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Negation in Kambaata (Cushitic)

Yvonne Treis
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1. Introduction

1.1. The language

The Kambaata language (iso-code: ktb, glottolog code: kam1316) is spoken by the Kambaata, Xambaaro and Donga people, who settle around the Hambarrichcho mountain massif in southern Ethiopia, about 300km southwest of the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa. According to the last census, Kambaata has more than 600,000 speakers (Central Statistical Agency 2007: 74), the large majority of whom live in the Kambaata-Xambaaro Zone of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples’ Regional State. Kambaata belongs to the Highland East Cushitic branch of the Cushitic family (Afroasiatic phylum). There are possibly slight regional differences in prosody, grammar and lexicon (whose exact nature is still to be explored) across the Kambaata-speaking area, which do, however, not impact mutual intelligibility. The immediate neighbors of the Kambaata are speakers of other Highland East Cushitic languages (Hadiyya and Alaaba) and Ometo languages of the Omotic family (Wolaitta and Dawro). Amharic, the Ethiopian lingua franca, is the most important second language of Kambaata speakers. The language is used as a medium of instruction in public primary schools and is taught as a subject up to grade 12. In 2018, Wachamo University started a Kambaata language BA program on its Duuraame campus. Despite having been taught in schools since 1997, Kambaata has remained an overwhelmingly oral language, while Amharic is the written language in private and official contexts. Overall, Kambaata is still vital. Intergenerational transmission seems stable in rural areas yet threatened in towns. Amharic is dominant in certain communication contexts, such as social media, TV, religious services, political meetings, offices, courts, schools, and part of the retail industry and gastronomy. Kambaata is more and more becoming restricted to communication within the family, with friends and neighbours.

The official Kambaata orthography is based on the Roman script (Treis 2008: 73-80, Alemu 2016) and follows the spelling conventions of the Oromo Qubee orthography. The official Kambaata orthography is adopted in this contribution with one important adaptation: Phonemic stress is marked by an acute accent. The following Kambaata graphemes are not in accordance with IPA conventions: <ph> /pʰ/, <x> /tʰ/, <q> /kʰ/, <j> /dʒ/, <c> /tʃ/, <ch> /tʃ/, <sh> /ʃ/, <y> /j/ and <'> /Ɂ/. Geminate consonants and long vowels are marked by doubling, e.g. <shsh> /ʃʃ/ and <ee> /eː/. Nasalisation is marked by a macron, e.g. <ā> /ã/. The data for this paper comes from the author’s recorded corpus of narratives and conversations (marked by initials of recorded speakers name, date, and file number or name), her field notes of volunteered or elicited data as well as a corpus of locally published written Kambaata texts.

1.2. General typological profile

Kambaata is agglutinating-fusional and strictly suffixing. Its constituent order is consistently head-final; hence all modifiers precede the noun in the NP, and all dependent clauses precede independent main clauses. The last constituent in a sentence is usually
a fully finite main verb or a copula. The following open word classes are defined on morphosyntactic grounds: nouns, adjectives, verbs, ideophones, and interjections.

Kambaata is a nominative-accusative language; the nominative is the subject case; the accusative marks direct objects and certain adverbial constituents, it also serves as the citation form of nouns and adjectives. Nouns are marked for gender (masculine vs. feminine); the assignment of grammatical gender is mostly arbitrary, with the exception of nouns referring to human beings and higher animals, where it is sex-based. Nouns distinguish nine case forms (nominative, accusative, genitive, dative, ablative, instrumental, locative, oblique, predicative), all of which are marked by a segmental suffix and a specific stress pattern. The case marking of constituents in a clause is not affected by negation. Adnominal adjectives, numerals and demonstratives agree with their head noun in case and gender. The case system of adnominals is reduced to three forms, namely nominative, accusative and oblique, with the oblique form marking agreement with non-nominative/non-accusative head nouns.

![Figure 1a. Affirmative declarative main verb with bipartite subject marking](image1)

![Figure 1b. Jussive main verb with simple subject marking](image2)

All verbs, with the exception of verbal nouns, carry simple or bipartite subject indexes, as illustrated by the structures of an affirmative declarative main verb and a jussive main verb in Figure 1. Furthermore, verbs inflect for aspect (imperfective, perfective, perfect, and progressive), mood (declarative, imperative, jussive, benedictive, and apprehensive), polarity (affirmative, negative) and dependency status (main verbs, relative verbs, converbs). Inflectional morphemes tend to fuse into inseparable portmanteau morphemes and are therefore often not segmented in the examples. Direct and indirect objects can be expressed by suffixed pronouns at the right edge of the inflected verb. The use of these pronominal object suffixes is partly pragmatically determined and depends on the referential prominence of the object. If a declarative verb is marked for past tense, the marker íkke is the last element of the verbal complex. Derivational morphemes (passive, causative, middle morphemes or combinations of these) are found between the root and the inflection. The inflectional potential of dependent clause verbs is less rich than that of main verb forms: certain person/gender and aspectual distinctions are neutralized, they cannot be marked for mood, and only some of them allow for object suffixes. Ideophones and interjections are morphologically invariant. Interjections constitute utterances of their own. Ideophones are integrated into the clause through light verbs, y- ‘say’ or ih- ‘be(come)’ in intransitive clauses and a’- ~ ass- ‘do’ in transitive clauses.

1.3. Earlier works on negation

Borelli’s linguistic data appendix (1890: 463-482) constitutes the earliest source on the Kambaata language. Though the section on negative verbs remains empty in his questionnaire, there are five negative verb forms in his list of common phrases (phrases usuelles), e.g. the negated imperfective ossaamba [ossa’aambá’a] ‘I don’t sleep’, the
negated non-imperfective amé timba [ameetimba’a] ‘I did not go, have not gone, am not going’, and the negated imperative agotti [ággooti] ‘don’t drink’. Leslau (1952) gives the first coherent presentation of the negative paradigms. Some relevant examples in Korhonen et al. (1986: 90-108) demonstrate slight morphological differences in the non-imperfective negation of Kambaata (proper) and Xambaaro as well as the closely related language Alaaba. As far as more recent publications are concerned, Treis (2012a) analyses clausal negation in Kambaata from a comparative Highland East Cushitic perspective, negative converbs are dealt with in Treis (2012b: 86-90), and Treis (2012c) is a detailed discussion of the negation of relative verbs.

2. Clausal negation

As in many languages in the world, the affirmative and negative verb forms and paradigms do not neatly match each other in a one-to-one relation; rather, paradigmatic and constructional asymmetries (Miestamo 2008) can be observed: Not all affirmative paradigms have dedicated negative counterparts, aspectual and modal distinctions are neutralized, and negation may trigger changes in the morphological makeup of verb forms. Kambaata has five inflectional negation suffixes (Table 2), which will be treated in the following subsections of §2. Negative morphemes are always located after the subject indexes and aspectual morphology, and before tense marking; their position relative to mood and object marking depends on the type of verb they combine with. Information on the order of morphemes will be given in the respective sections below.

| -ba(‘a) | NEG1 | Negator of declarative main verbs, existential verb yoo-, non-verbal predicates |
| -oot | NEG2 | Negator of imperatives |
| -ka | NEG3 | Negator of jussives |
| -ú’’na | NEG4 | Negator of converbs |
| -umb | NEG5 | Negator of relative verbs |

Table 2. Inflectional negation morphemes

2.1. Standard negation

Standard negation is marked with the standard negator -ba(‘a) (NEG1).

