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Number marking on nouns and adjectives of Sidaama

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Abstract

This paper aims to systematically analyze the formal marking of numbers on common nouns and adjectives of Sidaama, a Highland East Cushitic (HEC hereafter) language spoken in Ethiopia. There are three formal categories of number in Sidaama: basic form, singulative, and plurative. The basic form is a form of a noun that is not marked for number; a singulative denotes a single referent, and a plurative marks multiple referents. The singulative of nouns is usually marked either by *-tf-o* ~ *-tftf-o*. There are also a few nouns that contain the formatives *-f-o*, *-tf-o*, and *-k-o* as markers of the singulative. Such forms arose from the merging of the final consonant of the nominal root with the initial *-tf* of the singulative. Unlike nouns, singulative is marked only on a handful of adjectives. Five types of nominals and six types of adjectival pluratives are identified. All of them are suffixal, and two of them involve the copying of a root-final consonant. Sidaama has inherently singular nouns that usually denote humans and higher animals. In such nouns, their basic form marks a single referent. The language also contains inherently plural nouns that refer to a collective of entities or a group. Few nouns are transnumeral; in their basic form, they can refer to either a single entity or plural entities.

Keywords: Sidaama, Cushitic, number marking, basic form, singulative, plurative

1 Introduction

This section provides general information about the Sidaama language and discusses the study's objectives, significance, dataset, and research structure.

1.1 Background information

Sidaama is one of the HEC languages comprising Hadiyya, Kambaata, Alaaba, K'abeena, Gedeo, and Burji. The autoglottonym of Sidaama is *Sidaam-u ?afoo* [lit. “Sidaama-of mouth”] or *Sidaam-u k'aale* [lit. “Sidaama-of word”] while its ethnonym is Sidaama. Although native speakers label their language *Sidaamu ?afoo*, the name adopted in this paper and elsewhere is Sidaama since it has a broader use and currency in the linguistic literature. According to the 2007 national census of Ethiopia, the number of Sidaama mother-tongue speakers was 2,925,171 (Central Statistical Authority 2010: 200). The Sidaama language is spoken in southern in Ethiopia within the Administrative Region of Sidaama. Small enclaves of Sidaama populations are found in south Ethiopia among the neighboring Arsi Oromo, Guji Oromo, and Gedeo. Other ethnic groups, such as Amhara, Oromo, Wolaitta, Kamabaata, the Gurage, Silte, etc., live among the Sidaama, mainly in towns.¹ The capital city, Hawaasa,² is a microcosm of various ethnic groups and is known as ‘little Ethiopia’. Except for Omotic-speaking Wolaitta in the west, the Sidaama are bounded by speakers of Cushitic languages: Guji Oromo in the east, Arsi Oromo in the north, and Gede’uffa speakers in the south.

Since 1992, the language has exhibited tremendous growth. It is a language of instruction within the Administrative Region of Sidaama at the first cycle of primary level (Grade 1–4) in rural and urban schools. It is taught as a subject in all grades. In addition, it is used as a language of administration and jurisdiction and, to some extent, as a language of mass media in the Administrative Region of Sidaama. In 2014, a B.A. program in Sidaama linguistics and literature was launched at Hawassa University.

Typologically, Sidaama is a head-final language with canonical SOV word order. Hence, embedded clauses occur before main clauses while modifiers precede their heads. Thus, adjectives, genitives, and relatives precede a nominal head, while adverbs precede their verbal heads. Nouns and their modifiers agree in case and gender, while

1 Gurage is a cover term that refers to various ethnic groups and language varieties mainly found in the Gurage Zone.

2 The correct name of the city in the Sidaama language is Hawaasa, and I have adopted this correct form. However, it is incorrectly written as Hawassa.

number agreement is restricted. Sidaama is a suffixing language save for the prefix *di-* that marks negation.

1.2 Objectives and scope of the study

Sidaama is one of the HEC languages that is relatively well studied in its group.³ Nevertheless, various grammatical elements necessitate a detailed analysis to get a more precise and accurate picture, and one of these is number marking on nouns and adjectives. There are various types of research on Sidaama that touch upon number marking. This includes Kawachi 2007, Anbessa 2012, and Yri 2011. However, some elements were not analyzed in detail, and in other cases, amendments are necessary. Hence, in this article, number-marking on nouns and adjectives will be analyzed in detail to get a clearer picture.

This research will be restricted to number marking on nouns and adjectives. Hence, it will not involve number marking for other word classes, such as verbs and pronouns.

1.3 Dataset and structure of the research

Since the current study is primarily lexical and morphological, the tools employed to get the necessary data are written corpus and introspection. In this article, the written corpus consists of materials on number marking in Sidaama, HEC, and Cushitic languages and it includes Anbessa (2012; 2014), Kawachi (2007), Treis (2008; 2014), and Kramer & Anbessa (2020). In addition, the two dictionaries on Sidaama, i.e., Gasparini (1983) and Shimelis (2007), were consulted. Introspection was used as a supportive tool in the study because the writer of this article is a native speaker of Sidaama. Nevertheless, in the future, an effort will be exerted to use spoken data and written corpus in various Sidaama books to broaden the research.

The article contains four sections. The first introductory section is followed by the second section, the article's main body. This includes the linguistic analysis of the basic form, singulative, and plurative in nouns and adjectives of Sidaama. In the third section, the functions of number marking will be discussed. In this section, inherently singular, inherently plural, and transnumeral nouns will be dealt with. In the fourth section, the findings will be summarized.

3 I think Kambaata also enjoys the same privilege thanks to extensive linguistic research conducted on the language by Yvonne Treis (i.e. 2008; 2014).

The transcription adopted in this paper is phonemic and adheres to the standard IPA. However, wherever relevant, a phonetic transcription is provided. The transcription adopted here differs from the standard IPA only in representing long vowels and geminates, which are transcribed by doubling a vowel and a consonant.

2 Number in Sidaama

Sidaama nouns are marked for case, gender, and number. A single vocalic suffix marks the three prominent cases, comprising nominative, accusative, and genitive. There are also oblique cases that are usually formed on a genitive base. Nouns distinguish two grammatical genders: masculine and feminine. According to Yri (2012: 262), “prototypical nouns have inherent class membership in one of the two nouns (gender) classes: k-class (M) or t-class (F).” Except for some lexemes denoting kinship terms and higher animals, the gender of all other nouns is not predictable and, hence, is assigned arbitrarily. Thus, gender is mainly realized through agreement features on nouns, adjectives, and verbal endings.

Three formal categories of number are identified in Sidaama across most morphosyntactic contexts. These are basic form, singulative, and plurative.⁴ Few nouns have all three categories of number, while other nouns may have only one (the basic form) or a combination of two number categories. Among closely related HEC languages, the number in Kambaata was discussed formally and in detail by Treis (2008; 2014). Hence the terminologies for formal categories of number (such as “basic form”, “singulative”, and “plurative”), in this paper were adopted from Treis, and the grammatical analysis of number in Sidaama has benefited a lot from her research. That being the case, number in Sidaama was analyzed based on language-internal data. In addition, it must be noted that although Kambaata and Sidaama are related HEC languages, they also have many differences.

2.1 Basic form

Treis (2008: 131) defines the basic form as “[...] the form of the noun which is formally unmarked for number”. Thus, the basic form

4 Regarding number categories in Kambaata, Treis (2014: 2) writes, “In order not to confuse form and meaning, the terms ‘basic form’, ‘singulative’, and ‘plurative’ are used with respect to the form of a noun”.

in Sidaama has no number marking, and it consists of a noun stem that is followed by a terminal vowel⁵ which marks the accusative. Yri (2012: 262) calls the basic form “neutral”, while Kawachi (2007: 344) and Anbessa (2012: 22; 24) label it “unmarked”. Anbessa (2014: 28) also calls it “collective”, as does Gasparini (1983), and many such forms in his dictionary entries are abbreviated as “coll.”. Examples of basic forms in Sidaama are nouns such as *badal-a* ‘maize’, *dog-o* ‘road’, *min-e* ‘house’, etc. In all the three words, there is no marking for number. For instance, in the word *badal-a* ‘maize’, the nominal root⁶ is *badal-* and the terminal vowel is *-a*. All the three words are citation forms, and their terminal vowels mark the accusative.

There are few freely standing (independent) basic forms, as seen in the three examples above. Instead, the language uses nominal roots, reconstructed based on their singulative, plurative, or both (see Table 1 and Table 2). An asterisk marks such reconstructed roots.

Table 1. Roots

Nominal root	Singulative	Plurative
* <i>haiss-</i>	<i>haiss-i-tf tf-o</i> ‘a blade of grass’	<i>haiss-o</i> ‘grass’ (PL)
* <i>kin-</i>	<i>kin-tf-o</i> ‘stone’	<i>kin-n-a</i> ‘stones’
* <i>k’up’p’-</i>	<i>k’up’p’-i-tftf-o</i> ‘egg’	<i>k’up’p’-e</i> ‘eggs’
* <i>reek’k’-</i>	<i>reek’k’-ii-tftf-o</i> ‘obsidian’	<i>reek’k’-a</i> ‘obsidians’

2.2 Singulative

A singulative denotes a single referent and can be marked both on nouns and adjectives. Nonetheless, marking a singulative on nouns is quite frequent, while in the case of adjectives, it is very restricted.

2.2.1 Singulatives of nouns

The singulative of nouns is marked mainly by *-tf-o* ~ *-tftf-o* and, in a few cases, by other sets of allomorphs.

