

Surrogate Imperatives in Bantu Languages with Postverbal Negative Particles

Deo S. Ngonyani
Michigan State University

1. Introduction

This paper examines the morphosyntax of sentential negation and negative imperatives in three Bantu languages of southern Tanzania. The languages are Kindendeule, Kikisi, and Chingoni. Kikisi and Chingoni are coded by Guthrie (1967-71) as G67 and N12 respectively. Kindendeule, which is not mentioned by Guthrie, is coded as N101 in Maho's (2003) update of Guthrie's classification. In these languages, sentential negation is marked by post-verbal particles. Furthermore, prohibitive commands in these languages do not use the imperative morphology, but what is known as surrogate negative imperatives (Rivero 1994). Accounts of surrogate negative imperatives in other languages have attributed the ban on the negative marker to its being a syntactic head that blocks movement of the verb to C (Zeijlstra 2004, 2006). This paper examines data in these three languages in the light of this claim. The main claim of the present paper is that the negative particles are adverbs that do not act as barriers to movement of V-to-C.

The paper is organized in the following way. Section 2 provides an overview of sentential negation and imperatives in Kindendeule, Kikisi and Chingoni. Following this description, arguments that suggest the negative particle is an adverb are presented in Section 3. Section 4 contains an analysis followed by a typological overview of negation and negative imperative Section 5. The conclusion is in Section 6.

2. Sentential Negation and the Negative Imperative

The three languages have an SVO structure with similar morphological structure. In this section, we first provided an overview of sentential negation, and then present imperative forms in the three languages.

The particle for sentential negation in Kindendeule is *jee* or *jeka* and it appears after the verb. The following two sentences constitute a minimal pair contrasted by the presence of a negative particle in the second sentence.

- (1) a. η -geni a-ki-tɔl-a u-gembe
 1-guest 1SM-PT-take-IND 14-beer
 'The guest took the beer.'

* Data from Kikisi were collected during the author's 2006-2007 fieldwork that was supported by a fellowship from the National Endowment for Humanities (NEH) on NEH/NSF Documenting Endangered Languages program award number FN-50009-06 and Michigan State University College of Arts and Letters. Data from Kindendeule are from the author, a native speaker. Chingoni data were obtained during the author's 2001 fieldwork supported by Michigan State University Intramural Research Grant Program. Many thanks to the Syntax panel of the 43rd ACAL for very insightful comments. Thanks to an anonymous reviewer whose comments greatly improved the paper.

- (4) a. jis-a apa.
 Come-IND here
 ‘Come here.’ (singular)
- b. N-jis-a apa.
 You(pl)-come-IND here
 ‘Come here.’ (plural) Ngonyani (2011:130)

The verb does not bear a subject marker or tense when the subject of the imperative is singular, as shown in (4a) *jisa* ‘come.’ The imperative form of the plural, however, bears a subject prefix for 2nd person plural *njisa* ‘(you all) come’ (4b). In both these forms, the final vowel is the indicative *-a*.

Negative commands do not make use of the imperative morphology just described. A periphrastic negative marker appears before the main predicate. Using the same verb we illustrate the negative imperative forms.

- (5) a. Somu ku-jis-a.
 NEG INF-come-IND
 ‘Do not come.’
- b. N-somu ku-jis-a.
 PL-NEG INF-come-IND
 ‘Do not come (pl).’ (Ngonyani 2011:132)

The negative imperative for singular subject (5a) is made up of the periphrastic negative marker *somu*, while the negated predicate *kujisa* ‘to come’ appears in the infinitive form. The plural subject negative imperative is marked by the inflected negative marker *nsomu* in (5b). The pattern of subject marking found in the periphrastic form is the same as in true imperatives identified earlier in (4).

A pattern similar to Kikisi is found in Chingoni, as demonstrated in the following examples in which the verb *gega* ‘carry’ is used.

- (6) a. Geg-a ma-nji.
 Carry-IND 6-water
 ‘Carry the water.’
- b. M-geg-a ma-nji.
 You(all)-carry-IND 6-water
 ‘You (all) carry the water.’

This is not the form used in negative commands. As in Kikisi, a periphrastic *-koto* appears before the predicate for which the negative command applies. This is exemplified below.

- (7) a. U-koto ku-geg-a ma-nji .
 you-NEG INF-carry-IND 6-water
 ‘Do not carry water!’ (singular)
- b. M-koto ku-geg-a ma-nji.
 You-NEG INF-carry-IND 6-water
 ‘Do not carry water!’ (plural) (Ngonyani 2003:87)

The periphrastic negative marker is inflected for both singular subject and plural subject. It is worth noting that *-koto* is derived from *-kotoka* ‘cease, stop.’

