle varieties are given in Table 16.

Table 16. Pairwise cognate comparisons.

	Kono	Liberian Kpelle
Guinean Kpelle	90	94
Kono		89

As shown in Table 16, Kono is the most divergent variety, sharing 90% of cognates with Guinean Kpelle and 89% with Liberian Kpelle. Such discrepancy parallels some specific grammatical properties attested in Kono, which are discussed in sections 5 and 6. Hence, though it is not the goal of this sketch to suggest an appropriate taxonomic label, Kono may be considered a separate language, at least on linguistic grounds.

Abbreviations

AUT – free pronoun

B – basic person markers

COND – conditional person marker

DEF – definite

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[16] When counting cognate forms, I considered exclusive forms in Guinean Kpelle and Kono. There is no contrast between exclusive and inclusive forms in Liberian Kpelle.

EXCL – exclusive

EXI – existential person marker

FOC – focus

FUT – future marker

H – high

HAB – habitual

IMP – imperative person marker

L – low

LOC – locative form

NEG – negative marker

NEUT – neutral person marker

NONPST – non-past tense

PL – plural

PRED – predicative particle

PROH – prohibitive person marker

RES – resultative person marker

SG – singular

STAT – stative marker

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Maria Konoshenko

Field notes on Kono, a Southwestern Mande lect of Forest Guinea

Kono (knu) is a Southwestern Mande lect of the Republic of Guinea, not to be confused with Kono of Sierra Leone (kno, Kono-Vai group). It is a member of the Kpelle macro-language together with Guinean Kpelle (gkp) and Liberian Kpelle (xpe). This paper is a brief description of Kono based on the author's field notes collected in the Republic of Guinea in 2009 and 2014. I discuss segmental and tonal phonology of Kono as well as its basic morphology and grammatical constructions. 100-word Swadesh lists for Kono, Guinean and Liberian Kpelle are also provided. As I demonstrate in this sketch, Kono is lexically and grammatically distinct enough to be considered a separate language. Some phonological and grammatical phenomena in Kono, e.g. consonant harmony, first vowel elision in CVLV structures and obligatory pronominal doubling of definite noun phrases, suggest that, unlike other Kpelle lects, Kono has undergone a strong contact influence from Southern Mande.

Field Notes on Kono, a Southwestern Mande Lect of Forest Guinea

Maria Konoshenko

Notes de terrain sur le kono, une variété du groupe mandé sud-ouest, Guinée Forestière

Kono (knu) est un parler mandé-sud-ouest de la République de Guinée, à ne pas confondre avec kono de la Sierra Leone (kno, groupe Kono-Vai). Il est membre de la macro-langue kpelle conjointement avec le guerzé (kpelle de la Guinée , gkp) et le kpelle du Libéria (xpe). Cet article est une brève description de Kono sur la base des notes de terrain de l'auteur recueilli dans la République de Guinée en 2009 et 2014. Je décris la phonologie segmentale et tonale de kono ainsi que sa morphologie de base et des constructions grammaticales. Des listes Swadesh de 100 mots sont aussi données pour le kono, le guerzé et le kpelle du Libéria. Comme je le démontre dans cette esquisse, le kono est lexicalement et grammaticalement assez différent pour être considéré comme une langue indépendente. Certains phénomènes phonologiques et grammaticaux en kono, par exemple, l'harmonie consonantique, l'élision de la première voyelle dans les structures CVLV et le doublement pronominal obligatoire des syntagmes nominaux définis, suggèrent que, contrairement à d'autres parlers kpelle, le kono a subi une forte influence des langues mandé-sud.

Мария Борисовна Коношенко

Полевые заметки о коно, идиоме юго-западной группы манде, Лесная Гвинея

На идиоме коно (knu) говорят в Республике Гвинея, он относится к юго-западной группе манде, в отличие от коно (kno) из Сьерра Леоне (группа коно-ваи). Коно входит в макроязык кпелле вместе с гвинейским кпелле (gkp) и либерийским кпелле (xpe). Статья представляет собой краткое описание идиома коно на основе полевых материалов автора, собранных в Республике Гвинея в 2009 и 2014 гг. В статье даны сведения о сегментной фонологии и тональных правилах, базовой морфологии, основных грамматических конструкциях коно. Также приведены стословные списки Сводеша для коно, гвинейского и либерийского кпелле. Показано, что лексически и грамматически коно достаточно сильно отличается от других идиомов кпелле и может считаться отдельным языком. Более того, некоторые фонологические и грамматические особенности коно, например, консонантная гармония, элизия первого гласного в структурах CVLV и обязательное местоименное дублирование определенных именных групп, позволяют предположить, что, в отличие от других идиомов кпелле, коно подвергался значительному контактному влиянию со стороны южных манде.