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**Title:** A grammar of Hamar : a South Omotic language of Ethiopia  
**Issue Date:** 2016-11-10
12 Negative clauses

In this chapter the morpho-syntactic properties of negation are discussed. Both the
negative interjection ã́ʔãʔ 'no' and the affirmative interjection ĩĩ̂ 'yes' can be the full
response to a polar question. The negative interjection ã́ʔãʔ is the only inherently
negative particle of Hamar. Sentential negation is expressed on the verb by special
paradigms, and negation of constituents is generally expressed with a periphrasis in
negative existential constructions. The chapter discusses negation in copular clauses
and subordinated clauses as well.

12.1 Negative copula

The negative copula tê has the same syntactic properties as the equative affirmative
(chapter 9) and interrogative (chapter 11) copula: it occurs sentence-finally after the
predicate nominal and it is invariable for person and tense. It differs from its affirma
tive and interrogative counterparts in that it is a self-standing morpheme
characterized by a falling tone: the affirmative copula -ne and the interrogative
copula -u on the contrary are clitics. It should be noted that -ê is also the 3rd
person inflection of the negative present paradigm and it is found as well on the negative
existential predicator (see next section). The following examples show the oc
urrence and use of the negative copula:

(1a) koró rósho-n gálló tê
DEM1.F sling-F.OBL enemy:F.S NEG.COP
 koró gal wána-ne
DEM1.F enemy different-COP
 these are not the 'rósho'\(^{55}\) enemies, these are other enemies

(1b) demê káa fayá tê
side:M DEM1.M good NEG.COP
 this side is not good

(1c) kidí hámar tê
3 hamar NEG.COP
 he is not Hamar

(1d) agá ínte tê
DEM2.M 1SG:M NEG.COP
 that is not mine

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\(^{55}\) rósho literally means 'sling', and it refers here to the sling-like sound produced by their
weapons.
The negative stem *qolê* is a suppletive form used to negate existential constructions expressing existence (2a), possession (2b) and location (2c), cf. chapter 9, section 9.3. The variants *qolêi*, *qolêi* and *qolái* have been attested as well.

(2a) *noqó qolêi*
    water exist.not
    there is no water

(2b) *í=sa waakí kála-l qolê*
    1SG=GEN cow one-INCL exist.not
    I have not even one cow (lit. also one cow of me does not exist)

(2c) *kó-te éna murá qolêi*
    PRX.NSP-LOC past gun exist.not
    in the past here there were no guns

Negative indefinite words corresponding to the English 'nobody' or 'nothing' do not exist in Hamar, but they can be expressed with negative existential sentences. Consider for instance the following examples:

(3a) *éedi qolêi*
    person exist.not
    there's nobody

(3b) *yer qolêi*
    thing exist.not
    there's nothing

The general form of the noun *yer* 'thing' can be modified by a relativized verb when it functions as the negative indefinite subject of a clause: this is the only case attested so far where an uninflected noun can be modified by a relative clause, cf. chapter 8, section 8.1.

(4) *yer baq-â qolêi*
    thing fall-REL.PAST.M exist.not
    nothing fell (lit. the thing that fell does not exist)
The suppletive root *qol-* is found also in the negative postposition *qɔ́lma* ‘without’.
This postposition can be analysed as the suppletive root *qol-* plus the negative formative -m- which is attested in negative verbs in subordinate clauses (see 12.4):

(5a) ínta kurí qɔ́lma bũno-n ʰi = wuc’á-de
    1SG honey without coffee-F.OBL 1SG=drink-PFV
    I’ve drunk the coffee without honey

(5b) “yáa róo-n qɔ́lma qaldó-n qɔ́lma” ʰi = bagá-de
    2SG leg-F.OBL without thigh-F.OBL without 3=tease-PFV
    “you! without legs and without thigh” he teased

(5c) ínta koimó qɔ́lma yiʔ-idí-ne
    1SG belongings without go-PF-COP
    I went empty-handed (lit. I went without belongings)

