Negation and the expression of phasal polarity in Kambaata

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Negation and the expression of phasal polarity in Kambaata

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE: THE EXPRESSION OF PHASAL POLARITY IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN LANGUAGES, 2-4 FEB 2018, U HAMBURG
Introduction

- My first observation: There are hardly any phasal polarity expressions in my translations of recorded Kambaata sentences.
- My English-speaking Kambaata consultants do not seem to master the use of English *still, no longer, already, not yet* – maybe because there is no one-to-one equivalent in their native language?
- Challenge: Does Kambaata have function words and/or phrasal means to convey the idea of phasal polarity (and that I have overlooked so far)?
Introduction

Where to start looking for the expression of PhP in a language that has probably not grammaticalised PhP? (Because if it had, I should have noticed after so many years…)

Translational equivalents in texts SAE > Kambaata

- Little Prince (Saint-Exupéry [transl. by Deginet & Treis] 2008)
- Biblical texts (Gospel of John) – but: probably translated from Amharic
Structure of this talk

• 1. Introduction into Kambaata
• 2. Overview of the negation system
• 3. kas- ‘have (n)ever V-ed (once)’
• 4. Translational equivalents of phasal polarity expressions
2: Some background on Kambaata

CLASSIFICATION, SPEAKER AREA, TYPOLOGICAL PROFILE ...
Background on Kambaata I

- Afro-Asiatic > Cushitic > … > Highland East Cushitic
- Speaker Area: Southwest Ethiopia
- Number of speakers: > 600,000 (acc. to 2007 census)
- Official orthography (follows the Oromo Qubee)
- In the last 3 years: Concerted efforts to increase the number of local Kambaata publications
Background on Kambaata II

- **Exclusively suffixing**, agglutinating-fusional (many portmanteau morphemes)
- Head- and dependent-marking: elaborate case system + subject indexing on verbs
- **Strict head-finality**: dependent clauses before main clauses; main verb or copula = last constituent in a sentence; all modifiers before head noun
- Stress-accent language: no lexical, only grammatical minimal pairs
- Parts of speech: 4 sets with open membership (nouns, verbs, adjectives, ideophones); several closed sets; negligible word class: **adverbs** instead: case-marked nouns and adjectives; conversbs
Background on Kambaata III

• Nouns are always marked for gender (m vs. f) and case
  • ACC, NOM, GEN, DAT, ABL, ICP, LOC, OBL/VOC, PRED

• Fully finite main verbs/final verbs marked for
  • Subject indexes
  • Aspect (imperfective, perfective, perfect, progressive) / Mood (imperative, jussive, apprehensive)
  • Polarity

• Subordinate verbs with a decreased inflectional potential
  • Relative verbs
  • Converbs (but: switch-reference marking)
  • Verbal nouns
3: Negation system

INFLECTIONAL MORPHEMES, (A)SYMMETRY, MORPHOLOGICAL SLOTS
Negative inflectional morphemes

5 inflectional negation morphemes

- **-ba’a:** Standard negation – Negation of declarative main verbs (imperfective, perfective, perfect, progressive), existential verb yoo- and non-verbal predicates
- **-oot:** Negator of imperatives
- **-ka:** Negator of jussives (= directive verb forms 1st + 3rd person)
- **-u’nn(a):** Negator of converses
- **-(um)b:** Negator of relative verbs (and all relative-based subordinate verb forms)
Negative inflectional morpheme: Slot

Negative imperfective main verbs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Root-</th>
<th>(Derivation)</th>
<th>-Subject1</th>
<th>-Aspect</th>
<th>-Subject2</th>
<th>(-Object)</th>
<th>-Negation</th>
<th>(-X)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Other negative main verbs and negative converbs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Root-</th>
<th>(Derivation)</th>
<th>-Subject1</th>
<th>-Aspect/ -Mood/ -Converb</th>
<th>-Negation</th>
<th>(-Object)</th>
<th>(-X)</th>
</tr>
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</table>