(1) Af-óon aff-ee waas-á it-áno-ba’a, mouth-mLOC grab-3mPRF.REL enset_food-mACC eat-3mIPV-NEG1 tů=ý-i agůrr=ke’éechch waal-áno spit.IDEO=say-[3m]PCO leave.[3m]PCO=SEQ come-3mIPV
(Context: Somebody hears about the death of a loved one.) ‘He does not swallow (lit. eat) the food that he has in his mouth, spits it out (and) then comes (to the house of the deceased).’ (EK2016-02-23_003)

(2) Hikkanneeni-i teesuuhrá-a bajig-g-im-bá’a P_DEM2.mICP-ADD again-ADD be(come)_happy-3f-NIPV-NEG1 [corresponding affirmative: bajig-gee’u] be(come)_happy-3fPRF
‘(But) even with this, she was still not happy.’ (TD2016-02-11_001)

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1 English translation mine.
Table 3. Affirmative and negative declarative endings

Order of morphemes: subject marker 1, aspect morpheme in bold, (if present:) subject marker 2, negator; 1s and 3m may vary depending on whether verb stem ends in a single consonant (C) or cluster (CC); object marking is optional

2 Elements in round brackets are dropped or occur dependent on what follows.
3 The CC-forms in the 1s and 3m perfective and perfect look identical but can be shown to be distinct and to follow different stress rules.
Two standard declarative negation constructions need to be kept apart: negative imperfective and negative non-imperfective. As seen in Table 3, affirmative declarative main verbs distinguish four aspectual categories: imperfective, perfective, perfect and progressive, all of which are marked by an aspect morpheme wedged between the bipartite subject index. In the negation, the aspectual distinctions are partly neutralized and reduced to two: imperfective (1) vs. non-imperfective (2). In the imperfective aspect, the affirmative and negative paradigms are largely symmetrical; they only differ in the presence of the standard negator. In contrast, we observe paradigmatic and constructional asymmetry in negative non-imperfective verbs: (i) the second subject slot of the affirmative counterpart is dropped in the negation, which leads to a reduction of the number of distinct subject indexes from seven to five, with 1s=3m and 2s=3f/3p; (ii) a dedicated aspect morpheme, the non-imperfective suffix -im, is used in the negation but not found in any affirmative verb form, (iii) the palatalization and gemination of stem-final consonants in certain 1s and 3m affirmative verb forms is absent in the negation, and (iv) the stress patterns of the negative non-imperfective verb forms are unlike those found on their affirmative counterparts.

If one compares the two declarative negative paradigms in Table 3 with each other, differences in the relative position of the object morpheme [OBJ] and the negator become apparent: The negator follows the object in the imperfective (3) but precedes the object in the non-imperfective (4).

(3) (…) isso’óot kaa’ll-itáa xa’mm-úta hór-a-n
3pNOM help-3fIPV.REL question-fACC all-mOBL-N
xa’mm-itaa-’nne-ba’a
ask-3fIPV-2pO-NEG1
‘(…) they never ask you any essential (lit. helping) questions.’ (Saint-Exupéry 2018: 19)

(4)6 (…) teesuuhá-a hikkuuní-i duus-im-bá-se
again-ADD P_DEM2.mNOM-ADD satisfy-[3m]NIPV-NEG1-3fO
‘(But) this, too, did still not satisfy her.’ (TD2016-02-11_001)

2.2. Negation of non-declaratives

Main verbs in non-declarative sentences are marked for imperative, jussive/benedictive or apprehensive mood. Imperatives and jussives/benedictives have dedicated negation strategies. The apprehensive, a paradigm of main verb forms expressing warnings and threats (Treis 2018), has no corresponding negative paradigm and can only be negated periphrastically with the verb hoog- ‘not do’.

2.2.1. Negation of imperatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Imperative</th>
<th>Affirmative: V-[IMP]-[OBJ]</th>
<th>Negative: V-[SBJ1]-[NEG2]-[IMP]-[OBJ]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2s</td>
<td>‘-i-[OBJ]’</td>
<td>‘-i-oot-i’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2p/2hon</td>
<td>-CPAL/GEM: \ [-é-[OBJ]}</td>
<td>-téen-oochond-e-[OBJ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-CC:</td>
<td>~ -téen-oochond-iyyé-[OBJ]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 Matters are here a bit simplified: Phonological changes triggered by the standard negator are ignored.

5 In the Xambaaro-variant of Kambaata, the respective aspect marker is -um (Korhonen et al. 1986: 101).

6 Subject indexes that are realized as \(\emptyset\) are glossed in [square brackets] in the examples.
Table 4. Affirmative and negative imperative endings

The affirmative imperatives are the simplest verb forms in Kambaata, as they lack the expected first slot of subject indexes. In the negation (Table 4), however, the subject indexes 2s -t and 2p -teen “resurface”. After the subject slot follows the imperative negator -oot (NEG2) – which is realized palatalized and geminate (–oochch) in the plural –, the respective singular (5) or plural (6) imperative morpheme, and, if present, an object suffix.

(5) “Bux-ichch-i min-i aag-is-s-oot-e-’e”
poor-SG-mGEN house-mACC enter-CAUS1-2s-NEG2-2sIMP-1sO
y-ée’u buur-i hoof-ichch-u
say-3mPFV butter-mGEN wrapping_material-SG-mNOM
[Proverb] “Don’t make me enter a poor man’s house!” said the butter wrapping.’ (Alamu & Alamaayyo 2017: 33)

(6) Mikk-míll=y-itéen-oochch-e
move-move.IDEO=say-2p-NEG2-2pIMP
(Police to robbers:) ‘Don’t you (p) move!’ (Volunteered 2016)

Kambaata has a handful of indexical imperative-only verbs (7), which can neither be negated nor be inflected in a non-imperative mood. The completely invariant directive interjections, of which Kambaata has several dozens (8), cannot be negated either.

(7) ám-i (2s) – amm-é (2p) ‘Come (to me for an instant)!’
ī (2s) – i-yyé (2p) ‘Take (what I have in my hands)!’
mée (2s) – mee-yyé (2p) ‘Give (to me what you have in your hands, with you!’
ashshám-i (2s) – ashshamm-é (2p) ‘Hang in there!’ (Greeting to people working)
kárag-i (2s) – káragg-e (2p) / híkkarag-i (2s) – híkkaragg-e (2p) ‘Listen up!’

(8) e.g. ná’a (to children:) ‘Eat!’, gá’a (to children:) ‘Drink!’, sá ‘Shush!’ hág (to donkeys:) ‘Go (on/away)!’, kút (to chicken:) ‘Go away!’, háa (to cattle): ‘Stay calm!’, hírká (to cattle:) ‘Go into the pen!’, sú (to dogs:) ‘Catch!’

