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Delineating a case system: How many cases are there in Standard Goan Konkani – and why?[1]

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Abstract

In the present study we analyze the case system of Standard Goan Konkani, an Indo-Aryan language spoken in western India. We first analyze the individual markers which fit our definition of case markers and discuss how these differ from and/or overlap functionally with other case markers. We then present a detailed description of two further case markers which, although quite common, to our knowledge have not been discussed in previous works on Konkani, namely the *selective* and the *elative*, and show how these forms, despite their transparent etymologies as case stacking of the inessive case and either the genitive or the ablative, cannot be viewed as case stacking in the modern language. With this, we argue that Konkani can best be described as having 13 productive cases, although other analyses are possible, depending on researchers' theoretical and practical preferences.

Keywords: Konkani, Indo-Aryan, case system, selective case, elative.

1. Introduction

The present study deals with the case system of Standard Goan Konkani (ISO 639-3: gom; Glottocode: goan1235), an Indo-Aryan language spoken primarily in western India.

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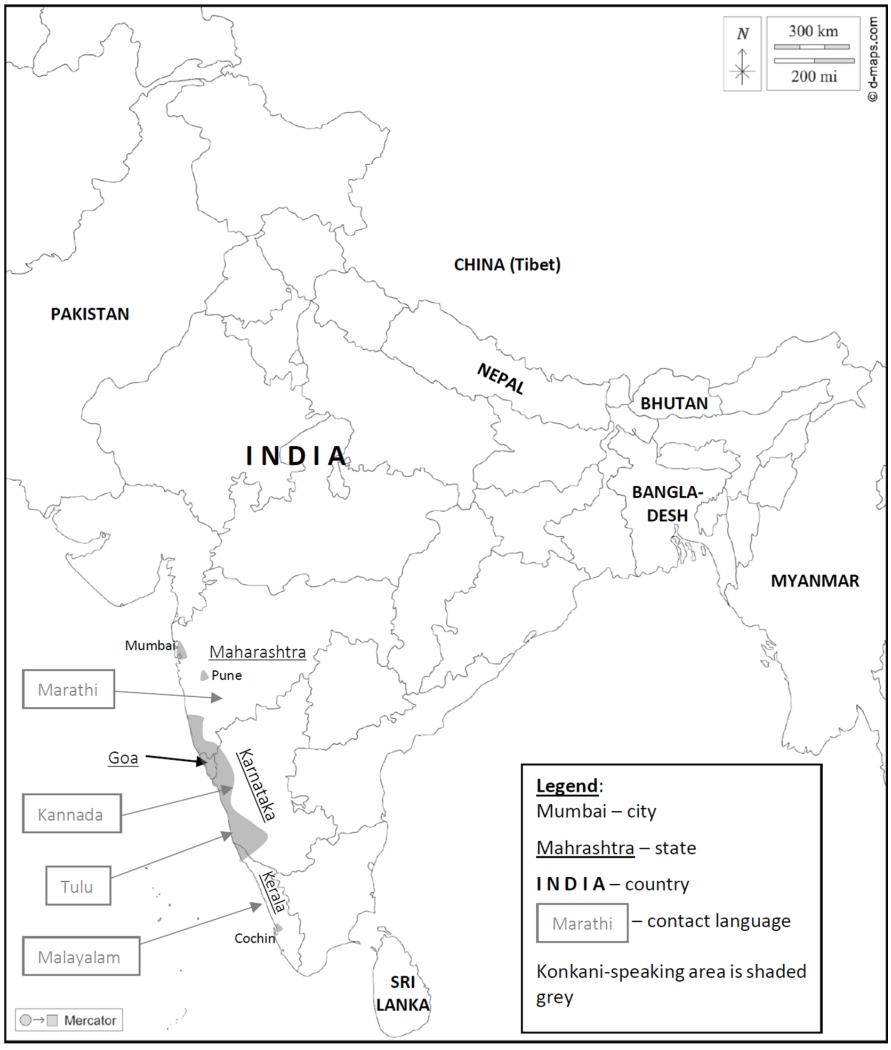
Konkani ([koŋkɳiː]) is the official language of the state of Goa, the only region where it is spoken by a majority of the population. Outside of Goa Konkani is spoken in different varieties as a minority language throughout a relatively narrow strip of land along the west coast from the state of Maharashtra in the north, through Goa, and in much of coastal Karnataka to the south. There are also small pockets of Konkani in and near Pune and Mumbai in Maharashtra, and in Cochin in the southwestern state of Kerala (cf. Almeida 1989: 5-7). Konkani is thus in close contact with the Indo-Aryan language Marathi in Maharashtra, with the Dravidian languages Kannada and Tulu in Karnataka, and with Malayalam (also Dravidian) in Kerala; see Map 1, based on Almeida (1989: 6). According to the *Ethnologue* (Eberhard et al. 2023), Goan Konkani was spoken in 2000 by 3,630,000 people in India and 3,725,300 in all countries.

Konkani is a "macro-language", defined by Eberhard et al. (2023) as "multiple, closely related individual languages that are deemed in some usage contexts to be a single language."[2] The different varieties of Konkani throughout the region where these are spoken can thus show considerable differences. In this situation, a de facto standard of Konkani has emerged which we refer to here as "Standard Goan Konkani" and which is based on the Goan Hindu dialect. This "standard" is not to be understood in the sense of one single "correct" form of speech which has been standardized by an organization with the recognized authority to determine which forms of the language are or are not standard. To our knowledge, this type of standard does not exist for any form of Konkani. Rather, with this term we refer to the socially recognized standard form of Goan Konkani for which there is a stable, agreed upon orthography, and for which there are also morphological categories and syntactic constructions which are recognized by all educated speakers and which are expected in written and in formal spoken language.

Despite this generally agreed upon written standard, as we show in the following pages there is presently no real consensus among researchers with respect to the case system of this language – with the number of posited cases ranging from six to eleven in individual studies – and it is not always clear how the respective authors have reached the number of cases that they assume. With the present study we hope to shed some light on the problems and issues involved. While we do not claim to have found the "correct" interpretation of the Konkani case system, we will suggest our own analysis and show how this differs from other analyses – and why.

The remainder of this article is structured as follows. In Section 2 we give the definition of *case* that we use in this paper and present our criteria for differentiating between case markers and postpositions in Konkani. In Section 3 we give an overview of the case system as this has been analyzed in a number of previous studies of Konkani, stretching back some 100 years. In the following two sections we discuss various forms in considerable detail and the issues involved in determining their status as separate cases: In Section 4 we discuss various genitive case forms, based on the results of a small corpus analysis with respect to claims made in the literature, and in Section 5 we take a closer look at the various markers of the ablative and related forms.

[2] https://www.ethnologue.com/methodology/ (Last accessed 2023-07-14).



Map 1: The Konkani-speaking regions and Konkani's major contact languages, based on Almeida (1989: 6)[3]

In Section 6 we then present evidence for two further cases in Konkani, hitherto unmentioned in the literature, namely the selective and the elative. In Section 7 we then return to our main question, namely how many cases there are in Konkani – and why, taking the uncertainties into account that we discuss in this article. Finally, Section 8 presents a summary of this study with a brief outlook for future research.

[3] This map is a modified version of the map given at https://d-maps.com/carte.php?num_car=4183&lang=en, to which the names of states, countries, the Konkani language and the legend have been added. (Last accessed: 2024-05-23.)

2. Case markers and postpositions

We follow here the definition of case given in Blake (1994: 1): "**Case** is a system of marking dependent nouns for the type of relationship they bear to their heads. Traditionally the term refers to inflectional marking, and, typically, case marks the relationship of a noun to a verb at the clause level or of a noun to a preposition, postposition or another noun at the phrase level." (emphasis in the original) In addition to cases defined in this way and following Blake (1994: 9), we also assume that the vocative, i.e., the form of a noun used to address someone, can be considered a case for structural reasons if it forms part of the same nominal paradigm to which the other cases belong, as is the case, e.g., in Latin and Greek.

Case in Konkani is not predominantly marked inflectionally but rather enclitically, by markers which likely derive from, but are also distinct from, postpositions. Miranda (2003: 744) assigns case markers in Konkani to the larger class of postpositions, which he divides into two groups. The first group, consisting of case markers, are what Miranda refers to as "clitic postpositions", the second group being "secondary postpositions". With respect to this distinction Miranda (2003: 744) writes:

> With the exception of the superessive, clitic postpositions occur after the oblique form of a noun or pronoun.[4] Secondary postpositions can occur after the oblique form of a noun or non-personal pronoun or after the genitive oblique singular form of the same […], but they must occur only after the genitive oblique singular form of a personal pronoun […].

Dhongde (2022: 53-54) notes that "[a] clitic may intervene between a postposition and the governing noun", e.g. in (1), but that this is not possible with case markers, as shown in (2).[5] Note that the "clitic" *=ʧya* in both examples is in fact the genitive case marker, so that Dhongde's argumentation also supports Miranda's analysis.

(1)	*ram-a=pasun* /	*ram-a=ʧya=pasun*	*ʧiʈ*	*ghe.*	
	Ram-OBL=PP	Ram-OBL=clitic=PP	letter	take.IMP	
	'Take the letter from Ram.'				
(2)	*ram-a=k*	/	**ram-a=ʧya=k*	*ʧiʈ*	*di.*[6]
	Ram-OBL=DAT	/	Ram-OBL=clitic=DAT	letter	give.IMP
	'Give the letter to Ram.'				