Negative relative verbs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Root-</th>
<th>(Derivation)</th>
<th>-Subject1</th>
<th>-Aspect</th>
<th>-Negation</th>
<th>-Case</th>
<th>-Gender</th>
<th>(-Object)</th>
<th>(-X)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

X = pragmatically determined discourse morphemes; coordinative; additive; subordinating morphemes
Standard negation

• -ba’a:

Imperfective: totally symmetrical affirmative-negative paradigm

e.g.  *dag-gáant[i]* find-2sIPV ‘you find’ > *dag-gáanti-ba’a* ‘you don’t find’

(2)  (...)  *dikk-ū-s* zahh-iteent ikki-i
    market-fACC-DEF wander-2fPRF HYP-ADD

    *kank-ā* *xe’-amó* *burtukaan-ū* *dag-gáanti-ba’ā*
    EQ1_A_DEM-mACC be_sweet-3mIPV.REL orange-mACC find-2sIPV-NEG

    ‘(…) even if you trawled the market, you would not find oranges this sweet.’
    (Fn_2014-12-24_Dialogue)
Standard negation

• -ba’a:

Non-verbal predicate: symmetrical affirmative-negative forms

(3)  hittiin  ii-taa  lúus-a(-ba’a)
P_DEM1.fNOM 1sGEN-fCOP2 fault-fPRED(-NEG)

‘This is (not) my fault.’
4. **Kása ‘ever?’ – kása-ba’á ‘never!’**

A PHASAL POLARITY-GRAMMEME?
Kása ‘ever?’ – kása-ba’a ‘never!’

Construction: perfective converb + kása(-ba’a) = ‘have (n)ever V-ed (once)’

(4) A: Kám waayy-áno!
   put_away.2sIMP probably_not-3mIPV

   Át Duuball-i min-i már-t kása-ndo?
   2sNOM PN-mGEN house-mACC go-2sPCO ever-Q

   A: ‘Come on, I doubt that! Have you ever been to Duuballa’s house?’

   B: Márr kása-ba’a gagás. Ikkodáa ...
      go.1sPCO ever-NEG in_fact but

   B: ‘I have in fact never been (there). But …’ (Comparison_dialogue_2014-12-10f)
Kása ‘ever?’ – kása-ba’a ‘never!’

- Converbs: (co-)subordinate non-final verbs, reduced in finiteness

- **Perfective conversbs**: semantic relation to superordinate verb vague

- [Imperfective conversbs: temporal simultaneity]

- Negative conversbs

- Purposive conversbs

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<tr>
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<th>1s</th>
<th>3m</th>
<th>2s</th>
<th>3f</th>
<th>3p</th>
<th>3hon</th>
<th>1p</th>
<th>2p</th>
<th>2hon</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perfective</strong></td>
<td>(GEM/PAL)-Ø ~ -Ø-í</td>
<td>-t</td>
<td>-éen</td>
<td>-n</td>
<td>-téen</td>
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Kása ‘ever?’ – kása-ba’a ‘never!’

Only the converb changes with the subject

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<td>2hon</td>
<td></td>
<td>-téen</td>
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</table>

 Márr  kása-ba’a.
go.1sPCO ever-NEG
‘I have never gone (there).’

 Má-í  kása-ba’a.
go-2sPCO ever-NEG
‘You have never gone (there).’

 Mar-éen  kása-ba’a.
go-3honPCO ever-NEG
‘S/he (hon) has never gone (there).’

 Mán-n  kása-ba’a.
go-1pPCO ever-NEG
‘We have never gone (there).’
etc.
Kása ‘ever?’ – kása-ba’a ‘never!’

Origin of kása: Noun?
+ stress pattern of a predicate noun
+/ – standard negator -ba’a
– no copula

Márr kása-ba’a.
go.1sPCO ever-NEG
‘I have never gone (there).’
Kása ‘ever?’ – kása-ba’a ‘never!’

