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Negative Imperfective Verb Form in Kanuri: A Case Study of Nyariwa Kanuribe

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A B S T R A C T

This paper examines Negative Imperfect Verb Form in Kanuri text within the framework of descriptive linguistics adopting the works of Cyffer's model of approach in analyzing negation types in Kanuri. The research employs both sources of data collection were employed: the primary source includes a Kanuri written text Nyariwa Kanuribe, where all the various places where the Negations negating the imperfective verb occurs are underlined and extracted from the text for data presentation and analysis. The study also employs the secondary source of data collection where three linguists from the Kanuri section of the department of languages and Linguistics University of Maiduguri, Nigeria were engaged to validate the data collected from the text. The outcome of the study reveals that there are two particle used in negating the imperfective verbs form in the text and the study identifies these particles as ba and bawo. They are both bound morpheme negating imperfective verb forms in Kanuri. It has been said, Kanuri has two verb classes where the both verb classes 1 and 11 carry the negative particles –ba. The negative particle –bawo can negate sentence or constituent with emphasis. The negative particle –bawo stands as a bound morpheme throughout in the text. The tone can be both high or low tone. Finally, the study identifies eighty - one instances of the two negative particle with their number of occurrences and their percentages in the text analyzed (Nyariwa Kanuribe)

I. INTRODUCTION

Kanuri is a member of the Saharan branch of the Nilo–Saharan phylum of African languages (see Greenberg, 1963). Bender (2000:44) presents the Saharan branch according to the following groups: Saharan Kanuri: Kanembu, Daza, Teda–Tubu, Zaghawa –Bideyat, and Berti. Lewis (2009) presents the Saharan languages into Eastern, Western and Northern branch. Kanuri is the widest – spread language in the Lake Chad region and is spoken in all countries bordering Cameroun Chad, Niger, and Nigeria. There are also small numbers of Kanuri speakers in Fezzan Libya. Some Kanuri in diaspora also live in Sudan in around Khartoum. However, Kanuri speakers in Nigeria outnumber those in other countries by far. The estimated number of Kanuri speakers in Nigeria is between

three to four million. Those in other countries do not exceed five hundred thousand Cyffer (1998).

Kanuri is an amalgamation of several ethnic groups. The ethnic groups that constitute Kanuri language according to Bulakarima (1991), Bulakarima and Shettima (2012) are twenty different ethnic groups. The speech forms of the Kanuri ethnic groups are further classified into six major dialects. The classification of these six major dialects is based on their phonological, phonetic, morphological and semantic differences. The six major dialects according to Bulakarima (1991), Bulakarima and Shettima (2012) are:

- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| (i) Manga | (iv) Dagəra |
| (ii) Mowar | (v) Bilma |
| (iii) suwurti | (vi) Yerwa |

The present study is based on Yerwa dialect of Kanuri which is the most widely used dialect of Kanuri and the standard Kanuri orthography (sko) is written in Yerwa dialect of Kanuri (Cyffer 1991).

The negative hypothesis is the proposal that imperfective verb are negated in Kanuri sentence in the text. The imperfective verb is a common structural unit which can act as an imperfective verb in Kanuri. Therefore the paper examines Negative Imperfective Verb Forms in Kanuri using the text Nyariwa Kanuribe, Negation in Kanuri pays much attention on syntactic and semantics description but none of them (scholars) states their strides discussing on negative markers negating imperfective verb in the written text.

Onietan and Fannami (2008) identifies that negation can also be expressed through morpho – syntactic means. This morpho – syntactic means is termed particles or element. Ndimele (2009: 125) points out that the negative perfective verb form in standard Igbo is marked by *beghi*. It can be hosted by any lexical verb, particularly the non – stative ones. Storch (2009) states that, negation in Jukun language is not related to particular tense or aspect and there is basically no difference between the negation of the subject, the verb or the object of the whole sentences. Dryer (2009) discusses the distribution of Verb Object and Negative order in Nilo – Saharan language. Lobo (2002) states that, adjuncts that are able to carry independent tense always occur outside the scope of negation. However, Storch (1997) observes that, an object can be represented by a pronoun, noun or a phrase and is negated by the sentence – final marker *məŋ*. Croft (1991) postulates a negative existential cycle from A to Type C: in the Type A, the negation of the existential predicate is performed by the verbal

negation. In Type B, there is a special negative existential predicate, distinct from verbal negation. In Type C, there is a special negative existential predicate, which is identical to the verbal negation.