[4] Unlike other case markers, the superessive superessive marker *=r* is only added to personal pronouns marked by the genitive *=ce*. Cf. Section 2 for further discussion.

[5] We have silently corrected a small printing error here from Dhongde (2022: 54). Also, we indicate clitics with "=" and suffixes with "-" in Dhongde's examples and gloss according to the Leipzig Glossing Rules, where possible, in keeping with the rest of the present article.

Dhongde (2022: 53) refers to both Miranda's (2003) class of postpositions and the direct and oblique stems of nouns as "cases". In contrast, we refer in the present article to these latter forms as the direct and oblique stems and reserve the term "case" for Miranda's (2003) "clitic postpositions". Cf. §§3.1 and 3.2 for further discussion.

[6] The second form in (1), with *ram-a=ʧya=pasun*, appears to be from a non-Goan variety. Furthermore, (2) with *ram-a=ʧya=k*, is in fact grammatical if this is viewed as case stacking of the genitive *=ʧya* and the "dative" *=k*, but not with the meaning intended in (2). Instead it would mean 'Give the letter to Ram's [child, etc.]'. As this second meaning is irrelevant for our discussion here we do not discuss this issue further.

We follow the argumentation in Miranda (2003), although we will speak of "postpositions" for those forms which must take the genitive with pronouns vs. "case markers", which do not require the genitive with pronouns. There are however two exceptions to this second group:

- The first is that we consider units which transparently derive from the genitive plus a case marker, but which are entirely interchangeable with forms lacking this genitive marker in all positions outside of the pronominal system, to be case markers. For example, the superessive marker *=cer*, which consists of the genitive marker *=c* marked for the oblique singular marker by *-e*[7] plus the superessive marker *=r*, is interchangeable with the simple marker *=r* in all environments outside of the pronominal system. We therefore view it as a simple variant of the form *=r*, which is unambiguously a case marker.
- Secondly, the marker *=cyan*, which derives from the genitive marker *=c* followed by the masculine / neuter singular marker *-ya* and the ergative / instrumental *=n*, is entirely interchangeable in its ablative function with all other ablative forms such as the free variants *=san*, *=sun*, *=than*, etc. (cf. Section 5) and is therefore a case marker in our view. This analysis is further supported by the fact that the ablative meaning of *=cyan* does not derive compositionally from the genitive and the ergative / instrumental case meanings, so that it has developed further as a case marker from only marking the ergative / instrumental to include the ablative.[8]

As the discussion of *=r* / *=cer* and *=cyan* above shows, when discussing the Konkani case system several choices with respect to the status of particular forms as case markers or as postpositions have to be made, and opinions will often differ among researchers. As the following pages illustrate, the cumulative effect of decisions such as these directly impact the number of cases assumed by a particular researcher.

3. The Konkani case system – structural overview and previous accounts

Despite Konkani's status as a scheduled language,[9] comparatively little descriptive work has been done on it in comparison with other scheduled languages, and much of the work which has been done on it is dedicated either to non-Goan Konkani varieties or to non-standard varieties of Goan Konkani. Furthermore, in those works which do deal with Goan Konkani, it is notable that these studies often come to very different conclu-

[7] *-e* here is a fossilized form found in some pronominal forms and with certain postpositions. Its more common form is *-ya*.

[8] In Section 5 we will show that *=cyan* not only marks ablative semantics but also instruments. For the sake of presentation, we do not deal with this further here.

[9] The term "scheduled languages" refers to the 22 languages presently listed in the Eighth Schedule to the Indian Constitution which enjoy a privileged status in education and administration, etc.

sions with respect to the case system, ranging from six to eleven cases in the different analyses.

The present section begins with a general typological overview of the case system of Standard Konkani in Section 3.1, describing its alignment patterns and the direct and oblique stems found with all nouns and pronouns, while Section 3.2 presents an overview of the different case systems suggested for Konkani in previous studies. Here, we include only those grammars which claim to describe either (Standard Hindu) Goan Konkani or simply "Konkani". We do not, however, include any varieties which specify in their title a local, non-standard or non-Goan variety, such as Christian Karnataka Konkani (Almeida 1989), the Christian Bardeshi dialect of North Goa (Almeida 2012), the Konkani of South Kanara (Ghatage 1963) and Kankon (Ghatage 1968), Kudali (Ghatage 1965), Kunabi (Ghatage 1966) or Gawdi Konkani (Ghatage 1972; Karapurkar 1968). A discussion of the different Konkani varieties in comparison with one another will be the subject of a later study.

Section 3.3 then gives a brief overview of the complex NP-internal agreement system of Konkani in order to facilitate the interpretation of the examples contained throughout the rest of the present study. Finally, Section 3.4 discusses the main functions of these cases, with examples.

3.1. General introduction

Standard Goan Konkani is a verb-final language with a split ergative-alignment system: The "transitive subject" (A) appears in the ergative in the simple past tense and in the perfect, while the "intransitive subject" (S) in these categories appears in the nominative. In all other finite verbal categories such as the present, future, and the past imperfective, S and A both appear in the nominative case.

The "direct object" (O)[10] can either appear in the zero-marked nominative or in the objective case. To our knowledge no study has yet researched O-marking in Konkani in detail, but the general principles seem to apply to Konkani as they do to most other South Asian languages, with a strong tendency for non-human and non-definite objects to appear in the unmarked nominative case and human and/or definite objects to appear in the objective case. S also shows variable marking, as it appears in the ergative with certain nonfinite forms, such as the future participle, and in the nominative elsewhere.

Simplifying somewhat, the verb agrees in terms of person, number and in some categories also in terms of gender with a nominative-case marked S or A or with the nominative-case marked O in transitive clauses in the past tense and in the perfect. If there is no nominative-case form with which the verb can agree, the verb usually shows default agreement, i.e., the 3rd person singular, neuter, although some speakers allow the verb to show agreement with the objective-marked noun, i.e., semantic marking. Which

[10] Strictly speaking, these comments apply to both O and T (i.e., the "direct object" in both mono- and ditransitive clauses), but as O and T behave identically with respect to case marking, and in order to simplify the discussion, we will speak of both of these argument types collectively as "O".

forms of Konkani allow this and under which conditions remains to be studied in more detail.

All nouns in Konkani have an inherent grammatical gender (masculine, feminine or neuter) and two different stems in both the singular and the plural, referred to here as the direct and oblique stems. The direct stem is the citation form and, since the nominative is zero-marked (see following section), the direct stem is always homophonous with the nominative case. The oblique stem is the stem to which case markers and postpositions attach. There are some 33 different nominal inflectional classes and subclasses with respect to the direct and oblique stems (cf. Peterson 2022). Table 1 presents a few examples of these different inflections (here for the singular only).

Table 1: Examples of direct stems, oblique stems, and oblique stems plus case markers in Konkani

Direct stem	Oblique stem (SG)	Oblique stem plus case marker
ʃar 'city (M)'	*ʃar-a*	*ʃar-a=k* 'to the city' (=*k* 'OBJective')
khuɖ 'room (F)'	*khuɖ-i*	*khuɖ-i=nt* 'in the room' (=*nt* 'INESS')
ʃet 'field (N)'	*ʃet-a*	*ʃet-a=nt* 'in the field'
ʃaɭa 'school (F)'	*ʃaɭ-e*	*ʃaɭ-e=k* 'to the school'

3.2. The Konkani case system – previous accounts

In this section we present an overview of some of the case systems which have been suggested by various researchers of Konkani over the past ca. 100 years. We stress that the following discussion is by no means exhaustive and only serves to show some of the different previous analyses of this system.

We begin with the system suggested by Dalgado (2022), written ca. 100 years ago.[11] Dalgado assumes eight cases for Konkani, however as one of these, the locative, shows two different forms with two different meanings and is given as two different subcategories by Dalgado, we count them here as two different cases, yielding nine cases altogether.[12] Table 2 summarizes the case system proposed by Dalgado, using current terminology, with Dalgado's terminology in parentheses where the two differ. As Table 2 shows, one potential problem with respect to Dalgado's analysis – one which will come up again in the following pages – is the fact that the "accusative" has two different forms, both of which are identical to another case, namely the nominative and the dative.[13]

[11] Dalgado (2022) is the translated English edition of the Portuguese-language manuscript by Rev. Mgs. Dr. Sebastião Dalgado, the hand-written original of which was apparently written between 1916-1922 and which is now on display in the Central Library of Goa (Dalgado 2022: 6-7, 12, 14).

[12] Dalgado (2022: 44-45) posits a third locative case, in *-ĩ*, which we do not include in Table 2 as it is not productive.

[13] Here and in the following tables, the nominative (and the "accusative" when this has the same form as the nominative) is formed by the direct stem plus the null morph. All other case markers, including the

Table 2: The Konkani cases system in Dalgado (2022)

	Singular	**Plural**
Nominative	*Ø*	
Accusative – formally identical with either the nominative or the dative	*Ø / =k*	
Ergative / instrumental (“instrumental”)	*=n / =cyan*	*=nĩ / =cyan*
Dative	*=k*	
Ablative	*=sun / =san / than*, etc.	
Genitive	*=cɔ / =ci / =cɛ̃*[14]	
Inessive (“Locative I”)	*=nt*	*=nt / =nĩ*
Superessive (“Locative II”)	*=r*	
Vocative	*Ø*	*=no / =nu*

In contrast, Miranda (2003) gives paradigms for pronouns with five cases but does not provide declensions for lexical nouns. However, he also mentions the “subessive” case marker (“inessive” in our terminology) in his discussion of clitic vs. secondary postpositions (Miranda 2003: 744) so that we include this case in Table 3, with six cases in total.