2.2.2. Negation of jussives and benedictives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affirmative Jussive</th>
<th>Affirmative Benedictive</th>
<th>Negative Jussive/Benedictive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1s -‘-Ó-u-[OBJ]</td>
<td>-Ó-ó</td>
<td>-Ó-ún-ka-[OBJ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3m -‘-Ó-un-[OBJ]</td>
<td>‘-Ó-u-[OBJ]</td>
<td>-Ó-ún-ka-[OBJ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3f/3p ‘-t-un-[OBJ]</td>
<td>‘-t-u-[OBJ]</td>
<td>-t-ún-ka-[OBJ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3hon -éen-un-[OBJ]</td>
<td>-éen-u</td>
<td>-éen-ún-ka-[OBJ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1p -n-ó ~ ‘-n-u ~ ‘-n-un-[OBJ]</td>
<td>(n.a.)</td>
<td>-n-ún-ka-[OBJ]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5. Affirmative and negative imperative endings

The jussive is used for first and third person directives and expresses what should be done or is permitted to be done. The first person singular jussive is only used in questions, e.g. dág-u ‘Can I come in?’. Whereas the imperative (§2.2.1) can be used to

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7 As in other verb forms, the subject indexes of the first slot undergo regular morphophonological changes (Treis 2008: 60-72).
8 In the Xambaaro-variant of Kambaata, the negative 2p imperfective form is -tóon-oochch-e (Korhonen et al. 1986: 99).
9 I have segmented, glossed and translated examples from published sources and added stress marks.
10 Only two benedictive forms are attested with object pronouns in the database.
bless and curse second persons, e.g. lé'-oot-i át grow-[2s]NEG2-1sIMP 2sNOM ‘Don’t grow!’; blessings and curses of first and third persons are expressed by a dedicated verb form, the benedictive; see, for instance, the self-curse án moo-g-am-ó 1sNOM bury-PASS-1sBDV ‘May I be buried!’ In the negation, the distinction between jussive and benedictive is neutralized. The morpheme -ka (NEG3) is the negator of jussive/benedictive verbs; it follows the subject index and mood morpheme -un and precedes the object suffix (9).

(9)  
Lankaann-i  híil-u,  land-i  kotím-u  
paternal_uncle-mGEN bad-mNOM  leather_dress-mGEN short-mNOM  
Laadd-í  gid-u  gambá=y-ún-ka-he!  
PN-mGEN cold-mNOM  encounter.IDEO=say-[3m]JUS-NEG3-2sO  
(Blessing:) ‘May a bad uncle, a too short leather dress and the cold of Laadda (= windy place) not catch up with you!’ (Alamu & Alamaayyo 2017: 101)

As Table 5 shows, the negative jussive/benedictive is almost entirely based on the affirmative jussive (with the exception of the 1s form). However, the addition of the jussive negator triggers a shift of the stress from the stem to the mood morpheme.

2.2.3. Negation of questions

Negated polar questions are built on negative declarative main clauses and marked by the interrogative suffix -ndo; see the negated non-verbal and verbal predicates in (10) and (11), respectively. The speaker suspects the answer to their question to be affirmative and asks the addressee to confirm this expectation.

(10)  
Hikkúun  qaláall-a-a  xáh-a-ba-ndo?  
P_DEM1.mNOM easy[Amh.]-mPrED-mCOP2 issue-mPRED-NEG1-Q  
‘Isn’t this an easy problem?’ (EK2016-02-12_003)

(11)  
Cii'-áta  sharr-itaaanti=g-a  ik-k-im-bá-ndo?  
birds-fACC  chase-2sIPV.REL=G-mACC/OBL be(come)-2f-NIPV-NEG1-Q  
‘Haven’t you reached the bird-chasing stage (yet) (lit. haven’t you become like you chase birds)?’ (EK2016-02-23_001)

Kambaata has another construction that is regularly rendered by speakers as a negative question in the English translation. The construction is marked by question intonation and the morpheme -bay (12).

(12)  
Ayichch-è=b-a  múan-n  shaf-an-tóo  
Mum-fGEN=PLC-mACC  go-1pP CO churn-PASS-3fPFV.REL  
az-úta  angim-báy?  
milk-fACC  drink<1p>NIPFV-BAY  
(Context: S1 asks S2 to explain to her what “churned milk” is. S2 is surprised by the question and says:) ‘Didn’t we drink churned milk when we went to Mum’s place?! / Remember, we drank churned milk when we went to Mum’s place!’ (Volunteered 2019)

Questions marked by -bay are not intended to solicit an answer; they are possibly best characterized as rhetorical questions and are, as such, also found in the middle of monologues. They can express (i) a strong expectation on the side of the speaker that the addressee fully agrees, (ii) the speaker’s surprise that the addressee has expressed

11 The 2s subject index -t is regularly deleted after a glottal stop.
the opposite, forgotten about something or not realized something obvious (12), or (iii) the speaker’s comment on a surprising encounter or discovery (13). So even though the construction comes in the form of a negative question, it is a strongly non-negative assertive statement.

(13) S1: Xáh-u waal-áyyoo-bay? S2: Āā (…).
issue-mNOM come-3mPROG-BAY yes
(Comment from the audience during a recording of a narrative:) S1: ‘Oh, (here/now) comes the problem!’ – S2 (Narrator): Yes, (…). (S2 explains the turning point of the story again.) (EK2016-02-12_003)

The morpheme -bay is probably segmentable into the standard negator -ba plus an undetermined -y. However, even though speakers tend to translate it as a negative interrogative in English or provide it as a rough equivalent of the -bando-form in (10)-(11), the categorization of -bay as a negator is not entirely certain. On the hand it is attested after the non-imperfective morpheme -im (12), which is an aspect category exclusive to negative polarity (recall Table 3), and thus this combination is an argument in favour of interpreting -bay as a negator. On the other hand, -bay is also attached to progressive verbs (13), where the standard negator never occurs. Furthermore, -bay can combine with an already negated verb; the result is a double negative question (lit. ‘Wasn’t it not by chance?’), which serves as a strongly assertive negative statement (14), often after a surprising discovery (e.g. ‘Oh, it was not by chance!’). If the standard negator (NEG1) in (14) were dropped, the sentence would again be an assertive affirmative statement (lit. ‘Wasn’t it by chance?’ for ‘Oh, it was by chance!’).

(14) (…) qée’rr-aa=bb-aan maran-táni-yan
far-mOBL=PLC-mLOC walk-2sICO-DS
meet=say-1pPFV.REL-NMZ1.mNOM DM chance-mOBL-L-COP3-NEG1-BAY
(gambá=y-inoommi-i(hu) áda dangitt-a-ne-eb-ba-bay? meet-say-1PFV.REL-NMZ1.mNOM DM chance-mOBL-L-COP3-NEG1-BAY
(Speaker realizes that he was mistaken:) ‘So it was not by chance that you were walking along in this remote place (…)?!’ (Saint-Exupéry 2018: 82)

There are two possible positions of -bay: It can be suffixed to the main predicate (12)-(14) or to a focused constituent (15). In the latter case, the sentence-final predicate undergoes final vowel-lengthening whose functional motivation is not yet clear.

(15) Ta abbabáann-uta mann-aakk-á=g-a-bay
A_DEM1.fACC grown_up-fOBL people-PL2-fGEN=G-mACC/OBL-BAY
haasaaww-itáyyoonti-i? talk-2sPROG-VV
(Speaker surprised:) ‘You talk just like grown-ups!’ (Saint-Exupéry 2018: 28)

2.3. Negation of stative predications
The standard negator -ba(‘a) (NEG1) is used with all types of non-verbal predicates, irrespective of whether the predicate expresses equation, proper inclusion, attribution, location or possession, and irrespective of whether, and if yes, which of the non-verbal copulas (Treis 2008: 297-436) is used. It is positioned after the copula (16) or, if the copula is zero or has been shifted to a modifier, it directly follows the predicative case suffix (17). The following examples differ from their affirmative counterparts only in the presence of the negator.
Od-éet  asúss-a-ta-ba’a  
(tree_sp-fNOM  seedling-fPRED-fCOP2-NEG1)  

(Speaker correcting interlocutor’s word choice:) ‘Sycamore fig trees are not “seedlings”.’ (Saint-Exupéry 2018: 21)

hittíin  ii-taa  liúus-a-ba’a  
P_DEM2.fNOM  1sGEN-fCOP2 fault-fPRED-NEG1  

‘This is not my fault.’ (Saint-Exupéry 2018: 12)

The standard negator is also used for the negation of the defective existential, locative and possessive verb yooy- (glossed: COP1) ‘exist, be (located), be (for a P’OR)’ (18); in possessive constructions it follows the object suffix referring to the possessor.