⁵ The label “terminal vowel” is borrowed from Azeb Amha (2017: 822) and is common in Omotic languages. Although Sidaama is not an Omotic language, the label “terminal vowel” suits my analysis well, which is why it is adopted in this paper.

⁶ In this article, the term ‘root’ refers to a bare morpheme that is devoid of grammatical affixes.

(i) Singulatives marked with *-tf-o* ~ *-tftf-o*

The singulative of nouns is marked mainly by *-tf-o* or *-tftf-o*. The actual singulative formatives are *-tf* or *-tftf*, while *-o* is a terminal vowel that marks an accusative and provides the citation form. For instance, in the word *kin-tf-o* ‘stone’, *-o* is the terminal vowel, and this word, being accusative, will appear in the object position. When the same word appears in the subject position, the terminal vowel will be replaced by *-u*, which marks nominative in Sidaama and becomes *kin-tf-u* ‘stone’ (nom). The singulative *-tf-o* is suffixed to nominal roots that end in sonorants. Sidaama has seven sonorants: *l*, *m*, *n*, *ɲ*, *r*, *w*, and *j*. However, nominal roots to which a singulative is suffixed end only in three of them: *n*, *r*, and *l*, while nominal roots with final *m*, *ɲ*, *w*, and *j* were not attested (see Table 2).

Table 2. Nouns marked by the singulative *-tf-o*

Nominal root	Singulative	Gloss
* <i>fur-</i>	<i>fur-tf-o</i>	‘a small opening’
* <i>dar-</i>	<i>dar-tf-o</i>	‘leaf’
* <i>hoon-</i>	<i>hoon-tf-o</i>	‘a juniper tree’
* <i>k’amal-</i>	<i>k’amal-tf-o</i>	‘a small monkey’
* <i>k’iissan-</i>	<i>k’iissan-tf-o</i>	‘spider’

The above roots are nominals, to which are attached singulatives. However, other roots display an interesting morphological feature: the same root can be shared by both nouns and verbs, and many roots in Sidaama yield noun-verb pairs. For instance, the same root can suffix a singulative and become a noun, while it can also attach an inflectional suffix and become a verb. In this article I label such kind of root “pre-categorial”, as suggested by Ronny Meyer in personal communication. Derivations that are based on it are illustrated in tables (3) and (4). If singulative suffixation to a root yields a noun, it has a derivative function in addition to its number-marking major function.

Table 3. Pre-categorial roots with nominal outputs

Pre-categorial root	Singulative	Gloss
* <i>da'mul-</i>	<i>da'mul-tf-o</i>	'worm'
* <i>darar-</i>	<i>darar-tf-o</i>	'flower'
* <i>lal-</i>	<i>lal-tf-o</i>	'early/first fruit'

Table 4 shows how an inflectional formative derives verbs from the same roots listed in Table 3.

Table 4. Pre-categorial roots with verbal outputs

Pre-categorial root	Verbal form	Gloss
* <i>da'mul-</i>	<i>da'mul-í</i>	'It became worm eaten.'
* <i>darar-</i>	<i>darar-í</i>	'It blossomed.'
* <i>lal-</i>	<i>lal-í</i>	'It grew.'

In Table 4, by attaching the 3M.SG of inflectional suffix *-í* to the same pre-categorial root *darar-*, one gets the verbal form *darar-í* 'it blossomed'. If both nouns and verbs share the same root, which is the basic? Regarding this dilemma in a related HEC language, Kambaata, Treis (2008: 162) writes:

“At the present state of knowledge, one cannot decide which lexeme is to be considered as the basic one and which one is converted, i.e., ‘zero-derived’. Determining whether a stem like *caakk-* is basically a noun, *caakk-á* ‘light’, or a verb, *caakk-ú* ‘to give light (INF)’, is not possible as both only differ with respect to their inflectional behaviour. One lexeme adds endings of the nominal declension M1, and the other one adds verbal endings.”

In addition, after examining the relation between verbs and adjectives, Treis (2008: 269) writes, “[t]he word class of lexical stems in Kambaata is **not pre-determined**; one and the same stem may serve as a verb or adjective [...]” (bolding by Treis).

I support the analysis of Treis because the same phenomenon is observed in Sidaama. Many pre-categorial roots can yield verbs and nouns, and deciding the basic word class of such roots is challenging. There are even more complex cases because, from the same pre-categorial root, it is possible to derive a verb, a noun, and an adjective. For instance, the root *goww-* yields an inchoative verb *goww-í* ‘he became foolish’ (by suffixing *-í* = 3M.SG.PERF), an adjective *goww-a*

‘foolish’ (by attaching the adjectivizer *-aʔ*), and a noun *goww-imma*, ‘foolishness’ (via suffixation of the nominalizer *-imma*).

The second singulative allomorph, i.e., *-ʈʈf-o*, is suffixed to nominal roots that end in a single obstruent, a geminate, or a consonant cluster. In such forms, an epenthetic *-i* is inserted between the nominal root and the singulative formative to disallow impermissible consonant sequences (see Table 5).

Table 5. Nouns marked by the singulative *-ʈʈf-o*

Nominal root	Singulative	Gloss
* <i>haantʔ-</i>	<i>haantʔ-ii-ʈʈf-o</i> ⁸	‘enset fibre’
* <i>haiss-</i>	<i>hais-i-ʈʈf-o</i>	‘a blade of grass’
* <i>hakʔkʔ-</i>	<i>hakʔkʔ-i-ʈʈf-o</i>	‘wood/tree’
* <i>ʈʈʔeʔ-</i>	<i>ʈʈʔeʔ-i-ʈʈf-o</i>	‘bird’
* <i>wiliiʔl-</i>	<i>wiliiʔl-i-ʈʈf-o</i>	‘lamb’
* <i>wof-</i>	<i>wof-i-ʈʈf-o</i>	‘dog’

(ii) Singulatives that contain other formatives

Some nouns contain formatives such as *-ʃ*, *-ʈʈ*, and *-k* as markers of the singulative synchronically. Such singulatives arose because of the historical morphophonological processes of Sidaama, as will be explained immediately below.

(a) Singulatives marked with *-ʃ-o*

There are a handful of singulatives that contain *-ʃ* synchronically. It appears that first the *-ʈʈ* of the singulative became *-ʃ* through some historical assimilatory process. Then the root-final consonants completely assimilated to the *-ʃ* of the singulative resulting in *-ʃʃ*. Thus, in such forms, the actual singulative marker is *-ʃ* and not *-ʃʃ*. This is because the first *-ʃ* is a root-final consonant which is not part of the singulative marker. This assimilatory process was observed first by Moreno (1940: 80). The evidence for this can be gleaned from basic forms whereby the root-final consonant can be observed. Additionally, in three of the words, the final consonant of the nominal root in pluralive forms provides evidence (Table 6).

7 The formative *-a* also marks an infinitive in Sidaama. Thus, *goww-a* can also be translated as ‘to become foolish’.

8 In some nouns, the epenthetic vowel is lengthened, and there is no explanation for the time being.

Table 6. Singulatives marked with *-f-o*

Basic form	Singulative	Plurative
<i>ʔagad-a</i>	<i>ʔagaf-f-o</i> ‘stem of maize’	-----
<i>farad-o</i>	<i>faraf-f-o</i> ‘horse’	<i>farad-da</i> ‘horses’
<i>galad-o</i>	<i>galaf-f-o</i> ‘monkey’	<i>galad-da</i> ‘monkeys’
<i>hamas-o</i>	<i>hamaf-f-o</i> ‘snake’	-----
<i>wees-e</i>	<i>weef-f-o</i> ‘enset’ ⁹	-----
* <i>rumud-</i>	<i>rumuf-f-o</i> ‘root’	<i>rumud-d-a</i> ‘roots’

In the above examples, the root-final *d* or *s* has merged with the singulative *ʃ*, resulting in **ʃʃ*.¹⁰ As shown below in examples 1) and 2), many of the above basic forms are viewed as collective or a single group, which is observed in their singular verbal inflection.

- (1) *bero farad-u buraak’-i*
 Yesterday horses-NOM gallop-3M.SG.PERF
 ‘Yesterday the horses galloped.’

- (2) *galad-u hand-o sorr-í*
 monkeys-NOM ox-NOM chase-3M.SG.PERF
 ‘The monkeys chased the ox.’

Unlike the singulative and plurative, the basic form lacks number-marking formatives. Nevertheless, semantically, some basic forms can convey a plural meaning although they are not plurative.

(b) Singulatives marked with *-ʃf-o*

The singulative *-ʃʃ* that occurs in nouns in Table 5, and additional nouns such as *k’ubb-i-ʃʃf-o* ‘finger’, *mik’-i-ʃʃf-o* ‘bone’, *wof-i-ʃʃf-o* ‘dog’, etc., is an inherent and indivisible one. There are some nouns (see Table 7 below) that apparently contain *-ʃf-ʃf* as a singulative marker. However, in these nouns too, singulative is marked only by *-ʃf*. The first *ʃf* is actually a root-final consonant that has assimilated to the *-ʃf* of the singulative. In such nouns, the synchronic *-ʃf-ʃf* results from a diachronic morphophonological process whereby the root-final con-

⁹ The word ‘enset’ (Ensete ventricosum) refers to a plant that, among other names, is also known as ‘false banana’.

¹⁰ Moreno (1940: 80), Anbessa (2000: 35; 2014: 27), and Kawachi (2007: 347) discussed this and similar morphophonological processes in Sidaama. A similar process is also observed in Kambaata and was explained by Treis (2008: 133).

sonant (mostly *b* and, in a few cases, *d*) completely assimilated to *-tf* of the singulative resulting in *-tf-tf*. Again, this evidence is gleaned from the basic forms and, in two cases, from pluratives whereby the diachronic root-final consonant surfaces.

