Tense, aspect, modality, and (some) negation in Kam

(And some hidden information structure)
Kam (àũwɔ́m): an Adamawa language?

• 5,000-20,000 speakers, 20 villages
• Farmers-fishers-hunters
• Claim Jukun descent (kororofa kingdom) – close contact (e.g. religion, Meek 1931b,c)
• Trade language: Hausa; Fulfulde major language since Fula jihad (early 19th century)
• Close contact with various other groups, e.g. Mumuye (‘Adamawa’), Jirim (‘Dakoid’), Chamba Leko (‘Adamawa’), recently Glavda (Chadic)
• Classification is not clear, probably at least a lot of contact with other groups (Lesage 2019)
Some typological features

- Phonology
  - Three tones, only floating L, no floating H
  - Tonal morphology: TAM, negation, case marking on pronouns
  - Labial-velar consonants (kp, gb, w, ŵ)
- Little bound segmental morphology
  - No synchronic noun classes
  - A few bound pronominal indexes
  - Limited verbal derivation
  - Serial verb constructions
- Other
  - Sentence-final negation
  - Plural word
TAM in Kam: an overview

Essential concept: cumulative marking

(1) constructions, not single morphemes

\[
\begin{array}{ccccccc}
\text{ń} & \text{rí}^+ & \text{bád} & \text{ńí} & \text{rí} & \text{hin} \\
1\text{SG.S.FUT.NEG} & \text{FUT.NEG} & \text{farm:FUT.NEG} & \text{thing} & \text{EMPH?} & \text{NEG} \\
\end{array}
\]

‘I won’t farm.’

(session_357)

(2) polyfunctionality of markers/tonal schemes, e.g. H-tone on verbs is used for

- Perfective
- Imperfective
- Negative future
- Negative perfective with a specified object
- …
Things to discuss about TAM and negation

- Basic constructions with cumulative markers (and their meanings and functions)
- Specific markers and their degree of specialization/dedicatedness
- (‘Extensions’: particles and auxiliaries that extend basic constructions)
Basic positive constructions: overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TAM-CATEGORY</th>
<th>PRONOUN TONE</th>
<th>VERB TONE</th>
<th>PARTICLE/AFFIX</th>
<th>REDUPLICATION</th>
<th>REPETITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perfective</td>
<td>YES (H)</td>
<td>YES (H)</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfective</td>
<td>YES (L)</td>
<td>YES (H)</td>
<td>YES (rɨ̀)</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future 1 (non-spec. patient)</td>
<td>YES (H)</td>
<td>YES (H-L)</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future 2 (spec. patient)</td>
<td>YES (H)</td>
<td>YES (H-L)</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stative/resultative 1</td>
<td>YES (H)</td>
<td>YES (H)</td>
<td>YES (-áji)</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stative/resultative 2</td>
<td>YES (H)?</td>
<td>YES (H)?</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Basic negative constructions: overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TAM CATEGORY</th>
<th>PRONOUN TONE</th>
<th>VERB TONE</th>
<th>PARTICLE/SUFFIX</th>
<th>NEGATOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-future 1 (non-spec. patient)</td>
<td>YES (L)</td>
<td><strong>NO (lexical)</strong></td>
<td>OPTIONAL (màg)</td>
<td>NO (hǹ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-future 2 (spec. patient)</td>
<td>YES (L)</td>
<td>YES (H)</td>
<td>OPTIONAL (màg) (not in IPFV?)</td>
<td>NO (hǹ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future 1 (spec. patient)</td>
<td><strong>YES (H)</strong></td>
<td>YES (H)</td>
<td><strong>YES (rī) + (rī?)</strong></td>
<td>NO (hǹ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future 2 (non-spec. patient)</td>
<td><strong>YES (H)</strong></td>
<td>YES (H)</td>
<td><strong>YES (rī)</strong></td>
<td>NO (hǹ)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A closer look at verbal melodies

