

**Norbert Cyffer, Erwin Ebermann and Georg Ziegelmeyer (eds.)
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Introduction

<1>

The present volume is a most welcome contribution to the investigation of negation in African languages of non-Bantu language groups. It aims at filling a gap in the study of African languages, since – as several of the authors state – negation has so far only been given little attention: "the structural and conceptual function of negation was often given little consideration in the grammatical description of African languages, though in many African languages we are confronted with a remarkable complexity of negation patterns" (Cyffer, p. 72). Negation is a highly complex matter and interacts with other grammatical categories. Thus, it has to be analyzed from different perspectives:

"The study of [...] negation patterns is [...] more than a mere description of expressing 'no' or 'not' in the language. Negation structures uncover other patterns of language structure, especially with regard to the evolution of grammatical categories. Genetic, universal and areal impacts may come in to explain negation in the present language." (Cyffer, p. 72)

<2>

The present volume can, to a certain extent, be considered complementary to a special issue of *Linguistique Africaine* 4 (1990), which contains papers on Bantu and non-Bantu languages. Comparative research on negation seems to have played a more important role in Bantu studies than in other areas, cf. Kamba Muzenga (1981) and Güldemann (1999).

Therefore, the aim of the reviewed publication is achieved, even though the whole range of structures affected by negation has not been covered for a single language.

The reviewed publication is made up of the following chapters:

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The articles

<3>

Georg Ziegelmeyer outlines the negation patterns in the non-indicative mood in Hausa, Kanuri and Fulfulde, three genetically unrelated linguae francae ("languages of wider communication"), which are in close contact in northern Nigeria. In all three languages, the non-indicative negation patterns differ from those in the indicative mood in several respects. In Hausa and Fulfulde, negation of non-indicative mood is marked outside the verbal complex, i.e. negation is expressed by a negative particle followed by an affirmative sentence in the non-indicative mood. In Kanuri, there is double marking of negation; a clause-initial negative particle introduces a clause in the negative completive TAM. What at first glance appears to be the result of "structural diffusion" affecting the three languages is a phenomenon of far wider areal distribution and not only attested in northern Nigeria. But since the distribution of the typological feature of double negation is not clear, the author does not discuss the question about the origin of double negation any further and refers instead to Zima's article in the same volume.

<4>

Ekkehart Wolff investigates negation patterns in the closely related and adjacent Central Chadic languages Hdi and Lamang. In both languages, negation interacts with mood (indicative/subjunctive/imperative), focus and aspect. Strictly speaking, negation is confined to the indicative mood in these languages.

Hdi and Lamang do not have negative imperatives or subjunctives. The author argues that the prohibitive is not a negative structure. Lamang uses a special (inherently-negative) verb paradigm for the prohibitive, while there is a clause initial prohibitive marker *mà* (p. 44f) in Hdi. In both languages, there is no further negative marking in this clause type.

Wolff's contribution reads like a review article of Frajzyngier & Shay's (2002) grammar of Hdi, a work that he strongly criticizes.

<5>

Philip Jaggar's is concerned with negative polarity items, i.e. adverbs which quantify time ('always, never, ever') and degree ('absolutely, not at all'), and the "(quasi) aspectual verb" *taɓā* ('ever do s.th., do s.th. once') in Hausa, for which he provides a semantic analysis and a elaborate discussion of their functional distribution. Most of the time and degree adverbs discussed are exclusively negative polarity items, only a few are bipolar and express opposite quantificational values depending on the syntactic context. Jaggar contrasts the definitions of the individual Hausa adverbs with the definitions of their English "quasi" equivalents by Quirk et al. (1985) in order to make their semantics clear to the reader.

<6>

Norbert Cyffer claims that the marking of negation in Kanuri is strongly influenced by language contact and the result of recent grammaticalisation processes: an originally simple Saharan system of negation has thus developed a highly complex structure. He argues that the negative marker *bâ* of the imperfective seems to be a recent innovation. The imperfective could not easily be negated in an earlier stage of the language.

The author shows that a construction with a negative predicator negating affirmative imperfective clauses has grammaticalized into the present imperfective negative construction, *kórəkin báwo* ('there is not [that] I ask'). The imperfective morpheme being a locative suffix might explain why the negation strategy of this aspect differs from that of other TAMs.

