

# Case marking in Dime

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## Abstract

Dime has a rich case marking system and it has at least six morphologically coded case forms. The morphological case marking suffixes are; accusative (-im), dative (-in), genitive (-ko), locative (-se and -o), instrumental (-ká), ablative (-de). Nominative case is unmarked. In Dime case is marked not only in nouns but also on certain modifiers of the noun such as adjectives and determiners.

The difficulties that exist in the analysis of case in Dime are that some mono-transitive verbs occur with “dative” case and that the accusative form occurs where the dative case is expected in the pronominal paradigm. Thus, dative and accusative cases are not clearly distinguished in Dime pronouns while they are easily distinguished in nouns.

Largely, in Ethiopian languages, case affixes are differential according to the definite-indefinite distinction but this does not seem to be the case in Dime. Interestingly, there are areas where the occurrence of -im is strange. These are the morpheme -im is used for deriving abstract nouns from adjectives and cognate object nouns from their corresponding objects.

## 1 Introduction

The southern part of Ethiopia is a home land of a remarkable variety of communities. Their cultural and linguistic diversity results from a complex historical background and geographical, social differences. The Dime people are one of the communities who live in this culturally rich area. Dime is an endangered Omotic language which is spoken by a population of 5,400 (1994 census).

The Dime people live in six villages: Gero, Us’a, Gerfa, Genčire, Gec’a and Irk’a. All these villages are located on the mountains of Gerfa, Woyede, Vingi, Bampre,

Gulo, Irk'a and Galc'ic'. Some of the names of the villages derived from the name of the mountains. Among these six villages those of Us'a and Gero people are using an ox for their farming recently but the rest are using only hoes for their traditional farming activities.

The other speech communities around the Dime area are the Chara to the north (across the river Omo), the Basketto to the north-east and east, the Aari to the southeast, the Mursi and some Surma to the south-west, and the Bodi (Me'en) to the west.

The Dime language is not well documented. The main source of information concerning Dime is the work of Fleming (1990). The Dime communities are permanent settlers and horticulturalists. There are two mutually intelligible dialects in Dime, *Us'a* and *Gerfa*. Data in this paper are mainly from the *Us'a* dialect.

## 2 Case marking in Dime

Case can be categorized into two different levels. The first one is “core case” which includes accusative and dative case. The second level, peripheral case, includes instrumental, genitive, locative, and ablative cases. Core cases express syntactic relation, while peripheral cases express semantic relations (Blake 1995:33). Thus, we discuss the syntactic and semantic relation of case marking in the language.

### 2.1 Nominative and accusative case

Dime is a nominative-accusative language. Except for the nominative case, the other cases in this language are morphologically marked. For instance, in examples (1) and (2) with a transitive verb the subject *kéné* is not morphologically marked for case.

#### 2.1.1 Accusative case marking in nouns

- (1) *kéné*    *ʔéft-im*        *deys-í-n*  
dog    bird-ACC        kill-PF-3  
'A dog killed a bird'
- (2) *ʔéft-im*    *kéné* *deys-í-n*  
bird-ACC dog    kill-PF-3  
'A dog killed a bird'

In intransitive clauses also nominative case is not morphologically marked as in example (3).

- (3) kéné ?éh-ó yíz-i-n  
 dog house-LOC run-PF-3  
 ‘A dog ran home.’

The accusative case identifies object nouns: It is marked by **-im**. It is suffixed to the patient or affected constituent of two argument verbs. This is in line with what accusative markers do in related languages. It is consistently marked on both in definite and indefinite nouns referring to affected entities. Compare (4a) and (5a) with (4b) and (5b), respectively.