Table 3: The Konkani case system in Miranda (2003)

	Singular	**Plural**
Nominative	*Ø*	
Accusative / dative	*=k*	
Ergative / instrumental (“agentive”)	*=n*	*=ni*[15]
Genitive	*=cɔ / =ci / =cɛ̃* **or** *=l-ɔ / =l-i / =l-ɛ̃*	
Superessive	*=r*	
Inessive (“subessive”)	*=t̃*	

Almeida (2004: 48, 65-66, 78) assumes, in our interpretation of his discussion, a system of eleven cases, summarized in Table 4. Note that Almeida assumes both a dative and an accusative case which are formally identical. Almeida (2004: 66) also discusses a further form of the genitive, *=gɛl-*, referred to in the following text as the kinship genitive, with the meaning ‘belonging to the household of’. We therefore include this as a separate case in Table 4.

zero-marked vocative singular, attach to the oblique stem. For the sake of presentation, all case markers are given here as enclitics and the various transliteration systems have been unified for the sake of presentation.

[14] The genitive forms in Table 2 and all following tables agree with the following head noun with respect to gender, number and direct/oblique status of the stem. The full declension of these forms is given in Section 3.3 below (Table 7).

[15] We find no examples of the ergative plural given for nouns (only the somewhat different forms for pronouns, cf. Miranda 2003: 743), so we have filled in this slot of Table 3 with the modern standard form.

Table 4: The Konkani case system in Almeida (2004)

	Singular	**Plural**
Nominative (“direct”)	*Ø*	
Accusative	*=k*	
Dative (formally same as accusative)	*=k*	
Ergative / instrumental (“agent / instrumental”)	*=n*	*=ni*
Inessive (“Locative 1”)	*=t̃*	*=ni*
Superessive (“Locative 2”)	*=r / =cer*	
Kinship essive (“Locative 3”)	*=ger*	
Ablative	*=san / =sun*	
Genitive (“possessive”)	*=cɔ / =ci / =cɛ̃* **or** *=l-ɔ / =l-i / =l-ɛ̃*	
Kinship genitive	*=gɛl-ɔ / =gel-i / =gɛl-ɛ̃*	
Vocative	*Ø*	*=no*

In his recent grammar, Dhongde (2022: 53-59) assumes eight cases, summarized in Table 5 (without the forms from the Mangalore dialect). We include the vocative in this list, which Dhongde also views as a case but which he discusses separately from the other cases. Like Almeida, Dhongde (2022: 55) assumes both an accusative and a dative case, again although they are formally identical, although he generally glosses the two uniformly as DAT. Note also that he groups all three locative case forms mentioned by Almeida (i.e., inessive, superessive and kinship essive) together under “locative” and does not distinguish further between these forms or their functions.

Table 5: The Konkani case system in Dhongde (2022)

	Singular	**Plural**
Nominative	*Ø*	
Accusative	*=k*	
Dative (formally same as accusative)	*=k*	
Ergative	*=n / =ɳ*	*=ni / =ɳi*
Ablative	*pɵsun*	
Genitive	*=cɔ / =ci / =cɛ̃*	
Locative	*=t, =cer / =ger, =ã*	*=t, =cer*
Vocative	*=a / =o (M) / =e (F)*	*=o*

With eleven cases, Almeida’s (2004) system is the most detailed of any of the case systems above and also served as the basis for discussions in other works by the Peterson and his associates (e.g., Peterson 2022; Peterson & Chevallier 2022; Peterson & Mopkar 2021), although with one minor revision, namely that these latter works do not consider Almeida’s dative and accusative to be two separate cases. Instead, as the direct object (O) is identical in form to the nominative when it is non-human/indefinite and

identical in form to the indirect object (G) when it is human/definite, these studies consider the direct object to be either in the nominative case when it is unmarked, or in the objective case when it is marked by the objective marker *=k*. Table 6 provides an overview of this system, together with the most common forms of these markers.

Table 6: The modified system of Almeida (2004) as found in Peterson (2022), Peterson & Chevallier (2022) and Peterson & Mopkar (2021)

	Singular	**Plural**
Nominative (= direct stem)	*Ø*	
The following enclitic case markers attach to the oblique stem:		
Objective	*=k*	
Ergative / Instrumental	*=n*	*=ni*
Locative cases		
Inessive (≈ 'in')	*=nt (=n)*	*=ni*
Superessive (≈ 'on')	*=r / =cer*	
Kinship essive ('at the home of')	*=ger*	
Ablative	*=san / =sun / =savn / =than / =cyan*	
Genitive cases		
Genitive (general)	*=cɔ / =ci / =cɛ̃* **or** *=l-ɔ / =l-i / =l-ɛ̃*	
Kinship genitive ('of the household of')	*=gɛl-ɔ / =gel-i / =gɛl-ɛ̃*	
Vocative	*Ø*	*=no*

As noted in Peterson & Mopkar (2021: 37, fn. 10), while Standard Goan Konkani distinguishes between the ergative / instrumental singular *=n* and the inessive singular *=nt*, although they have identical forms in the plural, in the spoken language of many speakers, as well as in works written in colloquial style (e.g. Murkuɳḍe 2015, a book of stories for children), the inessive singular is spoken and written as *=n*, resulting in identical marking of the ergative / instrumental and the inessive in both singular and plural, so that these are best considered a single case for these speakers. However, as we are discussing here solely the standard dialect, where the distinction between these two cases is maintained in both singular and plural, we will continue here to distinguish these two cases in the following.

Thus, as this section shows, not only do the different researchers assume different case systems, interpreting exactly what each of these individual authors views as a separate case, as opposed to an allomorph of a more general case, itself often involves a certain amount of interpretation.

3.3. NP-internal agreement patterns

The genitive markers given in Tables 2-6 agree with the noun they modify in terms of gender, number and direct/oblique-stem status. This agreement pattern is identical with that found with declinable adjectives. The agreement system of the genitive with the following head noun is illustrated in Table 7. For the sake of comparison, Table 8 shows the corresponding forms of declinable adjectives.

Table 7: The forms of the genitive markers

Stem	**Singular**			**Plural**		
	M	F	N	M	F	N
Direct	*=cɔ / =lɔ*	*=ci / =li*	*=cɛ̃ / =lɛ̃*	*=cɛ / =lɛ*	*=cyo / =lyo*	*=cĩ / =lĩ*
Oblique	*=cya / =lya*	*=ce / =le*	*=cya / =lya*	*=cya / =lya*		

Table 8: The forms of the declinable adjectives in attributive use

Stem	**Singular**			**Plural**		
	M	F	N	M	F	N
Direct	*-ɔ*	*-i*	*-ɛ̃*	*-ɛ*	*-yo*	*-ĩ*
Oblique	*-ya*	*-e*	*-ya*	*-ya*		

Examples of genitive and adjectival agreement are given in (3)-(5). The oblique singular marker preceding the genitive enclitic marker in example (3), i.e., *-a* in *ɵdhyay-a=c-ɛ̃* ‘of the chapter’, is that of the respective inflectional class to which *ɵdhyay* ‘chapter’ belongs. The marker ***-ɛ̃*** following the genitive marker *=c* agrees in gender, number and stem status with the following possessum *rupantɵr* ‘version’, which is neuter, singular and appears in the direct stem.

(3) *ɵdhyay-a=c-ɛ̃* *rupantɵr*
chapter.M.SG-OBL.M.SG=GEN-DIR.N.SG version.DIR.N.SG
‘the version of the chapter’

In example (4), the NP in (3) is modified by the noun *khɵŋḍ* ‘section’, which is masculine, singular and – as it is followed by the genitive marker – also appears in the oblique stem. The final *-ya* in the form *khɵŋḍ-a=c-ya* shows agreement with the following masculine, singular, oblique-stem noun *ɵdhyay-a=c-ɛ̃*, from example (3).

(4) *khɵŋḍ-a=c-ya* *ɵdhyay-a=c-ɛ̃* *rupantɵr*
section.M.SG-OBL.M.SG=GEN-OBL.M.SG chapter.M.SG-OBL.M.SG=GEN-DIR.N.SG version.DIR.N.SG
‘the version of the chapter of the section’

Finally, example (5) shows the larger, attested NP from which (3) and (4) were taken. Here we find the NP-initial demonstrative *hya*, the masculine, singular, oblique form of

the proximal demonstrative, agreeing in terms of oblique status, gender and number with the oblique-stem, masculine singular noun *khəɳḍ* 'section'. The example also includes the adjective *pəyl-* 'first' in attributive function to the noun *ədhyay* 'chapter'. Here *pəyl-* is marked as masculine, singular oblique, i.e., *pəyl-ya*, as it agrees with the masculine, singular oblique noun *ədhyay* 'chapter'.