Qenéf-u  me’-iqqi-a  bár-i?  
birth_ceremony-mNOM  how_many-ORD-mCOP2  day-mPRED  

[S2:] Bár-u  yóo-si-ba’a,  isíi  
day-mNOM  COP1.3-3mO-NEG1  3mDAT  

[S1:] ‘The genefa-ceremony is (on) which (lit. the how-manieth) day?’ –  
[S2:] ‘It doesn’t have a (fixed) day (lit. A day is not for him (= genefa m.)).’  

(EK2016-02-23_002)

At first sight, the negation of stative predications thus does not seem to differ from standard negation (§2.1). However, it is shown in §2.4.2 – see (24) – that negative existential predicates do not follow the relativization strategy of other verbal predicates.

### 2.4. Negation in non-main clauses

In complex sentences usually only the last verb is a fully finite main clause verb (or a copula), while verbs in preceding clauses are either based on converbs, relative verbs, purposives or verbal nouns. Negation strategies in non-main clauses differ significantly from those in main clauses (§§2.1-2.3): A dedicated negative converb is used for converb clauses (§2.4.1), a negative participle for relative and purposive clauses (§§2.4.2., 2.4.3), and a periphrastic strategy for the negation of verbal nouns (§2.4.4).

#### 2.4.1. Negation of converb clauses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perfective converb (PCO)</th>
<th>Imperfective converb (ICO)</th>
<th>Negative converb (NEG4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1s/3m</td>
<td>-é-[PAL/GEM]</td>
<td>-Ø-án-[DS-[OBJ]]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2s/3f/3p</td>
<td>-t-[DS-[OBJ]]</td>
<td>-t-án-[DS-[OBJ]]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3hon</td>
<td>-éen-[DS-[OBJ]]</td>
<td>-een-án-[DS-[OBJ]]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1p</td>
<td>-n-[DS-[OBJ]]</td>
<td>-n-án-[DS-[OBJ]]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2p/2hon</td>
<td>-téen-[DS-[OBJ]]</td>
<td>-teen-án-[DS-[OBJ]]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6. Affirmative and negative converb endings

12 Exceptions to this rule are sentences with coordinated final main verbs and with non-final main verbs in embedded reported speech. Furthermore, contrastive clauses with bagáan ‘but’ and the apodosis of hypothetical and counterfactual conditional clauses contain main verb forms.
Kambaata makes a distinction between perfective (general) and imperfective (explicitly simultaneous) converbs; both affirmative converb types are obligatorily marked for switch-reference (-yan DS)\(^{13}\) if the subject changes between the converb and the superordinate clause (Treis 2012b). In the converb paradigms, five persons are distinguished (main verbs distinguish seven). Perfective converbs consist essentially of a verb stem and the first subject index; in addition, the 1s/3m form is marked by the palatalization and gemination of single stem-final consonants or – after stem-final clusters – by an accented vowel suffix -í. Imperfective converbs consist of a verb stem, the indexes of the first subject index slot and an ending -án. Affirmative converbs can only receive object suffixes in their different subject form.\(^{14}\)

Converbs are negated with the dedicated converb negator -ú’nna (21) ~ -u’nnáachch (19) ~ -u’nnáan (20) (NEG4), whose three allomorphs are in free variation and suffixed after the subject index (for reasons of space only the second allomorph is given in Table 6). In the negation, the distinction between the imperfective and perfective converb forms is neutralized; negative converbs are not sensitive to and, consequently, not marked for switch-reference. Negative converbs take object morphemes either as suffixes or infixes (19) to the converb negator.\(^{15}\) Negative converb clauses express events posterior to the event in the superordinate clause (‘before V-ing’) or the absence of accompanying events (‘without V-ing’).

(19)  
(…) mëxx-uhi-u kaa’l’u’nna<’ée>chch (= kaa’l’u’nnaáachchi’-e)  
    single-mNOM-ADD help-[3m]NEG4<1sO> help-[3m]NEG4-1sO  
    dág-u has-ishsh-o-’e  
    know-mNOM want-CAUS1-3mPFV-1sO  
    ‘(…) I was obliged to find (a solution) without anybody helping me.’ (Saint-Exupéry 2018: 22)

The negative converb is also used in two complex verb forms: (i) in combination with the defective verb yoo- ‘exist’ (20) it expresses ‘not yet’ (see Treis 2020 for details), (ii) in combination with the verb fa’- ‘remain’ (21) it serves as a periphrasis for a morphologically negated verb. The semantic difference between a morphologically and periphrastically negated verb is not yet clear and remains to be investigated.\(^{16}\)

(20)  
    Ti qàar-it já’l-a-ta.  
    A_DEM1.fNOM type_of_pepper-fNOM weak-fPRED-fCOP2  
    = Laal-t-u’nnáan yóo-taa.  
    be(come)_ripe-3f NEG4 COP1.3.REL-fCOP2  
    ‘This qaarita-pepper pod is weak. (Speaker gives a periphrasis of the first sentence:) It is not yet ripe.’ (Volunteered 2007)

\(^{13}\) See ex. (21) where the switch from a 1p subject to a 2s subject is marked by a DS marker on the imperfective converb.

\(^{14}\) Exception to this rule: Same subject converbs are also used as final verbs in questions; in this function they can carry object suffixes.

\(^{15}\) It seems that no object suffixes can be added to the first allomorph, -ú’nna; the second allomorph -u’nnáachch takes object infixes or suffixes, the third allomorph, -u’nnáan only suffixes.

\(^{16}\) Deginet W. Doyiso (pers. comm.) tends to translate the periphrastic construction as ‘not have the occasion to V, miss to V’.

10
(21) Kank-áta j-eechch-úta barg-ám-m he’-nnáni-yan that_much-fACC time-SG-fACC add-PASS-1pPCO live-1pICO-DS káan dag-g-ú’nna fa-’oonti-ihu
P_DEM1.mACC know-2s-NEG4 remain-2sPFV.REL-NMZ1.mNOM luus-áane-et
1sGEN mistake-fICP-COP3

‘It is by my fault that you have not known this all the while that we are living together.’ (Saint-Exupéry 2018: 34)

2.4.2 Negation of relative clauses

Affirmative relative verbs are based on declarative main verbs and differ from them, as far as the segmental realization is concerned, only minimally, e.g. if the inflectional complex ends in -’u (see e.g. -táa-’u 3fIPV in Table 3), this element is dropped. There are regular stress differences between perfective and imperfective main vs. relative verbs; in contrast, the stress pattern is identical for perfect and progressive main and relative forms (see Treis 2012c for details). Relativisation is ubiquitous in Kambaata. Many subordinate clauses, e.g. temporal (30), causal, conditional (24), concessive (25), simulative (11) clauses, are relative-based. Cleft sentences are a common focusing device; here, the focused information is expressed in a non-verbal predicate, the backgrounded information in a headless relative clause (21). While affirmative relative verbs – like declarative main verbs – distinguish between four aspectual values (imperfective (3), perfective (12), perfect (22), progressive), these values are neutralized in the negation. The relative negator is -umb and its position in the verb is illustrated in Figure 2. To be noted here is the absence of an aspect morpheme.

