Field Notes on Kono, a Southwestern Mande Lect of Forest Guinea¹

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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 hɔgkwèlɛ̃ 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

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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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oral</th>
<th>Nasal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Front</td>
<td>Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back rounded</td>
<td>Back rounded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>η</td>
<td>j</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ε</td>
<td>ε</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Table 2. Consonants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voiceless stops</th>
<th>Labial</th>
<th>Coronal</th>
<th>Palatal</th>
<th>Velar</th>
<th>Labiovelar</th>
<th>Labialized</th>
<th>Glottal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voiceless affricates</td>
<td>dz / z</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral sonorants</td>
<td>r, l</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>w</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasal sonorants</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>ŋm</td>
<td>ŋw</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kono</th>
<th>Liberian Kpelle</th>
<th>Guinean Kpelle</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>péré</td>
<td>péré</td>
<td>pélé</td>
<td>‘house’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kéréj</td>
<td>kéréj</td>
<td>kéléj</td>
<td>‘burn’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kélè</td>
<td>kélè</td>
<td>kélè</td>
<td>‘beat’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kplá</td>
<td>kpálá</td>
<td>kpálá</td>
<td>‘be dry’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yîré</td>
<td>yîlã</td>
<td>yîlè</td>
<td>‘dog’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>léré</td>
<td>lélè</td>
<td>lélè</td>
<td>‘good’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2. **Vowel elision in stems with intervocalic /l/**

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kono</th>
<th>Liberian Kpelle</th>
<th>Guinean Kpelle</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kloï</td>
<td>kloï</td>
<td>kloï</td>
<td>‘know’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kplë</td>
<td>kplë</td>
<td>kplë</td>
<td>‘drink’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bîlà</td>
<td>bîlã</td>
<td>bîlè</td>
<td>‘sheep’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.3. **Vowel shortening**

CV1V1 stems with identical vowels, as well as stem initial CV1V1- structures in non-monosyllabic stems are shortened in Kono; cf. Table 5.
Table 5. CV₁V₁ shortening.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kono</th>
<th>Liberian Kpelle</th>
<th>Guinean Kpelle</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ká</td>
<td>káá</td>
<td>káá</td>
<td>‘see’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hè</td>
<td>sèè</td>
<td>hèè</td>
<td>‘sit’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hwèrè</td>
<td>fèèrè</td>
<td>hwèèlè</td>
<td>‘two’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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→ŋ/dz

b→m l→n y→ŋ 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 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 ḥóŋɔ́‘nose’: é-hóŋɔ́‘your nose’, ṣóŋɔ́‘my nose’, dzóŋɔ́‘his nose’; for lexical /k/ in kóyɔ́‘leg’: ó-kóyɔ́‘your leg’, ŋɔ́yɔ́‘my leg’, gɔ́yɔ́‘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, ŋ, 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’, zuŋɔ́‘his nose’; é-kóyɔ́‘your leg’, gɔ́yɔ́‘my leg’, gɔ́yɔ́‘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 C₁- for lexical consonant, ÑC₂- for 1sg, C₂- with low tone for alternated consonant, e.g., í-húŋɔ́‘your nose’, ízúŋɔ́‘my nose’, zúŋa‘his nose’; í-kóyɔ́‘your leg’, ígɔ́yɔ́‘my leg’, gɔ́yɔ́‘his leg’.

⁴ Other nasals – /ŋm/, /nv/ and word initial/ŋ/ – are never lexical; they only occur as a result of the alternation.
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with high or low tone depending on the pronoun, e.g., ëlëc ‘your mother’ with initial lexical /l/, but

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., píní kôɔ [ní nɔɔ] ‘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., CVCCVC, have no restrictions on tone combinations).

(2) /H/ kòɣɔ ‘leg’
/L(H)/ hûyô ‘meat’
/HL/ yûre ‘dog’
/LHL/ yòwâ ‘axe’
/L/ nàle ‘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 yûre ‘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: pà ‘to kill’,
hûyô ‘meat’, mɔ́ŋ ‘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: pà 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., *Héní àà pá bɔ̀ [Héní àà pà bɔ̀] ‘Hení 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).

\[(4) \quad -HL + /H/ \rightarrow [-H] + ![H]: /yîrề kà/ \rightarrow [yîrê ˈkà] ‘to see a dog’\]

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 *klɔ́ŋ* ‘know’ in (5-6):

\[(5) \quad [ηá Héní klɔ́ŋ]\] ‘I know Heni’.
\[(6) \quad [ηá !glɔ́ŋ]\] ‘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 underlingly */gɔ́lɔ́ŋ/*, 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.