(5) *hya* *khəɳḍ-a=c-ya* *pəyl-ya* *ədhyay-a=c-ɛ̃*
this.OBL.M.SG section.M.SG-OBL.M.SG=GEN-OBL.M.SG first-M.OBL.SG chapter.M.SG-OBL.M.SG=GEN-DIR.N.SG

rupantər
version.DIR.N.SG
'the version of the first chapter of this section'

In order to simplify the examples and for the sake of readability, in the following pages oblique marking will simply be glossed as "OBL" for singular oblique forms and as "OBL.PL" with plural oblique nouns, only indicating gender when this serves to clarify the example. Similarly, the direct stem will not be glossed unless this serves to clarify the example.

3.4. The individual cases shown in Table 6 and their functions

We briefly summarize here the forms and functions of the ten cases in Table 6 from our own previous study (Peterson & Mopkar 2021) and provide an example for each case. The purpose of this is to give the reader a better idea of this system, on which all of the above-mentioned studies agree at least to some extent, before refining this system somewhat and discussing two further cases which have so far escaped the attention of researchers of Konkani.

- the zero-marked **nominative or direct case** is the case of intransitive subjects (S) of finite verbs in general and of transitive subjects (A) of finite verbs in the present tense, the future, and the past habitual. It is also found with non-human and indefinite O's, as with *aḍo* 'fencing' in example (6) (where the A is omitted as it is known from context), or *pətrə* 'letter' in (8).

(6) *aḍo=y=bi* *ke-ll-ɔ.*
fencing.NOM.M.SG=ADD=ADD do-PST.PERF-M.SG
'We also put in fencing (literally: '[We] did fencing also').' (CP: 35)[16]

- the **ergative / instrumental** marks the A in the finite past tense (e.g., *ain* 'mother' in (8)), and in the past and present perfect, and both S and A with non-finite forms (e.g., future participle). It also marks instruments and can have a causal interpretation, as shown in (7).

[16] References given as abbreviations between brackets, as here, are from spoken texts in our corpus.

(7) *[…] hẏa bhõẏ-a=n to=y kheɭ=na […]*
this.OBL fear-OBL=INST 3SG.M=ADD play=NEG.COP.PRS.3SG
'[…] through / out of this fear he also does not play […]' (Almeida 2004: 176)

- the **objective** is used to mark indirect objects (G), and definite/human direct objects (O). In (8) it marks G, *baba* 'father', the indirect object.

(8) *ai=n baba=k pətrə bərəy-l-ɛ̃.*
mother.OBL=ERG father.OBL=OBJ letter.NOM.N.SG write-PST-N.SG
'Mother wrote a letter to father.' (Almeida 2004: 121)

- the **inessive** marks a local relationship where one entity is contained within another, as in (9).

(9) *biɭ-a=nt ek muyed-ã=c-i poʈli asa.*
hole-OBL-INESS one coin-OBL.PL=GEN-F.SG bundle.F COP.PRS.3SG
'In the burrow there is a bundle of coins.' (Nayɔk 2017: 8)

- the **superessive** marks a local relationship in which one entity is physically on another; it is also used with reference to text/spoken language contained in different media, i.e., in a newspaper, on television or on the radio. (10) presents an example of this case in its primary meaning of 'on'.

(10) *mɛj-a=r dəvər-lã tɛ̃ pustək mhaka jay.*
table-OBL=SUPERESS place-PERF.3SG.N that.N.SG.DIR book.N.SG 1SG.OBL be.necessary
'I need the book that I placed on the table (lit.: 'I have placed on the table that book is necessary to me)'. (Almeida 2004: 173)

- the **kinship essive** expresses a locative relation with respect to a household or, less commonly, motion towards a household, referenced by one of the members of that household ('at the home of'). (11) provides an example of the first meaning.

(11) ... *tãɳi dilli lagĩ apəl-ya put-ã=ger rav-p-i ɖɔ*
3.HON.ERG Delhi close.to REFL-OBL.HON son-HON.OBL=KIN.ESS stay-NMLZR-ADJVZR Dr.

joʃĩ=c-ɔ namɔ ani fon nəmbər mhaka di-l-ɔ.
Joshi-OBL.HON=GEN-M.SG name. and. address.M andphone number 1SG.OBJ give-PST-M.SG
'… he gave me the name, address and phone number of Dr. Joshi, who was living at his son's home close to Delhi.' (Miranda 2019: x)

- the **ablative** refers to movement away from a source (physically or temporally), as in (12).

(12) *hãv karnaʈək-a=sun [ay-lã][17] haŋar kam kər-p-a=k.*
1SG Karnataka-OBL=ABL come-PERF.M.1SG here work do-NMLZR-OBL=OBJ
'I came here from Karnataka to work.' (RV: 4)

[17] Pronounced [ela] by this speaker.

- the **general genitive** is the default adnominal case, in which one NP is incorporated into another NP in attributive function, including but not restricted to possession. It can also be used to incorporate postpositions and adverbials into an NP as attributes, as in (13).

(13)

						pɵɭẽvk	
mhaka	*haŋa=c-yo*	*veɭ-o*	*ani*	*dharmik*	*jag-ɛ*	*pɵɭe-ũk*	*jay.*
1SG.OBL	here=GEN-F.PL	beach-F.PL	and	religious	place-M.PL	see-INF	be.wanted

'I would like to see the beaches and religious places of here.' (Almeida 2004: 59)

- the **kinship genitive** has the same function as the general genitive but is only used with a possessor NP which refers to the members of a household, referenced by one of the members of that household as possessor, as shown in (14).

(14) ... *mha=gɛl-ɔ* *ekʈ-ɔ* *frɛɳɖ*
1SG=KIN.GEN-M.SG one.single-M.SG friend.M.SG
'… a friend of my family' (CP: 29)

- the **vocative** is the form used to address someone. It is found with nouns but not with pronouns. An example is given in (15).

(15) *bhurg-yã=no,* *tumkã* *hi* *suvat* *kheɭ-p-a=c-ɛ̃* *mɵidan* *mhɵɳun*
child-OBL.PL=VOC.PL 2PL.OBJ this.F.SG place.F play-NMLZR-OBL=GEN-N.SG field.N QUOT

jay *kay* *"cilɖrens park"* *mhɵɳun* *jay?*
be.needed or Children's Park QUOT be.needed
'Children! Do you need this place as a playing field or as a "Children's Park"?' (Murkuɳɖe 2015: 5)

Having provided a basic overview of the functions of the cases given in Table 6, in Section 4 we turn our discussion towards the distribution of the two forms of the general genitive given in that table. We will argue that while the description of these markers in previous studies of Konkani is essentially correct, this description does not fully describe the present distribution of these two markers in the modern language. In Section 5 we then discuss the various ablative markers and will argue that one of these, *=cyan*, overlaps with both the ergative / instrumental and a somewhat enigmatic form which we refer to as the "pseudo-ablative / instrumental".

This discussion of the genitive and ablative forms will then play a central role in our discussion in Section 6 of two further cases, the selective and the elative, which are extremely common in all registers of Konkani, but which to our knowledge have so far escaped the attention of scholars of Konkani grammar.

4. The general genitive

In this section we discuss the status of what is referred to as the general genitive in Table 6 above, with the two enclitic markers =*c* or =*l*, followed by markers of agreement for gender, number and stem status of the head noun (= possessum). While the distribution of the kinship genitive is clear and only found with the meaning "belonging to [someone]'s household', as discussed in the previous section, the distribution of the general genitive markers =*c* and =*l* is less clear. The remainder of this section therefore deals with these two forms in some detail.

With respect to the distribution of the the "*c*- and *l*-genitives", as we refer to them here, Almeida (2004: 66) writes that the *c*-genitive can be used with all types of possessor NPs, whereas the *l*-genitive is restricted to nouns denoting personal names of human possessors. In a similar vein, Miranda (2003: 742) writes that the forms beginning with /l/ are found "when the preceding pronoun or noun denotes a human". In this section we look at the distribution of these two forms of the genitive as reflected in our corpus.

This corpus presently contains 21,628 words. It has two main subsets. The first part has been taken from a learner's manual of Konkani (Almeida 2004) and shows how Konkani is taught in Goa itself to non-Konkani speakers, so that the morphosyntactic structures that it contains can be considered to be what most native speakers of Goan Konkani view as prescriptively correct Standard Goan Konkani.[18] This part of the corpus consists of all but a few of the most basic introductory lessons found in Almeida (2004), including all stories and dialogues as well as example sentences in the exercises.[19] The second part of the corpus contains texts from a variety of sources. These include two spoken narratives, several short stories from children's books, and various sections of an academic text. (16)-(17) provide examples of the *l*-genitive from this corpus, where the possessor is the name of a person. Table 9 presents the statistics for the *c*- and *l*-genitives and the percentage of human possessors.

[18] However, this does not hold for orthography, which deviates somewhat in Almeida (2004) from standard practice. E.g., Almeida (2004) prioritizes morphological consistency in some cases where standard orthography follows the phonetic principle. For example, where the imperfective marker /ta/ follows a stem-final retroflex, e.g. *soḍ* 'leave', Almeida consistently writes this as <soḍta> / <सोडता>, preferring a consistent form of the imperfective marker, whereas Standard Goan Konkani orthography shows the assimilation of the initial /t/ of the imperfective to /ʈ/, i.e., <soḍʈa> / <सोडटा>, reflecting pronunciation.