- (4a) šiftaye zit-im šín-i-n  
 shiftaye ox-ACC buy-PF-3  
 ‘Shiftaye bought an ox’

- (4b) šiftaye zit-is-im šín-i-n  
 shiftaye ox-DEF-ACC buy-PF-3  
 ‘Shiftaye bought the ox’

- (5a) šiftaye zití s’án-ub-im šín-i-n  
 shiftaye ox black-M-im buy-PF-3  
 ‘Shiftaye bought a black ox’

- (5b) šiftaye zití s’án-ub-is-im šín-i-n  
 shiftaye ox black-M-DEF-im buy-PF-3  
 ‘Shiftaye bought the black ox’

As (4a) to (5b) demonstrate the accusative marker is occurred phrase finally. If there is no modifier, the accusative marker is suffixed to noun. In example (5a-b) we see that the case marker is affixed to the modifier if the latter is the last element of the phrase. If instead, the word order of NP is modifier-head **-im** is attached to the noun as in example (6).

- (6) šiftaye s’án-ub zit-ís-im šín-i-n  
 shiftaye black-M ox-DEF-im buy-PF-3  
 ‘Shiftaye bought the ox’

It is observed that the accusative marker can be marked two or more times in a sentence as in (7) and (8), where the accusative is marked both on the modifier and the head noun.

(7) nááye      ʔád-ib-is-im      gošt-ís-im      nú      yéf-i-n  
 yesterday come-M-DEF-ACC man-DEF-ACC 3SM.SUBJ see-PF-3  
 ‘He saw the man who came yesterday’

(8) ʔaté      níts-is-im      deys-íb-is-im      ʔiyy-ís-im  
 1S.SUBJ child-DEF-ACC kill-REL (M)-DEF-im man-DEF-ACC  
 yéf-i-t  
 saw-PF-1  
 ‘I saw the man who killed the child’

These examples seem to contradict our earlier observation that case marking is phrasal marking. Thus in Dime accusative marking can be marked only once phrase finally, whether the phrase final constituent is a noun or a modifier. It can also be marked both on the noun and its modifier(s) as in (7 and 8).

Double accusative marking on nouns is also attested in the language. This may be due to the nature of the verb. For instance, where there are two arguments in the sentence both of these are marked with -im as in (9a) and (9b).

(9a) ʔatí      kó-n-im      mes’af-im      ʔím-í-t  
 1S.SUBJ her-n-ACC book-ACC give-PF-1  
 ‘I gave her a book’

(9b) nú      kó-n-im      t’él-im      ʔím-i-n  
 3SM:SUBJ 3SF.OBJ-n-ACC medicine-ACC give-PF-3  
 ‘He gave her medicine.’

The accusative case is also suffixed to interrogative pronouns in Dime as in (10) and (11).

(10) ʔáyi wuy-im      wunt’  
 who what-ACC do-PF:Q  
 ‘Who did what?’

- (11) ʔáyi ʔay-im deis-téé  
 who who-ACC kill-IPF:Q  
 ‘Who kills whom?’

Even though case markers tend to occur at the final position of the noun phrase, there are also morphemes which follow case markers as in example (12) and (13).

- (12) šiftaye zim-áf-is-im-k deys-í-n  
 shiftaye chief-PL-DEF-ACC-too kill-PF-3  
 ‘Shiftay killed the chiefs too.’

When two conjoined object nouns occur in a sentence both nouns must be marked for case as in (13).

- (13) ʔaté nits-is-im-ká wudr-is-im-ká yəf-i-t  
 1S.SUBJ child-DEF-ACC-CNJ girl-DEF-ACC-CNJ see-PF-1  
 ‘I saw the boy and the girl’

Personal pronouns and demonstratives are marked for case. In this case the occurrence of the accusative marker -im on object pronouns following the element -n.

Person	Subject	Object	Dative	Genitive	ABL	INST
1S	ʔáte	ʔís-im	ʔís-in	ʔís-kó	ʔís-kó-dé	ʔís-ká
2S	yáye	yín-im	yí-n	yí-n-kó	yí-n-kó-dé	yí-n-ká
3MS	nú	kín-im	kí-n	kí-kó	kí-kó-dé	kí-ká
3FS	ná	kón-im	kó-n	kó-kó	kó-kó-dé	kó-ká
1PL	wétu	wón-im	wó-n	wó-kó	wó-kó-dé	wó-ká
2PL	yési	yén-im	yé-n	yé-kó	yé-kó-dé	yé-ká
3PL	kéte	kén-im	ké-n	ké-kó	ké-kó-dé	ké-ká