Unlike affirmative relative verbs, which only have verbal morphology, negative relative verbs are almost textbook cases of verb-adjectival hybrids with their combination of verbal and adjectival morphemes (Treis 2012c, Treis 2017). They index the person, gender, number and honorificity of their subject, and agree in case and gender with their head noun. The case/gender variation is shown in Table 6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Root</th>
<th>(-Derivation)</th>
<th>Verbal Inflection</th>
<th>Adjectival Inflection</th>
<th>Case/Gender</th>
<th>(-Object)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(-Subject index (slot 1))</td>
<td>-umb</td>
<td>Case/Gender</td>
<td>(-Object)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2. The structure of negative relative verbs

17 The morphologically negated verb equivalent of daggà’’nna fa’oontiihu in (21) would be dag-g-umb-iu /know-2s-NEG5-NMZ1.mNOM/.
Table 6. Endings of negative participles (negative relative verbs)

In (22), the nominative head noun is modified by a numeral and two juxtaposed relative modifiers; the first relative clause ends in a negative participle, the second in an affirmative relative verb. The negative participle agrees in nominative case and feminine gender with the head noun; it is indexed for an honorific/impersonal subject. The affirmative relative verb does not agree with the head noun; it is indexed for a third person masculine subject (referring to the unexpressed stimulus of confusion), marked for perfect aspect and carries an object suffix (referring to the target of confusion, i.e. the grammatically feminine beetle).

(22)  
\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{Relative 1} \\
\text{one-fNOM} & \text{where-fABL} & \text{come-3fPFV-Q} & \text{know-3hon-NEG5-fNOM} \\
\text{Relative 2} & \text{Head noun (…)} \\
\text{confuse-[3m]PRF-3fO.REL} & \text{beetle_type-SG-fNOM} \\
\text{yaaran-áta} & \text{gaffár-ti-yan} \\
\text{loud_sound-fACC} & \text{release-3fPCO-DS} \\
\end{array}
\]

‘(…) when a confused beetle (f.), which came from goodness knows where, released a loud noise (lit. when a beetle, (of) which one does/did not know where she came from and which (something) had confused, released a loud noise) and (…).’ (Saint-Exupéry 2018: 45f)

In (23), the locative noun hixéen ‘over grass’ is modified by a negative participle, which agrees with it in feminine gender and case – note that the oblique case of modifiers shows agreement with non-nominative and non-accusative head nouns. As in this particular example the head noun is coreferent with the subject of the participle clause, the 3f subject index of the participle also points to the grass.

(23)  
\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{Relative clause modifier} \\
\text{help-3f-NEG5-fOBL-3pO} & \text{grass-fLOC} \\
\text{ba’án-t} & \text{goof-fóo’u} \\
\text{quarrel(PASS)-3fPCO} & \text{finish-3fPFV} \\
\end{array}
\]

‘They18 quarreled over grass that had no use for them (i.e. it was a needless fight).’ (Voluntereed 2019)

Example (23) shows that negative participles, like affirmative relative verbs (22), can carry object morphology, which is here -ssa ‘them’ (3pO). Interestingly, the (verbal) object morphemes are located at the right edge of the participle, still after the adjectival case/gender morphology.

Only a single verb follows a different negative relative strategy: The defective existential verb yoo- ‘exist, be (located), be (for a P’OR)’ (§2.3) uses the standard negator -ba(’a) in relative clauses. The negator is realized -ba’í in its relative form (24).

---

18 Recall that Kambaata does not make a distinction between 3f and 3p subject indexes. So the 3f forms of ba’ánt goofóó’u are translated here as ‘they’ (rather than ‘she’).
(24) *Mateeminn-it yoo-ba‘i=dda*

shortage_of_manpower-mNOM COP1.3-NEG1.REL=COND

*shool-uħ-a iill-itāa‘u*

four-mACC-ADD reach-3fIPV

‘If there is no shortage of manpower, she (= the young mother) stays even up to (lit. reaches) four months (in childbed).’ (EK2016-02_23_002)

### 2.4.3. Negation of purposive clauses

Kambaata has two purposive paradigms, i.e. dependent verb forms used in purpose and certain complement clauses and marked for switch-reference (Treis 2010). The verb forms in `-orta` are used in SS contexts, e.g. *hab-orta* forget-[3m]PURP.SS ‘so that he (= SS) forgets’; the verb forms in `-unta` in DS contexts, e.g. *bá‘unta* spoil-[3m]PURP.DS ‘so that he (= DS) is spoilt’. There is no negative purposive paradigm. Instead negative purpose clauses are based on negative relative clauses (§2.4.2) plus the simulative marker =g ‘manner; like’ (see Treis 2017 on the multifunctionality of =g). The distinction between SS and DS purposive is neutralized in the negation – see (25)-(26), where the same verb form is used in same and different subject contexts.

(25) “(...)

*U-ée'u qakk-ichch-u láah-u, barg-íg*
say-3mPFV small-SG-mNOM prince-mNOM add-[3m]PCO

*zákk-o ka xah-ā*

later-mOBL A_DEM1.mACC words-mACC

*hab-úmb-o=g-a*

forget-[3m]NEG4-mOBL=G-mOBL‘“(...), said the Little Prince again so that he (= SS) wouldn’t forget these words later.’ (Saint-Exupéry 2018: 74)

(26) Zuug-gaa-si=r-u boq-o-ssá múumm-u

scrape-3fIPV-DEF.REL=NMZ4-mNOM head-fGEN-3pPOSS hair-mNOM

*hoog-óon ba‘-úmb-o=g-a shom-úta*

enset_juice-fICP spoil-[3m]NEG4-mOBL=G-mOBL headgear_sp-fACC

*wo’rr-itée'u*

put_on.MID-3fPRF

‘Those of them who are scraping (the enset sheaths) are wearing headgear (made from enset leaves) so that their hair (= DS) is not damaged by the (acidic) enset juice.’ (Volunteered 2003)

### 2.4.4. Negation of verbal noun clauses

Verbal nouns consist of a verbal stem plus a case/gender marker -ú (mACC) in the citation form; they inflect like any other noun in the language (Treis 2012c). Verbal nouns may function as arguments and as adverbial constituents, and are thus, e.g., used as final verbs in purpose, manner and complement clauses. Verbal nouns cannot be morphologically negated but require a periphrastic negation with *hoog- ‘not do’; the negative verb takes the verb to be negated as a direct object (27).

(27) *Mát-e Kambaat-iss-á laag-á goof-óon*

one-FOBL Kambaata-GLOT-fGEN word-fGEN end-mLOC

*i-hé tá‘mm-uħ-u tã‘mm-ú hóog-uħ-u*

i-fGEN use-mNOM-ADD ta‘mm-ú not_do-mOBL=G-mOBL
The use of “i” (lit. using and not using “i”) at the end of a Kambaata word is determined by the way it is pronounced (lit. read). (Maatewoos 1992: 16 [correction by Deginet W. Doyiso])

2.5. Negative lexicalisations

The use of the inherently negative verb hoog- ‘not do; miss, lack, not have (s.th.); be tired’ as periphrastic negator has already been exemplified in (27). Alemu (forthc.) makes ample use of the verb in his monolingual definitions of idiomatic expressions (28)-(29); note that verbal dictionary entries are in their accusative verbal noun form.

(28) wozán-u saqal-am-ú = fooloocc-ú hoog-ú
heart-mNOM hang-PASS-mACC rest-mACC not_do-mACC
[Entry] ‘to be hung (of heart)’ = [Definition] ‘not to rest’ (Alemu forthc.)

(29) godáb-u mool-ú = il-áta hinát-e-n
belly-mNOM be(come)_dry-mACC progeny-fACC totality-mOBL-N
il-ée’na¹⁹ fa’-ú; il-ú hoog-ú
give_birth-3honNEG4 remain-mACC give_birth-mACC not_do-mACC
[Entry] ‘to be(come) dry (of belly)’ = [Definition] ‘to never have (lit. to remain without bearing) children; not to bear’ (Alemu forthc.)