[19] Only those exercises were excluded from our corpus where example sentences were not given in a final, "correct" form, as e.g. when the learner was expected to re-order the words of the sentence, or similar exercises.

Table 9: Human possessors and the genitive markers in our corpus

Learner's corpus	
Total number of genitive forms	
c-genitive	900 (98%)
l-genitive	15 (2%)
Total	**915**
Human personal names marked by the genitive in the learner's corpus	Total number: 41
Names followed by the *c*-genitive	26 (63%)
Names followed by the *l*-genitive	13 (32%)
Other human nouns followed by l-genitive	2 (5%)
Mixed "natural" corpus	
Total number of genitive forms	
c-genitive	419 (100%)
l-genitive	0 (0%)
Total	**419**
Human personal names marked by the genitive in the mixed corpus	Total number: 22
Followed by the *c*-genitive	22 (100%)[20]
Followed by the *l*-genitive	0 (0%)

(16) *uma, tumka tereja=l-i kombi avɖ-ũ na?*
Uma 2HON.OBJ Teresa=GEN-F.SG hen.F.SG be.pleasing-INF NEG.COP.PRS.3SG
'Uma, did you not like Teresa's hen (lit.: has Teresa's hen not pleased you)?'[21] (Almeida 2004: 28)

(17) *ai, nita=l-e ai=n suŋaʈ-ã=c-ĩ bhaj-ĩ ke-ll-ĩ.*
mother Nita=GEN-OBL mother=ERG prawn-OBL.PL=GEN-N.PL type.of.food-N.PL do-PST.PERF-N.PL
'Mother, Nita's mother made (lit.: had made) prawn *bhajas*.' (Almeida 2004: 31)

Two further lexical nouns referring to humans are also followed by the *l*-genitive marker, shown in (18) and (19). The possessum in (19) is omitted in the original text, as it is clear from context.

(18) *mhɵ=gel-ya iʃʈ-a=l-ɔ*[22] *aj jɵlmadis.*
1SG.OBL=KIN.GEN-OBL friend-OBL=GEN-M.SG today birthday.M.SG
'Today is the birthday of a friend of my family.' (Almeida 2004: 64)

[20] In the children's stories, an older man who plays a prominent role in helping the children is often referred to as kaka 'paternal uncle', which in this usage functions similarly to a personal name and is therefore counted as such here.

[21] The negative perfect is marked in (16) through the infinitive plus the present-tense negative copula, hence the lack of any explicit perfect morpheme in (16).

[22] *iʃʈ* 'friend' is also found once followed by the *c*-genitive in the learner's manual.

(19) *lok-ɑ̃=l-ɛ̃* *pɵɭe-vn* *hɑ̃vɛ̃=y* *dɵvɵr-l-ɔ.*
people-PL.OBL=GEN-N.SG look-CVB 1SG.ERG=ADD place-PST-M.SG
'Having watched the people's [behavior] I too placed [the present (M.SG) there].' ([Almeida 2004: 154)

If we expand "human personal names" to include "humans" in general, following Miranda (2003: 742), as in examples (18)-(19), this means that 15 out of 41, or 37%, of all human possessors take the *l*-genitive, while 63% of all cases with a human possessor are marked by the *c*-genitive. This confirms both Almeida (2004) and Miranda (2003)'s analysis of the *c*-genitive as unmarked with respect to the status of the possessor, whereas the *l*-genitive is restricted to human possessors. It is however also clear that even with nouns with human reference, the *c*-genitive is preferred, even in the learners' manual. As the *l*-genitive is found in our corpus exclusively in Almeida's (2004) learners' manual and never in the "natural" corpus, the use of the *l*-genitive is clearly optional in Standard Goan Konkani. Also, as these two genitive markers are interchangeable with human possessors, we consider them allomorphs of the same case, so that we assume one general genitive case.

Traces of the *l*-genitive are also found with a small number of adjectives which derive from postpositions or relational nouns, e.g., *vɵyl-* 'upper', which derives from *vɵyɵr* 'above' plus the *l*-genitive (< **vɵyɵr-l-* 'upper-GEN'), *bhayl-* 'outer' (< *bhayɵr* 'outside'), *faɻɵl-* 'posterior' (< *faɻ* 'back'), and *bhitɵrl-* 'inherent, intrinsic' (< *bhitɵr* 'inside'). This use of the *l*-genitive is no longer productive, and all of the above-mentioned forms are accordingly listed as separate lexical entries in Borkar et al. (2017), the standard dictionary for Goan Konkani. Similar comments hold for a few further adjectival forms which historically derive from the simple form of an adjective to which the *l*-genitive is added, with no notable semantic contribution. A few examples are given in (20).[23]

(20) *ɵʃɛ̃* / *ɵslɛ̃* 'like this; in this way'
tɵʃɛ̃ / *tɵslɛ̃* 'like that; in that way'
kɵʃɛ̃ / *kɵslɛ̃* 'how; in what way'.

Again, all of these forms are also listed as separate lexical entries in Borkar et al. (2017), underlining their status as lexicalized forms.[24]

In contrast, the *c*-genitive is entirely productive and, in addition to its use with all types of NPs to mark the possessor in complex NPs, it is also productively used to derive attributive forms from temporal and local deictic adverbials, such as *haŋ* 'here' (cf. e.g. example (13) above), *atɑ̃* 'now', *kal* 'yesterday', *tenna* 'then', etc.

[23] Note that /s/ before /e/, /ɛ/ or /i/ is regularly realized as [ʃ] and as [s] elsewhere in Konkani, so that the <s>~<ʃ> alternation in orthography in these examples is totally predictable and regular.

[24] This use of the *l*-genitive incidentally resembles that found in many Indo-Aryan and Munda languages of Jharkhand, in which the genitive marker came to be used as a focus marker, and later became so common in this function with certain words that it eventually lost its focusing function and essentially became part of the respective lexeme. Cf. e.g. Peterson (2010: 81-82; 2017: 561-568, especially the discussion at the bottom of p. 565).

In conclusion, we assume for Standard Goan Konkani a general genitive case which includes both the *c*- and *l*-genitives. With a possessor NP with human reference, the genitive may optionally be marked by *=l*, with no difference in meaning. The *l*-genitive is also found with a few other forms, where it has however now become part of the stem. Importantly, however, the *c*-genitives are the default forms and can always be used productively in the modern language.

5. The general ablative markers

Table 6 contains five different forms which are often mentioned as ablative markers in previous works. To these we can add the forms *=thavn* and *=sakun*. These are summarized in (21).

(21) *=san / =sun / =sakun / =savn /=than / =thavn / =cyan*

With the exception of *=cyan*, these ablative markers appear to be dialectal variants belonging to two main groups, i.e., *=san / =sun / =savn / =sakun* and *=thavn / =than*, respectively. They can all be viewed as regional / idiolectal variants of a single ablative case. These forms only mark ablative semantics. *=cyan* is different: To begin with, unlike the others, it transparently derives from the *c*-genitive with neutral, singular, oblique marking, i.e., *=c-ya*, plus the ergative / instrumental marker *=n*. On the other hand, the *s*-series of ablative markers in (21) seems to derive from the postposition *pasun*, while the *th*-forms are of a different source which is still unclear.

=cyan also has a different status than these other ablative markers, one which has previously been overlooked by many researchers (including by the present authors), namely that it can mark both an ablative NP but also an instrument. An example of an (unsuccessful) instrument function is given in (22) from Dalgado (2022: 115), who was perhaps the first to note this instrumental function of *=cyan*.

(22) *ta=cyan* *nəjɔ* *ja-l-ɛ̃.*
3SG.M.OBL=INST NEG.be.able COP-PST-N.SG
'It was not possible for him to do, he could not do (lit.: '[it] did not happen through/by him').' (Dalgado 2022: 115)

These (negative) abilitative constructions are typically expressed elsewhere in Indo-Aryan by marking the would-be agent by an ablative postposition, e.g., *se* 'from' in Hindi, which is then also an ablative / instrumental marker, and in many other Indo-Aryan languages the verb appears in the passive.[25] That *=cyan* in Konkani also marks ablative semantics is shown in (23).

[25] Cf. Hindi *mujh se* *nahīṃ* *so-yā* *ga-yā*
1SG ABL NEG sleep-PST.M.SG PASS-PST.M.SG
'I couldn't sleep, couldn't get to sleep (it was not slept by me).' (McGregor 1995[3]: 130)

(23) *jun-a=c-e* *pɵndra* *tark-e=cyan.*
June-OBL=GEN-OBL.F.SG fifteen date.F-OBL=ABL
'From the 15th of June [onwards].' (Almeida 2004: 51)

For this reason, we will refer to the marker *=cyan* henceforth as the ablative / instrumental marker, as it differs in this functional overlap from both the ergative / instrumental marker *=n* as well as the other ablative markers given in (21). For the sake of intelligibility, we will gloss it with the term that best fits the example it is found in.

=cyan may have been motivated through contact with Kannada, with which Konkani has been in contact for hundreds of years. Kannada has had an enormous impact on the morphology and syntax of Konkani, as until recently speakers of Konkani were generally lifelong bilinguals in both languages.[26] E.g., in Standard Kannada, there is an ablative / instrumental case marker, *=iṃda*, which follows a genitive-marked NP (cf. Zydenbos 2020: 97-98).