Table 1: Pronouns and their case marker forms

As we observe in the above table the subject pronoun forms are not inflected for any case, while the object pronoun forms are inflected. The following example illustrate

their uses:

- (14) kété wón-im gis'-i-n  
3PL.SUBJ 1PL.OBJ-n-ACC hit-PF-3  
'They hit us'
- (15) ná kón-im mes'af-im ?ím-í-n  
3SF.SUBJ 3SF.OBJ-n-ACC book-ACC give-PF-3  
'She give her a book'

With the exception of the first person singular, in all object pronouns we find the segment -n- preceding the accusative marker -im. In the second person singular, this -n- occurs in all columns except the subject.

A number of possible analyses and questions on the status of -n- are available:

The first analysis assumes that the insertion of -n- is phonologically motivated to avoid sequence of vowels as suggested by Tsuge (1997: 579). This can raise the following two questions:

- i. Why is the element -n- added to 2S with genitive, ablative, instrumental case in table 10 above?
- ii. Why is the element -n- not used in nouns and interrogative pronouns.<sup>1</sup>

Examples:

- (16) ?atí k'ír-im zis'-i-t  
1S.SUBJ door-ACC lose-PF-1  
'I closed the door'
- (17) ?ayí ?ay-im deys-í-n  
who who-ACC kill-PF-3  
'Who killed whom?'

These facts suggest that the phonological conditioning mentioned above is doubtful.

The second analysis is that in the pronoun paradigms the accusative is built on the dative case and displays double case marking. However, if this were an instance of double case one would expect the dative to be built on the accusative rather than the

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<sup>1</sup> In Aari, a related language, the accusative case marker -im is suffixed to pronouns without any intervention of -n-.

other way round.

There is a third and final possible analysis which I support. This is the line taken by Hayward and Tsuge (1998) in their historical and comparative analysis of Omotic languages. These authors suggest that the re-curing *-n-* element in the pronoun paradigm of many Omotic languages is a remnant/fossil element of a once active morpheme. They write:

In data recently collected from the Biyo dialect of Aari we see perhaps the last relics of a dative/benefactive function of *\*-n* in Aari. This suffix was recorded only with pronouns; no examples having appeared with nouns. (Hayward and Tsuge 1998: 27)

As Hayward and Tsuge (1998: 24) stated, among the Omoto languages, accusative *\*-n* still survives as a fossil in the first and second person pronouns, and occasionally in interrogative pronouns e.g., in Zayse.

Thus, the *-n* element in Dime in object pronouns may be the fossil element *\*-n* which is attested in many Omotic languages.

The other issue is case marking in demonstratives. The accusative case is suffixed to demonstrative pronouns when the demonstrative modifies the noun, similar to adjectives. Consider the following examples:

(18a) nú            máy    siki-n-im    šin-ée-n  
      3SM.SUBJ    pot    this-n-ACC    buy-IPF-3  
      ‘He buys this pot’

(18b) nú            sinú    máy-im    šin-i-n  
      3SM.SUBJ    this    pot-ACC    buy-PF-3  
      ‘He bought this pot’

As can be seen from the above examples case is not marked on both demonstratives and nouns. It is marked either on the noun or on the demonstrative; whichever occurs at the right edge of the noun phrase carries the case marker.

Case marking on interrogative pronouns is similar to case marking in nouns. The accusative case marker is directly suffixed to the interrogative pronouns without the intervention of the *-n* element as in (19).

- (19) ?ayí ?ay-im deys  
 who who-ACC kill  
 ‘Who killed whom?’

In Dime -im is used also as a nominalizer morpheme which is suffixed to adjectives to derive abstract nouns and sometimes to verb roots to derive verbal nominal. The following examples illustrate nouns derived from adjectives.

- (20) ?áɜ-is-ko gičč-ó-b-is-im ság-in gá-gám-déé-n  
 tree-DEF-GEN big-LOC-M-DEF-im cut-INF RDP:difficult-IPF-3  
 ‘The bigness of the tree is challenging to cut it.’