Mostly H
H-L and ‘lexical melody’ are exceptional

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tone</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perfective</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfective</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stative/resultative</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>H-L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative non-future 1</td>
<td>Lexical tone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative non-future 2</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative future</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperative</td>
<td>Lexical tone (with free variation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content interrogative with $gè...gè$ ‘what’</td>
<td>Lexical tone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Verbal melodies: illustrations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMPERATIVE (CONTRAST, LEXICAL)</th>
<th>NEGATIVE PERFECTIVE WITH UNSPECIFIED OBJECT (LEXICAL)</th>
<th>PERFECTIVE WITH (H)</th>
<th>CONTENT INTERROGATIVE CLAUSE WITH GÈ...GÈ 'WHAT'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gbèb ‘beat’ (L)</td>
<td>ìm gbèb hù  'I did not beat (it).’</td>
<td>ìm gbèb â  'I beat it.’</td>
<td>gè à gbèb gè ‘What did you beat?’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2PL ñò gbèb hù  ñò gbèb â</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>déŋ ‘roast’ (H)</td>
<td>ìm déŋ hù  'I did not roast (it).’</td>
<td>ìm déŋ â  'I roasted it.’</td>
<td>gè à déŋ gè ‘What did you roast?’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2PL ñò déŋ hù  ñò déŋ â</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kpiri ‘cough’ (L)</td>
<td>ìm kpirì hù  'I did not cough.’</td>
<td>ìm kpirà’h</td>
<td>gè à kpirì gè ‘What did you cough?’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2PL ñò kpirì hù  ñò kpirà’h</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>firì ‘jump’ (M)</td>
<td>ìm firì hù  'I did not jump.’</td>
<td>ìm firà’h</td>
<td>gè à firì gè ‘What did you jump?’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2PL ñò firì hù  ñò firà’h</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tiksi ‘blink’ (L-H)</td>
<td>ìn tiksi hù  'I did not blink.’</td>
<td>ìn tiksa’h</td>
<td>gè à tiksi gè ‘What did you blink?’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2PL ñò tiksi hù  ñò tiksa’h</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Verbal melodies: imperatives

• There’s some free variation between H and L (and M?) in imperatives, but this is not consistent across speakers.

• Functional load of tones in imperatives is low

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>zùr or zúr</td>
<td>‘pull, stretch a rubber’</td>
<td>Babangida Audu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tèg or tég</td>
<td>‘run’</td>
<td>David Mamuda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>táb or táb</td>
<td>‘touch, breastfeed’</td>
<td>David Mamuda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>míŋ or mìŋ</td>
<td>‘build’</td>
<td>Babangida Audu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A closer look at pronouns

Only 1SG.S' and 2SG.S' are TAMP-sensitive (possibly logophoric?)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person-number</th>
<th>Independent pronoun</th>
<th>Subject index 1 (H)</th>
<th>Subject index 2 (L)</th>
<th>Non-subject index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1SG</td>
<td>ñim</td>
<td>ñ / elsewhere</td>
<td>ñ / elsewhere</td>
<td>ñʈ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ñ / velar</td>
<td>ñ / velar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>m / bilabial</td>
<td>m / bilabial</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ñm / labial-velar</td>
<td>ñm / labial-velar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2SG</td>
<td>ñàn</td>
<td>ã</td>
<td>ã</td>
<td>ñàh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3SG</td>
<td>ñwú /&lt;&gt;_</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>ñwú /&lt;&gt;_</td>
<td>ñúh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ñú / elsewhere</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1PL</td>
<td>jùrú</td>
<td>N/A (Kamajim Kam)</td>
<td>jùrú</td>
<td>jùrúʈ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2PL</td>
<td>ñò</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>ñò</td>
<td>ñòh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3PL</td>
<td>ñjí /&lt;&gt;_</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>ñjí /&lt;&gt;_</td>
<td>ñí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ñí / elsewhere</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logophoric</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>ñí (Fincon Kam)</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>ñí</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1SG and 2SG pronoun tones

Mostly H
L is exceptional
Chance rather than meaningful

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<td>H</td>
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<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative non-future</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative future</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Specialized morphology and particles: preverbal slot (1)

- Imperfective \( r\ɨ \)

\[
\begin{array}{llll}
\text{à} & \text{rɨ} & mɨm & fâg \\
2\text{SG:IPFV} & \text{IPFV} & \text{laugh:H} & \text{laugh}
\end{array}
\]

‘You are laughing.’
(session_150)

= formally identical to comitative \( r\ɨ \) (\( nɪm \ rɨ \ ɲə \ ‘\text{you and/with me’} \))

= formally near-identical to \( rɛ/rɨ \ ‘\text{emphasis/contrast’, ‘‘unspecific’’ negative future, which occurs in a postverbal position. Different grammaticalization paths of the same source construction?} \)
Specialized morphology and particles: preverbal slot (2)

• Negative future \( rɨ \)

\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
\text{ŋ} & \text{rɨ}+ & \text{bád} & \text{ɲí} & \text{rɨ} & \text{hìn} \\
1\text{SG.S:H} & \text{FUT.NEG} & \text{farm:FUT.NEG} & \text{thing} & \text{FUT.NEG} & \text{NEG} \\
\end{array}
\]

‘I won’t farm.’
(session_357)

