

MORPHOSYNTAX OF NEGATION IN KOLOKUMA

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Abstract

This study is a descriptive analysis of the morphosyntax of negation in Kolokuma. The paper investigated the operations of negation in the Kolokuma dialect of the Izon language to ascertain how negation is realised in different sentence structures. The data for this work was collected through discussions with native speakers. The study showed that the primary negative markers are 'gha' for affirmative sentences, and 'kumo' for imperative sentences. The study demonstrated that, the tense markers are neutralized in most negative sentences, but in the case of the perfectives, the tense markers are not only deleted, another negative particle 'naa' is inserted pre verbally for the present perfect aspect, while 'naa' and the auxiliary verb 'timi' are inserted for the past perfective aspect. The research also showed that the future maker '-nghmi' is not deleted in future negative structures, but fronted to a post verbal position, attaching itself to another negative particle 'faa', while the negative marker '-gha' is attached to the main verb. In the same vein, the future marker is not deleted in negative sentences with the auxiliary verb 'kurei', but fronted, while '-gha' attaches to the main verb.

Keywords: Morphosyntax, negation, Kolokuma, language, affirmative.

Introduction

Negation is an essential operation in language and logic that refutes, denies or reverses the truth of a proposition. Succinctly put, it is a way of expressing opposites. The concept of negation is a universal concept in linguistics, with principles and parameters from which different languages choose, that is, there are similarities and differences of expressing negation in languages. Negation is used to contradict or make an affirmative untrue through the negative marker 'not' or other words like 'never', 'no', 'no one', 'nothing', 'nobody', 'none', etc. In English, negation can also be expressed by affixing prefixes like 'ante-', 'un-', 'dis-', 'il-' etc.

Negation has been defined as a device employed in a language to deny an affirmation or assertion. (Adeoye 2018). According to Jackson (2007:43), negation is the expression of the denial or reverse of a state of affairs. In English, the most common negative expression is the particle not, which is positioned after the first auxiliary in a verb phrase and often contrast (may not come, hasn't been seen). Negation may however be expressed in a variety of ways

(‘no dogs allowed’, ‘you must never say that’, ‘she can be so uncaring’). Dahl, Osten (1979, p80) claims that a negator is used ‘... for converting a sentence S_1 into another sentence S_2 , such that S_2 is true whenever S_1 is false and vice versa. Ilori, J. F (2010, p 153) observes that a negator is a functional element used to deny a proposition. Yusuf, A. (2008, p134) states that negative sentences are not used in discourse to introduce new argument, but rather they are used in context in which their referential arguments have already been introduced in the preceding context.

This study is a descriptive analysis of how negation is realised in the Kolokuma dialect. Kolokuma is a north central Ijoid lect that is spoken in the Kolokuma/ Opokuma Local Government Area of Bayelsa State. The study is divided into three sections; section one is introduction, section two discusses negation of affirmative sentences, the auxiliary verb ‘can’ and the negative marker, negation in tense and aspect, and finally, imperative sentences, while section three concludes the work.

Negation in Kolokuma

The negative makers in Kolokuma are ‘-gha’ (not) and ‘-kumo’ (don’t), ‘-gha’ is used to negate declaratives and interrogatives while ‘-kumo’ is used to negate imperatives. Interestingly, the tense makers in negative sentences are neutralized in most negative constructions but in some cases, not only is the tense maker retained, another negative particle is introduced.

Table 1 Negative Markers in Kolokuma

Suffix	Meaning	Example	Gloss
-gha	Not	gbein – gha tie – gha	Did not throw Did not stand
Kumo	do not	Uwou - kumo Kori - kumo	Don’t climb Don’t hold

There is another negative particle in Kolokuma, - ‘faa’.

Faa is the negative form of emi (to be present). It is used to negate sentences that express the presence of something. (Okotori, 2015 : 48)

Examples:

a) Fíyáí wari gho emi

Food house LOC be (presence of)

There is food in the house

b) Fiyai wari gho faa

Food house LOC absent NEG

There is no food in the house

a) Oni yobo emi

That place be (presence of)

It is there

b) Oni yobo faa

That place NEG

It is not there

Kolokuma is a pro drop or nul subject language, so even if the subject is not overtly written in some sentences, it is understood as having a subject. (Okotori, 2015 : 48)

Negation of Affirmative Sentences

According to Matthews, P. H (2007, P 11), affirmative is a (sentence, form, construction) by which one can asserts what is, as opposed to what is not. Kolokuma expresses the negative of affirmative sentences by attaching the negative marker 'gha' to the main verb. Examples of negative 'gha' in affirmative sentence :

1. Arau fun nimi - mi

3SG book know PRS

She is intelligent

b. Arau fun nimi - gha

3SG book know NEG

She is not intelligent

2. Tari bolou ebi kami

Tari mind good INTEN

Tari is too good

b. Tari bolou ebi - gha

Tari mind good NEG

Tari is not good.