*Kása* is of verbal origin:

+ Object pronoun (≠ possessive pronoun)

(5)  

\begin{align*}
\text{Ani-i} & \quad \text{kées} & \quad \text{xall-i} & \quad \text{su’mm-īinee-t} & \quad \text{bagáan} \\
1s\text{NOM-ADD} & \quad 2s\text{ACC} & \quad \text{only-m\text{GEN}} & \quad \text{name-m\text{ICP.VV-COP3 CONTR}} \\
\text{daqq-ámm} & \quad \text{xúujj} & \quad \text{kása-he-ba’a} \\
\text{find.MID-PASS.1sPCO} & \quad \text{see.1sPCO} & \quad \text{ever-2sO-NEG} \\
\end{align*}

‘I also know you only by name, but I have never met you before / but I have not met you yet.’

Position: …-Object-NEG cf. imperfective verbs
Kása ‘ever?’ – kása-ba’a ‘never!’

+ kása inflects for 3mIPV in questions

2 examples in the corpus: 1 from a schoolbook, 1 from the Bible

(6) Kii hegeg-óon mánn-u yáa’ kas-áno?
2sGEN area-mLOC people-mNOM hold.3mPCO (do)ever-3mIPV
‘Have the people in your area ever held meetings/a meeting?’ (K89: 3.41)

Problem: both examples with 3m subject – unknown whether kás-inflects or is invariantly 3m
Kása ‘ever?’ – kása-ba’a ‘never!’

+ Kása can be relativised + takes the relative negator

(7)  
(…)  
mexx-e-nii  maccoocc-i  kas-úmb-ut  
single-MULT-ADD hear-1sPCO  (do )ever-1sNREL-fNOM

kohichch-ut  láag-at  gisan-áachch  báqq=áát-t  
strange-fNOM  voice-fNOM  sleep-fABL  wake=do-3fPCO

ke’-is-soo-’é  j-átata (…)  
get_up-CAUS-3fPFV-1sO  time-fACC

‘(…) when I was woken up from (my) sleep by a strange voice that I had never heard before.’ (QL: §2)
Kása ‘ever?’ – kása-ba’a ‘never!’

+ Kása can be relativised + takes the relative negator

(8) Fénd-u-u  Ludág-u-u  ám-a-ssa  hittig-úta
PN-fNOM-ADD  PN-mNOM-ADD  mother-fNOM-3pPOSS  SIM2_P_DEM-fACC

ik-ki-yan  xíuud-d  kas-súmb-o=bikkii  hiliq-qóo’u.
become-3fPCO-DS  see-3fPCO  (do-ever)-3fNREL-mOBL=BEC  shock-3fPFV

‘Fendo and Ludago were shocked because (lit. for the reason that) they had never
seen their mother like this before.’ (NJ: vol. 5)

NB: Plural subject takes 3f agreement (3p = 3f).
Kása ‘ever?’ – kása-ba’a ‘never!’

Interim conclusion on the form:

• *Kása* has a verbal origin > auxiliary

• Synchronically: morphologically defective
  • Invariant in declarative clauses
  • Invariant or inflecting imperfective in interrogative clauses (but only 3m ex. so far)
  • Inflecting in relative clauses

• Experiential construction: perfective converb + imperfective auxiliary/verb
Kása ‘ever?’ – kása-ba’a ‘never!’

Interim conclusion on the meaning: Experiential

• Negative Declarative:* ‘have never V-ed (once)’ – no conventionalized ‘not yet’/lateness-interpretation, construction leaves open whether subject is going to change the situation, can be reinforced by adverbials, e.g. mexzenii / hinaten ‘not even a single time’

• Interrogative: ‘have ever V-ed (once)?’ – no conventionalized ‘already’/earliness-interpretation

• Meaning of experiential construction uninfluenced by tense (ikke PAST)

(9) *Mexx-e-nii daqq-ámm kása-si-ba’a ikke
   single-MULT-ADD meet.MID-PASS.1sPCO ever-3O-NEG PAST
   (Context: Did you know my father who died last year?) ‘I had never met him (before he died).’ (Elicited 2004 with Dahl’s TMA questionnaire, sent. 50)

*not used in affirmative declarative with the intended meaning: ‘I have seen him (at least once) before.’
Kása ‘ever?’ – kása-ba’a ‘never!’