While the development of a postposition with instrumental and ablative functions and which takes an NP in the genitive is of course nothing out of the ordinary, the similarity between the two languages in this respect should not be entirely dismissed as coincidental, especially since there is similar evidence elsewhere for Kannada influence on the case system of Konkani: Cf. once again the form of the superessive *=r* and its unexpected allomorph *=cer*, with the genitive marker *=ce*, discussed in the previous sections. Similar to the instrumental / ablative, which takes the genitive, the locative case is marked in Kannada by adding the case marker *=alli* 'LOC' (< *alli* 'there') to the genitive-marked noun (cf. Zydenbos 2020: 98-100). As these are the only two case markers in both Standard Kannada as well as in Standard Goan Konkani which can or must take the genitive marker, Kannada influence on Konkani would seem to be a likely explanation of these two Konkani forms. This topic requires further study from a diachronic perspective.

Summarizing: In our final analysis of the Konkani case system, we give *=cyan* a distinct status as the ablative / instrumental case marker, and no longer consider it an allomorph of the general ablative, with which it only partially overlaps functionally. Instead, it can mark the ablative, unlike the ergative / instrumental marker *=n*, but it can also mark the instrumental, unlike the other ablative markers in (21).

One last form must also be mentioned with respect to the ablative, namely the somewhat enigmatic morph *=lyan*. While not a productive ablative or instrumental marker, *=lyan* has the same underlying structure as *=cyan*, differing from the latter only in that it derives from the *l*-genitive instead of the *c*-genitive, i.e., *=l-ya* + the ergative / instrumental marker *=n*.[27] However, unlike *=cyan*, which can mark ablative and instrumental semantics, *=lyan* is not a productive marker from a synchronic perspective.

It is difficult to ascertain from the modern language whether *=lyan* was ever productively used, and further research on this form in older Konkani is necessary. *=lyan* is only

[26] See in this respect e.g. Nadkarni (1975), Peterson (2022) and Peterson & Chevallier (2022).

[27] In our view, that fact that these two markers have an identical underlying form, one deriving from the *c*-genitive and one from the *l*-genitive, further suggests that *=cyan* has been structurally copied from Kannada with purely Konkani morphology, and suggests an earlier stage where both forms competed with one another. Again, this topic requires further study.

found with three lexemes in our corpus, all of which have lexicalized with somewhat unpredictable meanings: *kəḍ* 'side', *faṭ* 'back' and *vəyər* 'above'. When combined with *=lyan* these yield *kəḍlyan* 'from', *faṭlyan* 'behind' and *vəylyan* 'on top of that / in addition to that' but also 'from above' (cf. Borkar et al., 2017: 570). In addition to 'from', *kəḍlyan* can also have an instrumental meaning, as (24) shows.

(24) *bhayər mej-a=r bəs-la* ***tya*** ***mənf-a*** ***kəḍlyan*** *bhər-un ghe.*
outside table-OBL=SUPESS sit.down-PRS.PERF that.OBL man-OBL INSTR fill.out-CVB AUTOBEN.IMP
'Have it filled out **by the man** seated at the table outside.' (Almeida 2004: 113)

Of the above-mentioned forms, only *kəḍlyan* 'from / through (INST)' and *vəylyan* 'from above' now show a direct connection to the ablative / instrumental, suggesting that if *=lyan* was once productive, it has since been entirely replaced in this function by the form *=cyan*.

There is one environment, however, in which *=lyan* and the *l*-genitive are both still commonly found with an ablative / instrumental or a genitive function, respectively, irrespective of animacy. These are discussed in the following section. To facilitate the discussion there, in the following we refer to the marker *=lyan* as the "pseudo-ablative / instrumental" form, to differentiate it from the "real" ablative / instrumental marker *=cyan*. As the *l*-genitive is still in use, we will simply refer to this form in the following as the "*l*-genitive".

6. The selective[28] and elative cases

Our corpus contains numerous examples of two further case markers which are very common in both data sets of our corpus but which to our knowledge have not received mention in any grammar or learner's manual of Konkani until now. Both derive historically from case stacking. The first of these, the selective, derives from the inessive singular marker *=nt* followed by the *l*-genitive marker. It refers to an entity which is located within a larger entity, from which it is "selected". The second, the elative, derives from the inessive singular marker *=nt* and the pseudo-ablative / instrumental allomorph *=lyan*. It refers to movement out of an entity or group of entities.

Examples (25)-(32) illustrate the forms and functions of these two cases. The selective case is restricted to attributive function ((25)-(28)). The elative is tendentially found in attributive function (e.g., (29)-(30)), although it can also function adverbially at the sentence level, as (31)-(32) show.

Selective: *=ntl-*

(25) *atã* ***don*** ***həjar*** ***don-a=ntl-ɔ*** ***ek*** ***maḍ*** *lag-ləl-ɔ*
now two thousand two-OBL=SEL-M.SG one coconut.tree.M bear.fruit-PST.PERF-M.SG

[28] The term *selective* has been inspired by the use of this term in Wagner-Nagy (2019: 521), although the status and function of our use of the term differs considerably from that in Wagner-Nagy's grammar. We thank Chris Lasse Däbritz for calling this term to our attention.

na.
NEG.PRS.3SG
'Now not **one coconut tree among those planted in 2002** bore fruit.' (CP: 18)

(26) ***tɛ*** ***prøt-i=ntl-ĩ*** *pan-ã* *bør-ĩ=c=ʃ-ĩ* *vac-ũ* *ye-tal-ĩ*
that.OBL copy-OBL=SEL-N.PL page-N.PL good-N.PL=FOC=APPROX-N.PL read-INF be.able-IPFV.PST-N.PL

øʃ-ɛ̃ *mhaka* *dis-l-ɛ̃.*
such-N.SG 1SG.OBJ be.seen-PST-N.SG
'**The pages in that copy** were easily readable, so it seemed to me.' (Miranda 2019: ix)

(27) ***gãv-a=ntl-ɛ*** ***lok*** *kasl-ɛ* *dhønd-ɛ* *kør-tat?*
village-OBL=SEL-M.PL people of.what.type?-M.PL profession-M.PL do-PRS.PL
'What professions do **the people in the village** do?' (Almeida 2004: 138)

(28) ***hya*** ***viʃøy-a=ntl-ɛ*** ***coɖ*** ***mahiti*** ***khatir*** *mhaka* *pi.ke.rajʃekhør*
this.M.OBL subject-OBL=SEL-F.SG.OBL much information.OBL for 1SG.OBJ P.K.Rajshekar

hãɳi *sɵpadit* *ke-ll-ɛ̃* *kønnøɖ* *jønpød* *møhabharøt* *jay* *as-l-ɛ̃.*
3HON.ERG edited do-PST.PTCP-N.SG Kannada people Mahabharata be.wanted COP-PST-N.SG
'**For more information on this subject**, I wanted the Kannada People's Mahabharata edited by K.P. Rajshekar.' (Miranda 2019: xiii)

Elative: *=ntlyan*

(29) ***payp-a=ntølyan*** ***udøk*** *soɖ-un* *ekømek-ã=k* *bhijovn bhij-øy-un* *møj-e=n*
pipe-OBL=ELA water release-CVB RECP-OBL.PL=OBJ get.wet-CAUS-CVB fun-OBL=INST.SG

dhuɭvøɖ *mønøy-l-i.*
sprinkling.of.colors.during.Holi.F celebrate-PST-F.SG
'[The boys and girls] turned on (lit. 'released') the faucet ('the **water from in the pipe**'), got each other wet and joyously (= with fun) celebrated the throwing of colors of Holi.' (Murkuɳḍe 2015: 10)

(30) *tãɳi* *mhøje* *khatir* ***bhã.pra.sõ.sõ=c-ya*** ***grønthaløy-a=ntølyan*** ***tya***
3.HON.ERG 1SG.POSS.OBL for B.O.R.I.=GEN-OBL.N library-OBL=ELA that.OBL

grønth-a=c-i ***foʈokɔpi*** *kør-p-a=c-i* *vevøstha* *ke-l-i.*
book-OBL=GEN-F.SG photocopy.F do-NMLZR-OBL=GEN-F.SG arrangement.F.SG do-PST-F.SG
'She arranged to make **a photocopy of that book from the B.O.R.I.'s library** for me.' (Miranda 2019: xii)

(31) *pracin* *koŋkɳi* *bharøt-a=c-i* *khøbør* *mhaka* *pøylĩ* *ɖa.* ***jujhe***
ancient Konkani Mahabharat-OBL=GEN-F.SG news.F.SG 1SG.OBJ first Dr. Jorge

pirer-ã=c-ya ***børp-a=ntølyan*** *me[-[-i.*
Pereira-HON.OBL.HON=GEN-OBL writing-OBL=ELA meet-PST-F.SG
'I first came across news of the old Konkani Bharat **from [a mention] in a writing of Dr. Jorge Pereira**.' (Miranda 2019: ix)

(32) *ta=c-ya* ***burak-a=ntlyan*** *koɳ=ɵy* *barik* *sarik* *jiv* *bhitər* *sər-ũk*
that.OBL=GEN-OBL hole-OBL=ELA who?=ADD small ECHO creature inside move-INF

ʃək-tal-ɔ.
be.able-PST.IPFV-M.SG
'Any tiny creature could come in through (= **from inside**) **that hole**.' (Nayək 2017: 6)

In combination with the demonstratives *hɛ̃* 'this' and *tɛ̃* 'that', the respective base forms for these two cases are realized as either *hatunt-*/*tatunt-*, or *hantũ-*/*tantũ-*, respectively, to which the *l*-genitive or *=lyan* is added; cf. example (33).