Table 7. Singulatives marked with *-tf-o*

Basic form	Singulative	Plurative
<i>?awaad-o</i>	<i>?awatf-tf-o</i> ‘tanner’	-----
<i>?ibiib-e</i> [<i>?iwiw-e</i>]	<i>?ibitf-tf-o</i> ‘louse’	-----
<i>dagub-a</i> [<i>daguw-a</i>]	<i>dagutf-tf-o</i> ‘cedar tree’	-----
<i>gereeb-o</i> [<i>gereew-o</i>]	<i>geretf-tf-o</i> ‘sheep’	<i>gereeb-ba</i> ‘sheep’
<i>gulub-e</i> [<i>guluw-e</i>]	<i>gulutf-tf-o</i> ‘knee’	<i>gulub-b-a</i> ‘knees’

In Table 7, a pervasive weakening rule applies in four basic forms whereby an intervocalic /*b*/ becomes [*w*]. In the above examples, although *?awaad-o* and *gereeb-o* are basic forms, they convey a plurative meaning of ‘tanners’ and ‘sheep’ (PL), respectively. Thus, they are plurative in meaning but not in form. However, the basic form *gereeb-o* ‘sheep’ has a full-fledged plurative *gereeb-ba* ‘sheep’ (PL).

(c) Singulatives marked with *-k-o*

A handful of Sidaama singulatives contain *-k-o*. In such nouns, *-tf* of the singulative assimilated completely to the root-final *k* of the basic form, resulting in a geminate, i.e., *-k-k*. Again, in such forms the actual singulative marker is *-k* and not *-kk*. This is because the first *-k* is a root-final consonant which is not part of the singulative marker. It is the second *-k* that marks singulative and which surfaced after *-tf* of the singulative assimilated to the root-final *k*. In such nouns, the basic forms provide clear evidence whereby the diachronic root-final consonant *k* surfaces. In Table 8 I have provided phonetic forms because a lenition rule applies whereby intervocalic /*k*/ becomes [*h*].

Table 8. Singulatives marked with *-k-o*

Basic form	Singulative
<i>?odak-e</i> [<i>?odahe</i>]	<i>?odak-k-o</i> ‘sycamore’
<i>beeddak-e</i> [<i>beeddah-e</i>]	<i>beedak-k-o</i> ‘star’
<i>futak-e</i> [<i>futah-e</i>]	<i>futak-k-o</i> ‘mole’
<i>hey yak-e</i> [<i>hey yahe</i>]	<i>hey yak-k-o</i> ‘partridge’
<i>yemak-e</i> [<i>yemah-e</i>]	<i>yemak-k-o</i> ‘rat’

Sidaama contains the noun *muduk-k-o* ‘navel’ that synchronically contains *-k* as a singulative formative. Based on its singulative, I will propose **muduk-* as the nominal root of the basic form. An almost identical basic form is attested in two related HEC languages. Treis (2008: 133) lists **mudug-* as a root¹¹ in Kambaata based on *mudug-ichch-ú*, while Hudson (1989: 104) lists the singulative *mudug-iccu* for Kambaata. According to Schneider-Blum (2007: 446) in Allaba, the word for ‘navel’ is *mudug-iccú*.

Kawachi (2007: 347) considers forms such as *-eččo*, *-aššo*, *-uššo*,¹² and *-akko* as additional allomorphs of the singulative and lists the following singulative words: *ger-eččo* ‘sheep’, *far-aššo* ‘horse’, *rum-uššo* ‘root’, and *fut-akko* ‘mole’, etc. among others. According to his analysis, only the first three segments such as *ger-*, *far-*, *rum-*, and *fut-* form the nominal root, while the remaining elements, such as *-eččo*, *-aššo*, *-uššo*, and *-akko* are singulatives.

According to my analysis, the singulative allomorphs are *-tʃ*, *-f*, and *-k* and not geminates such as *-tʃtʃ*, *-ff* and *-kk*. This is because the first segments are actually root-final consonants which do not take part in the marking of singulative. Moreover, I do not support the position of Kawachi’s morphemic cuts. My analysis differs from that of Kawachi because I exclude the initial vowels *-e*, *-a*, *-u*, and the segments *č*, *š*, and *k*, which are adjacent to the vowels he listed as part of the singulative allomorph. According to my analysis, these initial vowels and the adjacent consonants are part of the nominal root and must not be included in the singulative allomorphs. For instance, in synchronic nouns such as *geretʃfo* ‘sheep’, *faraffo* ‘horse’, *rumuffo* ‘root’, and *futakko* ‘mole’ their presumed diachronic forms are **gereb-tʃo*, **farad-tʃo*, **rumud-tʃo* and **futak-tʃo*. Thus, segments that Kawachi lists as part of the singulative allomorphs are, in fact, the last vocalic and consonantal elements of the nominal root, as they can be seen in the reconstructed forms.

2.2.2 Singulatives of Adjectives

Sidaama has very few “genuine” (underived) adjectives such as *danfja* ‘good’, *faajja* ‘pretty’, *fiima* ‘little’, etc. Instead, derivational processes enable the creation of numerous adjectives from verbs and

11 Treis uses the label “basic form”.

12 The IPA equivalent of *č* is *tʃ* and that of *š* is *f*.

nouns. Sidaama adjectives share grammatical features such as case, gender, and number with nouns. Nevertheless, there are also differences. Regarding number, a noun can have three forms (basic form, singulative, and plurative) while adjectives maximally have two (basic form and plural or singulative and plural). As far as gender is concerned, nouns have an inherent gender (masculine or feminine), while adjectives do not. Gender-marked adjectives always occur in pairs as in: *matfjaraar-aam-o* ‘mad/crazy’ (M) and *matfjaraar-aam-e* ‘mad/crazy’ (F).

Adjectives can have an attributive or a predicative function. An attributive adjective precedes a noun that it modifies and agrees with it in case, gender, and number, as shown in examples 3a) and 3b) below.

- (3a) *busul-u* *man-tf-i* *wot’e*
clever-NOM.M man-SGV-NOM.M money
di-finf’-anno
NEG-scatter-3M.IMPERF
‘A clever person will not scatter (waste) money.’

- (3b) *busul-laadd-u* *man-oot-i* *wot’e*
clever-PL-NOM.M man-PL-NOM.M money
di-finf’-i-tanno
NEG-scatter-3PL.IMPERF
‘Clever men will not scatter (waste) money.’

Both adjectives and nouns can be used predicatively and take an identical copula: *ho* (M) and *-te* (F) as shown in ex. 4) and 5).

- (4) *beett-u* *busule-ho*
boy-NOM.M CLEVER-COP.M
‘The boy is clever.’

- (5) *kun-i* *hando-ho*
M.PROX-NOM.M ox-COP.M
‘This is an ox.’

Although adjectives and nouns take the same copula, they also differ. For instance, when modifiers precede predicative adjectives, they

take either the copula *ho* (M) or *-te* (F), while predicative nouns take the copula *-ti*.

There are differences between adjectives and nouns regarding singulative: singulative is extensively marked on nouns and hardly on adjectives. Singulative is marked by *-tfo* ~ *-tftfo* only in a few adjectives, as shown in Table 9.

Table 9: The singulatives of adjectives marked by *-tfo* ~ *-tftfo*

Root	Singulative of adjectives
* <i>but'</i> - 'become poor'	<i>but'-i-tftfo</i> 'poor'
<i>gura</i> 'left'	<i>gura-tftfo</i> 'left-handed'
* <i>haraʔm</i> - ¹³ 'be short'	<i>haran-tf-o</i> 'short'

In Table 9, the adjectives were derived by suffixing *-tftfo* and *-tfo* to roots. As was mentioned earlier, here, too, it is impossible to determine the basic word class of a root such as *but'*- 'become poor.' This is because attaching the appropriate derivational suffixes makes it possible to derive different word classes. Thus, from *but'*- 'become poor', a singulative adjective can be derived by suffixing *-tftfo* (*but'-i-tftfo* 'poor') or the plurative adjective by attaching *-ane* (*but'-ane* 'poor ones'), a noun by suffixing *-ima* (*but'-ima* 'poverty'), and an inchoative verb via the 3M.SG.PERF suffix *-í* (*but'-í* 'he became poor').

Similarly to nouns, few adjectival singulatives contain *-f* synchronically. It seems that in adjectives too, first the *-tʃ* of the singulative became *-f* through some historical assimilatory process. Then *d*, i.e., the final consonant of the adjectival formative *-ad* have completely assimilated to the *-f* of the singulative resulting in *-f-f*.

Table 10: The singulatives of adjectives marked by *-f-o*

Pre-categorial Root	Adjectival stem	Singulative adjective
* <i>beeb-</i> 'be closed'	<i>beeb-ad-</i>	<i>beeb-af-f-o</i> 'closed'
* <i>ɕaaw-</i> 'become thin'	<i>ɕaaw-ad-</i>	<i>ɕaaw-af-f-o</i> 'thin'
* <i>k'iid-</i> 'become cold'	<i>k'iid-ad-</i>	<i>k'iid-af-f-o</i> 'cold, dull'
* <i>saal-</i> 'be slim'	<i>saal-ad-</i>	<i>saal-af-f-o</i> 'slim'

¹³ Although 'to be short' is synchronically based on *haraʔm-*, its root is presumably **haram-*. The *ʔ* that precedes *m* is an allomorph of *-d*, a middle voice (MID) formative in Sidaama. There is a regular glottal metathesis rule whereby a stem-final sonorant followed by *-d* results in *ʔ* + sonorant clusters. For instance, *faʔn-a* 'to open for oneself' comes from *fan-d-a*: *fan-* 'open', *-d* 'MID', *-a* 'infinitive'.