\[(7) \quad /nɔ̀ blàá/ \rightarrow [ŋɔ̀ blàá] ‘his sheep’\]
\[(8) \quad /ŋ́ blàá/ \rightarrow [ŋ́ ˈblàá] ‘my sheep’\]

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 *kéréŋ* ‘burn’; prefixal low tone is spread on its entire stem yielding /L(H)/ melody: [náá gérèŋ] ‘I have burnt it’, rather than the expected */gérèŋ/. 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).

\[(9) \quad -HL + /L/ \rightarrow [H] + [L]: /yîrê kà/ \rightarrow [yîrê kà] \text{‘saw a dog’}\]

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).

\[(10) \quad [àà pà] \text{‘he has come’}\]
\[(11) \quad [áá hè]\text{‘he sat down’}\]

The tone of adverb *niì* ‘yet’, used in negative resultative construction (6.8) and of the future marker *kèè* (6.12) is the opposite of the preceding tone:

\[(12) \quad [hò nìì pà-nì] \quad 2\text{SG.B.NEG yet come-STAT} \quad \text{‘You have not come yet’} \]
\[(13) \quad [hò nìì pà-nì] \quad 3\text{SG.B.NEG yet come-STAT} \quad \text{‘(S)he has not come yet’} \]

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.

\[(14) \quad /H/ + /L/ \rightarrow [H] + [HL]: /ɓlààá kà/ \rightarrow [ɓlááá kà] \text{‘saw a sheep’}\]

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

\[(15) \quad /L(H)/ + /L/ \rightarrow [L] + [L]: /wélò tò/ \rightarrow [wélò tò] \text{‘sang a song’}\]

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

\(^6\) 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”:

(16) /H/ + /L(H)/ → [H] + [M]: /ɓláá hèyè/ → [ɓláá hèyè] ‘to take a sheep’
(17) /L(H)/ + /L(H)/ → [L] + [M]: /wòlò tô/ → [wòlò tô] ‘to sing a song’

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

1SG person prefix is marked by consonant alternation and prefixal⁹ 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: kɔ́ɣɔ́ ‘leg’ – [ŋ́ɔ́ɣɔ́] ‘his/her leg’. All /L/ stems and nouns with lexical /L(H)/ switch to /HL/: pàmà ‘blood’ – [jámà] ‘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 wàá ‘wash’ [áá ſwáá] ‘he washed me’, similar to [áá ſwáá] ‘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., pàmà ‘blood’ – [jámà] ‘his/her blood’ and it changes lexical /H/ to /L(H)/: kɔ́ɣɔ́ ‘leg’ – [ŋ̀ɔ́ɣɔ́] ‘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 tô ‘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 tɔ́ŋándɔ́ldí dialect of Guinean Kpelle described in (Konoshenko 2008). In hɔ̰́ɔ̰́kwɛ̀lɛ̃ 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 *ŋ- and 3SG *ŋ- 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1SG</th>
<th>2SG</th>
<th>3SG</th>
<th>1PL.EXCL</th>
<th>1PL.INCL</th>
<th>2PL</th>
<th>3PL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ñá</td>
<td>õé</td>
<td>ðá</td>
<td>nɔwá</td>
<td>ɡɔwá</td>
<td>káá</td>
<td>dɔwá</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 héné ‘all’ (5.5), or when there are conjoint noun phrases (5.6).

Table 7. Person indexes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1SG</th>
<th>2SG</th>
<th>3SG</th>
<th>1PL.EXCL</th>
<th>1PL.INCL</th>
<th>2PL</th>
<th>3PL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(ţi-)</td>
<td>é-</td>
<td>(ţi-)</td>
<td>nũ-</td>
<td>gũ-</td>
<td>ká-</td>
<td>dũ-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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)  Gòpu  aa  pá.
Gpu  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)  Héní  ho  é-kłój.
 Henri     NEG  2SG-know
‘Hení doesn’t know you’.

(21)  Lóhóró-kí  hò  Héní  kłój.
child-DEF  3SG.NEG  Henri  know
‘The child doesn’t know Henri’.

(22)  Hó  é-kłój.
 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, tè in Liberian Kpelle).

(23)  Pépèè  [hò]  Héní  kłój.
Pepee      NEG  Henri  know
‘Pepee doesn’t know Henri’.