• In other Ethiopian languages, e.g. Koorete, Bench (Omotic); Sidaama, Oromo (Cushitic); Amharic (Semitic): converb + ‘know’

Oromo (Lowland East Cushitic)

(12a) An takkaa ududee oof-ee hin-beek-u.
[I once motorcycle drive-1sPCO NEG-know-1sIPV]

‘I have never driven a motor-bike.’ (Gragg 1982: 44, glosses mine)

(12b) Iyopyaa adeem-tee beek-taa?
[Ethiopie go-2sPCO know-2sIPV]

‘Have you ever been to Ethiopia?’ (Gragg 1982: 44, glosses mine)

• No evidence that kása goes back to a verb ‘know’ in Kambaata (no ‘know’ cognates in related HEC languages that resemble kása) – lexical origin of kása unknown
5. Tracking down PhP in translations

STILL, NO LONGER, NOT YET, ALREADY
Already

Translational (non-)equivalents

(1a) ‘No. This sheep is **already** very sickly. Make me another.’

\[
\begin{align*}
Ti & \quad \text{hóol-ch-ut} & \quad \text{abbiss} & \quad \text{moos-áan-ch-u-ta} \\
\text{A\_DEM1\_fNOM} & \quad \text{sheep\_SG\_fNOM} & \quad \text{very} & \quad \text{sickness\_PROP\_SG\_fPRED\_fCOP2} \\
\text{Wol-ú} & \quad \text{misil-á} & \quad \text{ke’-is-e’e} \\
\text{other\_mACC} & \quad \text{picture\_mACC} & \quad \text{get\_up\_CAUS1\_2sIMP\_1sO} \\
\text{Lit.} & \quad \text{‘This sheep is very sick. Draw another picture for me.’} & \quad (\text{QL: §2})
\end{align*}
\]
10 instances of ‘already’ in the Little Prince (Qakkichchu Laaha): 9 simply ignored in the translation

(1b)  
\[
Kānn \quad dimb-aan-ch-ii \quad wōna-n \quad kichché’-eesi \\
A\_DEM1.mOBL \quad get\_drunk-PROP\-SG\-mDAT \quad first-N \quad feel\_sorry-3mPRF\-3mO.REL
\]

\[
qakkichch-u \quad láah-u \quad “(...)” \quad y-i=ké’ \quad xa’mm-ée-s \\
little-mNOM \quad prince-mNOM \quad say-3mPCO=SEQ \quad ask-3mPFV-3mO
\]

‘“(…)” inquired the little prince, who already was sorry for the drunkard.’ (QL: §12)

Elsewhere: wōna(n) ‘at first, before, at an earlier time’
(= adverbial form of the ordinal numeral ‘first’)

[NB: wónan for ‘already’ also found John 9, 27]
Not yet

1 instance of ‘not yet’ in *Qakkichchu Laaha*

(2) Ikkodáa *tadáa iill-án qax-ée*
but now reach-3mICO extent-mDAT

áñ ka ba’-o-’é horophpill-á
1sNOM A_DEM1.mACC break-3mPFV-1sO.REL plane-mACC

makkicc-óta dandim-bá’a
be_made-CAUS1.MID-1sPURP be_able-1sNIPV-NEG

‘("Ah," I said to the little prince, "these memories of yours are very charming;) but I
have not yet succeeded in repairing my plane.’ (QL: §24)