The fossilized 3m perfective converb form, hóogg lit. ‘(he) not being’, serves as a disjunctor between phrases and clauses (‘or’), especially in locally produced written material (30), where it is possibly triggered by the need to find a handy translation for Amharic wáy ‘or’ in Kambaata.

(30) (…) mán-ch-u-s shuma’anó j-áata hóogg
people-SG-mNOM-DEF pee-3mIPV.REL time-fACC not_do.[3m]PCO
wól-e gajaajj-óon mal-á-s úll (…) other-fOBL reason-fICP pustule-fACC-DE touch.[3m]PCO
“(…) when the person pees or when he touches the pustules for another reason and (…)” (Kambaatissata 1989: 6.133)

Kambaata’s second inherently negative verb, waayy- ‘probably not do’, is often used in its perfective converb form as an adverbial modifier to another verb (31). The fieldwork corpus shows, however, also instances of main verb use (32), if it is clear from the context what probably does not happen. Note that the following examples contain no morphological negators.

(31) Kabár xeená ubb-ó=da
today.mOBL rain-mACC fall-3mPFV.REL=COND
ba’nnóta-at! Ati-sí-i daanxil-á
be_lost<1p>PURP.SS-COP3 2sNOM-DEF-ACC umbrella-mACC

¹⁹ Here a shortened 3hon form of the negative converb, -ée’na rather than -ee’nmú’na (§2.4.1), is used.
‘We are going to be in trouble (lit. lost) if it rains today. You probably don’t have an umbrella with you either.’ (Volunteered 2019)

(32) Kám, waayy-áno
    oh_no! probably_not_do-3mIPV

(Context: S1 states that Duuballa is not as rich as Handiso. S2, however, thinks that they are equally rich. He replies:) ‘Come on, this is probably not (true).’ (Volunteered 2014)

3. Non-clausal negation

3.1. Negative replies

Positive questions are answered positively with āā ‘yes’ or, as seen in (33), negatively with ā́ ā́ ā ‘no’.

(33) S1: Ā́t  nír  Ameerik-a-a
    2sNOM last_year.mOBL PN-mPRED-mCOP2
    mar-toontí-ihu?
    S2: Āáá, Jermán-a-a
    go-2sPFV.REL-NMZ1.mNOM no PN-mPRED-mCOP2

S1: ‘Did you go to Amerika last year?’ – S2: ‘No, to Germany.’ (Elicited 2019)

The negative interjection ā́ ā́ ā ‘no’ is not attested as polarity-reversing particle in replies to negative questions. Interestingly, the positive interjection āā ‘yes’ is found both in replies that confirm (34) or disconfirm negative questions (35). In (34), āā ‘yes’ signals agreement with the (negative) polarity of the question, in (35), in contrast, it signals agreement with the speaker’s implicit assumption of the negative question (§2.2.4), namely that the addressee can see the people on the horizon.

(34) S1: Shariif-á  dag-gáanti-ba-ndo?
    PN-mACC know-2sIPV-NEG1-Q
    S2: Āā, án waayy-i márr kas-áamm
    yes 1sNOM probably_not_do-[1s]PCO go.[1s]PCO do_ever-1sIPV

S1: ‘Don’t you know Shariifa (= a place)?’ – S2: ‘No (lit. yes), (I don’t know it,) I have probably never been there.’ (Volunteered 2019)

(35) S1: Kóo, (…) ká’e qée’rr-a lall-itim-bá-he-ndo?
    2mVOC P_DEM3.mOBL far-mOBL occur-3fNIPFV-NEG1-2sO-Q
    S2: Āā, hikkada xishsh=á’nn maram-moommi=da
    yes then strongly.IDEO=do.1pPCO walk-1sPFV.REL=COND
    iill-ináan-sa
    reach-1pIPV-3pO

S1: ‘Hey, (…) can’t you see them (lit. don’t they occur to you) far over there?’ – S2: ‘Yes, (I can see them,) then we can (still) catch up with them if we walk fast (lit. strongly).’ (Volunteered 2016)
A frequent negative reply to questions in natural conversation is kám ‘oh no, come on, far from it, forget it, don’t worry’.\(^{20}\) It is used to disconfirm, or maybe better: refute, positive questions (36) as well as the implicit assumption in negative questions, e.g. the assumption in (37) that the addressee has just eaten.\(^{21}\)

(36) S1: Mat-e-’ée uull-áta Sabir-óochch ker-á one-fGEN-ASC.fGEN land-fACC PN-mABL lease-mACC
    aphph-iti-ndo, nür?
    take.MID-2PCO-Q last_year.OBL
S2: Kó kám, m-á aphph-áammi-la?
    2sVOC oh_no! what-mACC take.MID-1sIPV-PRAG1
S1: ‘Did you lease one of Sabiro’s (plots of) land last year?’ – S2: ‘Far from it! What do I take? (Message: Don’t even think that I could have leased anything.)’ (Volunteered 2015)

(37) S1: Téma abb-am-a-kkí=b-aan hooshsh-ú it-t
    now great-mother-fGEN-2sPOSS=PLC-mLOC lunch-mACC eat-2sPCO
    ke’-im-bá-ndo?
    S2: Kám, it-im-bá-be,
    do_completely-[2f]NIPV-NEG1-Q oh_no! eat-[1s]NIPV-NEG1-PRAG5
    m-á it-áammi-la, it-íi ih-eenání-yam
    what-mACC eat-1sIPV-PRAG1 eat-mDAT be(come)-3honICO-DS
    Shaaméeb sókk-i-ya’nne mar-im-bá-ndo?
    PN.mNOM send-3mPCO-DS<1sO> go-[1s]NIPV-NEG1-Q
(Mother (S1) sees that her son (S2) serves himself in the kitchen.) S1: ‘Haven’t you just eaten lunch at your grandma’s place?’ – S2: ‘Far from it! I didn’t eat (anything). What do I eat? Didn’t I (have to) go (where) Shaameebo sent me when (people) were just about to eat?’ (Volunteered 2019)

Ex. (36)-(37) demonstrate another common Kambaata strategy to give negative replies, namely by a rhetorical question of the type ‘What do(es) [SBJ] V?’, with V being a copy used in the preceding question. Finally, instead of using ‘yes’, ‘no’, ‘far from it!’ as answers, speakers also often simply repeat the final verb of the question (in the same or opposite polarity) to (dis)confirm a question (38).

(38) S1: (…) agan-áan agan-áan ma-mmat-é áa’ll-u
    month-mLOC month-mLOC RED-one-MULT wash-mNOM
    ih-áno-bá-ndo?
    S2: Ih-áno-bá’a
    be(come)-3mIPV-NEG1-Q be(come)-3mIPV-NEG1
S1: ‘Isn’t it enough to wash once a month?’ – S2: ‘No (lit. it isn’t).’ (Kambaatissata 1989: 4.118)

For another negative reply see §4.4.

3.2. Negative indefinites and quantifiers
Kambaata does not have any inherently negative indefinites. Instead any interrogative pronoun can be combined with the additive suffix -V and thus be used in negative

\(^{20}\) The word class categorization of kám[-i] is difficult. It is the 2s imperative of the full verb kam- ‘hold back, not give, forbid, remove, protect from, deprive of’. However, it is about to lose its number agreement and thus fossilizing into an invariant interjection.