(24)  Yàrāmò  [hò]  Héní  kłój.
Yaramò     NEG  Henri  know
‘Yaramò doesn’t know Henri’.

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 héné ‘all’ (5.5) and conjoint noun phrases (5.6).

(25)  Máráŋàà  dùhó  é-kłój.
1SG\friend.PL  3PL.NEG  2SG-know
Field Notes on Kono, a Southwestern Mande Lect of Forest Guinea

‘My friends do not know you’.

(26) Ɖúhó ɓ-klɔŋ.

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) Héné ká nɔŋ yírî-nì.

Héni be sauce cook-STAT
‘Héni is cooking a sauce’.

(28) Gá nɔŋ yírî-nì.

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>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 8. Predicative person markers.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Series</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affirmative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Basic positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Resultative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Existential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Imperative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. Basic negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. Prohibitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII. Conditional</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1SG</th>
<th>2SG</th>
<th>3SG</th>
<th>1PL.EXCL</th>
<th>1PL.INCL</th>
<th>2PL</th>
<th>3PL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ŋ́`</td>
<td>wɔ́`</td>
<td>ŋ̀, ŋ́</td>
<td>nùá`</td>
<td>gùá`</td>
<td>káá`</td>
<td>dúá`</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 *héni* ‘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  wóò  ká  Héni  ma.**
     Pepee love be  Heni  on
     ‘Heni loves Pepee’.

(30)  **Pépèè  wóò  ká  mà.**
     Pepee love be  3SG.on
     ‘(S)he loves Pepee’.

(31)  **Pépèè  wóò  ká  lééplè-ŋàà  mà / důmá.**
     Pepee love be  child.PL-PL on / 3PL.on
     ‘Children love Pepee’.

(32)  **Pépèè  wóò  ká  důmá.**
     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) *Baa lè̀ bòhòrò-kí [mà].*  
2SG.RES forget child-DEF 3SG.on  
“You forgot the child”.

(34) *Baa lè̀ Pèpè̀ [mà].*  
2SG.RES forget Pepee on  
“You forgot Pepee”.

(35) *Baa lè̀ Hènì [mà].*  
2SG.RES forget Hèni on  
“You forgot Hèni”.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1SG</th>
<th>2SG</th>
<th>3SG</th>
<th>1PL.EXCL</th>
<th>1PL.INCL</th>
<th>2PL</th>
<th>3PL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mà́</td>
<td>bié</td>
<td>mà̀</td>
<td>nùmá</td>
<td>gùmá</td>
<td>kámá</td>
<td>dùmá</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.6. Conjunctive person markers

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

Table 11. Conjunctive person markers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1SG+3</th>
<th>1PL+3</th>
<th>1+2</th>
<th>2+3</th>
<th>3+3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nà</td>
<td>nwà</td>
<td>gwà</td>
<td>kà</td>
<td>dà</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Noun phrase

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


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’, lèè ‘mother’ and kɔ́ɣɔ́ ‘leg’.

Table 12. Possessive constructions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anaphoric possessor</th>
<th>Lexical possessor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ɗã ɓláá ‘his/her sheep’</td>
<td>Héní ɗã ɓláá ‘Heni’s sheep’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dùá ɓláá ‘their sheep’</td>
<td>lééplèá dùá ɓláá ‘children’s sheep’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Inalienable (with kinship terms)

| Hèè ‘his/her mother’ | Héní Hèè ‘Heni’s mother’ |
| dűlèè ‘their mother’ | lééplèá dűlèè ‘children’s mother’ |

Inalienable (with body part names)

| gɔ́yɔ́ ‘his/her leg’ | Héní kɔ́yɔ́ ‘Heni’s leg’ |
| dűkɔ́yɔ́ ‘their legs’ | lééplèá kɔ́yɔ́ ‘children’s legs’ |

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

(37) m̀ààŋ kɔ̀ò
  rice boneL
  ‘rice grain’

5.2. Plural marking

There are two plural markers in Kono: -nì for kinship terms and usually -ŋaa¹¹ for other nouns (however, cf. (41) with -nì marking ŋɔ̀ɔ̌ ‘bird’).

(38) è-léyè-nì ‘your elder siblings’; yířè-ŋàà ‘dogs’; wòlò-ŋàà ‘songs’

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

Table 13. Irregular plural forms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular form</th>
<th>Plural form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nú / ní</td>
<td>núàà</td>
<td>‘person’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hìnèñù</td>
<td>hínàà</td>
<td>‘man’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nèèñù</td>
<td>nèàà</td>
<td>‘woman’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

5.3. Demonstratives

5.4. Demonstratives

5.4. Definiteness marker

Definiteness is marked by the definite article -kür or sometimes -gyür after vowels and -ńür after word final -ńür.