The negative imperative takes verb in both verbs classes 1 and 2 these categories are core. Cyffer (2009) confirm that in present Kanuri only the imperfective occurs together with *ba / bawo*. However, Ziegelmeier (2009) states that, the morpheme *–ba / –bawo* is suffixed to the verb and can stand on its own. Beyer (2003) observes that, some languages use the non – marked basic verb stem in the perfective affirmative paradigm and mark the imperfective verb stem by derivation. Wilkendorf (1988) maintains that a neutralization of tense forms as well as a reduction in the number of degrees of remoteness for the tenses in both the perfective and imperfective aspects.

Cyffer (2009: 73) points out finite verb generally forms carry a negative suffix which is different in the imperfect and other TAMS. The other TAMS use a uniform negative formative in the perfective aspect, the specific sub categories are neutralized. Consider the following examples given in Table 1.

Cyffer (2009) emphasizes that in Kanuri, the Negative Imperfect is a recent TAM from this we conclude that the imperfective originally had no direct negative counterpart. In other to negate an ongoing or non- complete verbal action, other syntactic constructions had to be applied. This is done by creating an existential sentence and using a negative predicator as shown in examples a, b, and c.

In the examples a, b, and c above the construction *c* embeds in the complement position of a clause which contains a verb in the imperfective

Table 1 Kanuri system of TAM

	Affirmative	Negative
Perfective	Past (ki ---o) Noun Emphasis past (-o) Verb Emphasis (-i) Perfect (-na)	Negative Perfect (- v – nyi/ - nde)
Imperfective: Imperfective (-in) Potential (TI - -o)		Negative Imperfective (-in-ba) Negative Potential (Ti- -o – nyi / nde)
Command Imperfective (-e, -owo) Subjunctive (v,v)		Prohibitive

	Complement	Predicator	Gloss
a. Affirmative	Kungəna	mbeji	there is money
b. Negative	Kungəna	bawo/ ba	there is no money
c.	[Musa maarantiro legin] [Musa school, to he will go] There is not [that] Musa will go to school	bawo / ba	there is not

form. This paper describes the syntactic and semantics aspect of imperfective verb form of Negation and analyzed the host verb classes in the text by adopting descriptive approach.

This paper posits that imperfective verbs are negating imperfective verb forms in existential sentences in the text. Therefore this paper examines how to describe negative imperfective verb form in Kanuri but this work will give much emphasis to negative existential sentences in Kanuri written text within the purview of descriptive approach.

II. METHOD

The current research used descriptive approach to analyse the data in the Nyariwa Kanuribe. The descriptive linguistics, a theoretical framework due to the fact that the model is general in nature and can adequately describe the structure of the negation types in Kanuri. Descriptive linguistics gives a comprehensive, systematic, objective and precise account of the patterns and use of a specific language or dialect at a particular point in time. The aim of descriptive linguistic is to describe that facts of linguistics usage as they are not how they are ought to be with reference to some real or imagined ideal state Crystal (1985). The study adopting Cyffer (2009) confirm that in present Kanuri only the imperfect occurs together with *ba / bawo*.

III. RESULT

In the text analyzed, we identified eighty one instances of occurrences of two negation particles / markers. These are the negation markers “*ba*” (not), and “*bawo*” (none) identified in the text Nyariwa

Table 2 Negation occurrence in Nyariwa Kanuribe

NO	Types of negation in the text	Number of occurrences	Percentage of occurrences
1	Ba	72	88.89%
2	Bawo	9	11.19%
Total		81	100%

Kanuribe. The two negation markers are presented in the table below. The table shows negation types, number of their occurrences and their percentage of their occurrences in the text.

The table (1) above shows the percentages of occurrences of the negation particles and marker found in the text. Negation *-ba* which constitutes the highest percentages of the occurrences with 88.89% in the text analyzed while negation *-bawo* has the lowest percentages of the occurrences which constitutes 11.19%. The study also analyzes the relationship between the negative particle / marker in their verbs classes they are attached with.