Elsewhere: *tadáa iill-án qax-ée* ‘until now’ (lit. for the extent (of) reaching now); commonly used
temporal phrase; no lateness implication (NB: also used in the Dahl questionnaire elicited 2004)
‘Still’

Common translation: *teesúu* (additive form of *téesu* ‘now’)

(3)  

Still hopes the little prince will return to Earth one day.’ (QL: intro)
‘Still’

Common translation: *teesúu* (additive form of *téesu* ‘now’)

5/15 ‘still’ examples in *Qakkichchu Laaha* are translated by *teesúu*

Elsewhere with dynamic predicates: *teesúu* ‘again’ (lit. now too)

(3) \[ \text{Tees-ú-u} \quad \text{liushsh-eemm} \]
\[ \text{now-m[?]ADD} \quad \text{make\_mistake-1sPRF} \]

‘I have made a mistake again.’ (K89: 3.46)
‘No longer’

4 instances in *Qakkichchu Laaha*: all are left untranslated

(4) ‘The planet now makes a complete turn every minute, and I no longer have a single second for repose.’

\[
\begin{align*}
Téesu & \quad ku & \quad plaanéet-u & \quad wiim-á<n>ta-s & \quad zahhit-úta \\
\text{now} & \quad \text{A}_{\text{DEM1}.m\text{NOM}} & \quad \text{planet-m\text{NOM}} & \quad \text{full-f\text{ACC}<N>-DEF} & \quad \text{turn-f\text{ACC}} \\
méxx-o & \quad daqiq-áan & \quad zahh-i & \quad xoof-áno=\text{tannee} & \\
\text{single-m\text{OBL}} & \quad \text{minute-m\text{LOC}} & \quad \text{turn\_around-3m\text{PCO}} & \quad \text{finish-3m\text{IPV.REL}=BEC1} \\
esúa & \quad méxx-u & \quad fooloocc-uhú-u & \quad yoo-\text{e-ba’a}. & \\
1s\text{DAT} & \quad \text{single-m\text{NOM}} & \quad \text{rest-m\text{NOM-ADD}} & \quad \text{COP1-1sO-NEG} \\
\end{align*}
\]

Lit. ‘Because the planet now makes a complete turn every minute, I don’t have a single (moment to) rest.’ (QL: §14)
Conclusions

• Kambaata has grammaticalized an experiential perfect expressing ‘have (n)ever V-ed’, no conventionalized lateness or earliness implications, no change of situation implied

• Phasal polarity expressions are often ignored in translated texts or translated by adverbials that are commonly used with a purely temporal reading (non-PhP reading) elsewhere.

• Kambaata is one of the languages that have not grammaticalized phasal polarity.
References


Abbreviations

A = adjective, ABL = ablative, ACC = accusative, ADD = additive, BEC = reason, CAUS = causative, CONTR = contrastive COP = copula, DAT = dative, DEF = definite, DEM = demonstrative, DS = different subject, EQ = equative, f = feminine, GEM = gemination, GEN = genitive, hon = honorific, HYP = hypothetical, ICO = imperfective converb, ICP = instrumental-comitative-perlative, IMP = imperative, IPV = imperfective, LOC = locative, m = masculine, MID = middle, MULT = multiplicative, N = pragmatically determined morpheme (still unanalyzed), NEG = negation, NOM = nominative, NREL = negative relative, O = object, OBL = oblique, p = plural, P = pronoun, PAL = palatalization, PASS = passive, PAST = past tense, PCO = perfective converb, PFV = perfective, PN = proper noun, PRED = predicative, PRF = perfect, PROP = proprietive, PURP = purposive, Q = question, REL = relative, s = singular, SEG = sequential, SG = singulative, SIM = similitative, VV = vowel lengthening
Open questions

• How common is it for languages of the world to have a construction with ‘know’ for an experiential construction?
• Terminology: Experiential perfect / past / perfective?
• Suggestion: Include experiential perfect constructions in negation and phasal polarity questionnaire