(39) ya ‘river’ – ỳa-kür ‘the river’; màràq ‘a friend of mine’ – màràq-ńür ‘my friend’ (selected among friends of other people).

NPs with a -kür 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) Bo màš-kür gbè!
    2SG.IMP bird-DEF 3SG\hunt
    ‘Hunt the bird!’

(41) Bo màš-ni-kür dù-kpè!
    2SG.IMP bird-PL-DEF 3PL-hunt
    ‘Hunt the birds!’

(42) Bo màš kpè / * gbè!
    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-Gwëtaa (Vydrine & Kességbeu 2008:70-71).
5.5. Quantifying expressions


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) Ɂ ú ɗí-héné ɗí-kà  Lòràà.
     1SG.B 3PL-all 3PL-see\L Lola
     ‘I saw them all in Lola’.

(44) Ɂ ú námíráà héné kà  Lòràà.
     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 nũ pà.
     1SG+3 Heni 1EXCL.B come\L
     ‘I and Heni came’.

(46) Nà yà bò 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 nũ pà.
     1PL+3 Heni 1EXCL.B come\L
     ‘We and Heni came’, but *‘I and Heni came’.

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

(48) Dà Héní dɔ̀ pà.
     3+3 Heni 3PL.B come\L
‘He and Hɛni came’ (2) or ‘They and Hɛni came’ (>2)

Two full noun phrases are conjoined by ḏà (47).

(49) Yàrəmɔ̀  ḏà  Hɛnɨ̀  dũ̀  pà.
  Yaramɔ̀  3+3  Hɛnɨ̀  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 héng ‘all’ (5.5), conjoint noun phrases are always doubled by person markers, regardless of their syntactic position, e.g., direct objects:

(50) Ḏà  [dà  Hɛnɨ̀]  dũ̀-kà.
  1SG.B  3+3  Hɛnɨ̀  3PL-see\L
  ‘I saw him/them and Hɛnɨ’.

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

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) Máráŋà du é-klójì.  
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 Yáràmò klójì.  
1SG.B.NEG Yaramò know  
‘I don’t know Yaramò’.

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

(53) Máráŋà du é-klójì.  
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 Yáràmò klójì.  
1SG.B.NEG Yaramò know\L  
‘I didn’t know Yaramò’.

6.5. **Affirmative habitual**:  
1) Basic affirmative person markers + verb with -à suffix.

(55) Lóhórò-kí è tó-à yèrè héné.  
child-DEF 3SG.B fall-HAB day all  
‘The child falls all the time’.

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

(56) Hèni è kèà pà-nî bò.  
Heni 3SG HAB come-STAT here  
‘Hèni often comes here’.

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

(57) Hèni ho tó-à.  
Heni NEG fall-HAB  
‘Hèni doesn’t fall’.
2) Basic negative person markers + kɛ̀ + verb with -nì suffix (default negative marker ho after lexical subject).

(58)  Hɛnì ho kɛ̀ bá mɛ̀-nì yɛ̀rɛ̀ hɛnɛ̀.
     Heni  NE  HAB  rice  eat-STAT  day  all
     ‘Heni 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 yɛ̀rɛ̀ hɛnɛ̀ ‘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)  Lɛ́ɛplɛ̀ dʊhò tɔ̀-à.
     child.pl  3PL.B.NEG  fall-STAT
     ‘Children don’t fall’.

(60)  Lɛ́ɛplɛ̀ dʊhò kɛ̀ tɔ̀-nì.
     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.


(61)  É-leyɛ̀-nì daa pà, dʊká kɔlì.
     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 -nì suffix (default negative marker ho after lexical subject).

(62)  Mó nii pà-nì.
     1SG.B.NEG  yet  come-STAT
     ‘I have not come yet’.


(63)  Ňnà wɔlɔ tɔ̀-nì.
     1SG.EXI  song  throw-STAT
     ‘I am singing a song’.
6.10. **Negative progressive**: basic negative person markers + *nà* + verb with -*nì* suffix (default negative marker *ho* after lexical subject).

\[(64) \text{Mó nà wòlò tò-nì.}\]

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.

\[(65) \text{Héní wèé pá klò ké tíńáá.}\]

Hení 3SG.FUT come work do tomorrow

‘Hení 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).

\[(66) \text{Mó kɛɛ pá wááyɔɔ tèýɛ é-pó.}\]

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.

\[(67) \text{Kà pá!}\]

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/.

\[(68) \text{Hàà pà.}\]

3SG.PROH come\\L

‘Let him not come’.