2.3 Plurative

The plurative marks more than one referent. Sidaama has a wide-ranging plurative system since it has five plurative suffixes, while related HEC languages have fewer. For instance, Kambaata has two (Treis 2008: 135), while Alaaba (Schneider-Blum 2007: 67) and Qabeena (Crass 2005: 70) have three plurative formatives each. Dawit (2019: 109) claims that four “plural” markers exist in Gede’o. Appleyard (2012: 204) correctly summarizes the formation of pluratives in Cushitic languages and writes: “The formation of noun plurals is very diverse, even within groups of closely related languages [...].” Although Sidaama nouns and adjectives share at least two pluratives, they also have separate plurative morphemes. Hence, the pluratives of nouns and adjectives will be discussed separately.

2.3.1 Plurative of nouns

Five pluratives of nouns are attested in the language. For ease of presentation, the pluratives of nouns (PLN) are abbreviated and numbered from one to five as: PLN1, PLN2 ... PLN5.

(i) Plurative 1 of nouns

This is the most widespread plurative in Sidaama. Thus, PLN1 is formed by reduplicating the final consonant of the nominal root and by the suffixation of *-a*.

Table 11. Plurative 1 of nouns

Basic form	PLN1	Gloss
<i>?akaak-o</i> ¹⁴	<i>?akaak-k-a</i>	‘ancestors’
<i>?awur-a</i>	<i>?awur-r-a</i>	‘great-grandparents’
<i>daallas-a</i>	<i>daallas-s-a</i>	‘beds’
<i>doog-o</i>	<i>doog-g-a</i>	‘roads’
<i>farad-o</i>	<i>farad-d-a</i>	‘horses’
<i>galad-o</i>	<i>galad-d-a</i>	‘monkeys’
<i>gereb-o</i>	<i>gereeb-b-a</i>	‘sheep’ (PL)
<i>min-e</i>	<i>min-n-a</i>	‘houses’
<i>siib-o</i>	<i>siib-b-a</i>	‘ropes’
<i>tutum-a</i>	<i>tutum-m-a</i>	‘stumps’

¹⁴ The word *?akaak-o* has also the meaning ‘great-grandfather’.

Most plurative nouns in Sidaama are marked for feminine gender without consideration of the gender of the basic form and, as such, require feminine subject agreement. For instance, *min-e* ‘house’ is masculine while its plurative *min-n-a* ‘houses’ is feminine. This is seen in the gender of the modifiers that precede the nouns and the gender of the copula (see ex. 6a–6b).

(6a) *kun-i* *min-i* *hala?lado-ho*
 PROX.M-NOM house-NOM wide-COP.M
 ‘This house is wide.’

(6b) *tin-i* *min-na* *hala?l-ad-da-te*
 PROX.F-NOM house-PLN1 be wide-ADJ-PLA2-COP.F
 ‘These houses are wide.’

In (6a), the masculine noun *min-e* ‘house’ is preceded by the masculine proximal demonstrative *kun-i*. On the other hand, although the plurative *min-na* ‘houses’ is based on the masculine noun *mine* ‘house’, in its plurative form, it assumes a feminine gender switch, as is the case for most masculine nouns of Sidaama. That explains why the modifier that precedes *min-na* ‘houses’ is the feminine proximal demonstrative *tin-i*. In (6a), the basic form *mine* ‘house’ being a masculine subject requires the masculine copula *-ho*. On the other hand, its plurative form, i.e., *min-n-a* ‘houses’ in (6b), is feminine since most pluratives in Sidaama are feminine irrespective of the gender of the basic form. Hence, the copula at the end of the sentence is the feminine copula *-te*.

Although most plurative nouns in Sidaama have a feminine gender, there is at least one exception. The plurative *seenn-e* ‘unmarried girls’ is masculine, although its basic form, i.e., *seemm-o* ‘unmarried girl/virgin’, is feminine. Thus, the plurative *seenn-e* ‘unmarried girls’ does not obey the “feminine only” rule for pluratives. For instance, modifiers that precede *seenn-e* ‘unmarried girls’ and the copula at the end of the clause are masculine, as shown in ex. (7).

(7) *kun-i* *seenn-i* *busule-ho*
 PROX.M-NOM girls-NOM clever-COP.M
 ‘These girls are clever.’ (lit. ‘this (M) girls’)

In example (7), although the plurative *seenn-e* ‘unmarried girls’ is expected to be feminine because pluratives are mostly feminine, the

proximal demonstrative that precedes it is *kun-i*, which is a masculine demonstrative instead of the expected feminine demonstrative *tin-i*. In addition, the copula at the end of the clause is the masculine copula *-ho* instead of the expected feminine copula *-te*.

The plurative formation in Table 11 is based on synchronic roots. However, we have also seen nouns in section 2.2.1 that have reconstructed roots. The plurative formation rule PLN 1 also applies to most of such nouns.

Table 12. Plurative 1 of diachronic roots

Diachronic root	PLN1	Gloss
* <i>gulub-</i>	<i>gulub-b-a</i>	‘knees’
* <i>rumud-</i>	<i>rumud-d-a</i>	‘roots’

Kawachi (2007: 350) posits *-adda* and *-udda* as “plural allomorphs” for the words he lists as *far-adda* ‘horses’, *gal-adda* ‘monkeys’, and *rum-udda* ‘roots’. However, no such allomorphs exist in Sidaama since the first plural formation rule of nouns, i.e., PLN 1, can easily handle these words. According to my analysis they form their plurative by reduplicating the final consonant of the nominal root and by attaching *-a*. In addition, the first two segments *-ad* or *-ud* in the allomorph he proposed are the last two segments of the nominal root, as seen clearly in Table 12.

Although some of the basic forms in Table 11 are semantically plural they require a singular agreement. For instance, the basic form *farad-o* ‘horses’ is semantically plural but has a collective reading and hence requires a singular agreement. On the other hand, *farad-d-a* ‘horses’ is plurative and hence requires a plural agreement. The verbal inflections in (8b) illustrate this fact. The suffix *-tú* in (8b) marks a 3PL.PRF and a 3F.SG.PRF. However, for examples that involve pluratives, only the glossing 3PL.PRF will be provided.

(8a) *beero, farad-u sonsoom-í*
 yesterday horse-M.NOM trot-3M.SG.PERF
 ‘Yesterday, the horses (collective) trotted.’ (lit. ‘He trotted.’)

(8b) *beero, farad-da sonsoon-tú*
 yesterday horse-PL trot-3PL.PERF
 ‘Yesterday, the horses trotted.’

As seen in (8a), the subject is marked by *-í*, which is a marker of 3M.SG.PFV. This is because the sentence's subject is the basic form *farad-o* 'horses', which is treated as a single entity (collective) in Sidaama, although semantically, it is plural. In addition, the case suffix *-u* marks mainly the nominative of singular masculine referents.

On the other hand, in (8b), the subject is the plurative *farad-d-a* 'horses' that is treated as referring to two or more entities, and hence, this is reflected by the inflectional suffix *-tú* that marks a 3PL.PERF. In addition, there is no nominative case marking on the plurative *farad-d-a* 'horses'. This is because pluratives in Sidaama are feminine, and feminine nouns are not marked for nominative case in the language.

A set of nouns is marked chiefly by the regular singulative formative *-tʃfo* and, in a few cases, by *-tʃo*. All of these nouns have nominal roots and the plurative of these nouns, too, is based on PLN1, as illustrated below.

Table 13. Plurative 1 of singulatives

Nominal root	Singulative	PLN1
*ʔawul-	ʔawul-tʃ-o 'owl'	ʔawul-l-a 'owls'
*kin-	kin-tʃ-o 'stone'	kin-n-a 'stones'
*mik'-	mik'-i-tʃf-o 'bone'	mik'-k'-a 'bones'
*tʃ'ulunk'-	tʃ'ulunk'-i-tʃf-o 'fingernail'	tʃ'ulunk'-a 'fingernails'
*tʃ'uuntʃ'-	tʃ'uuntʃ'-i-tʃf-o 'big black ant'	tʃ'uuntʃ'-a 'big black ants'

In the examples in Table 13, PLN1 is derived by copying the final consonant of the nominal root and then by suffixing *-a*. However, in the last two nominal roots, i.e., *tʃ'ulunk'-* and *tʃ'uuntʃ'-*, reduplication of a final consonant is blocked. These two nominal roots end in consonant clusters, not single consonants. In the phonological structure of Sidaama, consonant clusters and geminates are indivisible units. Hence, a phonological rule (in this case reduplication) cannot operate on a single member of a consonant cluster or a geminate.

(ii) Plurative 2 of nouns

The formative *-aan-tʃ-o* is a productive agentive suffix that derives deverbal agentive nouns from simple verbal roots. The formative comprises the nominalizer element *-aan*, the singulative *-tʃ*, and the terminal vowel *-o*. A deverbal agentive noun usually denotes a

habitual activity and sometimes the profession of the agent noun. The plurative of deverbal agentive nouns is formed by attaching *-o* to the nominalizer suffix *-aan* which is devoid of the singulative and the terminal vowel (see Table 14).

