Negation and the expression of phasal polarity in Kambaata

Yvonne Treis

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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 conversbs
• -(um)b: Negator of relative verbs (and all relative-based subordinate verb forms)
Negative inflectional morpheme: Slot

Negative imperfective main verbs:

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<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>
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Other negative main verbs and negative converbs:

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

Negative relative verbs:

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

- **-ba’a:**

Imperfective: totally symmetrical affirmative-negative paradigm

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

(2)  (...)  *dikk-ú-s*  *zahh-itéent*  *ikki-i*

market-fACC-DEF wander-2fPRF HYP-ADD

*kank-á  xe’-ánó  burtukaan-ú  dag-gáanti-*ba’a

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_2014-12-24Dialogue)
Standard negation

• *-ba’a:*

**Non-verbal predicate:** symmetrical affirmative-negative forms

\[(3) \quad hittiin \quad ii-taa \quad lúus-a(-ba’a)\]

P_DEM1.fNOM 1sGEN-fCOP2 fault-fPRED(-NEG)

‘This is (not) my fault.’

A PHASAL POLARITY-GRAMMEME?
Construction: perfective converb + kásá(-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 kásá-nádo?
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 kásá-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 converbs**: semantic relation to superordinate verb vague
- [Imperfective converbs: temporal simultaneity]
- Negative converbs
- Purposive converbs

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Kása ‘ever?’ – kása-ba’a ‘never!’

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

**Már-i** kása-ba’a.
go-2sPCO ever-NEG
‘You have never gone (there).’

**Mar-én** 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.

---

Only the converb changes with the subject

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<td><strong>Perfective</strong></td>
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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)  

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Ani-} & \quad \text{kées} & \quad \text{xall-} & \quad \text{su’mm-ii} & \quad \text{bagáan} \\
1\text{sNOM-ADD} & \quad 2\text{sACC} & \quad \text{only-mGEN} & \quad \text{name-mICP.VV-COP3} & \quad \text{CONTR} \\
\text{daqq-ámm} & \quad \text{xúujj} & \quad \text{kása-} & \quad \text{ba’} & \quad \text{a} \\
\text{find.MID-PASS.1sPCO} & \quad \text{see.1sPCO} & \quad \text{ever-2sO-NEG} & \quad & \\
\end{align*}
\]

‘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

\[(6) \quad Kii \quad hegeg-\dot{o}on \quad mánn-u \quad yáa’ \quad \text{kas-áno?} \]
\[\text{2sGEN \ area-mLOC \ people-mNOM \ hold.3mPCO (do\_ever-3mIPV} \]

‘Have the people in your area ever held meetings\,|\,a meeting?’ (K89: 3.41)

Problem: both examples with 3m subject – unknown whether kasa-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

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

ke’-is-soo-’é j-áata (...) 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

\[(8) \quad \text{Fénd-u-u} \quad \text{Ludág-u-u} \quad \text{ám-a-ssa} \quad \text{hittig-úta} \]

\[
\text{PN-fNOM-ADD} \quad \text{PN-mNOM-ADD} \quad \text{mother-fNOM-3pPOSS} \quad \text{SIM2_P_DEM-fACC}
\]

\[
\text{ik-ki-yan} \quad \text{xúud-d} \quad \text{kas-súmb-o=biikkii} \quad \text{hiliq-qóo’u.}
\]

\[
\text{become-3fPCO-DS} \quad \text{see-3fPCO} \quad \text{(do\_ever)-3fNREL-mOBL=BEC} \quad \text{shock-3fPFV}
\]

‘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. mexxenii / 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-níi  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 ududde 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.’

\[
\begin{align*}
Ti & \quad h\text{o}ol-ch\text{-}ut & \quad abb\text{\'}iss & \quad moos\text{-}\text{\'}aan\text{-}ch\text{-}u\text{-}ta \\
A\_\text{DEM}1\_f\text{NOM} & \quad \text{sheep-SG}\_f\text{NOM} & \quad \text{very} & \quad \text{sickness-PROP-SG}\_f\text{PRED}\_f\text{COP}2 \\
Wol\text{-}\text{\'}u & \quad misil\text{-}\text{\'} & \quad ke\text{-}\text{\'}\text{-}is\text{-}\text{\'}e & \\
\text{other}\_m\text{ACC} & \quad \text{picture}\_m\text{ACC} & \quad \text{get\_up-CAUS}1\_2\text{sIMP-1sO} \\
\text{Lit.} & \quad \text{‘This sheep is very sick. Draw another picture for me.’} & \quad (\text{QL: } \S 2)
\end{align*}
\]
Already

10 instances of ‘already’ in the Little Prince (Qakkichchu Laaha): 9 simply ignored in the translation

(1b) Kànn dimb-aan-ch-iì wõna-n kichché’-eesì
    A_DEM1.mOBL get_drunk-PROP-SG-mDAT first-N feel_sorry-3mPRF-3mO.REL

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

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

Elsewhere: wõna(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
án ka ba’-o-’é horophphill-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) **Tees-ú-u** híkku qakkíchch-u láah-u mát-u
   now-m[?]·ADD A DEM2.mNOM little-mNOM prince-mNOM one-mACC
   bar-i Uull-áta fanqáll waal-áno y-i=ké’
   day-mACC Earth-fACC return.3mPCO come-3mIPV say-3mPCO=SEQ
   horophhill-i búrr=a’-áan-ch-u tass-áa ass-áno.
   plane-mGEN fly=do-PROP-SG-mNOM hope-mACC do-3mIPV

‘The pilot **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)  

{Tees-ú-u}  

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<th>liushsh-eemm</th>
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now-m[?]-ADD  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.’

Téesu ku plaañëet-u wiim-ã<nta>-s zahhít-úta
now A DEM1.mNOM planet-mNOM full-fACC<N>-DEF turn-fACC
mëxx-o ñaqiq-ãan zahh-ì xoof-áno=tanmee
single-mOBL minute-mLOC turn around-3mpCO finish-3mpPV.REL=BECl
esúa mëxx-u foołooç-uhú-u yoo-’e-ba’a.
1sDAT single-mNOM rest-mNOM-ADD COP1-1sO-NEG

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 = simulative, 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