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

\[(69) \text{Héní ká hiẹ-ni, Yàràmọ ke wòlò tò.}\]

Hení be walk-STAT Yaramọ NEUT song throw\\L

‘Hení is walking, and Yaramọ 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 \( \text{k\`e} \) 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/.

\[(70) \text{Ni\`e-n\'i} \text{ d\`a\`a p\`a, \`n\`\'\'\'\'bl\`\'a t\`\'y\`e d\`\'u-p\`i.} \]

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 + \( \text{\`b\`o}. \)

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 \( \text{\`b\`o}. \). 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.

\[(71) \text{H\`e\`n\`i l\`\'\'\'\'\'r\`e-\'e} \text{ \`b\`o.}\]

Heni be.beautiful-STAT PRED

‘Heni is beautiful’.

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

\[(72) \text{n\`e\`n\`u l\`\'\'\'\'\'r\`e-e}\]

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).

\[(73) \text{H\`e\`n\`i ho l\`\'\'\'\'\'r\`e-n\`i.}\]

Heni 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”.

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Maria Konoshenko

‘Heni 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) *Héní ho nà à ŋéré-é.*

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

‘Heni is not beautiful’.

(75) *Ngé-ní dùhó nà à dù-léré-é.*

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>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic TAM constructions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affirmative stative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic affirmative person markers + verb with lexical tone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative stative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic negative person markers + verb with lexical tone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affirmative past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic affirmative person markers + verb with /L/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic negative person markers + verb with /L/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affirmative habitual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Basic affirmative person markers + verb with -à suffix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Basic affirmative person markers + <em>kèà</em> + verb with -nì suffix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative habitual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Basic negative person markers + verb with -à suffix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Basic negative person markers + <em>kèà</em> + verb with -nì suffix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affirmative resultative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resultative person markers + verb with lexical tone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative resultative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic negative person markers + verb with -nì suffix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affirmative progressive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existential person markers + verb with -nì suffix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative progressive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic negative person markers + <em>nà</em> + verb with -nì suffix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affirmative future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future person markers + <em>pà</em> + verb with lexical tone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic negative person markers + <em>kèè</em> + <em>pà</em> + verb with lexical tone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperative person markers + verb with lexical tone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prohibitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prohibitive person markers + verb with /L/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral person markers + verb with /L/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional person markers + verb with /L/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affirmative stative-resultative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person index + verb with vocalic suffix + <em>bô</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative stative-resultative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic negative person markers + <em>nà</em> copula + <em>à</em> + person index + verb with vocalic suffix</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 predications, \( \text{nà} \) and \( \text{kà} \); 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 \( \text{káá} \) existential predicator, cognate to \( \text{ká} \) in Kono (77). In both constructions, the verb appears in the infinitive form with -\( i \) suffix.

**LIBERIAN KPELLE**

(76) \( \text{Ŋà} \)pá-\( i \).

1SG.NONPST come-INF

‘I am coming’.

(77) \( \text{Ŋgáá} \)pá-\( i \).

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).

**GUIANEAN KPELLE**

(78) \( \text{Gáá} \)pá-\( i \).

1SG\( \be \) come-INF

‘I am coming’.

(79) \( \text{Gáá} \)dèyé-\( i \).

1SG\( \be \) 3SG\( \cut \)INF

‘I am cutting it’.

Future person markers, presumably fused with the verb \( \text{ké} \) ‘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 \( \text{pá} \) ‘come’.

**LIBERIAN KPELLE**

(80) \( \text{Ŋà} \)pá-\( i \) pá-\( i \).

1SG.NONPST come-INF come-INF

‘I will come’.
(81) ḏgáá pá-ı dā kóří-ı.
1SG\be come-INF 3SG\some look_for-INF
‘I will look for some’ (Leidenfrost & McKey 2005:69).