Table 14. Plurative 2 of deverbal agentive nouns

Simple verbal root	Singulative agentive noun	PLN2
<i>daddal-</i> ‘trade’	<i>daddal-aan-tf-o</i> ‘merchant’	<i>daddal-aan-o</i> ¹⁵
<i>dimb-</i> ‘be drunk’	<i>dimb-aan-tf-o</i> ‘drunkard’	<i>dimb-aan-o</i>
<i>gaff-</i> ‘rule’	<i>gaff-aan-tf-o</i> ‘ruler’	<i>gaff-aan-o</i>
<i>kap’p’-</i> ‘tell a lie’	<i>kap’p’-aan-tf-o</i> ‘liar’	<i>kap’p’-aan-o</i>
<i>kiil-</i> ‘perform sorcery’	<i>kiil-aan-tf-o</i> ‘sorcerer’	<i>kiil-aan-o</i>
<i>moor-</i> ‘steal’	<i>moor-aan-tf-o</i> ‘thief’	<i>moor-aan-o</i>
<i>nabbab-</i> ‘read’	<i>nabbab-aan-tf-o</i> ‘reader’	<i>nabbab-aan-o</i>
<i>ros-</i> ‘learn’	<i>ros-aan-tf-o</i> ‘student’	<i>ros-aan-o</i>
<i>waadḡḡ-</i> ‘fear (v.)’	<i>waadḡḡ-aan-tf-o</i> ‘coward’	<i>waadḡḡ-aan-o</i>

Regarding the plurative of agentive nouns, Anbessa (2000: 39) incorrectly claims that “[s]ome of the agent nouns which end in /-aančɔ/ take the plural /-aano/” (bolding in the original source). This is because the plurative is *-o* and not *-aano*, as seen above. The formative *-aan* is a nominalizer in singulative and plurative forms.

Sidaama nouns and adjectives share many grammatical features, and sometimes the distinction between them is blurred. Thus, there is a vacillation whether some of the derived words in Table 14, such as *dimb-aan-tf-o* ‘drunkard’, *kap’p’-aan-tf-o* ‘liar’, *moor-aan-tf-o* ‘thief’, etc., can be considered as adjectives at least semantically. However, meaning alone cannot be a good criterion. In addition, although nouns and adjectives share grammatical features, they also have distinct grammatical properties. For reasons of brevity, I will not go into a detailed discussion, and I think further research may be needed to settle the issue.

Agentive nouns are formed from simple and derived verbal stems, particularly causative verbs that attach *-iis* ~ *-if* ~ *-siis*. In these nouns too, the plurative formative is *-o* (Table 15). In the examples

¹⁵ The word *daddal-aan-tf-o* ‘merchant’, in addition to the regular plurative *-o*, has the plurative formative *-aasine* as in *daddal-aasine* ‘merchants’.

under Table 15 below, the basic verb stems are *?egen-* ‘know’, *ros-* ‘learn’, and *fik-* ‘approach’.

Table 15. Plurative 2 of causative agentive nouns

Derived verbal stem	Agentive noun	PLN2
<i>?egen-siis-</i> ‘introduce’	<i>?egen-siis-aan-tf-o</i> ‘introducer’	<i>egen-siis-aan-o</i>
<i>ros-iis-</i> ‘teach’	<i>ros-iis-aan-tf-o</i> ‘teacher’	<i>ros-iis-aan-o</i>
<i>fik'-if-</i> ‘present’	<i>fik'-if-aan-tf-o</i> ‘presenter’	<i>fik'-if-aan-o</i> ¹⁶

(iii) Plurative 3 of nouns

The third plurative in Sidaama is PLN3, formed by suffixing *-uba* to the final consonant of the nominal root. Although the list contains disparate nouns, some plural nouns formed via PLN3 are basic forms related to kinship terms or paired body parts. In Sidaama /b/ becomes [w] intervocally. Hence in all the pluratives listed below, the phonetic form of the plurative will become [-uwa] as in: [*?add-uwa*] ‘heifers’, [*ball-uwa*] ‘in-laws’, [*lekk-uwa*] ‘legs’, etc.

Table 16. Plurative 3 of nouns

Basic form	PLN3	
<i>?add-e</i>	<i>?add-uba</i>	‘heifers’
<i>?am-a</i>	<i>?am-uba</i>	‘mothers’
<i>?ann-a</i>	<i>?ann-uba</i>	‘fathers’
<i>?ill-e</i>	<i>?ill-uba</i>	‘eyes’
<i>?amat't'-o</i>	<i>?amat't'-uba</i>	‘spears’
<i>ball-o</i>	<i>ball-uba</i>	‘in-laws’
<i>bass-a</i>	<i>bass-uba</i>	‘scars’
<i>lekk-a</i>	<i>lekk-uba</i>	‘legs’
<i>matf'tf'-a</i>	<i>matf'tf'-uba</i>	‘ears’
<i>su'm-a</i>	<i>su'm-uba</i>	‘names’
<i>rod-oo</i>	<i>rod-uuba</i>	‘brothers/sisters’
<i>?ar-oo</i>	<i>?ar-uuba</i>	‘husbands’

¹⁶ It appears in Shimelis (2007: 117) as part of the phrase *duduwu shiqishaancho*, ‘news presenter’.

It seems that basic forms with long terminal vowels will also have long vowels in their pluratives, as the last two examples in Table 16, i.e. *rod-uuba* ‘brothers/sisters’ and *?ar-uuba* ‘husbands’ demonstrate.

(iv) Plurative 4 of nouns

The formative of the fourth plurative, i.e., PLN4, is formed by suffixing *-ubba* to the final consonant of the nominal root. As can be seen in Table 17, most of the nouns that are pluralized via PLN4 are basic forms related to paired body parts. Note that three of the paired body parts, i.e., *?ill-e* ‘eye’, *lekk-a* ‘leg’, and *matf’fj’-a* ‘ear’ can also be pluralized via the formative *-uba*, as seen in Table 17. This indicates that some paired body parts have alternative pluratives.

Table 17. Plurative 4 of nouns

Basic form	PLN4	
<i>?ang-a</i>	<i>?ang-ubba</i>	‘hands’
<i>?ill-e</i>	<i>?ill-ubba</i>	‘eyes’
<i>buud-a</i>	<i>buud-ubba</i>	‘horns’
<i>gordo</i>	<i>gord-ubba</i>	‘heavens’
<i>lekk-a</i>	<i>lekk-ubba</i>	‘legs’
<i>matf’fj’-a</i>	<i>matf’fj’-ubba</i>	‘ears’
<i>sik’k’-o</i>	<i>sik’k’-ubba</i>	‘sticks’
<i>fomb-o</i>	<i>fomb-ubba</i>	‘lungs’

The formative of PLN4, i.e., *-ubba*, is similar to *-uba*, a plurative of PLN3. In PLN3, the segment *b* is single; in PLN4, it is *bb*, i.e., a geminate. Because of this reason, Hudson (1976: 252) writes, “[...] this suggests a reconstructed plural suffix *uba* which ordinarily gave *uwa* except where stems with *b* encouraged retention of the *b* of the suffix, which was then geminated” (underlining in the original). However, Hudson’s claim has two drawbacks. First, many nouns do not have an internal *b* but take the plurative *-ubba* as most of the examples in Table 17 illustrate. In addition, at least two nouns in Table 16 contain a stem-internal *b* but their plurative formative is *-uba* and not the expected *-ubba*. The two nouns are *ball-o*, ‘in-law’, and *bass-a*, ‘scar’, whose pluratives are *ball-uba*, ‘in-laws’ and *bass-uba*, ‘scars’, respectively.

(v) Plurative 5 of nouns

Plurative 5 (PLN5) is formed by suffixing *-oota* to the basic form which is devoid of a terminal vowel. These nouns have all the number categories of Sidaama: basic form, singulative, and plurative (Table 18).

Table 18. Plurative 5 of nouns

Basic form	Singulative	PLN5
<i>harr-e</i> ‘donkeys’	<i>harr-i-tfj-o</i> ‘donkey’	<i>harr-oota</i> ‘donkeys’
<i>mann-a</i> ‘men/ people’	<i>man-tj-o</i> ‘person’	<i>mann-oota</i> ‘people/men’
<i>woff-a</i> ‘dogs’	<i>wof-i-tfj-o</i> ‘dog’	<i>woff-oota</i> ‘dogs’

As we shall see later on, the above three basic forms belong to the category of inherently plural nouns which refer to a collective or group. Although these nouns are semantically plural, they are treated in Sidaama as a single entity because they refer to a collective or group. Two grammatical properties of such nouns that refer to a collective are: they require a singular morphological agreement and a masculine predicative copula *-ho*. On the other hand, nouns such as *mann-oota* ‘people/men’ and *woff-oota* ‘dogs’ (which are based on PLN5) are ordinary plurals because they refer to two or more referents. The evidence again comes from verbal inflections, as shown in (9a–9b).

(9a) *man-n-u* *sirb-í*
 man-PL-NOM sing-3M.SG.PERF
 ‘The people/men sang.’

(9b) *mann-oot-u* *sirb-i-tú*
 man-PL-NOM sing-3PL.PERF
 ‘The people/men sang.’

In (9a), the basic form *man-n-a* ‘people/men’, is considered a single entity and hence is marked by *-í*, a singular inflection that marks a 3M.SG.PERF. On the other hand, in (9b), the plurative *mann-oota* ‘people/men’ is based on PLN5, which is an ordinary plural, and that is the reason why it is marked by a plural inflection, i.e., *-tú* which marks a 3PL.PERF.

2.3.2 Pluratives of adjectives

Adjectives can be pluralized like nouns, and the number of adjective pluratives is similar to that of nouns. Nevertheless, some pluratives

are shared both by nouns and adjectives. For instance, PLN5 of nouns based on the formative *-oota* is identical to the adjectival plurative PLA5. In addition, PLN1 of nouns is identical to PLA1 of adjectives. Both are formed similarly: by reduplicating the final consonant of a nominal root or an adjectivizer stem and then by suffixing *-a*.

