

Locative interrogative as origin of the postverbal negative marker in Ndengeleko

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- Negation in Ndengeleko (P10) is symmetric.
- There is a one-to-one correspondence between the members of affirmative and negative paradigms, much like in for example German (Miestamo 2005:52).
- There are no structural changes to the negative form compared to the affirmative form, apart from the addition of a negative marker.

Post-verbal negative marker: *kwáku* / *kwáa*

- free-standing particle
- negates all indicative TAM as well as non-verbal constructions

Present:

1	<i>alima</i>	<i>kwáku</i>		
	a-	lim	-a	kwaku
	1SM-	cultivate	-FV	NEG
	'He does not cultivate.' (right now)			

Perfective:

2	<i>utyangi</i>	<i>kwáku</i>		
	u-	tyangi		kwaku
	2sSM-	walk.PFV		NEG
	'You didn't walk.'			

Imperfective:

3	<i>abulagage</i>	<i>kwáku?</i>		
	a-	bulag	-age	kwaku
	1SM-	kill	-PST.IPFV	NEG
	'S/he was not killing (someone)?'			

Past:

4	<i>muagónsike</i>	<i>kwáku?</i>		
	mu-	a-	gonz	-ike kwaku
	2pSM-	PST-	lie down	-PFV NEG
	'Didn't you (pl) sleep?'			

Habitual:

5	<i>alímaa</i>	<i>kwáku</i>		
	a-	lim	-aa	kwaku

1SM- cultivate -HAB NEG
'He does not cultivate.' (that's not his hab-
it/profession)

The standard strategy for negation is also used in non-verbal and existential clauses in Ndengeleko, as is also the case in for example Kaninchin (Devos, Kasombo Tshibanda, and van der Auwera 2010:160).

6 *Ywáa mundu kwáa!*
yu- aa mundu kwaku
1Cd- that 1.person NEG
'That's not a person!'

7 *bembe kwaku*
bembe kwaku
they NEG
'It's not them.'

8 *kundu kúlyu kunogike kwáa*
kundu ku- lyu ku- nog -ike kwaku
17.place 17Cd- that 17SM- be beautiful -PFV NEG
'That place is not nice.'

1. Origin of the negative marker

The origin of this marker is hypothesized to be the locative interrogative *kwáku* / *ku-aku*, literally 'which place'. This interrogative is identical in form to the negative marker, and ambiguity can arise.

9 *utyangi kwáku?*
u- tyang -i kwaku
2sSM- walk -PFV NEG/where
'Didn't you walk?' / 'Where did you walk?'

The stem 'which' can be used in all other noun classes as well (example 10), including class 15 (example 11) where the form is identical to class 17:

10 *ywáku*
yu- aku
1Cd- which
'Which one (person)?'

11 *kuína kwáku*
kuina ku- aku
to dance 15Cd- which
'Which dancing?'

- The proposal here is that the interrogative 'which place' in class 17 has become grammaticalized into a negative marker.

- Locatives are sources of negative markers in other Bantu languages, as in Kanincin (Devos et al. 2010).

1.1 *Alternative origin?*

Demonstrative 'that' for class 17 (and 15) is *ku-aa* [kwa:]

Followed by a locative suffix *-ku*.

However:

No independent evidence for a locative suffix. It is not found in any other context. Location is expressed by means of the class 17 prefix.

2. *Immediately After Verb (IAV)*

As pointed out by Devos et al. (2010), data from Bantu languages show that the post-verbal negative marker may occur immediately after the verb. In Ndengeleko, this position is compulsory, preceding for example any object:

12 *lino nziwike kitabu*
 lino ni- yibwike kitabu
 today 1sSM- forget.PFV 7.book
 'Today I have forgotten the book.'

13 *lino nziwike kwaku*
 lino ni- yibwike kwaku
 today 1sSM- forget.PFV NEG
 'Today I didn't forget.'

14 *lino nziwike kwaku kitabu*
 lino ni- yibwike kwaku kitabu
 today 1sSM- forget.PFV NEG 7.book
 'Today I have not forgotten the book.'

What is focused appears in IAV (Immediately After Verb) position (Watters 1979) - has been shown to be the syntactic position for focused elements in many Bantu languages.

The conjoint (CJ) form of the verb is used in Ndengeleko when IAV contains focused material. This can be objects and adverbs, and also inherently focused material like question-words and the negation marker *kwaku*. Therefore, the negative marker can never be preceded by a disjoint (DJ) verb form.

15 *ngulwi kwaku*
 'I didn't clean'

**ngulwile kwaku*

2.1 *Jespersen cycle, third stage?*

- "describes how a negator may collocate with a strengthener, which may later become an additional exponent of negation and possibly the only one" (van der Auwera 2009).
- In Ndengeleko, the only exponent of negation (left) is the strengthener *kwaku*, now 'bleached' (Devos and van der Auwera Forthcoming) to be the neutral negator in the language.
- Ndengeleko might have reached this third stage relatively recently, as the marker is yet intact - it has exactly the same form as the locative interrogative, and it has not been cliticized or suffixed.
- However, there is sign of further grammaticalization, as the negator can be shortened to *kwa* (example 16).
- The compulsory occurrence in IAV shows the close connection with the verb - is the negative marker becoming cliticized?
- For at least some speakers, the addition of the negative marker lowers a preceding H on the verb base.

16 *Niyowi kwaa.*
 ni- yowi kwaku
 1sSM- hear.PFV NEG
 'I haven't heard.'

17 *mailo gabuka kwaa aima*
 mailo ga- buk -a kwaku aima
 6.soot 6SM- go -FV NEG easily
 'Soot is not easily removed.'

18 *ammweni kwaku mwinja*
 a- mu- bweni kwaku mwinja
 1SM- 1OM- see.PFV NEG 1.girl
 'He does not see the girl.'

Devos, Maud, Michael Kasombo Tshibanda, and Johan van der Auwera. 2010. Jespersen cycles in Kanincin: double, triple and maybe even quadruple negation. *Africana Linguistica* 16:155-181.

Devos, Maud, and Johan van der Auwera. Forthcoming. Jespersen cycles in Bantu: double and triple negation.

Miestamo, Matti. 2005. *Standard negation: The negation of declarative verbal main clauses in a typological perspective*. Berlin; New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

van der Auwera, Johan. 2009. The Jespersen cycles. In *Cyclical change*, edited by E. a. Gelderen. Amsterdam, Philadelphia: Benjamins.