The Auxiliary Verb 'Can' and the Negative Marker

The auxiliary verb 'can' is used to show ability (able to) to do something. The word used for 'can' in Kolokuma is kurei. 'Kurei' in Kolokuma as in English, is used to show ability to do something. But in Kolokuma, 'kurei' can only be used with the future tense marker 'nghmi' (which literally means will be able to when it co occurs with 'kurei') and to express the negative of an affirmative sentence containing 'kurei', the negative marker '-gha' is attached to the main verb. The negative sentence for 'kurei' can also be expressed in another way, where another negative particle 'faa' is introduced, and the future marker 'nghmi' that was attached to the main verb is fronted. **Examples of 'Kurei' and the Negative Marker :**

Word	Gloss
3. Kurei bo - nghmi	can come (literally, will be able to come)
Kurei tite - nghmi	can sit
Kurei bunu - nghmi	can sleep
Kurei desi - nghmi	can jump

Negative

Kurei bo -gha	can not come
Kurei tite - gha	can not sit
Kurei bunu - gha	can not sleep
Kurei desi - gha	can not jump

Negative Sentences Where 'nghmi' is Fronted. Examples :

4. Kurei bo - nghmi

AUX come FUT

Can come

b. Kurei bo - gha faa - nghmi

AUX come NEG NEG FUT

Can not come (literally, will not be able to come)

5. Kurei tite - nghmi

AUX sit FUT

Can sit

b. Kurei tite - gha faa - nghmi

AUX sit NEG NEG FUT

Can not sit

Table 2 Present Tense (Negative)

Word	Gloss	Negative Form	Gloss
kpari -nimi	It is dry	kpari -gha	It is not dry
Bunu -nimi	Is asleep	Bunu-gha	Is not asleep
zau -mi	It is small	zau -gha	It is not small
Dagain -mi	It is tall	Dagain-gha	Is not tall

Tense in Negative Sentences

Examples:

6) a. Kpari - nimí

Dry - PRS

It is dry

b. Kpari - gha

kpari - NEG

it is not dry

7)a. Erí búnú -nimí

He sleep - PRS

He is asleep

b. Erí búnú - gha

He sleep - NEG

He is not asleep/He is not sleeping

Table 3 Past Tense (Negative)

Word	Gloss	Negative Form	Gloss
Aki -mi	Take	Aki -gha	Did not take
Tuun -mi	sang	Tuun -gha	Did not sing
Vuro- mi	flog	Vuro -gha	Did not flog
Desi- mi	Jumped	Desi -gha	Did not jump

- 8)a. Ominí aki - mí
3PL take - PST
They took
- b. Ominí aki - gha
3PL take -NEG
They did not take
- 9)a. Tena tuun - mi
Tena sing - PST
Tena sang
- b. Tena tuun - ghá
Tena sing - NEG
Tena did not sing

Table 4 Future Tense (Negative)

Word	Gloss	Negative Form	Gloss
Kpun -nghimi	Will pull	Kpun -gha faa - nghimi	Will not pull
Didimo – nghimi	Will push	Didimo -gha faa - nghimi	Will not push
Tei -nghimi	Will pray	Tei - gha faa - nghimi	Will not pray

- 10)a. Erí kpun - nghímí
3SGSUB pull - FUT
He will pull
- b. Erí kpun - ghá – faa - nghímí
3SGSUB pull NEG NEG FUT
He will not pull
- 11)a. Tarí a fámú-nghímí
Tari 3SGOBJ beat FUT
Tari will beat her
- b. Tarí a fámú- ghá faa- ghímí
Tari 3SGOBJ beat NEG NEG FUT
Tari will not beat her

As can be seen in the (b) examples from 6 - 11, the tense markers have been neutralized- the present tense marker ‘-nimi’ in 6b and 7b and the past tense marker ‘-mi’ in 8b and 9b respectively.