(Adj = gičč-ó-b ‘big’ )

- (21) kín-m ?áfál-is-ko s’án-ub-is-im t’um-ís-ká  
 3SM.OBJ cloth-DEF-GEN black-M-DEF-im dark-DEF-COM  
 yekki wón-i-n  
 equal be-PF-3

‘The blackness of his cloth makes him (similar to) dark’

(Adj = s’án-ub ‘black’ )

From the above examples (20-21) we observe two problems. First, if we consider -im as a nominalizer, it is strange that the definite marker precedes the nominalizer. If it is not a nominalizer the second option is to correlate -im to the accusative case marker -im. Because these two are parts of the nominal category, it is possible that the same morpheme, -im, is used as nominalizer and as accusative case marker. However, this hypothesis is also problematic. That is, the -im marked nominals occur in subject position. For the time being, we regard -im as a nominalizer morpheme which derives abstract nouns from adjectives. The derivation of abstract nouns through -im is also observed in texts. For instance, the word wókkil ‘one’ is changed to wókkil-im ‘unity’. Just like in Amharic where ?and ‘one’ becomes ?and-innät ‘unity’; the adjectives k’äyy ‘red’ becomes k’äyy-innät ‘redness’, and dägǵ ‘kind’ dägǵinnät ‘kindness’, by suffixing innät.

The morpheme -im can also be added to verbs to derive cognate nouns. No other affix intervenes between these two as in (22-24).



- (22) nú            ʔíts-im ʔíts-i-n  
 3SM.SUBJ food-im eat-PF-3  
 ‘He ate food’
- (23) nú            káx-im káx-si-n  
 3SM.SUBJ dream-im dream-PF-3  
 ‘He dreamed a dream’
- (24) nú            zág-im zá-zág-déé-n  
 3SM.SUBJ dance-im RDP:dance-IPF-3  
 ‘He is dancing a dance’

The derived cognate object can be used both as subject and object. Its use in object position is illustrated in the examples in (22-24). The following examples illustrate its use as subject:

- (25) ʔíts-im-is ʔíts-int’-i-n  
 eat-im-DEF eat-PAS-PF-3  
 ‘The food was eaten’
- (26) kətí            yíg-im-is-im            gár-gár-i-n  
 3PL.SUBJ game-im-DEF-ACC RDP: hate-IPF-3  
 ‘They hate the game’

However, the fact that the cognate object is used as subject as in (25) and that an additional accusative *-im* is needed to form the accusative as in (26) justifies that *-im* has a nominalizing role.

In (26) the morpheme *-im* occurs twice: once preceding the definite marker and once following the definite marker. In its first occurrence it nominalizes the verb. In its second occurrence it indicates that the derived nominal functions as object.

It is not possible at this point to satisfactorily defend the analysis of *-im* only as an accusative case marker, or as a nominalizer or as a morpheme that simultaneously serves to mark accusative case and to derive nominals from verbs and adjectives. It needs further investigations.

## 2.2 Dative

The dative in Dime is marked with *-in*. In three place verbs, the patient/affected (direct) object complement is marked by the accusative which is discussed in the previous section. The second complement representing the recipient or goal noun is

marked by the dative. The patient or the recipient argument can be omitted if it can be understood from the context. Even when the patient noun is omitted in the sentence, the recipient still gets its own marking -in. Examples:

- (27) šiftayé zim-ís-in gím-í-n  
 shiftaye chief-DEF-DAT answer-PF-3  
 ‘Shiftay answered to the chief’

The following sentential examples illustrate that dative marking is used for both the semantic roles recipient and beneficiary.