= H with following floating L tone

Note formal similarity with \( rɨ \) ‘comitative, imperfective, negative future’, cf. previous slide.
Specialized morphology and particles: preverbal slot (3)

• Negative non-future (perfective?) \( \text{màg} \)

\[
\text{àñî} \quad \text{mìnà} \quad \text{màg} \quad \text{kìm} \quad \text{bùwù} \quad \text{hì} \quad \text{à}?
\]
‘Who didn’t eat theirs?’
(session_285)

= completely optional

= possibly only perfective non-future, since I have no examples of this in imperfective? (would be the only distinction between perfective and imperfective negation)
Specialized morphology and particles: postverbal slots (1)

- Stative/resultative –ájì

  1SG kpét-ájì
tire-RES
‘I am tired’

  àgbàn á věw-ájì
tired-PROX die-RES
‘This woman died.’

  àŋgwó́g á tìntàm àlóŋó, âmá húm-ájì
  house PROX big before, but break-RES
‘The house was big, but it has been broken down.’
(session_041)
Resultatives: some issues

• More of a derivational category than inflection
• With intransitive verbs, the construction is semantically equivalent to perfective constructions (e.g. ìwú vɛ́g-ájì = ìwú véʔ â ‘she died’)
• With transitive verbs, detransitivising function, ‘P becomes S’ (e.g. tìgí ‘cover’ → tíg-ájì ‘turned off, covered’)
• Origin: possibly from serial verb construction with á-particle + jì ‘arrive, stand’
Specialized morphology and particles: postverbal slots (2)

- Floating L tone in case of monosyllabic verbs

\[
\begin{array}{llll}
\text{àwú} & \text{kím} & \text{m̀fàm} & (\text{cp. àwú kím m̀fàm à}) \\
3\text{SG} & \text{eat:FUT} & \text{meat} & 3\text{SG} \text{ eat:H meat ?} \\
\end{array}
\]

‘He will eat meat.’

‘He ate meat.’

= Only in monosyllabic verbs, floating L tone is realization of H-L scheme
Specialized morphology and particles: postverbal slots (3)

• à (function unclear)

ìkà ǹkà tór á pè.
then thunder fall ? come
‘Then, thunder fell down.’
(session_007)

í  pí dʒòŋ rì  jí  á
1PL come sit COM 3PL ?
‘I came and sat with them.’

í jìb dʒá  ú  à
1PL ask situation 3SG PFV?
‘I asked them what happened.’
(session_048)
Mysterious à-marker

• à can have many functions, so on the surface, there’s often potential for ambiguity
  • Proximal demonstrative and definite article (á, which is indistinguishable in case of tone spread over à)
  • Relativiser: à-...-à
• Default construction given in elicitation, link with
• Possibly not compatible with oblique noun phrases
• Any suggestions for analysis are welcome; I’m currently looking at Fabre’s grammar of Samba Leko (2002), she’s currently writing an article on a similar particle iirc
Specialized morphology and particles: postverbal slots (4)

• Negative future with specified patient \( rɛ̀/rɨ̀ \)

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccc}
\text{àwàn} & \text{rì́} & \text{mìŋ} & \text{ìŋ} & \text{gwóy} & \text{ò} & \text{rè} & \text{àlèb} & \text{ì́fè́} & \text{hìn} \\
\text{chief} & \text{FUT:NEG} & \text{build} & \text{house} & \text{DIST} & \text{FUT:NEG} & \text{inside} & \text{bush} & \text{NEG} \\
\end{array}
\]

‘The chief will not build a house in the bush.’
(Tope_Bitrus_06)

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
\text{ń} & \text{rì́} & \text{gbéb} & \text{ú} & \text{rì́} & \text{hìn} \\
\text{1SG:H} & \text{FUT:NEG} & \text{hit} & \text{3SG.NONS} & \text{FUT:NEG} & \text{NEG} \\
\end{array}
\]

‘I will not beat him.’

Compare:

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
\text{ń} & \text{rì́} & \text{gbéb} & \text{hìn} \\
\text{1SG:H} & \text{FUT:NEG} & \text{hit} & \text{NEG} \\
\end{array}
\]

‘I will not beat (it).’
(session_364)
Negative future with specified patient \( rɨ \)/\( rɛ \)

- Formally identical to \( rɨ \) ‘comitative’, ‘imperative’ ... (see above)
- Possibly more to do with valency change and/or information structure, possibly transitivity?
- cf. emphatic/contrastive marker

\[
\begin{array}{llll}
\text{m} & \text{màsi} & \text{rî} \\
1\text{SG.S} & \text{know} & \text{MIR}
\end{array}
\]