In the case of the future tense, not only was the tense marker retained, another negative particle ‘-faa’ was introduced as can be seen in examples 10b and 11b but while ‘-gha’ was attached to the main verb, ‘-nghmi’ was fronted to a post verbal position, attaching itself to the negative particle ‘faa’.

Aspect in Negative Sentences

Table 5 Present Perfect (Negative)

Word	Gloss	Negative Form	Gloss
Sou -dou	Has dug	Naa sou -gha	Has not dug (yet)
Sei -dou	Has danced	Naa sei -gha	Has not danced (yet)
Loou -dou	Has massage	Naa loou -gha	Has not massaged (yet)

12)a. Owou -mó sou - dou

Children- PL DEF dig - PRF

The children have dug

b. Owou - mó naá- sou - ghá

Children - PL DEF-NEG dig -NEG

The children have not dug yet

13)a. Araú sei - dou

3SGSUB dance -PRF

She has danced

b. Araú naa sei-gha

3SGSUB NEG sei -NEG

She has not danced yet

14)a. Tobou-má wai - dou

Girl -DEF return PRF

The girl has returned

b. Tobo-má naa waai - gha

Girl - DEF NEG return -NEG

The girl has not returned

Table 6 Past Perfect (Negative)

Word	Gloss	Negative Form	Gloss
Mu -dei ko	Had gone	Naa mu -gha tiimi	Had not (yet) gone
Bo -dei ko	Had come	Naa bo -gha tiimi	Had not (yet) come
Bunu -dei ko	Had slept	Naa bunu -gha tiimi	Had not slept (yet)

Examples:

15)a. Owou-mó búnú-déi ko áraú bó-mí

Child-DEF sleep-PRF TOP 3SGSUB come-PST

The children had slept before she came

b. Owou-mó naá búnú-ghá tími áraú bó-mí

Child-PLDEF NEG sleep-neg AUX 3SGSUB come-PST

The children had not slept before she came.

16) Beni-bí dári-déi ko arí búru-bí tua-mi

Water-DEF boil-PRF TOP 1SGSUB yam-DEF put-PST

The water had boiled before I put the yam

b. Beni-bí naá dári-ghá tími arí búrú-bí tua-mi

Water-DEF NEG boil-NEG AUX 1SGSUB yam-DEF put-PST

The water had not (yet) boiled before I put the yam

From the (b) examples above, we can see that for the present perfect negative, the perfective marker was deleted and the 'naa' negative marker was added. For the past perfect on the other hand apart from 'naa' the auxiliary verb 'timi' was added.

The Negative '-Kumo' in Imperative Sentences:

Table 7 The Negative 'Kumo'

Word	Gloss	Negative	Gloss	Negative Imperative	Gloss
Doro	Shout	Kumo	do not	Doro Kumo	Do not shout
Desi	Jump			Desi kumo	Do not jump
Deri	Laugh			Deri kumo	Do not laugh
Akubo	Bring it			Akubo kumo	Do not bring it
Aki	Take			Aki kumo	Do not take it

Examples:

17) Fíyái fí

Food IMP

Eat food

b) Fíyái fí kúmó

Food eat NIAUX

Do not eat food

18) Wáí ghó mú

House LOC go

Go to the house

b) Wáí ghó mú kúmó

house LOC go NIAUX

Do not go to the house.

Conclusion

In this study, we have analysed and described the negative operations in Kolokuma. The study identified the primary negative marker in Kolokuma as '-gha' in affirmative sentences, and 'kumo' in imperative sentences. However, the study shows that in most cases, the tense markers are neutralized in the negative sentences, while in some cases, it is not only retained, another negative particle is introduced. For the future negative, and the negative with the auxiliary verb 'kurei', it is observed that, while the negative '-gha' is attached to the main verb, there is a fronting of the future tense marker '-nghmi', where '-nghmi' detaches from

the main verb and is fronted to a post verbal position, attaching itself to the negative particle 'faa' rather than being deleted. It is also observed that in the case of the present perfect, the perfective marker was deleted, and another negative particle 'naa' was inserted pre verbally. In the negative of the past perfect aspect, the perfective marker is also deleted, but apart from the negative particle 'naa' that was added, the auxiliary verb 'timi' was also added.

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