IV. DISCUSSION

Negative Imperfective Verb Form in Kanuri

The Negative Imperfective Verb Form in standard Kanuri is marked by *-in* it can be hosted by any lexical verbs in both verb classes that is class 1 and 2 . In the text, we identified thirty three (33) verbs with imperfective *-in* as illustrated below taken from the text.

Yakkin
Carry IMPF VCL 1
I will carry it there
Fangin
Hear IMPF VCL 2
I will hear

Negative Imperfective

The negative particle *-ba* is suffixed to imperfective in verb class 1 and class 2. The table 3 shows verbs in imperfective form with negative particle *-ba*.

Table 3. imperfective form with negative particle -ba

Verbs and Imperfective	Verb Classes	Negative Particle ba	Glosses
Yakk -in	I	-ba	I will not carry
waltək -in	I	-ba	I will not return
fugək -in	I	-ba	I will not pour
sətangazəg -in	II	-ba	He cannot cure
Kasanng -in	II	-ba	I will not agree
waazəg -in	II	-ba	It will not happen
Manang -in	II	-ba	I will not talk

In table 3, the study shows imperfective *-in* is attached to the verb in both verb classes and the negative particle *-ba* is a bound morpheme to the imperfective *-in* as in the text.

Negative Imperfective Sentences in Kanuri

The study observes that the negative particle *-ba* is suffixed to the imperfective *-in* after the verbs in both classes to negate the whole sentence in Kanuri consider the following sentences from the text.

1. A' a wu nyi -ga yakk -in -ba wono
Yes I you -DOM taking VLC IMPF NEG he said
'yes I will not take you he / she said
2. Kam nuna -ye suluy -in -ba wono
Person dead CONJ VLC 1 he will come IMPF NEG he said
The dead person cannot come out he said
3. Abima nyi -ro waazag -in -ba
Nothing you IOM happen VCL2 IMPF NEG
Nothing will happen to you
4. Wu -də abima manang -in -ba
I DET nothing say VCL2 IMPF NEG
I will not say anything

In examples 1 and 2 above, consist of two sentences *wu nyi -ga yakk -in ba* 'I will not take you' and *wono* 'he said' and the negative particle *-ba* is suffixed to imperfective *yakkin* 'I will drink' 'to negate the part of the sentence while 'he said' is not negated.

In examples 3 and 4 above the negative particle *-ba* is suffixed to imperfective *-in* after the verb to negate the sentence at final position.

Imperfective Verb with Negative Particle *-bawo*

Imperfective Verb with Negative Particle *-bawo* is a bound morpheme use in imperfective verbs in Kanuri sentences the negative particle '*bawo*' is derived from negative marker and the copula verb '*wo*' in Kanuri. The copular '*wo*' is

always accompanied by the negative marker *-ba* it is attached to the negative marker *-ba* to negate sentences or phrases in Kanuri. In the text analyzed, we observed that the negative marker *-bawo* negates phrase to imperfective verb sentences as illustrated below taken from the text.

5. Wu -də nyi -ga nzəraakin -bawo
I DET you COND I love VCL IMPF NEG
It is only me who will not love you
6. Ala ye sədiya ye nduma fanjin bawo ye wono
God ADD permit ADD nobody hear IMPF NEG ADD ADJ said
If God permits nobody will hear it

In example 6 above the sentence is a simple sentence where the negative particle *-bawo* is attached to the imperfective *-in* to verb class I *nzəraak* negates the sentence at final position of the sentence. In example 7 above the sentence is a co-ordination by the additive adjunct *-ye* being placed after each clause where the negative particle *-bawo* is attached with emphasis to the verb class 2 of second person plural *fanjin* hear negates the part of the imperfective sentence. Ndimele (1995) opines that there are two main strategies for marking negation in Igbo. The first strategy is to negate the whole sentence, i.e 'predicate negation'. While the second is to negate a particular constituent or a sentence, i.e 'constituent negation'.

V. CONCLUSION

This paper examines negative imperfective verb forms in a selected Kanuri written text as a source of data. The study identified two types of negation used I negating imperfective verb form in Kanuri. These are: Negation particle *ba* and *bawo* are bound morphemes and cannot stand on their own they are attached to imperfective *-in* to negate imperfective verbs. The study also identified eighty - one (81) instances of these two negative particles with their numbers of occurrences and percentages of their occurrences in the text.

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