\(^{21}\) Note that kám can also signal disagreement with a previous statement, recall (32).
clauses to express ‘nobody’, ‘nothing’, ‘nowhere’, ‘never’ etc.; see the additive-marked interrogative phrases in (39)-(40) (see also Treis 2015).

(39) \textit{Fanqashsh-ú-s ay-i dag-áno-ba’a}  
\begin{tabular}{l}
\text{answer-mACC-DEF} \text{who-mNOM-ADD know-3mIPV-NEG1} \\
\end{tabular}
‘Nobody (lit. even who) knows the answer.’ (Elicited)

(40) \begin{tabular}{l}
\text{hátta j-aatá-a méxx-o min-i} \\
\textit{which.fACC time-fACC-ADD single-mOBL house-mGEN}
\end{tabular}  
\begin{tabular}{l}
aaz-éen gag-á iitt-uuhú-tu gar-ití-i \\
\text{interior-mLOC self-mACC love-mNOM-ADD truth-fNOM-ADD}
\end{tabular}  
\begin{tabular}{l}
hangaphph-án-t he’-iiha dand-ítáa-ba’a \\
\text{embrace.MID-PASS-3fPCO live-mDAT be_able-3fIPV-NEG1}
\end{tabular}
‘(…) self-love and truth (i.e. selfishness and justice) can never live together in one and the same house (lit. cannot live together even what time).’ (Kambaattis-sata 1989: 6.124)

Alternatively, additive-marked noun phrases with \textit{mexx-ú (m)} / \textit{mexx-íta (f)} ‘single’ as the head or the modifier express ‘nothing, nobody, no N etc.’ under negation; cf. (19) and (41). See also \textit{mexx-e-níi} single-MULT-ADD ‘never (lit. and not a single time)’.

(41) \begin{tabular}{l}
\text{ka heess-á méxx-o man-ch-iíhá-a} \\
\textit{A_DEM1.mACC story-mACC single-mOBL people-SG-mDAT-ADD}
\end{tabular}  
\begin{tabular}{l}
ku’ll-im-bá’a \\
tell.MID-[1s]NIPV-NEG1
\end{tabular}
‘(…) I have not told this story to anybody (lit. to even a single man).’ (Saint-Exupéry 2018: 91)

3.3. Negative derivation

Kambaata has a privative derivational morpheme -\textit{beel}, which generates denominal adjectives with the meaning ‘[N]-less, [not having] N’. It either attaches to the nominal stem or the genitive form; it is followed by the case and gender markers -ú (m) / -úta (f) in the citation form (accusative). In Treis (2008: 277), the privative derivation was too hastily characterized as “seldom used”, whereas Alemu’s (2016) dictionary shows that it is in fact fairly productively applicable – at least in a certain genre, namely written texts (incl. the Kambaata schoolbooks).\footnote{Alemu (2016) alone contains 128 different privative adjectives, most of which are used in the monolingual definitions.} See, for instance, \textit{bonx-beel-ú(ta)} ‘leafless, without leaves’ (< \textit{bonx-á} ‘leave(s)’), \textit{mum-beel-ú(ta)} ‘hairless, without hair’ (< \textit{muumm-í} ‘hair’) and \textit{seer-beel-ú(ta)} ‘illegal, without rules’ (< \textit{seer-á} ‘rule, law’).

The use of the privative derivation in oral speech remains little attested, though; here, clausal constructions of the type ‘which does not have N’ are preferred to privative adjectives. Furthermore, most privative adjectives attested in the written corpus are best considered semantically transparent adhoc-creations and the result of the generalization of a hitherto only weakly productive derivational schema. Lexicalised privatives that are not adhoc creations and widely shared across the speech community are, for instance, \textit{wol-beel-ú(ta)} ‘countless’ < \textit{woll-úta} ‘counting, number’, \textit{wozan-beel-ú(ta)} ‘forgetful (lit. heartless)’ < \textit{wozan-á} ‘heart’, \textit{su’mm-beel-é} \footnote{The case/gender-morpheme -é is the accusative morpheme of the largest declension of feminine proper names (Treis 2008: 103).} ‘first week of July (lit. nameless)’ < \textit{su’mm-á} ‘name’, \textit{maq-ee-beel-úta} ‘pregnant (lit. powerless)’ < \textit{maq-ée}
fGEN ‘of power’, hagar-beel-ú(ta) ‘indescribable, uncategorisable, ugly’ < hagar-á ‘type’, man-beel-(ch)-ú(ta)24 ‘foreign, without relatives in the area’ < mann-á ‘people’. Note that many of these established privatives are lexically idiosyncratic derivations.

Kambaata does not have a privative adposition or a case marker ‘without’. Hence absence is expressed in a negative converb or circumstantial relative clause, as ‘not having grabbed N’ (42) or as ‘not being present’.

(42) Meqqéerr-at úull-a úb-b huur-á af-f-ú’nna
afterbirth-fNOM ground-fOBL fall-3fPCO dirt-mACC grab-3f-NEG4
ke’-aa-ba’a
get_up-3fIPV-NEG1

[Proverb] ‘When the afterbirth falls to the ground, it does not get up without dirt (lit. without having grabbed dirt).’ (Alamu & Alamaayyo 2017: 113)

4. Other aspects of negation
4.1. The scope of negation
The negation of a final main or relative verb generally has scope over a preceding same subject general converb – e.g. beeqq-am-éen in (43).

(43) (...) nugguss-áan-ch-u he’-áni-yan maal-á
circumcise-AG-SG-mNOM exist-[3m]ICO-DS meat-mACC
beeqq-am-éen it-éenno-ba’a
share.MID-PASS-3honPCO eat-3honIPV-NEG1

‘(…) if there is a (newly) circumcised (boy in the household), one (does not) share the meat among (the family members) and does not eat it (together).’
(EK2016-02-23_001)

The scope of negation can (and is) often narrowed down to a specific constituent (an NP, a clause etc.) through a cleft construction (44).

(44) Got-íchch-u-a-ba’a wojj-ó-o(hu),
hyenas-SG-mPRED-mCOP2-NEG1 bark-3mPFV.REL-NMZ1.mNOM
wosh-íchch-u-a
dogs-SG-mPRED-mCOP2

(Context: S1 tells how he got a shock last night on the way home when a hyena barked close to him. – S2: Come on, don’t exaggerate!) ‘It wasn’t a hyena that barked, it was a dog.’ (Elicited)

4.2. Reinforcing negation
Negation is reinforced by the adverbials hór-a(-n) (45) or hór-a-nii (46), which are oblique case forms of the adjective hor-á (m) / hor-áta (f) ‘all’. The bracketed –n is a focus morpheme whose range of function is still to be investigated; the –nii is an additive morpheme. The adverbials are used in positive contexts to express ‘all, completely’; under a negative verb they are translatable as ‘not at all, really not, definitely not, never’. Alternatively, the synonymous hinát-e-n totality-mOBL-N ‘at all’ can be used (29).

24 The -ch-morpheme marks the singulative.
(45) *Hór-a-n*  
*all-mOBL-N*  
*know-2s-NIPV-NEG1*

(One player to another in a riddling session:) ‘You have no clue (…), so so wrong (lit. you don’t know at all, at all!’ (TH2003-06-04_xinkuta)

(46) *Aat-teenantá=*r-u  
*hór-a-nii*  
*kot-ún-ka-*nne

(Blessing on the masaala-holiday:) ‘May you never/not at all lack the means to give (to others!’ (Volunteered 2003)

There is one context in which the adverbial *hór-a-nii* is attested to be inherently negative, namely as a one-word answer to a question (47).