<7>

Petr Zima focuses on negative TAM-morphemes in Songhay. Negative marking in Songhay is very complex, because TAM, polarity and (in)transitivity is marked by portmanteau¹ morphemes. To complicate matters, the marking is tonal in Dendi and Zarma and non-tonal in the Songhay dialects of Gao and Timbuktu. The simplest zero-marked verb form ("positive, indicative, perfective, intransitive") is marked as negative by *na* or *mana*.

Zima considers the use of negative TAM-markers a typological feature of the Sahel region and discusses the hypotheses that it may be of Afro-Asiatic, Niger-Congo or Saharan origin. He even sees typological similarities between the negation strategies in Bantu and the negative marking in the non-indicative mood in Songhay and regards common genetic roots as conceivable. However, he considers it equally plausible that that the negation patterns are linked by contact, interference and pidginization / creolization (104).

<8>

Anne Storch sets off to explain that her paper was "originally intended to investigate the "repeating pronoun" in Jukun". In the course of her studies, it turned out that the relationship between the recapitulative pronoun (also called "copy pronoun", cf. Storch in print) and negation is so important that the author produced two papers, the present one focusing on negation and a second one (Storch in print) focusing on the pronouns themselves. A thorough analysis of the complex negation patterns in the different Jukun dialects was considered necessary in order to understand the function of recapitulative pronouns. Apart from the use of negative morphemes, the Jukun dialects Kutep, Waphā, and Wapan use recapitulative pronouns as a secondary device to mark negation.

The following syntactic conditions triggered the emergence of copy pronouns in negative constructions (p. 116ff):

¹ Zima (p. 96) uses the term "complex morpheme" and speaks of an "overlap" of marking of grammatical categories.

- In verbal negation, the position of the recapitulative pronoun is between predicate and negation morpheme.
- Focus, contrastive constructions and sentence final negation share the clause final position of their markers.
- Focus as well as locality are reflected in the use of recapitulative pronouns
- The leveling of structural boundaries between the major word classes caused the necessity of an absolutely strict word order SVO, even in focus construction. As a result, absolutely all verbs must have two overt participants: subject and object.

Consequently, copy pronouns occur in negative and focus constructions.

The title of the article does not do justice to its contents, but the reader gets a fascinating insight into the interrelationship of copy pronouns, focus and negation.

<9>

Ozo-mekuri Ndimele introduces his comprehensive description of expressions of negation in standard Igbo and Igbo dialects with five definitions of negation, which are not often referred to again in the remainder of the article. The article is concerned, among others, with the variable position of the negative morpheme. However, the reader has to rely more on his own analysis of the provided examples than the opaque description. In Standard Igbo, the general negative suffix *ghi*, used in all tenses, aspects and moods, follows the verb stem, thus replacing the factitive marker. While the suffix *-ghi-* precedes the verb stem in the negative anticipative form and follows the TA prefix *gà-* in the negative anticipative. In the habitual, the suffix follows the auxiliary verb *nà-* and precedes the verb stem. In the perfective, the complex suffix *-beghi* follows the verb stem and replaces both a vowel suffix of unclear function and the perfective marker. Ndimele stresses that negative constructions in the Echie dialect have a peculiar tone marking (p. 133). The examples show another striking feature: a clause initial negative existential is used followed by an OVS construction. The same construction is found in the Owere dialect when the focused object is negated (p. 134).

<10>

Tjerk Hagemeijer focuses on the structure and development of the discontinuous sentence negation pattern of Santome, a Portuguese based creole. The pre- and postverbal negative morphemes are both inherited from a proto-Gulf of Guinea Creole. On the basis of Jespersen's cycle² Hagemeijer postulates the following development in GGC (142):

- Initially, NEG₁ was the only marker of negation.
- NEG₂ was used initially as an intensifying element associated with negation.
- The semantics of negation became associated with this intensifying element, NEG₂.
- This resulted in a regular discontinuous marking of negation.
- NEG₁ was dropped, and NEG₂ was left as the only marker of standard negation, as in Lungi'e (spoken on the island of Príncipe).