As in Kikisi and Chingoni, to form a negative imperative in Kindendeule, the verb takes the infinitive form together with the negative particle *-kato* or *jee*, as illustrated in the following examples.

appears after a locative noun which it modifies. These adverbs can be replaced with the negative particle as shown in the following sentences.

- (10) a. Bana jee bakihika.
2-child NEG 2SM-PT-come-IND
'It is not children (that) came.'
- b. B-ana ca-ba-geg-a jee ki-tandabala.
2-child FT-2SM-carry-IND NEG 7-basket
'Children will not carry the basket.'
- c. Ka-gimbwa ka ka-cokombe jee.
21-dog 21DEM 21-small NEG
'The (small) dog is not little.'
- d. Aki-tam-a mu-nyumba jee.
1SM.PT-stay-IND 18-house NEG
'She/he did not stay in the house.'

In (10a), the particle negates the subject, while in (10b) the particle negates the whole sentence. In sentence (10c), *jee* negates the adjective and in (10d) it negates the location. The positions of the negative particle appear to be the same as the positions occupied by different adverbs in (9). Just like adverbs that modify various domains, the negative marker has scope of several possible domains. We can reasonably conclude that the post-verbal negative marker is an adverb due to its distributional patterns.

In order to have scope over the proposition, NEG must be generated higher than VP. Its appearance after V must be attributed to movement of V. Its failure to prevent movement is consistent with adverbial behavior. The movement of the Verb to Infl is argued for in Ngonyani (1996). Using data from VP ellipsis in Kindendeule (as in the following example) and Kiswahili, Ngonyani argues that the verb survives ellipsis because it has moved out of the VP.

- (11) Halima aki-lem-a n-ghonda gw-ake
Halim 1SM.PT-farm-IND 3-farm 3-his/her
- na Miche aki-lem-a ... helahe
and Miche 1SM.PT-farm-IND also
'Halima cultivated her farm and Miche did so too.' (Ngonyani 1996:84-85)

In this example, the second conjunct is elliptical. However, only the object appears missing. Ngonyani (1996) and Ngonyani and Githinji (2006) demonstrate that the verb in Chingoni moves out of VP to support Infl features.

One of the questions we may want to address is the adjunction position of the negative. Again other adverbs provide relevant clues. From VP ellipsis, it appears that the negative marker *jee* is left-adjoined higher than other VP adverbs. In VP ellipsis, a VP adverb is eliminated together with the object of the verb as the following example from Chingoni illustrates.

- (12) V-ana va-kali-tungu jembe kanyata-kanyata (Chingoni)
2-child 2SM-PT-pick 10mango quickly-quickly
'Children were picking mangoes quickly
- na dadi w-avi a-kali-tungu mewa.
and 1father 1-their 1SM-PT-pick also
and their father did so too.' (Ngonyani and Githinji 2006:43)

The adverb *kanyatakanyata* ‘quickly’ appears in the first conjunct but not in the second conjunct. But the interpretation of the second conjunct recovers the object and the manner adverb. In a similar construction but with negative adverb, the negative adverb cannot be eliminated in a similar manner. Consider the following set of sentences from Kindendeule.

- (13) a. Halima aki-pengu kacokɔ n-kongo
 Halima 1SM.PT-fell slowly 3-tree
 na Juma aki-pengu helahe
 and Juma 1SM.PT-fell likewise
 ‘Halima cut the tree slowly and Juma did so too.’
- b. Halima akipengu jee n-kongo
 Halima 1SM.PT-fell NEG 3-tree
 na Juma aki-pengu jee.
 and Juma 1SM.PT-fell NEG
 ‘Halima did not cut the tree and neither did Juma.’
- c. ?Halima akipengu jee n-kongo
 Halima 1SM.PT-fell NEG 3-tree
 na Juma aki-pengu jee helahe
 and Juma 1SM.PT-fell NEG likewise
 ‘Halima did not cut the tree and neither did Juma.’
- d. *Halima akipengu jee n-kongo
 Halima 1SM.PT-fell NEG 3-tree
 na Juma aki-pengu helahe.
 and Juma 1SM.PT-fell likewise
 ‘Halima did not cut the tree and neither did Juma.’

To use a conjunct with ellipsis and retain the negation in both clauses, the speaker must use the negative marker in both clauses (13b). If the negation marker appears only in the first conjunct, as do other adverbs, the result is an ungrammatical sentence (13d). This indicates that although the negative marker behaves as VP adverbs in most respects, it has constraints it does not share with VP adverbs.