- (28) nú yíf-id-in yeχn-im ʔexs-i-n  
 3SM guest-PL-DAT farm-ACC show-PF-3  
 ‘He showed the farm to the guests’
- (29)<sup>2</sup> nú yíf-id-af-in yeχn-im ʔexs-i-n  
 3SM guest-PL-PL-DAT farm-ACC show-PF-3  
 ‘He showed the farm to the guests’
- (30) nú yá-rí-n ʔay-im baʔa ʔád-i-n  
 3SM donkey-DAT grass-ACC bring come-PF-3  
 ‘He brought grass for a donkey’
- (31) yá ké-n mestaf-is-im šin-i-n  
 2S.SUBJ 3PL-n book-DEF-ACC buy-PF-3  
 ‘You bought the book for them’

### 2.3 Genitive/possessive

The genitive / possessive relation between nouns can be marked by various ways: by a genitive suffix or by juxtaposition with deletion of final vowel: compare the (a) and (b) examples in (32). There is no semantic difference between in these structures.

The genitive case suffix can be directly marked to the possessor noun as in example (32a).

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<sup>2</sup> Surprisingly the plural marker for modifiers is used in yif-id ‘guest’ as in (28), and an additional nominal plural suffix -af can be used with no difference in meaning as in (29). This is a peculiarity of the lexeme yif- ‘guest’.

(32a) zob-kó      dóótu    dex-ub  
 lion-GEN    leg      strong-M

‘A lion’s leg is strong’

(32b) zob      dóót      dex-ub  
 lion      leg      strong-M

‘a lion’s leg is strong’

It is also possible to use the genitive marker more than once in the same extended noun phrase construction as in (33).

(33) zim-ko      ʔíndiid-is-ko      máte  
 chief’s-GEN    wife-DEF-GEN    head  
 ‘the chief’s wife’s head’

A summary of the possessive pronouns both with and without -ko are given in the following table. The terminal vowel -u is omitted in the later form.

Genitive form		Gloss
with -ko	without -ko	
ʔis-ko dóótu	ʔa-dóót	my leg
wó-ko dóótu	wó-dóót	our leg
yín-ko dóótu	yí-dóót	your (S) leg
yé-ko dóótu	yé-dóót	your (PL) leg
kí-ko dóótu	kí-dóót	his leg
kó-ko dóótu	kó-dóót	her leg
ké-ko dóótu	ké-dóót	their leg

Table 2: possessive pronouns in Dime

### 2.3.1 Instrumental and comitative

The instrumental case marker is -ká. An instrumental case encodes the instrument with which an action is carried out (Blake 1994).

- (49) ʔaté ʔáák-im tǐbz-is-ká k'árs'-í-t  
 1S.SUBJ tree-ACC axe-DEF-INST cut-PF-1  
 'I cut a tree by axe'
- (50) maikró gáit-ká kuy-á dón-im kór-i-n  
 maikro hoe-INST dig-CNV1 potato-ACC plant-PF-3  
 'Maikro planted a potato digging with a hoe.'

The morpheme *-ká* is also used to express by comitative case. Consider the following example:

- (51) nú kí-ko mič-ká ʔéh-ó tíŋ-i-n  
 3SM.SUBJ 3SM OBJ-GEN sister-COM home-LOC go-PF-3  
 'He went home with his sister.'

If we use the morpheme *ká* in a sentence that combines the functions of coordination and the other functions discussed above we get multiple *-kás*. The morpheme *-ká* also expresses conjunction, comitative and instrumental. The conjunction *-ká* is suffixed to each coordinated constituent, while the instrumental and the comitative morpheme *ká* is used only one in a single phrase. Sometimes it can also be suffixed with each noun. To identify the instrumental and the comitative *-ká* we distinguish it in gloss. In example (52) the first *-ká* as in *yín-ká* is the comitative *-ká* which express ʔaté *yín-ká* 'I will (live) with you' and the other *kás* in *kóxs-im-ká-ká- ʔišinč-ká dá-tub* 'with love and devotion', the first *-ká* in each case is the comitative *-ká*, while the second *-ká* which is suffixed to *-ká* in double way is conjunction *-ká*.

- (52) ʔaté yín-ká kóxs-im-ká-ká- ʔišinč-ká dá-tub  
 1S.SUBJ you-COM love-NMZ-COM-CNJ think-CNJ live-FUT  
 'I will live with you with love and devotion.'