(33) *ami* *jenna* *kaka* *vaŋɖa* *hi* *suvat* *nivəl* *kər-tal-ɛ,* *tenna*
1PL when.CRL uncle together.with this.F.SG place.F clean do-PST.IPFV-M.PL then

yẽvk
hatuntl-ɔ ***koɳ=uc*** *adar-a=k* *ye-ũk* *naʃ-ill-ɔ.*
this.SEL -M.SG who=FOC help-OBL=OBJ come-INF NEG.COP-PST.PERF-M.SG
'When we were cleaning this place together with Uncle, then **no one from among them** came to help (lit.: **who among these** had not come to help).'[29] (Murkuɳɖe 2015: 11)

The most likely reason that none of the grammatical works that we consulted deal with these forms[30] is that these appear at first glance to be typical examples of case stacking, in which a genitive or (pseudo-)ablative / instrumental case marker is added to an inessive-marked NP with entirely predictable semantics. For example, the complex NP *paypantəlyan udək* in (29) is semantically transparent: water (*udək*) from inside the pipe (*paypantəlyan*); similar comments apply to all other examples in our corpus, as examples (25)-(33) above show. The main question is thus whether these forms are still analyzable as case stacking in the modern language or whether they have fossilized and become case markers in their own right. In the following we show that the facts clearly indicate that both of these markers have indeed fossilized and must be viewed as simple case markers from a synchronic perspective.

Assuming for the moment that the elative and the selective are in fact case stacking in the modern language, we would expect three things, namely:

1. that both the *l*- and *c*-genitive markers are found here with roughly the same distribution as described above in Section 4;
2. that the ablative / instrumental marker *=cyan* should be possible with the elative, since of the two only *=cyan* is productively used in the modern language whereas *=lyan* is not, and:
3. that the inessive marker has the form *=nt* with a singular noun and *=ni* with a plural noun (cf. again Table 6).

[29] Note that *koɳ=uc* [who=FOC] plus a negated verb means 'no one'.

[30] The selective is found once in Dhongde (2022: 157, example (99)) in the form *goy-a-ntl-i*, which Dhongde glosses as 'Goa-OBL-PP:in.F.S', unfortunately without further comment or translation of the form.

However, as we now show, none of these three conditions hold.

With respect to the first point, note that only the *l*-based forms of the genitive are possible in the selective, regardless of the status of the possessor as [±human], so that Point 1 does not hold (cf. e.g. examples (25)-(28) and (33)). This also holds for the elative, where only *=lyan* can occur; thus, Point 2 also does not hold. That is, the forms **=ntcɛ̃* and **=ntcyan* are not grammatical in Standard Goan Konkani,[31] and these two units do not show the distribution we would expect for either the genitive or the ablative / instrumental.

With respect to Point 3: Only the "singular" form *=nt* is found in the selective and the elative, even with a plural noun. Consider the lexeme *bhas* 'language.F' in examples (34) and (35). In the singular, *bhas* has the oblique stem *bhaʃe* while in the plural it has the oblique stem *bhasɑ̃*, written *bhasa* before /nt/. In both (34) and (35), these two stems, both singular and plural, are followed by the same form of the selective, namely *=ntəl-*.

(34) ***dər*** ***ek-e*** ***bhaʃ-e=ntəl-ya*** ***pracin*** ***sahity-a=k*** *ayc-ya*
every one-OBL.F.SG language.F-OBL.F.SG=SEL-OBL ancient literature-OBL=OBJ of.today-OBL

kaḷ-a=nt *ek* *agḷ-ɛ̃=c* *mhətvə* *prapt* *ja-ta.*
time-OBL=INESS one special-N.SG=FOC significance acquired become-PRS.3SG
'The ancient literature of every language obtains a special significance in today's time (lit.: **to the ancient literature which is in every single language** … a special significance is acquired).' (Miranda 2019: viii)

(35) *pracin* *məraṭhi,* *sɔ̃skṛt ,* *kənnəḍ* *ani* ***her*** ***bhas-a=ntəl-yo***
ancient Marathi Sanskrit Kannada and other language-OBL.PL=SEL-F.PL

məhabharət-a=c-yo *prət-i…*
Mahabharata-OBL=GEN-F.PL copy-F.PL
'… copies of the Mahabharata in Old Marathi, Sanskrit, and Kannada and **in those in other languages** …' (Miranda 2019: viii)

In (34)-(35) it is only the oblique stems (*bhaʃe* (SG) and *bhasɑ̃* (PL)) that indicate number, not the case markers. If the selective were indeed case stacking in the modern language, we would expect the **ungrammatical** plural form **bhas-a=ni=l-yo* in (35), with the plural inessive marker *=ni*, instead of the grammatical form *bhas-a=ntəl-yo*, as *=nt* as a productive case marker signals the **singular** inessive. As the expected plural marker *=ni* of the inessive cannot appear here together with the plural stem but only the "singular" form *=nt*, the form *=ntəl-* cannot be viewed as case stacking in the modern language. Rather, the two historical case markers INESSIVE + GENITIVE have fused to form a new case. Similar comments hold for the elative.

In fact, it is only in those declensions where the singular and plural oblique stems differ with respect to their final vowels, such as *bhaʃe* (SG) vs. *bhasɑ̃* (PL) in (34)-(35),

[31] These forms do, however occur in some non-standard varieties of Konkani, although not in the Goan Standard. This topic requires further study, as this could mean that there is still productive case stacking in those non-standard varieties. We will deal with this topic in a later study, as detailed data on these dialects are not yet available. However, as the discussion above shows, in the Goan Standard variety we must assume that the elative and the selective are cases in their own right from a synchronic perspective.

that the singular and plural of these cases can be distinguished morphologically. For example, the majority of masculine and neuter stems end in *-a* in the oblique singular and *-ã* in the oblique plural (which is written as <a> before <nt>), e.g., *put* 'son.M.DIR.SG' vs. *puta* 'son.M.OBL.SG' / *putã* 'son.M.OBL.PL' and *ghər* 'house.N.DIR.SG' vs. *ghəra* 'house.N.OBL.SG' / *ghərã* 'house.N.OBL.PL'. These nouns therefore cannot formally express singular vs. plural in the elative and the selective.

These facts, taken together, show that the selective and the elative must be viewed as fully grammaticalized case markers in Standard Goan Konkani and are probably of recent origin.

7. Analysis: How many cases are there in Standard Goan Konkani – and why?

Table 10 summarizes the results of our analysis with respect to the case forms of Standard Goan Konkani. We assume the 13 distinct cases listed in that table. In this section we justify our decision for assuming each of these cases. We recognize that the status of these markers as distinct cases or as allomorphs of more general cases is to some extent dependent on the theoretical persuasion and/or practical concerns of individual researchers; we therefore end this section by showing how our own analysis compares with both a minimal and a maximal analysis of this system.

With respect to its status as a case in its own right, the only candidate in Table 10 which is truely uncontroversial is the **vocative**; it has a unique marking pattern, with zero marking of the oblique stem in the singular and marked by *=no* in the plural, and a clearly defined function, namely addressing someone. While the vocative does not fit the usual definition of a case, as was discussed above in Section 2, we follow the argumentation in Blake (1994: 9) and view the vocative as a case in Konkani, due to its structural similarities with other cases.

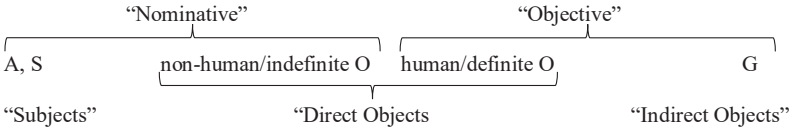
Table 10: The revised case system of Konkani

Case	Singular	Plural
Nominative (= direct stem)	*Ø*	
The following enclitic case markers attach to the oblique stem:		
Objective	*=k*	
Ergative / Instrumental	*=n*	*=ni*
Ablative / Instrumental	*=cyan*	
Locative cases		
Inessive	*=nt (=n)*	*=ni*
Superessive	*=r / =cer*	
Kinship essive	*=ger*	

Ablative cases		
Ablative (general)	*=san / =sun / =sakun / =savn /=than / =thavn*	
Elative	*=ntlyan*	
Genitive cases		
Genitive (general) – *l*-forms are restricted to human possessors, *c*-forms are unmarked in this respect	*=cɔ / =ci / =cɛ̃* or *=lɔ / =li / =lɛ̃*	
Kinship genitive	*=gɛlɔ / =geli / =gɛlɛ̃*	
Selective	*=ntlɔ / =ntli / =ntlɛ̃*	
Vocative	Ø	*=no*

The status of the **nominative** and the **objective** as distinct cases requires some comment. Although A and S (i.e., "subjects") in the present tense all appear in the nominative, and definite, human direct objects (O) are marked as objective, non-human and indefinite object NPs are zero-marked, i.e., they have the same form as the nominative. Furthermore, indirect objects (G) receive the same formal marking as definite and human O's, i.e. the objective case. Diagram 1 illustrates this distribution.

