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12 Negative clauses

In this chapter the morpho-syntactic properties of negation are discussed. Both the negative interjection *á?á?* ‘no’ and the affirmative interjection *íí* ‘yes’ can be the full response to a polar question. The negative interjection *á?á?* 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 affirmative 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 occurrence and use of the negative copula:

- (1a) **koró rósho-n gálo 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

⁵⁵ *rósho* literally means ‘sling’, and it refers here to the sling-like sound produced by their weapons.

- (1e) **ínta bishê tê**
 1SG alone:M NEG.COP
 I am not the only one

12.2 Negative existential

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 *qolâi* 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 *qólma* ‘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 qólma búno-n i = wuc’á-de**
 1SG honey without coffee-F.OBL 1SG = drink-PFV
 I’ve drunk the coffee without honey
- (5b) **“yáa róo-n qólma qaldó-n qólma” ki = 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 qólma yi?-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 12.1: Negative present and negative past conjugations

	Negative present	Negative past
1SG	wuc’-atíne	wuc’-átine
2SG	wuc’-atáne	wuc’-átane
3M/3F/3PL	wuc’-ê / wuc’-ái	wuc’-áye
1PL	wuc’-atóne	wuc’-ótone
2PL	wuc’-aténe	wuc’-étene

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

- (7) **wodí kaisí-n hannó-n laz-atóne**
 1PL servant-F.OBL 2SG:F-F.OBL touch-PRES.NEG.1PL
 we won't touch your vassals (referring to Haile Selassie's vassals)
- (8) **ínta goín-te yi?á-da bashadá=i=da**
 1SG road.F.OBL-LOC go-IPFV be.tired=1SG=IPFV
bashad-é gabá-n sána yesk-atíne
 be.tired-PRES market-F.OBL fast arrive-PRES.NEG.1SG
 I will become tired along the road, and I won't reach the market soon
- (9) **dongár dæes-â wó=ɗan gar-ê**
 elephant kill-REL.PAST.M 1PL=ACC leave-PRES.NEG.3
 the one who killed Elephant won't leave us
- (10) **yáa shóqo í=ɗan bash-atáne!**
 2SG tick 1SG=ACC win-PRES.NEG.2SG
 you, Tick, you won't defeat me!

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

	Negative past
1SG	wuc'-áan
2SG	wuc'-áan
3M/3F/3PL	wuc'-áye
1PL	wuc'-óon
2PL	wuc'-éen

- (11) **yedí sun har ye=ɗalq-á? des-éen!**
 2PL just what 2PL=speak-PAST.INT know-PAST.NEG.2PL
 why did you speak? you did not know!

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

- (12a) **yiʔá** **ḥóde!**
 go.IMP.2SG IMP.NEG
 don't go!
- (12b) **ḍalq-é** **ḥóde!**
 speak-IMP.2PL IMP.NEG
 don't speak!
- (12c) **qultá** **dettá** **ḥóde!**
 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** **gará!**
 2SG fight-F.OBL want- R stop.IMP.2SG
 stop looking for war!
- (14) **í = ḍan** **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*.

- (15b) **qulí táaki birr bazá kin = kasha-mónna**
 goat now birr debit 3 = pay-NEG.SUB2
kánki ni?-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 ni?á-ise, há = ďan in = aapa = mónna,**
 PRX.NSP-LOC come-CNV1 2SG = ACC 1SG = see = NEG.SUB2
ínta maata-ise yi?-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 = ďan ens-íma ki = yi?á-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
yi?á-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 *-ína* 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 ni?-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.

- (18a) **ínta galá kumm-áan émma**
 1SG food eat-PAST.NEG.1SG 1SG:NEG.COND
aajaďá=i=da aajaď-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 *qolé* 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-ánna búska-shet yi?-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 yi?-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 [jedíttai] and [ji?íttai].

The examples below shows the tag *-tai* cliticized to nouns:

(21a) **háile.sellás-sa kaisí-na yi?á-ise boráana da-uxá,**
 Haile.Selassie-GEN servant-PL go-CNV1 Boraana IPFV-fight
gabáre-tai?, boráana da-uxá
 Gabra.Oromo-TAG Boraana IPFV-fight
 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~isadá gin búno noqó-tai?**
 honey eat~eat:PASS but coffee water-TAG
 honey is eaten, *but* coffee is water, isn't it?