12.3 Negative paradigms

In declarative independent clauses negation is marked on the verb by negative inflections. Similar to content questions, in negative clauses verb inflections distinguish only present from past tense, without aspectual distinctions. Negative paradigms are formed by suffixing the inflections to the verb root: the negative paradigms belong to the set of fully inflected verb paradigms, cf. chapter 6 (section 6.3.3). The full negative paradigms can be seen in table 12.1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Negative present</th>
<th>Negative past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1SG</td>
<td>wuc’-atíne</td>
<td>wuc’-átine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2SG</td>
<td>wuc’-atáne</td>
<td>wuc’-átane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3M/3F/3PL</td>
<td>wuc’-ê / wuc’-ái</td>
<td>wuc’-áye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1PL</td>
<td>wuc’-atóne</td>
<td>wuc’-ótone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2PL</td>
<td>wuc’-aténe</td>
<td>wuc’-étene</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The difference between the present and past negative paradigm is purely tonal for the 1ˢᵗ and 2ⁿᵈ person singular. The vowel alternation in the negative inflections reveals the presence of the phonologically reduced subject clitics, except for the 3ʳᵈ persons. In the negative present the tone is on the vowel of the subject clitic.
The following examples illustrate the use of the negative declarative paradigms: as it can be seen from the examples, the negative present is used also for future reference.

(6) ínta naasí ad-átine
    1SG child give.birth-PAST.NEG.1SG
    I haven’t given birth
An alternative paradigm corresponding to the negative past illustrated in table 12.1 has been attested in naturally-occurring conversations. The alternative negative past conjugation is a contracted version of the full paradigm, and it shows vowel assimilation of the subject clitic pronouns in the 1st and 2nd person plural. The third person is identical to the full paradigm, and there is no difference between the 1st and the 2nd person singular (see table 12.2). The syllabic structure of this paradigm is due to compensatory vowel lengthening (recall that CVVC syllables are allowed only in monosyllabic words, cf. chapter 2, 2.3.1). An alternative paradigm for the negative present does not exist, probably because the tonal opposition cannot be reproduced on the shortened paradigm.

### Table 12.2: Alternative negative past conjugation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Negative past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1SG</td>
<td>wuc'-aan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2SG</td>
<td>wuc'-aan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3M/3F/3PL</td>
<td>wuc'-aye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1PL</td>
<td>wuc'-óon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2PL</td>
<td>wuc'-éen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Imperative mood is negated by means of the negative morpheme ɓóde which follows the imperative affirmative form of the verb:

(11) yedí sun har ye = dalq-á? des-éen!

2PL just what 2PL= speak-PAST.INT know-PAST.NEG.2PL

why did you speak? you did not know!
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(12a) yiʔá bóde!
g.IMP.2SG IMP.NEG
don't go!

(12b) dalq-ã bóde!
speak-IMP.2PL IMP.NEG
don't speak!

(12c) qultá dettá bóde!
goat:M kill:CAUS.IMP.2SG IMP.NEG
don't let kill the goat!

Prohibition can also be expressed by means of the verb gará 'stop': in this case the argument of gará is marked by the relational marker -n (see chapter 7, section 7.4.4).

(13) yáa banqí-n zagá-n garál
2SG fight-F.OBL want- R stop.IMP.2SG
stop looking for war!

(14) i= dan bagá-n gará!
1SG=ACC tease-R stop.IMP.2SG
stop teasing me!

12.4 Negative subordinate clauses

Negation in dependent clauses is expressed by means of the negative markers -mónna and -íma suffixed to verbs. Negation in conditional clauses is coded by a negative conditional suffix and a periphrastic construction involving the negative existential qolê, see later on.

The negative marker -mónna attaches to the citation form of the verb, and gets obligatory pronominal subject marking (short form II). The verb marked by the negative suffix -mónna can convey also the semantic reading associated with reason clauses:

(15a) mugá parsí kin=wuc’a-mónna wodí kí=na
Muga beer 3=drink-NEG.SUB2 1PL 2M=DAT
qarrabó im-idí-ne qarrabó give-PF-COP
since Muga does not drink parsí beer, we gave him qarrabó.
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(15b) qulí táaki birr bazá kin = kasha-mónna
   goat now birr debit 3 = pay-NEG.SUB2
kánkí niʔ-ína gobá-gobá
   car come-COND run = run
now Goat, not having paid the debt, if a car comes, he runs away

(15c) kó-te niʔá-ise, há = ðán in = aapa = mônna,
   PRX.NSP-LOC come-CNV1 2SG = ACC 1SG = see = NEG.SUB2
ínta maatá-ise yiʔ-idí
   1SG go.back-CNV1 go-PF
when I came, since I didn’t see you, I went back.