Further evidence is found in lack of scope ambiguity for negation in causative constructions. Causative constructions denote two events. Since the causative affix and the verb root form one word, adverbs may be ambiguous with respect to their scope. Here is an example from Kindendeule.

- (14) a. Ma-tungutu g-aki-telek-a kabe li-kolo.
 6-owl 6SM-PT-cook-IND again 5-vegetable
 ‘The owls cooked vegetable again.’
- b. Nungu hya-ki-ga-telek-eh-a kabe ma-tungutu li-kolo.
 9porcupine 9SM-PT-6OM-cook-CAUS-IND again 6-owl 5-vegetable
 ‘The porcupine made the owls cook vegetable again.’
- i. making (causing) again
 ii. cooking again

The adverb may modify causation, which is a higher predicate yielding the first interpretation. It may also modify the cooking, resulting in the second interpretation. This ambiguity is due to the possibility of two adjunction positions, one with the causative VP and the other with the root VP.

This ambiguity is not available for the negative marker. Replacing the adverb with the negative *jee*, we get the following sentences.

- (15) a. Ma-tungutu g-aki-telek-a jee li-kòlb
 6-owl 6SM-PT-cook-IND NEG 5-vegetable
 ‘The owls did not cook vegetables.’
- b. nungu hja-ki-ga-telek-eh-a jee ma-tungutu li-kòlb
 9.porcupine 9SM-PT-6OM-cook-CAUS-IND NEG 6-owl 5-vegetable
 ‘The porcupine did not make the owls cook vegetable.’
- iii. Did not make (CAUSE)
 iv. *did not cook

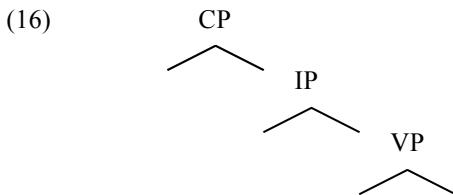
The negative marker unambiguously only negates causation, as lack of ambiguity in (15b) demonstrates.

In short, the distribution of the negative marker reveals it is an adverb that does not prevent V movement to I. Therefore, it is not X^0 . Furthermore, this is an adverb that appears higher than other VP adverbs. The puzzle here is that the negative adverb does not block verb movement to C to form true imperative and yet TNI is banned in these languages. We explore possible structures of the negative and the imperative in the following section.

4. Analysis

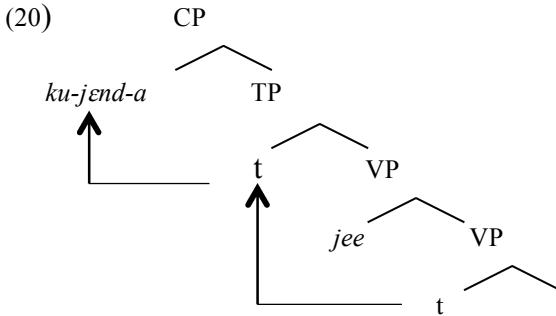
The negative command is a result of interaction between the imperative and the negative. Therefore, we locate the imperative, which by definition involves a command illocutionary force in C. In this section, we present assumptions about clause structure in order to locate the imperative and negation. The clause structure provides a framework for analyzing the negative as associated with tense phrase (TP). We share assumptions with Han (2001) and Zeijlstra (2004, 2006). These are on (a) the location of the illocutionary force on the left periphery, (b) the position of negation in the scope of the operator of the command illocutionary force, and (c) head movement constraint.

The analysis of the SNI in these languages can be accounted for by using Rizzi’s (1997) proposal of an articulated left periphery of the sentence. His proposal is based on the commonly accepted assumption that the clause is made up of three layers, namely, the lexical layer, the inflectional layer, and the complementizer layer. These three layers can be represented in the following way:



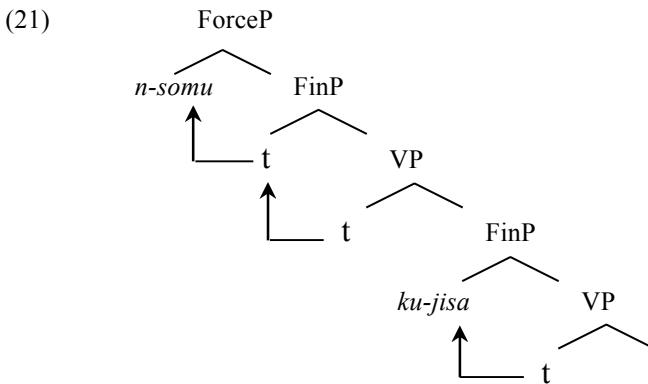
The VP is the lexical layer responsible for assigning arguments and theta roles. The IP is the locus of functional heads such as tense and case. The CP, complementizer layer, is the domain of functional heads that have to do with topic and operator-like elements including focus, interrogative and relativization. It is the locus where illocutionary force is expressed.