As the author shows in detail, Santome shows patterns which reflect several of the above-mentioned steps. In the discontinuous construction, NEG₂ is not a specifier but a functional head. In simple clauses, it has the clause final position, but it may be followed by temporal adjuncts. Contrastive focus operates only on elements that are within the scope of negation,

² The term "Jespersen's Cycle" was coined by Dahl (1979).

which is directly followed by a final NEG₂. When negation occurs inside certain purpose clauses there is usually no NEG₂.

Hagemeijer considers the Portuguese negator *não* to be the origin of NEG₁, *na* ~ *nax* ~ *nanta(n)*, the origin of NEG₂, *f(a)/va* ~ *wa*, however, is not clear. The development of a discontinuous “long distance” negation marking may have been triggered by Kikongo influence.

<11>

Kerstin Winkelmann and **Gudrun Miehe** give a detailed overview of the highly complex negation strategies in copular clauses and in verbal predicates in Gur languages. Since basically any syntactic structure is found it is likely that some are inherited, while others result from language contact. Because negation is closely bound to the specific cognitive structures of the speakers’ communities (p. 192), the authors are cautious to make general interpretations with regard to common genetic or areal sources of certain patterns. They identify, however, the following features that are common in many Gur languages (as well as in other languages in the area):

- 1 There is a suppletive and an additive type of negation.
- 2 There are specific negative forms for the three copula constructions, though never in one single language
- 3 Certain negators, like *Ba* and *N*, are distributed over a large area and even attested in unrelated languages, while others are restricted to very small areas.
- 4 Sentence final negation is found throughout the area, but only in some languages.
- 5 There is a widespread strategy of avoiding overtly marked perfect stems in negative clauses.
- 6 In a few Gurunsi languages, word order has changed from SVO to SOV in negative clauses.
- 7 In some languages, the position of the preverbal negative marker is variable.
- 8 Some negative markers have a temporal or modal connotation.

<12>

Klaus Beyer investigates the areal distribution of double negation marking from a historical perspective. His aims are twofold: firstly, a documentation of the diffusion of this syntactic feature from the margins of the Sahel through the Volta Basin to the rainforest zone, secondly, the development of a hypothesis that may explain the diffusion. He considers the models of “metatypy” (Ross 2001) and of “contact-induced grammaticalisation” by Heine & Kuteva (2003: 533) better suited for this purpose than the borrowing hierarchy established by Thomason & Kaufman (1991: 75). This latter would need modification, because it is neutral with regard to the relation of dominance among the groups in contact. The geographical distribution of the pattern “double negation” and the difference in the phonological substance in the various languages make such an approach reasonable.

The very origin or the “unique initiator” of the construction cannot be determined and the author does not consider this question to be very important. The structural features of the construction itself and its diffusion are the central topics of his research. He motivates the diffusion of double negative marking by a “need” felt in the respective languages, irrespective of their genetic affiliation. The nature of this need, however, is not specified. A map (p. 222) illustrates the areal distribution of double negation constructions. Four areas of diffusion are

indicated, namely areas in which languages with a final element *wa/ya*, *O*, *mV* or another final element are distributed.

<13>

Negative structures in Southern Mande languages spoken in Côte d'Ivoire and Northern Liberia are the topic of **Valentin Vydrine**'s contribution. In combination with the series of personal pronouns, he documents the negation patterns of unmarked verbal sentences, perfective, prohibitive, existential and presentative clauses of the following languages/language groups: Mano, Dan, Tura, Guro, Yaure, Wan, Mwan, Gban, Beng. A separate chapter is devoted to each language. Apart from the types of negative clauses mentioned above, Guro, Yaure and Gban have focalised negative constructions. The results of the analysis of six negative constructions ("unmarked" verbal sentence", "perfective", "prohibitive", "focalized", "existential", and "presentative") in twelve languages are summarized in a table (p. 257)

<14>

Erwin Ebermann investigates the development of negative constructions in Northern Samo in comparison to negative expressions in Southern Samo and other Mande languages and by evaluating the assumed historical migrations of the speakers. As in most Mande languages, the predicate markers in Samo are portmanteau morphemes marking mood, aspect and polarity, most of which were originally compounds. In negative sentences, most dialects have an additional clause final marker. Ebermann postulates (i) that double negation with NEG_2 in clause final position was a feature of Proto-Samo and possibly also of Proto-Eastern Mande (p. 271), (ii) that double negation was used in forming the negative perfective in these language groups (p. 272), (iii) that the dominant role of NEG_2 permitted the deletion of NEG_1 in the "over marked" [sic] perfective (p. 272), and (iv) that, eventually, NEG_2 was weakened and the functional load of sentence negation became increasingly associated with the post-subject position, i.e. that of NEG_1 in Northern Samo. The last postulate is striking, because it is not in agreement with the Jespersen's cycle mentioned above (cf. Dahl 1979).