The negative marker -íma attaches to the verb root and it translates as ‘without doing something’. In other Omotic languages this has been called negative converb or negative dependent verb (Azeb 2012a:470, Azeb and Dimmendaal 2006).

(16a) í = ðán ens-íma ki = yiʔá-de
   1SG = ACC go.with-NEG.SUB1 3 = go-PFV
he went and did not bring me along (lit. without bringing me)

(16b) raat-íma waadíma-n ashká-ti dáa-de
   sleep-NEG.SUB1 work-F.OBL do-SE.1SG exist-PFV
I am working without having slept

(16c) dungurí ars-íma roo gúuri ki = goín
   sandals enter:CAUS-NEG.SUB1 foot empty 3 = road.F.OBL
   yiʔá-de
go-PFV
without putting on the sandals he went along the road bare foot

As it was shown in chapter 10, two types of conditional clauses operate in Hamar: potential conditional clauses and veridical conditional clauses. In negative conditional clauses the difference between potential and veridical conditions is maintained.

Veridical condition (which is marked by -íma in affirmative conditional sentences) is marked by the negative conditional marker -ámma on the verb. This verb form requires pronominal subject agreement (short form I pronouns):

(17) ha = eel-ámma kó-te niʔ-atóne
   2SG = call-NEG.COND PRX.NSP-LOC come-PRES.NEG.1PL
if you don’t call we won’t come
Negative potential conditional is expressed periphrastically, similar to the affirmative potential conditional (10.1.4). The construction consists of the short negative paradigm illustrated in table 12.2 plus the negative conditional marker -ámma suffixed to a following subject pronoun. Vowel coalescence (P5) takes place between the vowel of the clitic pronouns and the initial vowel /a/ of the negative conditional marker -ámma, see chapter 2.

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(18a) ínta galá kumm-áan ámma
1SG food eat-PAST.NEG.1SG 1SG:NEG.COND
aajadá = i = da aajad-é
be.sick = 1SG = IPFV be.sick-PRES
I would be sick if I didn’t eat food

(18b) macc-óon wómma róoro ábi
finish-PAST.NEG.1PL 1PL:NEG.COND day another
maccó-da macc-é
finish.1PL-IPFV finish-PRES
If we don’t finish, we will finish another day

(18c) shekind-áan hámma ínta
make.a.hunting.trophy-PAST.NEG.2SG 2SG:NEG.COND 1SG
há = xal dáa-ne
2SG = AFF exist-COP
if you don’t make a hunting trophy, I will be with you forever

If the condition is expressed by the existential verb a periphrastic construction is used. The negative existential stem qolê is used as the complement of the dummy verb hamá ‘say’; the latter takes the verbal inflections used to form the affirmative potential conditional:

(19) kánki qoléi ham-idi-áanna búska-shet yiʔ-atóne
car exist.not say-PF-OPT Buska-ALL2 go-PRES.NEG.1PL
if there is no car, we don’t go to Buska

12.5 Tag questions

Tag questions are formed by suffixing the tag -tai to verbs in affirmative-declarative clauses. In verb-less sentences the tag is attached directly to the noun phrase. From a morpho-syntactic point of view tag questions are not interrogative clauses because verbs occur in the affirmative-declarative forms. However, tag questions are uttered with a rising pitch similar to interrogative clauses, and they elicit an implicitly positive answer.
(20a)  wodí  angála  míri  shed-idí-tai?
      1PL  day.before.yesterday  wave  look-PF-TAG
         didn’t we watch the waves the day before yesterday?

(20b)  ím=be  hám=be  kínka  yiʔ-idí-tai?
      1SG=COM  2SG=COM  together  go-PF-TAG
         you and me, we went together, didn’t we?

In fast speech, the perfect inflection -idí assimilates to the following tag -tai: the verbs in (20) are thus pronounced as [ʃedíttai] and [jiʔíttai]. The examples below show the tag -tai cliticized to nouns:

(21a)  hálíe.sellás-sa  kaisí-na  yiʔá-ise  boráana  da-uxá,
      Haile.Selassie-GEN  servant-PL  go-CNv1  Boraana  IPFV-fight
         gabáre-tai?,  boráana  da-uxá
         the vassals of Haile Selassie went and fought the Boraana, the Gabra Oromo, isn’t it? they went and fought the Boraana.

(21b)  kurí  isá~isa  gin  búno  noqó-tai?
       honey  eat~eat:PASS  but  coffee  water-TAG
       honey is eaten, but coffee is water, isn’t it?