### 2.3.2 Locative case

There are two locative cases which are suffixed to nouns. These are the suffixes *-se* 'on' and *-o* 'in'. Examples:

- (53) maŋ-ís            t'əɾəp'ez-is-se      dáh-i-n  
 gourd-DEF      table-DEF-LOC      stay-PF-3  
 'The gourd is on the table.'
- (54) níts-is            ?éh-ó              dán  
 child-DEF      house-LOC      COP  
 'The child is in the house' (cf. citation form ?éhé 'house')
- (55) nú                  mir-ó              ?ótl-i-n  
 3SM.SUBJ      river-LOC      jump-PF-3  
 'He jumped into the river.'

Moreover, to express more specific location the locative noun can be followed by *lisin* 'on top/surface of', *gəy-ó* 'in the interior of'. The examples in (53-55) contrast with those in (56-58):

- (56) maŋ-is            t'əɾəp'ez-is-se      lisin      dáh-i-n  
 gourd-DEF      table-DEF-LOC      on      live-PF-3  
 'The gourd is on (surface) the table.'
- (57) níts-is            ?éh-ó              gəy-ó              dán  
 child-DEF      house-LOC      inside-LOC      COP  
 'The child is inside the house' (cf. citation form: ?éhé 'house')
- (58) lál-is              mir-ó              gəy-ó              dán  
 stone-DEF      river-LOC      inside-LOC      COP  
 'The stone is in the river.' (cf. citation form naʔé 'water'/river')

Without the locative case marked noun the words *lisin* 'on top/surface of' and *gəy-ó* 'inside/interior of' cannot be used by themselves to express location. Thus, example (59) is unacceptable because *lisin* is preceded by the noun *t'əɾəp'ez-is* 'the table', without it being marked with the locative case.

- (59) \*maŋ-ís            t'əɾəp'ez-is      lisin      dáh-i-n  
 gourd-DEF      table-DEF      on      stay-PF-3  
 'The gourd is on the table.'

### 2.3.3 Ablative

The ablative case is marked by the suffix *-de*. It expresses source, e.g. 'from' or 'out

of'. In most cases the ablative case is formed on a genitive or locative stem. In the following examples we observe that the ablative case is formed on the basis of a locative form (60-64).

- (60) ná            kǐ-n-ze-de                    ʔád-i-n  
 3SF.SUBJ    3SM.OBJ-n-LOC-ABL    come-PF-3  
 'She came from his place.'
- (61) dim-ko       ʔámze    ʔed-is-se-de                    yič-á  
 dime-GEN    woman    mountain-DEF-LOC-ABL    descend-CNV1  
 ʔád-i-n  
 come-PF-3  
 'A Dime woman came down from the top of the mountain'
- (62) nú            ʔed-is-se-de                    ʔád-i-n  
 3SM.SUBJ.    mountain-DEF-LOC-ABL    come-PF-3  
 'He came from the top of the mountain.'
- (63) náǰ-ís       ʔed-is-ó-de                    ʔád-i-n  
 water-DEF    mountain-DEF-LOC-ABL    come-PF-3  
 'The water came from inside the mountain.'
- (64) nú            méh-im       wó-n-ze-de                    tálk'-i-n  
 3SM.SUBJ    money-ACC    1PL: OBJ-DAT-LOC-ABL    borrow-PF-3  
 'He borrowed money from us'

In motion verbs such as ʔádé 'come' and bit'e 'leave', however, the ablative case morpheme is suffixed to the directive particle as in example (65-73).

- (65) šiftayé    taddese-ká       bow-de    ʔéh-ó       ʔád-i-n  
 shiftaye    taddesse-COM    DIR-ABL    house-LOC    come-PF-3  
 'Shiftaye came out from Taddesse's home.'
- (66) gún-ís       taddese-ká       bow-de    ʔád-i-n  
 snake-DEF    taddesse-COM    DIR-ABL    come-PF-3  
 'The snake came out from Taddesse's house.'
- (67) šiftayé    taddese-ká       bow-de    bín-n<sup>3</sup>  
 shiftaye    taddesse-COM    DIR-ABL    leave-:PF-3  
 'Shiftaye left from Taddesse's place.'