Diagram 1: The distribution of the formal markers of "subjects", "direct objects" and "indirect objects" in Konkani



For this reason, many researchers of South Asian languages with similar differential object marking patterns differentiate between an accusative and a dative case so that not only subjects and indirect objects, but also direct objects are assigned to a single case, at least in name. Alternatively, our objective case is divided into two distinct cases, the "accusative" and the "dative" which have the same marker.[32]

We follow the formal marking and assume two cases here, the nominative and the objective, as shown in Diagram 1. As this pattern is quite common crosslinguistically, with shared marking for S, A and non-human/indefinite O as opposed to G and human/definite O, we prefer to assume the presence of only two cases here, not three, although other researchers may analyze this differently.

The status of the **ergative / instrumental** as a unique case would seem straightforward, although it should also be mentioned that the same marker does cover two different semantic roles, namely an agent and an instrument. As such, some might chose to consider them two different cases, among other reasons as they can co-occur in the same sentence. However, we again prioritize the formal marking and consider this to be one

[32] Cf. e.g. the discussion in Butt (1995: 17-19) on Hindi and the literature cited there.

case.[33] Similar arguments hold for the **ablative / instrumental**, which we similarly recognize as a distinct case due to its form, despite its overlap with the ergative / instrumental on the one hand and with the general ablative markers on the other, since its specific semantics differ from that of both the ergative / instrumental and the purely ablative markers.

The three locative cases in Table 10 also seems straightforward, in that we have three different markers, one denoting location in a place (**inessive**), on something (**superessive**), or at the home of someone's family (**kinship essive**). We therefore consider these to be three different locative cases. Note however that Dhongde (2022: 55) groups all of these together as one overarching locative case, so that our analysis is not entirely uncontroversial.

The **general ablative** in our analysis is clearly a separate case, one which can be marked quite differently according to the region and personal preference of the speaker, although these are all allomorphs in free variation and all mark the same ablative function. The **elative** in our view is also a separate case; while its semantic relation to the general ablative is undeniable, it is at the same time distinct from this in that it refers to movement away from a temporal or locative source within a specific set of referents. The latter part of this definition is clearly lacking from the general ablative, which merely refers to movement away from a particular entity or time.

The genitive cases also present various problems with respect to the total number of cases of Goan Konkani. We assume that the *c*-genitive and the *l*-genitive together form one **general genitive** case which incorporates one NP or other unit (e.g., postpositions or adverbs) in attributive function into a larger NP: The difference between the two is the status of the possessor NP, either [+human] for the *l*-genitive or unspecified for this feature with the *c*-genitive, however, as the *l*-genitive is optional and can always be replaced by the *c*-genitive, we view these as subtypes of a more general genitive case.

The relationship of the **kinship genitive** and the **selective** with the **general genitive** is somewhat less straightforward. The main difference between these three markers, which are all used exclusively in attributive function, is the status of the possessor – i.e., kinship, a specific group of individuals of which the head noun is one, and all other nouns, respectively. Again, we give precedence here to form and view these three markers as three different cases. The etymologies of these forms are also relevant here: The selective derives from case stacking involving two different case markers with two different semantic roles, namely the inessive and possessor (in its broadest sense), both of which are still present in the semantics of the selective, although the marker is now invariable and can no longer be viewed as case stacking. In our view, the unique semantics and form suffice to qualify this category as an independent case.

[33] Recall however from Section 3.2 above that in the spoken language, the ergative / instrumental singular and the inessive singular are both commonly realized as *=n*, and both cases are regularly marked by *=ni* in the plural, so that in the speech of these speakers, the ergative / instrumental and the inessive are not distinguished in either the singular or the plural, which thus complicates this picture somewhat. Again, as we are dealing here with the standard dialect, we do not pursure this topic further here.

Similar arguments hold for the analysis of the kinship genitive: It seems to us that the semantic distinction between a general "possessor" and the members of a household as a possessor is a cultural distinction which must be recognized as a distinct category. This category likely derives from *ghər* 'house' plus the *l*-genitive marker, i.e., **ghər=l-* 'house=GEN-", where the /r/ of /ghər/ is lost before /l/, although this awaits confirmation.[34] From a cultural perspective, the fact that a distinction between **ghər=l-* and *=l-* was salient enough not only to be made, but also that **ghər=l-* was used so regularly with reference to a household that it evolved further phonologically to the point where its original form can only be inferred, strongly suggests that this difference is culturally important enough to consider it a separate case. This analysis is further strengthened by the presence of a kinship essive, discussed above, which for independent reasons we also classifiy as a separate case. We recognize, however, that opinions on this issue may differ among researchers.

Table 11 compares our results with a minimal and a maximal analysis of the Konkani case system. Our analysis of 13 cases in total – a rather high number when compared with the case systems of most other New Indo-Aryan languages – is presented in the center of the table. To the left, the minimal interpretation is given, with seven cases and the maximal interpretation with 16 cases, given on the right. There are of course other possible intermediate interpretations, however we believe these three interpretations suffice to illustrate the major underlying difficulty, namely that even after having identified the relevant forms of the language and their primary functions, there still remains the issue of deciding if the respective form is a case marker (as opposed to a postposition) and also when the meanings of two or more categories differ enough to consider them to be different cases, and when they are still close enough to be considered allomorphs of a more general case.

8. Summary and outlook

In this study we analyze the case system of Standard Goan Konkani, an Indo-Aryan language spoken throughout a narrow strip of land on the west coast of India. After defining *case* for the purpose of this study and how we structurally distinguish enclitic case markers from postpositions, we give a brief overview of the case systems proposed by various researchers over the past 100 years, ranging in size from six to eleven cases. We note however that it is not always entirely clear from such descriptions what counts as a separate case for the individual authors, as different forms are sometimes given under one heading without specifying their exact function or status.

[34] Cf. e.g. once again **vəyər=l-* 'top=GEN-' > *vəyl-* 'upper' in Section 4. Similarly, the kinship essive seems to derive from **ghər* 'house' or the superessive form **ghər-er*. Further work is necessary.

Table 11: The case system of Konkani – three possibilities

Minimal system	Our analysis	Maximal system
Nominative	Nominative	Nominative
Objective	Objective	Accusative
		Dative
Ergative / Instrumental	Ergative / Instrumental	Ergative
		Instrumental
	Ablative / Instrumental	Ablative / Instrumental
Locative	Inessive	Inessive
	Superessive	Superessive
	Kinship essive	Kinship essive
Ablative	General ablative	General ablative
	Elative	Elative
Genitive	Genitive	General genitive
		Human genitive
	Kinship genitive	Kinship genitive
	Selective	Selective
Vocative	Vocative	Vocative
7 cases	**13 cases**	**16 cases**

What this overview of past interpretations of the Konkani case system also shows is that choosing the most appropriate descriptive level for discussing case in Konkani is anything but trivial, and the answer to the question of how many cases Konkani "really has" will differ from researcher to researcher, depending on the respective researcher's theoretical persuasion and practical considerations.

We also provide a detailed discussion of these different markers and their functional range and discuss two further cases which have gone virtually unnoticed until now in grammatical discussions of Konkani, despite their very common use. These are the selective and the elative, which derive from earlier case stacking but which must be considered case markers in their own right in the modern language. We come to the conclusion that Standard Goan Konkani can best be described as having 13 productive cases, quite a large number for a New Indo-Aryan language, and conclude our discussion by comparing our own analysis with a minimal and a maximal analysis of the Konkani case system, showing how the number of cases can plausibly be argued to range anywhere from seven to 16, depending on the respective researcher's theoretical and practical assumptions.

The discussion of the previous pages also shows that the case system of Standard Goan Konkani is in the midst of a highly dynamic process of reanalysis and change and has likely been so for some time, with traces of old case forms co-existing with trans-

parent newer forms which show partial functional overlap with other forms, but also new case markers with unique semantics. Given Konkani's intimate historical relationship with Kannada, its much larger Dravidian neighbor to the South and East which has immensely affected its morphological and syntactic development over the past centuries, a closer comparison of the case systems of these two languages will undoubtedly yield further insights into these dynamics, as will a closer comparison with Marathi, Konkani's larger and better known sister language to the North, from which it separated several centuries ago.

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Abbreviations

1, 2, 3	– persons	GEN	– genitive	PART	– participle
ABL	– ablative	HON	– honorific	PERF	– perfect
ADD	– additive focus	IMP	– imperative	PL	– plural
ADJVZR	– adjectivalizer	INESS	– inessive	PP	– postposition
AUTOBEN	– autobenefactive	INF	– infinitive	PST	– past
CAUS	– causative	INST	– instrumental	QUOT	– quote
COP	– copula	IPFV	– imperfective	RECP	– reciprocal
CRL	– correlative marker	KIN.ESS	– kinship essive	REFL	– reflexive
CVB	– sequential converb	KIN.GEN	– kinship genitive	SG	– singular
DAT	– dative	M	– masculine	SEL	– selective case
DIR	– direct stem	N	– neuter	SUPERESS	– superessive
ELA	– elative	NEG	– negative	V2	– "vector verb" expressing Aktionsart
ERG	– ergative	NMLZR	– nominalizer		
F	– feminine	NOM	– nominative	VOC	– vocative
FOC	– focus	OBJ	– objective case		
FUT	– future	OBL	– oblique stem		

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