(47) S1: *Hoosáan-u Halaab-íichch   qée’rr-a-a-ndo?*  
PN-mNOM PN-mABL far-mPRED-mCOP2-Q  
*all-mOBL-ADD*

S1: ‘Is Hosaina more distant than Alaaba?’ – S2: ‘Not at all!’  
(Volunteered 2015)

Kambaata has an experiential perfect constructions (Treis 2020: §5) expressing 'have (n)ever (once) V-ed'. The construction consists of a perfective converb plus a phonologically independent, non-inflecting element kása ‘ever’ or plus an inflected verb kas- ‘do ever’. The converb and the adjacent ‘ever’ constitute a periphrastic verb form that cannot be separated by an intervening constituent. The positive construction is rarely used outside questions (‘Has [S] ever [V]-ed?’) – but see (34) above; the negative construction is most common in declarative clauses (‘[S] has never/not once [V]-ed’) (48). The time in which the subject never V-ed is usually the time of subject’s existence (‘never (in subject’s life time)’) (48), but may also be a period from a given starting point onwards, e.g. the time when the addressee in (49) promised to call.

(48) *Hítt     gaararéemat kará      xiud-d   kása-ba’a*  
A_DEM1.fNOM chameleon-fNOM P_DEM1.mpACC see-3fPCO ever-NEG1  
‘The chameleon had never seen these (animals).’ (TD2016-02-11_001)

(49) *Mexx-é   dawwal-tóont, dawwal-áamm  y-ít   ba’-óont*  
single-MULT call-2sPFV call-1sIPV say-2fPCO disappear-[2s]PFV  
*hikkanniichch   ka=b-á         dawwál-t   kása-ba’a*  
P_DEM2.mABL P_DEM1.mACC=PLC-mACC call-2fPCO ever-NEG1  
‘You called (me) once; (then) you said “I will call (again)”, (but) you dis-appeared, and up to now you have never called (again).” (Volunteered 2017)

4.3. Negation through inference

There are (at least) two constructions which regularly invite a negative inference although an overt negative morpheme is missing. The first construction contains the equative demonstrative (and by extension: intensifier) kank-á ‘that much/many; very much/many’. If used predicatively (lit. ‘it is that/very much’), the demonstrative often invites a negative interpretation (‘it is not that/very much’) (see also Treis 2020a: §6.3).
(50) Giir-at katam-i mann-íi aass-itáa tám-it
fire-NOM town-mGEN people-mDAT give-3fIPV.REL use-fNOM
kánk-a-anta
that_much-fPRED-fCOP2<N>
‘The use that fire has (lit. gives) for townspeople is not that much (lit. is that much).’ (Kambaatissata 1989: 4.56)

The apprehensive verb form (Treis 2018) is a fully grammaticalized main verb paradigm that is used in warnings of looming dangers and in threats; see, e.g., 

*bumbókkoomm* burn<1pAPPR> ‘(take care, otherwise) we might burn’, *ag-ókkoo-kke* drink-[3m]APPR-2sO ‘(take care, otherwise) (it) might drown (lit. drink) you’.

Similarly, with a second person apprehensive, the speaker can warn the addressee of an imprudent, unintentional realization of an event, e.g. *eeb-bókkooont* bring-2sAPPR ‘(take care, otherwise) you might bring/cause (something)’. There is, however, a strong tendency to interpret the second person apprehensive straightforwardly as a reinforced negative command and thus as synonymous to the negative imperative (§2.2.1). See, e.g., (51), where the apprehensive and negative imperative occur in the same context.

(51) Bookk-íta it-téen-oochch-e; […] resh-á-ssa-n
pig-fACC eat-2p-NEG2-2pIMP carcass-mACC-3pPOSS-N
ul-teenókkoonta
touch-2pAPPR
(Literal translation:) ‘Don’t eat pork; (…) don’t touch their carcasses.’ (Draft version of Deuteronomy 14, 8)

4.4. Metalinguistic negation

For metalinguistic negation, Kambaata makes use of a construction that is unusual from a language-internal perspective. Speaker S2, who wants to correct S1’s word choice, quotes the relevant section in a question and provides the preferred wording in a clause marked by the contrastive conjunction *bagáan* ‘but, rather’ (52), whose exact function remains to be investigated. The construction ending in a conjunction rather than a finite main verb clearly violates the head-finality rule.

(52) Árr-u fúll-ee’u y-dáno-n-do?
sun-mNOM come_out-3mPRF say-3mIPV-Q
Hór-a buss-áyyoo bagáan
all-mOBL burn-3mPROG CNTR
(Context: S1 says: ‘The sun is shining (lit. has risen).’ – S2 corrects the word choice:) ‘The sun is not shining but really burning (lit. Does one say “The sun has come out”? Rather “(It) really burns”).’ (Elicited)

4.5. Diachronic notes and observations

The diachrony of the Kambaata negative morphology is still unexplored. A study of verbal negation in Highland East Cushitic (Treis 2012a) has shown that the languages apply fairly divergent means of standard negation. There are four non-cognate standard negators: (i) -yyo Hadiyya, -ssho Libido, (ii) -ba’(a) Kambaata, Alaaba, -ba K’abeena, -baa and -bo’ Gedeo, (iii) di= Sidaama, and (iv) -ey’i Burji. Given that the HEC languages are closely related, some standard negators must be fairly recent innovations. Negators in *b* are found in the standard negation of Kambaata, Alaaba, K’abeena and Gedeo and well as in Hadiyya and Libido, which have a dedicated negative existential
verb *bee’e* ‘not exist’, which is probably cognate to Kambaata -*ba’*(a) NEG1. Sasse (1982: 22) expresses the tentative hypothesis that the HEC negators in *b* are “borrowed from Omotic” – however, without giving any supporting evidence.

5. Summary

Kambaata has five negative inflectional suffixes, which are used for the negation of (a) declarative main verbs and non-verbal predicates, of (b) imperatives, of (c) jussives/benedictives, of (d) converbs and of (e) relative and purposive verbs. Non-morphological means, i.e. periphrases with a lexically negative verb, are needed to negate verbal nouns and apprehensives. As shown in §2, only negated imperfective main verbs and non-verbal predicates are fully symmetrical to their affirmative counterparts. Everywhere else the following paradigmatic asymmetries can be detected:

- Reduction or neutralization of aspectual distinctions – see non-imperfective main verbs (§2.1), converbs (§2.4.1) and relative verbs (§2.4.2),
- Reduction of the set of subject indexes – see non-imperfective main verbs (§2.1) and relative verbs (§2.4.2),
- Neutralization of a modal distinction – see jussive/benedictives (§2.2.2)
- Neutralization of the same subject/different subject distinction – see converbs (§2.4.1) and purposive verbs (§2.4.3)

The following constructional asymmetries are observed:

- Different means of subject indexing:
  - Type 1: Bipartite subject indexing is reduced to simple subject indexing – see non-imperfective main verbs (§2.1) and relative verbs (§2.4.2)
  - Type 2: Covert subject indexing in the affirmation vs. overt subject indexing in the negation – see imperatives (§2.2.1)
- Optional object marking in the negation, but incompatibility of object marking in the affirmation – see converbs (§2.4.1)
- Fully verbal morphology in the affirmation, but verb-adjective hybrids in the negation – see relative verbs (§2.4.2)
- Neutralization of the distinction between relative-based and purposive-based purpose verb forms (§2.4.3)

Apart from inflectional means of negation, Kambaata has a privative derivation that generates adjectives on the basis of nouns. No inherently negative polarity items could be found, instead interrogatives and quantifiers occur in negative contexts to express ‘nobody, nothing, nowhere etc.’.

Abbreviations

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References