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<sup>3</sup> The basic verb form bit'e changes to binn when the perfective morpheme -i followed by the person

- (68) ná kǐ-ká bow-de ʔád-i-n  
 3SF.SUBJ 3SM.OBJ-COM DIR-ABL come-PF-3  
 ‘She came from his place.’

The morpheme *-bow* may be a noun which shows direction together with the ablative case that suffixed to it. If the morpheme *-ká* (comitative or instrumental) is suffixed to it, it expresses a direction towards somebody. It expresses direction away from somebody when both the morpheme *-ká* and the ablative *-de* are affixed to it. For instance, *-ká bow* is used to express direction towards somebody as in (69a) while *-ká bow -de* is used to express direction of movement away from somebody or something as in (69b) below:

- (69a) šiftaye taddese-ká-bow tíŋ-i-n  
 shiftaye taddese-COM-DIR go-PF-3  
 ‘Shiftaye went towards Taddese.’
- (69b) šiftayé taddese-ká bow-de ʔád-i-n  
 shiftaye taddese-COM-DIR-ABL come-PF-3  
 ‘Shiftaye came from the place where Taddese is found.’

In some cases of inherently locative nouns ablative is suffixed to nouns directly without a preceding locative case marker. For instance, in examples (70) and (71) we have *gazer-de* ‘Gazer, a place name in south west Ethiopia’, *džinka-de* ‘Jinka’ without any interference of another element between the ablative case and the noun.

- (70) ʔaté búnú lijub gazer-de šín-ée-t  
 1S.SUBJ coffee good Gazer-ABL buy-IPF-1  
 ‘I bought a good coffee from Gazer’
- (71) taddese džinka-de kúrum bá-ʔád<sup>4</sup>-dée-n  
 taddese jinka-ABL honey bring-IPF-3  
 ‘Taddese will bring honey from Jinka’

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marker *-n* is suffixed to it i.e., *bit'e + in > binn*.

<sup>4</sup> The word *baʔad* is a combination of two words *baʔa* ‘take’ and *ʔádi* ‘come’.

Core case	Case marker	Example	Gloss
Nominative	Unmarked	ʃiftaye yili-im yaxn dan	shiftaye is a farmer
Accusative	-im	ʃiftaye yili-im yaxn dan	shiftaye is a farmer
Dative	-in	yəri-in	for a donkey
Peripheral case			
Ablative	-de	ke-se-de, ke-ko-de	from them
Genitive / possessive	-ko	ʔamz-is-ko dootu	the woman's leg
Locative	-se and -ó	t'ərbəz-is-e/t'ərbəz-is-ó	on/in the table
instrumental	-ká	ʔaté ʔááy-is-im tíbz-is-ká	I cut a tree with an axe

Table 4: Core and peripheral case in Dime

The ablative, dative, comitative and instrumental cases are also directly suffixed to interrogative pronouns as in example (72-74).

- (72) ʔámz-is      ʔamó-dé  
 woman-DEF    where-ABL:Q  
 'Where is the woman from?'
- (73) yá      ʔay-in      məs'af-is-im      ʔím  
 2S.SUB    who-DAT    book-DEF-ACC    gave:Q  
 'To whom did you give the book?'
- (74) ʔay-ká      déén      nú      ʔits-int'  
 who-INST    was      it      eat-PASV:Q  
 'By whom was it eaten?'

## Conclusion

As we discussed so far Dime is a nominative-accusative language in which the nominative case is unmarked. The accusative, dative, genitive, instrumental/comitative, ablative and locative cases are marked morphologically. In the analysis of case marking in Dime the dative form occurs where the accusative case is expected in the pronominal paradigm. Thus, dative and accusative cases are not clearly distinguished in Dime pronouns while they are easily distinguished in nouns. We assume that the intervention of the -n element with accusative marker in the paradigm of object



pronouns may be the fossil element \*-n which is attested in many Omotic languages. Double accusative marking on nouns is also attested in the language. The accusative marker -im seems to be used also for derivation of abstract nouns and cognate object. However, it needs further investigations.

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