(i) Plurative 1 of adjectives

The suffix *-aam-o* is a productive morpheme that derives denominal adjectives from nouns¹⁷ and has the meaning of ‘full of N’ or ‘characterized by N’ (where N = noun). The formative *-aam-o* is suffixed to a nominal root, i.e., a form devoid of the terminal vowel. Denominal adjectives in Sidaama distinguish masculine and feminine gender with the suffixation of *-o* and *-e*, respectively, as in: *matʃʃaraar-aam-o* ‘mad/crazy (M)’ and *matʃʃaraar-aam-e* ‘mad/crazy (F)’.

The first plurative of adjectives, i.e., PLA1, is formed by reduplicating *m*, i.e., the final consonant of the adjective stem *-aam*, and then by suffixing *-a*. Consider the examples in Table 19 where the adjectives are in masculine gender.

Table 19. Plurative 1 of adjectives

Noun	Adjective	PLA 1
<i>?agood-a</i> ‘shoulder’	<i>?agood-aam-o</i> ‘muscular’	<i>?agood-aam-m-a</i>
<i>?amal-e</i> ‘temper’	<i>?amal-aam-o</i> ‘ill-tempered’	<i>?amal-aam-m-a</i>
<i>?atoot-e</i> ‘riches’	<i>?atoot-aam-o</i> ‘full of riches’	<i>?atoot-aam-m-a</i>
<i>?awuub-e</i> ‘white hair’	<i>?awuub- aam-o</i> ‘full of white hair’	<i>?awuub- aam-m-a</i>
<i>badd-e</i> ‘bald spot’	<i>badd-aam-o</i> ‘bald’	<i>badd-aam-m-a</i>
<i>biɕaaɕ-o</i> ‘scabies’	<i>biɕaaɕ-aam-o</i> ‘scabby’	<i>biɕaaɕ-aam-m-a</i>
<i>buluul-o</i> ‘ashes’	<i>buluul-aam-o</i> ‘covered with ash’	<i>buluul-aam-m-a</i>
<i>buud-a</i> ‘horn’	<i>buud-aam-o</i> ‘with horns’	<i>buud-aam-m-m-a</i>
<i>matʃʃaraar-o</i> ‘madness’	<i>matʃʃaraar-aam-o</i> ‘mad/crazy’	<i>matʃʃaraar-aam-m-a</i>

¹⁷ I came across one example whereby an adjective is derived from a verb. Thus the verb *?afid-* ‘get’ yields the adjective *?afiʔr-aam-o* ‘wealthy’ and the plural *?afiʔr-aam-m-a*.

(ii) Plurative 2 of adjectives

Many adjectives are pluralized with the suffix *-ulle*. There are seven semantic classes of adjectival concepts that were proposed by Dixon (1982: 16). Amongst these, six of the semantic classes contain 12 adjectives in Sidaama that are pluralized based on *-uulle* i.e., PLA2, which is attached to the adjectival root i.e. a form that is devoid of the terminal vowel. The only semantic field that was not involved is SPEED since there are no adjectives in Sidaama for its expression. A similar phenomenon is observed in Alaaba (Schneider-Blum 2007: 118) and Kambaata (Treis 2008: 254). Table 20 provides examples for PLA2 based on various semantic fields.

Table 20. Plural 2 of adjectives

Semantic field	Adjective	PLA 2
DIMENSION	<i>duʔm-a</i> ‘fat’	<i>duʔm-uulle</i>
	<i>seed-a</i> ‘tall’	<i>seed-uulle</i>
PHYSICAL PROPERTY	<i>faayy-a</i> ‘beautiful’	<i>faayy-uulle</i>
	<i>tʔum-a</i> ¹⁸ ‘good’	<i>tʔum-uulle</i>
COLOR	<i>biiff-a</i> ‘red’ ¹⁹	<i>biiff-uulle</i>
	<i>waaɕɕ-o</i> ‘white’	<i>waaɕɕ-uulle</i>
	<i>haandɕ-a</i> ‘green’	<i>haandɕ-uulle</i>
HUMAN PROPENSITY	<i>goww-a</i> ‘foolish’	<i>goww-uulle</i>
AGE	<i>ʔaɕ-a</i> ‘young’	<i>ʔaɕ-uulle</i>
	<i>maaʔn-e</i> ‘younger in age’	<i>maaʔn-uulle</i>
VALUE	<i>buf-a</i> ‘bad’	<i>buf-uulle</i>
	<i>dantf-a</i> ‘good’	<i>dantf-uulle</i>

(iii) Plurative 3 of adjectives

Few adjectives are formed by suffixing *-ad-o* to pre-categorical roots, whereby *-ad* is the adjectivizer formative, while *-o* is a terminal vowel. The plurative of this group of adjectives is formed by reduplicating the final consonant of the adjectivizer formative, i.e., *d*, and then by suffixing *-a*, as shown in Table 21 below.

¹⁸ Also has the meaning of beautiful.

¹⁹ A color for human beings with light-colored hue.

Table 21. Plurative 3 of adjectives

Pre-categorial root	Adjective	PLA 3
*ʔairr- ‘become honored’ ²⁰	ʔairr-ad-o ‘honored’	ʔairr-ad-d-a
*ʔiibb- ‘become hot’	ʔiibb-ad-o ‘hot’	ʔiibb-ad-d-a
*kaaḫḫ- ‘become thin’	kaaḫḫ-ad-o ‘strong’	kaaḫḫ-ad-d-a
*faal- ‘be slim’	faal-ad-o ‘thin’	faal-ad-d-a
*ʃak’k- ‘be soft’	ʃak’k-ad-o ‘soft’	ʃak’k-ad-d-a

(iv) Plurative 4 of adjectives

These pluratives are formed by reduplicating the final consonant of a pre-categorial root and then suffixing the plurative *-aadda*, as shown in Table 22 below.

Table 22. Plurative 4 of adjectives

Pre-categorial root	Adjective	PLA 4
*busul-	busul-e ‘clever’	busul-l-aadda
*duum-	duum-o ²¹ ‘red’	duum-m-aadda
*ʃim-	ʃim-a ‘small’	ʃim-m-aadda
*bair-	bair-a ‘older sibling’	bair-r-aadda
*ḫaaw-	ḫaaw-af-f-o ‘thin’	ḫaaw-aadda

As can be seen in Table 22, in the last pre-categorial i.e., *ḫaaw-*, its last consonant i.e. *w* does not undergo reduplication.

(v) Plurative 5 of adjectives

These pluratives are formed by suffixing the formative *-oota* to pre-categorial roots. Thus, PLA5 is identical to PLN5 of nouns that contain the same suffix.

Table 23. Plurative 5 of adjectives

Pre-categorial root	Adjective	PLA 5
*babb- ‘stammer’	babb-i-tʃʃ-a ‘stammerer’	babb-oota
*ball- ‘be blind’	ball-i-tʃʃ-a ‘blind’	ball-oota
*dank’- ‘be deaf’	dank’-i-tʃʃ-a ‘deaf’	dank’-oota
*murk’- ‘be cut off’	murk’-i-tʃʃ-a ‘dismembered’	murk’-oota

²⁰ The pre-categorial root *ʔairr- has also the meaning of ‘become heavy’ and ‘become pregnant’.

²¹ This adjective exhibits a masculine feminine distinction: *duum-o* ‘red (M)’ and *duum-e* ‘red (F)’.

Pre-categorial root	Adjective	PLA 5
* <i>doofaar-</i> ‘be untidy’	<i>doofaar-a</i> ‘untidy’	<i>doofaar-oota</i>
* <i>goww-</i> ‘be foolish’	<i>goww-a</i> ‘foolish’	<i>goww-oota</i>

In examples in Table (23), the last four adjectives distinguish gender, whereby *-tʃtʃ-a* marks masculine, and *-tt-e* marks feminine as in *ball-i-tʃtʃ-a* ‘blind (m)’ and *ball-i-tt-e* ‘blind (f).’ Since *-tʃtʃ* also marks a singulative, hence *-tʃtʃa* can be considered as a portmanteau morpheme that marks two functions: gender and number.

(vi) Plurative 6 of adjectives

Several adjectives are derived from pre-categorial roots with the suffixation of two formatives that distinguish gender: *-all-eessa* (M) and *-all-ette* (F) as in *tʃʼeeʔm-all-eessa* ‘lazy (M)’ and *tʃʼeeʔm-all-ette* ‘lazy (F)’. The function of the element *-all* in the adjectivizing formative of Sidaama is unclear. The same holds true for related HEC languages Kambaata and Qabeena. Regarding Kambaata Treis (2008: 283) writes, “[t]he morpheme *-all* might be a former derivational morpheme having served to derive adjectives from verbs. In modern Kambaata, it is as unproductive as in Qabeena [...]”. According to Crass (2005: 73) in Qabeena, the function of the suffix *-all* cannot be determined.²²

The elements *-eessa* and *-ette* in the adjectivizing formative are portmanteau morphemes that mark gender on one hand and number (singulative) on the other. The plurative of these adjectives is based on *-eeyye*, a marker of PLA6. For sake of brevity, the adjectives will be based only on the masculine form: *-all-eessa* (Table 24).