GUINEAN KPELLE
(82) Gáá pá-ı Pépèè tólú-ı.
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) Bàà güűj / güű? – ‘Good morning!’ Lit. ‘You (sg.) have woken up?’, addressing a single person.
(84) É yö kpéè? – ‘Good morning!’ Lit. ‘You (sg.) have slept well?’, addressing a single person.
(85) Kàà güűj / güű? – ‘Good morning!’ Lit. ‘You (pl.) have woken up?’, addressing more than one person.
(86) Ká yö kpéè? – ‘Good morning!’ Lit. ‘You (pl.) have slept well?’, addressing more than one person.
(87) É túgå! – ‘Good afternoon!’, addressing a single person.
(88) Ká túgå – ‘Good afternoon!’, addressing more than one person.
(89) É túyó kpéè? – ‘Good afternoon!’ Lit. ‘You (sg.) have spent the day well?’, addressing a single person.
(90) Ká túyó kpéè? – ‘Good afternoon!’ Lit. ‘You (pl.) have spent the day well?’, addressing more than one person.
(91) É mámá é hëyê! – ‘Thank you!’, addressing a single person.
(92) Ká mámá ká hëyê! – ‘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. 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>French</th>
<th>Guinean Kpelle</th>
<th>Kono</th>
<th>Liberian Kpelle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 all</td>
<td>tout</td>
<td>kéléé</td>
<td>héné</td>
<td>kéléé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 ashes</td>
<td>cendre</td>
<td>lỳỳù / lì̝̃í</td>
<td>lùbù</td>
<td>lùù</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 bark</td>
<td>écorce</td>
<td>kòlò</td>
<td>kòlò</td>
<td>kòlò</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 belly</td>
<td>ventre</td>
<td>kòò</td>
<td>kòôlôô</td>
<td>kòô</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 big</td>
<td>grand</td>
<td>kéné</td>
<td>kéné</td>
<td>kété</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 bird</td>
<td>oiseau</td>
<td>njwèn</td>
<td>njôô</td>
<td>njôôni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 bite</td>
<td>mordre</td>
<td>njûj</td>
<td>njûj</td>
<td>njûj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 black</td>
<td>noir</td>
<td>tèè ~ tèyî</td>
<td>tèè</td>
<td>tèî</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 blood</td>
<td>sang</td>
<td>námà</td>
<td>námà</td>
<td>náa, námà</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 bone</td>
<td>os</td>
<td>kóû</td>
<td>k só</td>
<td>káó ~ káû</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 breast</td>
<td>sein, mamelle</td>
<td>níní</td>
<td>níní</td>
<td>níní</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 burn</td>
<td>bruler</td>
<td>kélééj</td>
<td>kérééj</td>
<td>kérééj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 nail</td>
<td>ongle</td>
<td>yéé-káliŋ̃j</td>
<td>yéé-kâà</td>
<td>yéé-yáléŋ̃j</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 cloud</td>
<td>nuage</td>
<td>tòùlò-kpînîŋ̃j</td>
<td>tòùnò-kpînîŋ̃j</td>
<td>yêle-kòlôŋ̃j</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 cold (be cold)</td>
<td>froid (être froid)</td>
<td>láyî</td>
<td>lôôŋ̃j</td>
<td>láyî</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 come</td>
<td>venir</td>
<td>pà</td>
<td>pà</td>
<td>pà</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 die</td>
<td>mourir</td>
<td>hàá</td>
<td>hàá</td>
<td>sãá</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 dog</td>
<td>chien</td>
<td>yîlé</td>
<td>yîrè</td>
<td>yîlà</td>
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<td>19 drink</td>
<td>boire</td>
<td>kpêlé</td>
<td>kpêlé</td>
<td>kpêlé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 dry (be dry)</td>
<td>sec (être sec)</td>
<td>kpâlå</td>
<td>kpâlå</td>
<td>kpâlå</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 ear</td>
<td>oreille</td>
<td>wêlí</td>
<td>wôô-láyang</td>
<td>wôôlî</td>
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<td>22 earth</td>
<td>terre</td>
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<td>pôrò</td>
<td>pôrò</td>
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<td>23 eat</td>
<td>manger</td>
<td>mîi ~ mêé</td>
<td>më</td>
<td>mëi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 egg</td>
<td>oeuf</td>
<td>jànîŋ̃j</td>
<td>yââŋ̃j</td>
<td>yâlôôq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 eye</td>