Rizzi (1997) proposes to split the CP into four functional projections in a manner that parallels the split of IP (Pollock 1989) and VP shells (Larson 1988). In this proposal, CP, or the left periphery of the clause is composed of four phrases, namely, Force Phrase, Topic Phrase, Focus Phrase, and Finiteness Phrase. These are represented as shown below.



In this structure, the verb is generated lower than the negative adverb. This verb raises to the TP and finally to CP in the imperative form. The surrogate negative imperative (SNI) is not triggered by a negative syntactic head that prevents movement of the verb. Rather, SNI in these languages is brought about by morphosyntactic requirement of the verb merging with a T element. In this case the infinitive *ku-* functions as the T element. The imperative CP selects a TP. This TP is headed by the infinitive and has, as its complement, a VP. The negative marker modifies this VP by supplying the negative feature. This negative feature can be checked in a complement of TP.

When a periphrastic form is used, there are two VPs. The negative element is not an adverb but a higher V. This verb moves to ForceP to express the command ‘stop.’ Since it exhibits some inflectional feature, namely, subject marking, it must go through FinP. This higher VP takes as its complement a FinP which contains the VP that is headed by the lower verb. FinP selects an infinitive verb.



The ban on negative imperative cannot be accounted for in a principled way. It appears that there are language-specific constraints that prevent TNI.

5. A Typological View

There is a well-known cross-linguistic variation in the compatibility of imperative morphology and negation. There are languages, such as Dutch and Polish, in which imperative morphology is compatible with negation. This is known as true negative imperative (TNI). TNI is illustrated by Zeijlstra (2006:405).

- (22) a. Jij slaapt niet. (Dutch)
 you sleep NEG
 ‘You don’t sleep.’
- b. Slaap!
 sleep
 ‘Sleep!’

- c. Slaap niet!
sleep NEG
'Don't sleep!'
- (23) a. (Ty) nie pracujesz (Polish)
you.2sg NEG work.2SG
'You don't work.'
- b. Pracuj!
work.2SG.IMP
'Work!'
- c. Nie pracuj!
NEG work.2SG.IMP
'Don't work.'

The imperative form of 'sleep' in Dutch is *slaap* (22b). This same form is used in negative imperative with the negation marker *niet* appearing after the verb, as (22c) reveals. In Polish, *pracuj* 'work' is used in both imperatives (23b, c). The negative marker *nie* appears before the verb in (23c).

Spanish, on the other hand, is a language in which imperative morphology cannot co-occur with negation. Instead, a negative command requires the subjunctive form. Rivero (1994) calls this form of prohibitive command surrogate negative imperative (SNI). Below are surrogate negative imperative (SNI) examples from Zeijlstra (2006:405-406).

- (24) a. Tu no lees. (Spanish)
you.sg NEG read.2SG
'You don't read.'
- b. Lee!
read.2SG.IMP
'Read!'
- c. *No lee!
NEG read.2SG.IMP
'Don't read!'
- d. No leas!
NEG read.2SG.SUBJ
'Don't read.'

The imperative form of 'read' in Spanish is *lee* as in (24b). The negative imperative does not use this form (24c). Instead, the subjunctive *leas* appears with the negative marker *no* before it (24d). This means Spanish imposes a ban on true negative imperatives.

In an attempt to account for this crosslinguistic variation, Zeijlstra (2006:414) makes the following observation.

- (25) G1: Every language with an overt negative marker X^0 that carries [iNEG] bans TNIs.
G2: Every language that bans TNIs exhibits an overt negative marker X^0
Zeijlstra (2006:414).

Zeijlstra (2004, 2006) claims that the ban on true negative imperative is a feature of languages whose negative marker is a syntactic head (X^0). The claim is based on three assumptions: (a) the imperative mood is encoded in C, (b) the imperative mood must scope the negative, and (c) head movement

constraint (HMC). When the negative marker is a syntactic head, the verb cannot move and merge with the imperative mood because the negative head is a barrier. We argue in this paper that HMC is not the only possible constraint that results in a ban in TNI. Another cause of this ban may be the location of the negative marker in sentential negation. In these languages, the negative marker is located on the left periphery of the VP.