Table 24. Plurative 6 of adjectives

Pre-categorial root	Adjective	PLA 6
* <i>boon-</i> ‘boast’	<i>boon-all-eessa</i> ‘boastful’	<i>boon-all-eeyye</i>
* <i>tʃʼeeʔm-</i> ‘be lazy’	<i>tʃʼeeʔm-all-eessa</i> ‘lazy’	<i>tʃʼeeʔm-all-eeyye</i>
* <i>fayy-</i> ‘be healthy’	<i>fayy-aall-eessa</i> ‘healthy’	<i>fayy-aall-eeyye</i>
* <i>wadʒʒ-</i> ‘be afraid’	<i>wadʒʒ-all-eessa</i> ‘coward’	<i>wadʒʒ-all-eeyye</i>
* <i>?af-</i> ‘know’	<i>?af-all-eessa</i> ‘wise man’	<i>?af-all-eeyye</i>

²² German-English translation of the relevant sentence was courtesy of Ronny Meyer to whom I am indebted.

There are also a few other adjectives whose plurative is based on PLA 6, i.e., *-eeyye*, which can be added as a subset of the above adjectives. They are listed in Table 25 below.

Table 25. Additional adjectives based on plurative 6

Root	Adjective	PLA 6
*ʔog- ‘be wise’	ʔog-eessa ‘bonesetter, professional’	ʔog-eeyye
*mah- ‘be last’	mah-eessa ‘last in a group’	mah-eeyye
*soor- ‘lead’	soor-eessa ‘first, preceding’	soor-eeyye
*fʔim- ‘arbitrate’	fʔim-eessa ‘elder of a clan, arbiter’	fʔim-eeyye

The adjectives in Table 25, too, make gender distinctions through the same formatives listed in Table 24: *-eessa* (M) and *-eette* (F). Thus, *ʔog-eessa* is ‘bonesetter, professional’ while according to Gasparini (1983: 249), *ʔog-eette* is ‘midwife’. Among this group, only the last word, *fʔim-eessa*, does not have a feminine counterpart, probably because of cultural norms since only males are nominated to be arbiters or elders of their clan.

Two differences exist between the adjectives listed in Table 24 and those in Table 25. Adjectives in Table 25 lack the obscure linguistic element *-all* which is found in adjectives in Table 24. In addition, adjectives in Table 24 are derived from pre-categorial roots that allow the derivation of different word classes, while the roots in Table 25 allow adjectival derivation only. For instance, from the pre-categorial root *fʔeeʔm-* ‘be lazy’ in Table 24, in addition to the adjective *fʔeeʔm-all-eessa* ‘lazy’, it is also possible to derive a noun *fʔeeʔm-ile* ‘laziness’ (via the nominalizer *-le*) and a verb *fʔeeʔm-í* ‘he became lazy’ (by suffixing *-í*, a 3M.SG.PERF).

3 Functions of number marking morphemes in Sidaama

In the second section of this paper, the number-marking morphemes of Sidaama were dealt with and this included a detailed discussion of singulatives and pluratives of nouns and adjectives. In this chapter, the functions of singulatives and pluratives will be discussed.

3.1 Functions of singulative

In Sidaama, the singulative marks a single referent. Nonetheless, the singulative formative is not found on all nouns that denote a single

referent. For instance, basic forms such as *min-e* ‘house’, *doog-o* ‘road’, *sik’k’-o* ‘stick’, etc. denote a single referent but do not carry a singulative formative. According to Treis (2008: 137) “[...] there is a class of nouns, predominantly referring to humans and higher animals, which are already inherently singular.”

(i) Inherently singular nouns

In Sidaama, inherently singular nouns are devoid of a singulative marker, and hence, their basic form is employed to denote a single referent. Table 26 presents a list of inherently singular nouns of Sidaama, similar to that of Kambaata (Treis 2008: 137; 2014: 5).

Table 26. List of inherently singular nouns of Sidaama

<i>ʔam-a</i> ‘mother’	<i>ʔadd-e</i> ‘heifer’
<i>ʔann-a</i> ‘father’	<i>boot-o</i> ‘young bull’
<i>ball-o</i> ‘in-law’	<i>gaang-o</i> ‘mule’
<i>beett-o</i> ²³ ‘boy/girl’	<i>gajj-a</i> ‘mare’
<i>ɕaal-a</i> ‘friend’	<i>hand-o</i> ‘ox’
<i>k’aak’k’-o</i> ‘infant’	<i>saa</i> ‘cow’
<i>rod-oo</i> ‘sibling’	<i>siito</i> ‘calf’
<i>seemm-o</i> ‘virgin girl’	

With a number that exceeds one, the inherently singular noun itself or its plurative equivalent is used. In both cases, the numeral precedes the plurative or the inherently singular noun, as shown in ex. (10a) and (10b).

(10a) *kaayyamo sas-e hand-a hir-í*
 Kaayyamo three-ACC ox-PLN1 sell-3M.SG.PERF
 ‘Kaayyamo sold three oxen.’

(10b) *kaayyamo sas-e hand-o hir-í*
 Kaayyamo three-ACC ox-ACC sell-3M.SG.PERF
 ‘Kaayyamo sold three oxen.’ (lit. ‘three ox’)

As can be seen in in the first sentence (10a), the plurative *hand-a* ‘oxen’ is used, while in the second sentence (10b), the basic form of the inherently singular noun, i.e., *hand-o* ‘ox (ACC)’, has replaced it.

²³ Sidaama does not allow the suffixation of a singular to inherently singular nouns. The only exception appears to be *beetto* ‘boy/girl’. With the suffixation of the singulative *ɸɸ-o* the resultant noun is *beett-i-ɸɸ-o* ‘a small girl’.

In both sentences, the numeral *sas-e* ‘three’ precedes the plurative or the inherently singular noun. This illustrates that number agreement with a head noun is not obligatory in Sidaama. Nevertheless, a numeral with a plurative is the preferred option.

Inherently singular nouns are distinct from singulative nouns in that an overt singulative marker does not mark them. Nonetheless, an inherently singular noun denotes a single referent like a singulative; hence, both behave similarly grammatically, as the example below illustrates.

- (11) *hand-u woš-i-tfj-o forr-í*
 ox-NOM.M dog-EE-SG-ACC chase-3M.SG.PERF
 ‘The ox chased the dog.’

(ii) Singulative as a marker of diminutive

Singulative is hardly marked on adjectives save for very few ones, such as *but'-i-tfj-o* ‘poor’ or *ɕaaw-af-f-o* ‘thin’. However, there are three adjectives in Sidaama that suffix a special singulative to express diminutive. The singulative allomorph that is involved in such cases is not the regular singulative *-tfj-o* but rather *-tʃʃ'-o* whereby the *tʃ* element is glottalized. The diminutive is formed by suffixing *-tʃʃ'-o* to the adjectival stem devoid of the terminal vowel. An epenthetic *-i* is inserted to break impermissible consonant clusters in all the three diminutives below. In such cases, the resultant adjective denotes feminine referents only.

Table 27. Singulative as a marker of diminutive

Adjective	Adjectives with the singulative <i>-tʃʃ'-o</i>
<i>fim-a</i> ‘small’	<i>fim-i-tʃʃ'-o</i> ‘a very small cute girl’
<i>dantf-a</i> ‘good, beautiful’	<i>dantf-i-tʃʃ'-o</i> ‘a small good-looking girl’
<i>faayy-a</i> ‘pretty’	<i>faayy-i-tʃʃ'-o</i> ‘a small pretty girl’

(iii) Singulative as a marker of a small amount

Sidaama contains several mass nouns such as *mat'in-e* ‘salt’, *bull-ee* ‘flour’, *waa* ‘water’, *buuro* ‘butter’, *farf-o* ‘local beer’, *maal-a* ‘meat’, etc. These mass nouns being non-count nouns necessitate the use of traditional measure nouns such as *safe* ‘a grain measure’, *hoowo* ‘palmful’ or modern measure nouns (which are exclusively loanwords) such as *kilo* ‘kilogram’ or *liitiro* ‘liter’. Mass nouns do not take pluratives. However, three mass nouns can suffix a singulative to express a notion of ‘piece of MN’ or ‘a small amount of MN’, whereby

MN stands for a mass noun as illustrated below. The singulative is attached to the nominal stem i.e., a form devoid of a terminal vowel.

Table 28. Singulative as a marker of small amount

Mass noun	Singulative of mass noun
<i>bull-ee</i> ‘flour’	<i>bull-ii-tfj-o</i> ‘a small amount of flour’
<i>buur-o</i> ‘butter’	<i>buur-tf-o</i> ‘a small amount of butter’
<i>maal-a</i> ‘meat’	<i>maal-tf-o</i> ‘a piece of meat’

Few singulatives and inherently singular nouns exhibit a ‘gender switch’ whereby feminine nouns in the singular or singulative can trigger masculine agreement in the plural as was claimed by Kramer & Anbessa (2020: 1).

(12a) *tin-i* *seemm-o*
 PROX.F-NOM unmarried girl
 ‘this unmarried girl’

(12b) *kun-i* *seenn-i*
 PROX.M-NOM unmarried girls-NOM
 ‘these unmarried girls’ (lit. ‘this’ (M))

(13a) *tin-i* *wof-i-tfjfo*
 PROX.F-NOM dog-EE-SG
 ‘this female dog (bitch)’

(13b) *kun-i* *woff-oot-i²⁴*
 PROX.M-NOM bitches-PLN4-NOM
 ‘these bitches/dogs’ (lit. ‘this’ (M))

In (12a) in the phrase *tin-i seemmo* ‘this unmarried girl’, the proximal demonstrative *tin-i* ‘this’ is marked for feminine because the head noun *seemmo* ‘unmarried girl’ is feminine in gender. However, in (12b), the gender marking of the proximal demonstrative is switched from feminine to masculine: from *tin-i* ‘this (F)’ to *kun-i* ‘this (M)’ despite *seenn-e* ‘unmarried girls’ which is the plurative equivalent of *seemm-o* ‘unmarried girl’ must be treated as feminine in gender. Note that in Sidaama, most pluratives are treated as feminine. In relation

²⁴ In this phrase, the head noun can also be *woff-i* ‘dogs’ (NOM), an inherently plural noun.

to this, Kramer & Anbessa (2020: 7) write, “[i]n the plural, almost all Sidaama nouns trigger feminine agreement regardless of what gender they have in the singular”.