<td>yeux</td>
<td>nèi-kòù</td>
<td>nèi-kòù</td>
<td>nèi / nèi-gàô</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>Guinean Kpelle</td>
<td>Kono</td>
<td>Liberian Kpelle</td>
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<td>---------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 feather</td>
<td>poil</td>
<td>léýá ~ léýé</td>
<td>liýé</td>
<td>léýá</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 fire</td>
<td>feu</td>
<td>ṣwòŋ</td>
<td>ṣwòŋ</td>
<td>ṣòŋ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 fish</td>
<td>poisson</td>
<td>hɔŋlèɛ</td>
<td>nèɛ</td>
<td>nèɛ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 fly</td>
<td>voler</td>
<td>kèbèŋ ~ kòοŋ</td>
<td>kèbèŋ</td>
<td>kòοŋ</td>
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<tr>
<td>31 foot</td>
<td>pied</td>
<td>kɔvò</td>
<td>kɔvò</td>
<td>kòů</td>
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<td>32 full</td>
<td>plein</td>
<td>hwée</td>
<td>hwée</td>
<td>řé</td>
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<td>33 give</td>
<td>donner</td>
<td>tèyè</td>
<td>téyè</td>
<td>téé</td>
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<td>34 good</td>
<td>bon</td>
<td>lélé</td>
<td>léré</td>
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<td>35 green</td>
<td>vert</td>
<td>hvillibóá</td>
<td>wááléémoá</td>
<td>kpoié</td>
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<td>36 hair</td>
<td>cheveux</td>
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<td>ṣwùŋ-niýé</td>
<td>ṣuŋ-léýà</td>
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<td>yé</td>
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<td>tête</td>
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<td>ṣwùŋááŋ</td>
<td>ŋuŋ</td>
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<td>39 hear</td>
<td>entendre</td>
<td>mèŋ ~ màŋ ~ mòŋ</td>
<td>mòŋ</td>
<td>mèíi</td>
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<td>40 heart</td>
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<td>líí</td>
<td>líí</td>
<td>líí</td>
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<tr>
<td>41 horn</td>
<td>corn</td>
<td>míñé</td>
<td>míñé</td>
<td>míːlā</td>
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<tr>
<td>42 I</td>
<td>moi</td>
<td>ŋé</td>
<td>ŋé</td>
<td>ŋá</td>
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<tr>
<td>43 kill</td>
<td>tuer</td>
<td>pàá</td>
<td>pà</td>
<td>pàa</td>
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<td>44 knee</td>
<td>genou</td>
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<td>ṣwùŋ-múlâ</td>
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<td>connaitre</td>
<td>kɔlɔŋ</td>
<td>kɔlɔŋ</td>
<td>kɔlɔŋ</td>
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<td>46 leaf</td>
<td>feuille</td>
<td>lāá</td>
<td>lā</td>
<td>lāá</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47 lie</td>
<td>être couché</td>
<td>lāá</td>
<td>lā</td>
<td>lāá</td>
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<td>48 liver</td>
<td>foie</td>
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<td>līf</td>
<td>līf</td>
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<tr>
<td>49 long</td>
<td>long</td>
<td>kwéā ~ kwéā ~ kwíā</td>
<td>kwīē</td>
<td>kóyà</td>
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<tr>
<td>50 louse</td>
<td>pou</td>
<td>yɔû</td>
<td>yɔô</td>
<td>yàũ</td>
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<tr>
<td>51 man</td>
<td>homme</td>
<td>hilènû</td>
<td>hinènû</td>
<td>sùrɔŋ</td>
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<tr>
<td>52 many</td>
<td>beaucoup</td>
<td>támáá</td>
<td>támáá</td>
<td>támáá</td>
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<tr>
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<td>viande</td>
<td>hùyô</td>
<td>hùyô</td>
<td>sùũ</td>
</tr>
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<td>54 moon</td>
<td>lune</td>
<td>jàniŋ</td>
<td>yààŋ</td>
<td>yàloŋ</td>
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<td>55 mountain</td>
<td>montagne</td>
<td>yèé</td>
<td>yé</td>
<td>yée</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