‘I do know.’ (countering some assumption or expectation that the speaker doesn’t know.)
(session_357)

\[
\begin{array}{llll}
\text{n} & \text{tįu} & \text{nà} & \text{rî} \\
1\text{SG.S} & \text{do:FUT} & \text{work} & \text{MIR}
\end{array}
\]

‘I also want to work.’
(session_357)

\[
\begin{array}{llllll}
\text{â} & \text{tįu} & \text{n̂à} & \text{rî} & \text{hin} \\
2\text{SG.S.NEG} & \text{do} & \text{work} & \text{MIR} & \text{NEG}
\end{array}
\]

‘You don’t work at all.’
(session_357)
Specialized morphology and particles: postverbal slots (5)

• Negator *hǹ*

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
\text{à} & \text{tfúg} & \text{íⁿág} & \text{hǹ} \\
2\text{SG.S.NEG} & \text{do} & \text{work} & \text{NEG}
\end{array}
\]

‘You didn’t work.’
(session_357)

Has a peculiar phonological shape, possibly just very nasal vowel.

Always clause-or sentence-final. Indicating scope is difficult.
Repetition

• Future tense constructions with a specified object involve (completely) optional repetition of the verb after the object.

\[ \text{Later today, he will write a letter to me.} \]
\[ \text{(session_288)} \]

\[ \text{I will pince you!} \]
\[ \text{(session_345)} \]

Probably, but this remains to be checked, the verb is repeated with the lexical tone. In this sense, possibly, the construction is almost identical to serial verb constructions.
Reduplication (1): future tense

- Future tense with non-specific patient: H-L(-L) + -ɨ suffix is added after CVC stems (more analysis and data needed)

\[ \text{ń sīsā} \quad (< \text{sā ‘to roof’}) \]

1SG:H RED:roof
‘I will roof (it).’
(session_345)

\[ \text{ń tīntām-ɨ} \quad (< \text{tām ‘to grow’}) \]

1SG:H RED:grow-ɨ
‘I will grow.’
(session_345)
Reduplication (2): resultative/stative derivation

- Resultative/stative derivation: no ɨ-suffix

- kpèsì ‘make smooth’ → kpì-kpésì ‘smoothened’
- lèm ‘be good’ → lìl-lèm ‘good, improved’
- gàb ‘share’ → gìg-gàb ‘cut, divided’
- ká̤g ‘crunch’ → kík-ká̤g ‘crunched’
Reduplication (3): formal aspects

• Only first syllable is reduplicated
• Limited vowel inventory in reduplicated syllable: only close vowels /i/ and /u/. An e, ɛ, or a becomes an i, an o or ɔ becomes an u.
Some remarks on constructions and their functions (1)

- Imperfective relates to topicalization

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{àwú} & \quad \text{rí} & \quad \text{mí} & \quad \text{pè,} & \quad \text{i} & \quad \text{bó?} & \quad \text{ìbàŋ} & \quad \text{à} & \quad \text{bɛ́} \\
3\text{SG.S} & \quad \text{IPFV} & \quad \text{return} & \quad \text{come} & \quad 3\text{PLS} & \quad \text{soak} & \quad \text{alcohol} & \quad \text{DEF} & \quad \text{for.it}
\end{align*}
\]

‘(As) he’s coming back, they are preparing alcohol for it.’
(session_357)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{àsáŋ} & \quad \text{kó,} & \quad \text{m̃p̃w̃} & \quad \text{rì} & \quad \text{kpàr.} \\
\text{year} & \quad \text{there} & \quad \text{rain} & \quad \text{IPFV} & \quad \text{rain}
\end{align*}
\]

‘Last year, it was raining.’

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ìkà} & \quad \text{ŋkà} & \quad \text{tór} & \quad \text{á} & \quad \text{pè.} \\
\text{then} & \quad \text{tunder} & \quad \text{fall} & \quad \text{?} & \quad \text{come}
\end{align*}
\]

‘Then, thunder fell down.’
(session_007)
Some remarks on constructions and their functions (2)

• Specificity of patients and verb focus (possibly transitivity) definitely play a role in
  • different future constructions, both in affirmative (reduplication vs. repetition) and in negative constructions (marker rɨ)
  • negative non-future constructions (verb tone)
  • but not in affirmative non-future constructions
Some other constructions: extensions

• Repetitive with *mîrî* (auxiliary?), pre-verbal
• Sequential *sî*, pre-verbal, pre-*rî* ‘imperfective’
• Periphrastic constructions: imperfective *dî* + *kò* ‘be at place of ...’, with following verb
• Modality with *wûrî* ‘accept’ and *pënî* ‘refuse’: imperfective *rî* + auxiliary + *kîba* ‘when’ + complement clause