<15>

Amina Mettouchi describes the various salient patterns of negation and their functions in several Berber dialects. Distinct non-verbal negation patterns for locative-existential and identificational-qualificational predication are a characteristic feature of Berber. Another salient feature of Berber is the preverbal negator which is formally identical in all dialects.

In all dialects, verbal negation triggers the movement of clitics which occur after the preverbal negator *wər* and after aspectual or modal pre-verbs in relative and interrogative clauses. Clitics that mark the roles or distance of participants follow the verb in the order Verb – DAT – ACC – DIST in affirmative clauses, whilst they are encliticised to the preverbal negator in negative clauses, resulting in the order NEG – DAT – ACC – DIST – Verb. Another noteworthy feature of Berber is the existence of specific aspectual paradigms in the negative polarity. The author is, however, aware of the fact that this feature is shared by other African languages (p. 299).

<16>

Matthew S. Dryer's paper aims at investigating the Africa-wide and also worldwide distribution of a typologically rather uncommon syntactic feature, which is found in high concentration in an area in West Africa, namely the tendency of SVO languages to have clause final negators. For his typological study, he does not only take West African languages into account but also other Niger-Congo languages, including Bantu languages, languages of the Afro-Asiatic and Nilo-Saharan phyla and even non-African languages. His results are visualized in 9 maps.

General assessment

<17>

The focus of the book is very broad. The authors were given the freedom to investigate aspects of negation of their choice. Consequently, the volume presents fascinatingly different ways how to approach the topic of negation, e.g., in a comparative framework, by focusing on the relationship of negation with other grammatical categories such of TAM or focus, by examining the grammaticalization of negative morphemes or by considering the contact-linguistic background of negative constructions. None of the articles is restricted to one approach.

<18>

Most of the articles are well written and provide comprehensive descriptions and analyses of comparative and language-specific grammatical data, studies of very specific grammatical features and investigations on the historical and areal development of negation patterns. The interaction between negation and other grammatical features plays a role in almost all articles.

<19>

The articles by Jaggar and Beyer are particularly well written and pleasant to read. In a very clear manner, Jaggar deals with a topic, the interaction of negative polarities and degree adverbs, that is not addressed in any other article. The article will surely stimulate many readers, also those not familiar with West African languages, to investigate this type of adverbs in their languages. Beyer has the courage to put an end to the unsolvable question of whether the ultimate origin of double negation is genetic or not and concentrates instead on how this areal feature behaves.

<20>

There are a number of editorial weaknesses of which only the more significant ones should be addressed. In some articles (Ziegelmeier, Jaggar, Storch), the glosses in the examples are not properly arranged below the corresponding forms in the primary data. In two examples, a page break separates the text and the glosses (p. 109, 143), occasionally the glossing (p. 320, ex. 37) or the free translation (p. 264, ex. f.) is missing. The organization of the papers into chapters follows very different strategies. Not all abbreviation lists are complete or in the correct alphabetical order; in Zima's and Hagemeijer's article the lists are missing completely.

The reader is further left to wonder what motivated the order of the articles. It neither reflects the geographical distribution of the languages nor the theoretical orientation of the individual articles. In the introduction, the editors summarize the articles in a different order.

<21>

Despite the weaknesses, the volume constitutes an important contribution to African linguistics which will contribute to a better understanding of negation in other African languages and also to the treatment of areal features.

Abbreviations

ACC	accusative	OVS	open vowel suffix
GGC	Gulf of Guinea Creole	SVC	serial verbal construction
DAT	dative	SVO	subject – verb- object
DIST	distal	TAM	tense – aspect - mood
NEG	negation		

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