15 Here and below, a basic person series is given for pronominal meanings ‘I’, ‘we’ and ‘you (pl.).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>French</th>
<th>Guinean Kpelle</th>
<th>Kono</th>
<th>Liberian Kpelle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>56 mouth</td>
<td>bouche</td>
<td>lááléэ</td>
<td>lááléэ</td>
<td>lááγ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57 name</td>
<td>nom</td>
<td>láá</td>
<td>lá</td>
<td>láá</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58 neck</td>
<td>cou</td>
<td>kɔŋŋ</td>
<td>kɔŋŋ</td>
<td>kɔŋŋ</td>
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<td>59 new</td>
<td>nouveau</td>
<td>nínẽ</td>
<td>nínẽ</td>
<td>nínã</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 night</td>
<td>nuit</td>
<td>kwíí</td>
<td>kwíí-hjà</td>
<td>kpíní</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61 nose</td>
<td>nez</td>
<td>húŋŋó</td>
<td>hóŋŋó</td>
<td>sūã</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62 not</td>
<td>ne pas</td>
<td>hwé (hó)</td>
<td>hó</td>
<td>ŋé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63 one</td>
<td>un</td>
<td>tɔnɔ</td>
<td>tɔnɔ</td>
<td>tɔnɔ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64 man, person</td>
<td>personne</td>
<td>nú</td>
<td>nú ~ ní</td>
<td>núú</td>
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<td>65 rain</td>
<td>pluie</td>
<td>tǔló</td>
<td>tǔnó</td>
<td>tínã / túnã</td>
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<td>rouge</td>
<td>kpɔlũ</td>
<td>kpɔdũ</td>
<td>kpɔlũ</td>
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<td>route</td>
<td>pèlè</td>
<td>pèrè</td>
<td>pèrè</td>
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<td>68 root</td>
<td>racine</td>
<td>hàmũ</td>
<td>hàmũ ~ hɔŋ̌</td>
<td>sàmẽ</td>
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<td>rond</td>
<td>k álãŋ</td>
<td>kárãŋ</td>
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<td>sable</td>
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<td>nèé</td>
<td>nəyã ~ nəyã</td>
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<td>71 say</td>
<td>dire</td>
<td>hwáá</td>
<td>hwá</td>
<td>fáá</td>
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<td>72 see</td>
<td>voir</td>
<td>káá</td>
<td>ká</td>
<td>káá</td>
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<td>graine</td>
<td>kóũ</td>
<td>kóõ</td>
<td>kóõ</td>
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<td>s’asseoir</td>
<td>hëë</td>
<td>hë</td>
<td>sëë</td>
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<tr>
<td>75 skin</td>
<td>peau</td>
<td>kɔlɔ</td>
<td>kɔlɔ</td>
<td>kɔlɔ</td>
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<td>dormir</td>
<td>yií</td>
<td>yí</td>
<td>ŋíí</td>
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<td>77 small</td>
<td>petit</td>
<td>kɔlɔ</td>
<td>kóró</td>
<td>kúró</td>
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<td>fumée</td>
<td>lũũ</td>
<td>lũũ</td>
<td>lũũ/lũũ</td>
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<td>79 stand</td>
<td>rester debout</td>
<td>tɔŋ</td>
<td>tɔ</td>
<td>tɔŋ</td>
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<td>80 star</td>
<td>étoile</td>
<td>péleŋ-gɔ̀</td>
<td>pléŋ-ŋɔ̀</td>
<td>péméléŋ-kàò</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81 stone</td>
<td>pierre</td>
<td>kwěnĩ</td>
<td>kɔŋ</td>
<td>kɔŋí</td>
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<tr>
<td>82 sun</td>
<td>soleil</td>
<td>hwóló</td>
<td>hłó ~ fló</td>
<td>fɔló</td>
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<tr>
<td>83 swim</td>
<td>nager</td>
<td>yá këlẽ</td>
<td>yá klẽ</td>
<td>yá ná-këlẽ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84 tail</td>
<td>queue</td>
<td>wóní</td>
<td>wóní</td>
<td>wóní</td>
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<tr>
<td>85 that</td>
<td>ce-là</td>
<td>tíí</td>
<td>měŋ</td>
<td>tí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86 this</td>
<td>ce ci</td>
<td>ŋéí</td>
<td>yà</td>
<td>ŋí</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Kono</th>
<th>Liberian Kpelle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guinean Kpelle</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kono</td>
<td>89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

References


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

Keywords: Southwestern Mande, Southern Mande, consonant alternation, consonant harmony, tonal rules, possessive constructions, TAM constructions, Swadesh list, greetings, language contact

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.

Mots-clés: langues mandé-sud-ouest, langues mandé-sud, alternance de consonnes, harmonie consonantique, règles tonales, constructions possessives, constructions TAM, liste Swadesh, salutations, contact linguistique

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 (gkr) и либерийским кпелле (xpe). Статья представляет собой краткое описание идиомы 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.

Ключевые слова: юго-западные манде, южные манде, чередования, гармония согласных, тональные правила, посессивные конструкции, видо-временные конструкции, списки Сводеша, приветствия, языковые контакты