This generalization needs to be reviewed in the light of data from Tanzanian Bantu languages of Kikisi, Kindendeule, and Chingoni. The data show that the negative particles exhibit distributional features of adverbs. However, these languages do not have a true negative imperative. The verb morphology used for imperative cannot combine with negation to express a negative command.

6. Conclusion

In this paper, we set out to describe negative imperatives in Kindendeule, Kikisi and Chingoni languages of southern Tanzania. In these three languages, sentential negation is marked by postverbal particles. This negation marking is incompatible with imperative morphology or true imperatives. We examine Zeijlstra's (2004) claim that only languages with Neg ban true negative imperative morphology. The reason for this is that Neg block movement of the verb to C, the locus of illocutionary force. We have presented data from the Bantu languages of Kindendeule, Kikisi and Chingoni, all of which have post-verbal negative particles. Using examples from Kindendeule we have shown that these particles are not syntactic heads but adverbs of VP. On the basis of the distribution of the negative particles we conclude that although Neg is a sufficient condition for triggering SNI, it is not a necessary condition. In their study of SNI and TNI, Collberg and Håkanson (1999) reach the conclusion that factors other than the head status of the negation may be at play in determining the use of SNI. The findings in the present study are consistent with their findings.

The proposal put forward here is that in these languages, SNI is brought about by language specific constraints. In these languages, a VP is modified with a negative adverb. With this modification, the verb needs to merge with T, in this case, in the form of the infinitive *ku*. Movement of the verb is not blocked by the negative particle because the particle is an adverb. However, further typological studies might reveal some systematic constraints that are at play.

References

- Collberg, Sheila D. and Gisela Håkanson 1999. Prohibition: negative imperatives and parametric typology of negation. *Lund University Working Papers* 47:25-37.
- Han, Chung-Hye 2001. Force, negation and imperatives. *The Linguistic Review* 18:289-325.
- Larson, Richard 1988. On double object constructions. *Linguistic Inquiry* 19:335-391.
- Ngonyani, Deo 2010. A Grammar of Kindendeule (manuscript).
- Ngonyani, Deo 2011. A Grammar of Kikisi (manuscript).
- Ngonyani, Deo 1996. *The Morphosyntax of Applicatives*. Doctoral dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles.
- Ngonyani, Deo 2003. *A Grammar of Chingoni*. München: Lincom Europa.
- Ngonyani, Deo and Peter Githinji 2006. The asymmetric nature of Bantu applicative constructions. *Lingua* 116:31-63.
- Odden, David 1996. *The Phonology and Morphology of Kimatuumbi*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Pollock, Jean-Yves 1989. Verb Movement, Universal Grammar and the Structure of IP. *Linguistic Inquiry* 20:365-424.
- Rivero, Maria-Louisa 1994. Clause structure and V-movement in the languages of the Balkans. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 12:63-120.
- Zeijlstra, Hedde 2004. *Sentential Negation and Negative Concord*. Doctoral dissertation University of Amsterdam. Utrecht: LOT.
- Zeijlstra, Hedde 2006. The ban on true negative imperatives. In O. Bonami & P. Cabredo Hofherr (eds) *Empirical Issues in Syntax and Semantics* 6 pp.405-424.

Selected Proceedings of the 43rd Annual Conference on African Linguistics: Linguistic Interfaces in African Languages

edited by Olanike Ola Orié
and Karen W. Sanders

Cascadilla Proceedings Project Somerville, MA 2013

Copyright information

Selected Proceedings of the 43rd Annual Conference on African Linguistics:
Linguistic Interfaces in African Languages

© 2013 Cascadilla Proceedings Project, Somerville, MA. All rights reserved

ISBN 978-1-57473-460-7 library binding

A copyright notice for each paper is located at the bottom of the first page of the paper.
Reprints for course packs can be authorized by Cascadilla Proceedings Project.

Ordering information

Orders for the library binding edition are handled by Cascadilla Press.
To place an order, go to www.lingref.com or contact:

Cascadilla Press, P.O. Box 440355, Somerville, MA 02144, USA
phone: 1-617-776-2370, fax: 1-617-776-2271, sales@cascadilla.com

Web access and citation information

This entire proceedings can also be viewed on the web at www.lingref.com. Each paper has a unique document # which can be added to citations to facilitate access. The document # should not replace the full citation.

This paper can be cited as:

Ngonyani, Deo S. 2013. Surrogate Imperatives in Bantu Languages with Postverbal Negative Particles.
In *Selected Proceedings of the 43rd Annual Conference on African Linguistics*, ed. Olanike Ola Orié and Karen W. Sanders, 177-187. Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Proceedings Project. www.lingref.com, document #2966.