Jukunoid negation particles: special emphasis on Yukuben.

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This paper presents a general overview and comparison of negation particles in select Jukunoid languages. As indicated in the examples below, such particles can have a variety of shapes. They basically occur in sentence-final position, as in Yukuben and Kuteb (SJ), Jukun of Takum, Wukari, and Hone (CJ).

I. Indicative
1. Yukuben – Anyanwu (ms)
   a) Āmà r̃í/r̃ē sī í-sí.
      1sg IMPERFV walk cl-walk
      ‘I am walking.’ [Lit.: ‘I am walking walk.’]
   b) Āmà ré ē-sī í-sí kāg.
      1sg IMPERFV SM-walk cl-walk NEG
      ‘I am not walking.’ [Lit.: ‘I am walking walk not.’]

   Ā wēn-bā ic′u bē.
   3pl kill-3pl leopard NEG
   ‘They did not kill a leopard.’
   (where L-tone is left unmarked)

3. Takum – Welmers (1968: 56)
   Bē rī bí bē "bá.
   3pl TAM come RECAP NEG
   ‘They are not coming.’

   Nī nī r̃ā ñí būť’ō “bá.
2pl TAM COP Recap work NEG
‘You aren’t working.’

   a) 5-ti-ŋi-é.
   NSP.2sg-IND.NEG-know-NEG
   ‘You did not learn (of)/hear (it).’ (Original: “du hast (es) nicht gelernt/erfahren.”)
   b) 5-tó-ří-fük
   NSP.2.sg-IND.NEG-PRES-hear-(NEG) language-Pp.1pl NEG
   ‘You don’t understand our language.’
   c) Kín-áá bánŋ.
   head-PP.3sg NEG
   ‘S/he is mentally ill/deranged.’ ((a) “S/he is not with her/his head or (b) Her/his head is non-existent/missing.”)

II. Imperative

6. Yukuben – Anyanwu (ms)
   a) Dọŋ!
   go
   ‘Go!’
   b) Fé dọŋ kọŋ!
   PROHIB.FOC go NEG
   ‘Don’t go!’

   À”dá tí ànyisù ā kà-bà ātány bë!
   women and children Ho go-3pl there NEG
   ‘Don’t let the women and children go there!’

8. Takum - Welmers (1968: 57)
   (Ú) ká yā āndā!
   (2sg) PROHIB.FOC go NEG
   ‘Don’t go!’

(Ú)  ká  yá  "bá!
(2sg)  PROHIB.FOC  go  NEG
‘Don’t go!’


a)  Ká-ji-e!
IMP.NEG-know-NEG
‘Do not “know”/learn (of)/hear (it)!’ (Original: “wisse nicht!; erfahre (es) nicht!”)

b)  Ká-yāg  bēr-Kààsàà  mɔŋ!
IMP.NEG-gehen-(NEG)  Kasan Dare  NEG
‘Don’t go to Kasan Dare!’

My main idea is to argue that (at least in the majority of the languages under consideration) the canonical pattern of negation in the Jukunoid languages is sentential negation, marked generally by a sentence-final negative particle, which probably originates from grammaticalisation.

The scope of the piece focuses on 1) outlining and discussing the relevant known negative particles (and markers) found in some Jukunoid languages, 2) comparing and contrasting them with those of Yukuben in particular.

Since Yukuben basically uses, inter alia, a presumably cognitive semantic device in form of a sentence-final particle kǎŋ (which can be interpreted/translated as “false (not true)” or “not”) to change the meaning of a given expression from positive to negative, and since this same negative particle is used exactly the same way as question particles, I will explore a diachronic connection between them.

Furthermore, by making reference to other various relevant typological work on negation, I will have recourse to a diachronic approach by arguing that kǎŋ may have derived from kó-hūŋ ‘false/falsehood’ (the positive counterpart of which is ká-vāŋ ‘true/truth’) via grammaticalisation, whereby the H-M tone pattern in kǎŋ derives from the merger of the H-tone of kó and the M-tone of the elided TBU hū. At this point, such an approach might have a direct consequence for a strategy which opts for (or rather dares) seeking an explanation in a topic/comment-related phenomenon. This would entail the negation particle acting as comment, and the affirmative statement itself as a whole acting as topic.

The results of the discussion are expected to contribute, in the first place, to the foundation for the reconstruction of negation particles (as well as markers/affixes) in Jukunoid in particular and Niger-Congo in general, as well as general typological work on negation.
Note: All the interlinearisation specifications in Welmers’s examples are mine.

(Abbreviations: SJ = Southern Jukunoid; CJ = Central Jukunoid; ms = manuscript; Neg = Negation/negative; Ag = Agreement; Sm = subject marker; cl = class; sg = singular; pl = plural; L = low; Imperfv = Imperfective; Perfv = Perfective; TAM = tense, aspect, mood/modality; Recap = “recapitulating”; Cop = copula; Nsp = Nominal subject pronoun; Ind = Indicative; Pres = present; Pp = Possessive pronoun; Ho = Hortative; Imp = Imperative; Prohib = Prohibitive; Foc = Focus; H = High; M = Mid; TBU = tone-bearing unit)

References
Anyanwu, R-J. (ms.) Yukuben.