3.2 Functions of plurative

Sidaama has a list of inherently plural nouns that designate a collective or a group.²⁵ In such nouns, the basic form marks an inherently plural noun, similar to an inherently singular noun.

In inherently plural nouns, a singulative form is necessary to denote a singular referent. Again, the list of inherently plural nouns of Sidaama is similar to that of Kambaata (Treis 2008: 138; 2014: 5).

Table 29. List of inherently plural nouns of Sidaama

<i>fiit’-a</i> ‘relatives’	<i>farad-o</i> ‘horses’
<i>geerr-a</i> ‘elders’	<i>galad-o</i> ‘monkeys’
<i>mann-a</i> ‘men, people’	<i>gereeb-o</i> ‘sheep’ (PL)
<i>meent-o</i> ‘women’	<i>got-o</i> ‘hyenas’
<i>seenn-e</i> ‘unmarried girls’	<i>hamas-o</i> ‘snakes’
<i>wedell-a</i> ‘youngsters’	<i>me?-e</i> ‘goats’
<i>Sidaam-u</i> ‘Sidaama people’	<i>wof-f-a</i> ‘dogs’
<i>wosin-a</i> ‘guests’	

Most inherently plural nouns listed above in Table 29 have a corresponding singulative. For instance, *geer-tfo* ‘elder’, *faraf-fo* ‘horse’, and *me?-i-tfjo* ‘goat’ are singulatives of *geerr-a* ‘elders’, *farad-da* ‘horses’, and *me?-?a* ‘goats’, respectively. The only exception without a corresponding singulative appears to be *seen-e* ‘unmarried girls’. Even in this case, *seenne* has a basic form *seem-o* ‘unmarried girl’, which is inherently singular and hence refers to a single referent. The inherently plural nouns *mann-a* ‘men, people’ and *meent-o* ‘women’ share the singulative *mantf-o* ‘man/woman.’

Inherently plural nouns refer to a collective of entities as a single group and are marked morphologically for singular. This includes modifiers that precede them that are marked for masculine.

- (14) *mee?-u* *t’ooq-í*
 goats-NOM.M flee-3M.SG.PERF
 ‘The goats fled.’ (lit. ‘He fled.’)

²⁵ According to Treis (2008: 138), the same holds in Kambaata.

- (15) *kun-i* *galad-i* *ʔooso*
 PROX.M-NOM.M monkeys-NOM children
forr-í
 chase-3M.SG.PERF

‘These monkeys chased the children.’ (lit. ‘this monkeys’)

In ex. (14), although *meʔ-e* ‘goats’ designates a group of at least two goats and even more, this noun and others in the list in Table 29 are treated as a collective in Sidaama. Therefore, this explains why the verb is in singular *tʔooq-í* ‘he fled’ instead of the expected plural *tʔooq-quí* ‘they fled’. Consequently, the inflectional features on the verb are the same for inherently plural nouns and singulatives because both are treated as a single entity in Sidaama. Likewise, the masculine proximal *kun-i* ‘this’ in (15) that precedes the head noun *galad-i* ‘monkeys’ is in singular instead of *kur-i* ‘these’ the expected plural proximal.

Consider (16) whereby the inherently plural *galad-o* ‘monkeys’ of (15) is replaced by the singulative *galaf-f-o* ‘monkey’.

- (16) *kun-i* *galaf-f-i* *ʔooso*
 PROX.M-NOM.M monkey-SG-NOM children
forr-í
 chase-3M.SG.PERF

‘This monkey, chased the children.’

Although inherently plural nouns are viewed as designating a collective entity, some have plurative forms. For instance, the inherently plural *galad-o* ‘monkeys’ has a plurative form *galad-d-a* ‘monkeys’ that refers to two or more referents. Accordingly, the verbal inflection will also reflect this fact, as shown in ex. 17).

- (17) *beero* *galad-da* *ʔooso* *forr-i-tú*
 yesterday monkey-PL children chase-EE-3PL.PERF
 ‘Yesterday, the monkeys chased the children.’

Two inherently plural nouns are exceptional because they do not have a corresponding singulative derived from them, unlike the list in Table 29. These nouns are *ʔoos-o* ‘children’ and *lal-o* ‘cattle’. This also holds true for Kambaata, as Treis (2008: 138) mentions. For a single referent, inherently singular nouns are used: in the case of

ʔoos-o ‘children’ *beett-o* ‘boy, son/girl, daughter’ and for *lalo* ‘cattle’, either *hand-o* ‘ox’ or *saa* ‘cow’ will be used.

3.3 Transnumeral nouns

In addition to inherently singular and plural nouns, there are transnumeral nouns in Sidaama. These nouns can refer to a single entity or plural entities in their basic form. In Sidaama, paired body parts are transnumeral. The list is presented in Table 30.

Table 30. List of inherently transnumeral nouns

<i>ʔagan-a</i> ‘moon’	<i>dikk-o</i> ‘market(s)’
<i>ʔang-a</i> ‘hand(s)’	<i>hak’k’-a</i> ‘tree(s)’
<i>ʔill-e</i> ‘eye(s)’	<i>lekk-a</i> ‘leg(s)’
<i>ʔunun-a</i> ‘breast(s)’	<i>matʔ’ʔ’-a</i> ‘ear(s)’
<i>dar-o</i> ‘leaf/leaves’	

Many transnumerals have plurative forms. For instance, *ʔang-a* ‘hand’ has the plurative *ʔang-ubba* ‘hands’. Although that is the case, the basic form *ʔang-a* ‘hand’ is used in daily speech as shown under (18).

- (18) *sood-o ʔanga-si haiʃʃ-i-d-í* [*haiʃʃ-i-ʔr-í*]
 morning hand-3M.SG.GEN wash-EE-MID-3M.SG.PERF
 ‘In the morning he washed his hands.’

Although *ʔang-a* ‘hand’ in (18) is a basic form and is assumed to refer to one hand, it is interpreted as ‘hands’ based on pragmatics. People typically wash both hands and not one. This implies that although a noun can refer to plural referents, a plurative form is not obligatory. This is particularly true for transnumerals since they can refer to one or more than one referent. In the case of *ʔanga* ‘hand(s)’, it has a plurative *ʔang-ubba* ‘hands’. However, replacing *ʔanga* in sentence (18) with *ʔang-ubba* will render it ungrammatical, as shown below in (19).

- (19) **sood-o ʔang-ubba-si haiʃʃ-i-d-í* [*haiʃʃ-i-ʔr-í*]
 morning hand-PLN4-3M.SG.GEN wash-EE-MID-3M.SG.PERF
 ‘In the morning he washed his hands.’

4 Conclusion

This paper examined the number markings on Sidaama nouns and adjectives in detail. There are three formal categories of number in

Sidaama: basic form, singulative, and plurative. The basic form is a noun unmarked for number; a singulative denotes a single referent, and a plurative marks more than one referent.

The singulative of nouns is marked mainly by *-tf-o* ~ *-tjtf-o*. There are also other formatives such as *-f-o*, *-tf-o*, and *-k-o* that function as markers of the singulative synchronically. Such formatives arose from the merging of the stem-final consonant of the basic stem with the initial *-tf* of the singulative. Singulative is hardly marked on adjectives save for very few ones such as *ɕaawaf-f-o* 'thin.' Five types of nominal pluratives were identified. These are: *-Ca*, *-o*, *-uba*, *-ubba*, and *-oota*. The first one, i.e., *-Ca*, is the most frequent, and it involves copying of a stem-final consonant and suffixation of *-a*. The six adjectival pluratives are: *-ma*, *-uulle*, *-da*, *-Caadda*, *-oota* and *-eeyye*. As can be seen from the plurative list, nouns and adjectives share two of the plural formatives: *-Ca* and *-oota*. During the discussion on number marking, it has become clear that the word class of most basic stems is indeterminate. This is because the same stem allows the derivation of different word classes; hence, it is difficult to determine the basic word class of the stem itself.

Sidaama contains inherently singular nouns that comprise the domain of humans and higher animals. Their basic form marks a single referent. The language also contains inherently plural nouns that refer to a collective of entities or a group. In such nouns, a singulative form is obligatory to denote a singular referent. Most of the inherently plural nouns have a corresponding singulative. Few nouns are transnumeral, and in their basic form, they can denote either a single referent or a plural referent.

Some elements necessitate future research because they cannot be explained at the present stage. For instance, there are many stems in Sidaama whose basic word class cannot be determined. Moreover, there is a question of whether *-aan-tf-o* can also derive agentive adjectives and not only agentive nouns. Hence, there is a plan to incorporate more written corpus and spoken data. I hope this may enable me to answer the questions raised here and to explore further number marking in Sidaama.

List of Abbreviations

3 third person, ACC accusative, ADJ adjectivizer, COP copula, COP.F feminine copula, COP.M masculine copula, EE epenthetic element, F feminine, GEN genitive, IMPERF imperfect, INF infinitive, M masculine, MID middle voice, NEG negative, NOM nominative, PERF perfect, PL Plural; Plurative, PLA plurative of adjective, PLN plurative of noun, PROX proximal, SG singular, SGV singulative.

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