

CLAUSAL NEGATION IN XWERE GONOM

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THIS TALK

- ▶ A basic description of clausal negation in Xwere Gonom
- ▶ In a nutshell, this is encoded by a pre-verbal particle
- ▶ However, various negators are used depending on grammatical and contextual factors
- ▶ Clausal negation also interacts with certain other aspects of the grammar

THE LANGUAGE

- ▶ Xwere Gonom is an autonym meaning ‘voice of the sand’
 - ▶ Spoken by a riverine people, the Łined Gonom or ‘people of the sand’
 - ▶ Head-initial: basic VSO order, prepositions, postposed adnominal modifiers
 - ▶ Three cases with animacy-based differential subject and object marking
 - ▶ Verbs agree with the absolutive argument in person and number
 - ▶ Aspect and mood conflated into a single category; no morphological tense^{*} or voice
- * At least on matrix verbs, dependent verbs could be argued to show pure/strict relative tense*
- ▶ Morphological number distinction only for animates
 - ▶ First-person clusivity distinction; second-person consanguinity distinction

NEGATION IN DECLARATIVES

STANDARD NEGATION

- ▶ “Standard negation” is the default way of negating declarative main clauses containing a verbal predicate (Payne 1985; Miestamo 2000, 2005, 2017)
- ▶ In Xwere Gonom, clausal negation is expressed with a pre-verbal particle
- ▶ In declarative clauses, the default negator is *xen*

- (1) a. Abola ħiin šom.
 3INAN.drink.IMPF man milk
 ‘The man drinks milk.’
- b. *Xen* abola ħiin šom.
 NEG 3INAN.drink.IMPF man milk
 ‘The man doesn’t drink milk.’

STANDARD NEGATION

- Although *xen* can also occasionally be found elsewhere in the clause

- (2) a. Abola *xen* łiin šom.
 3INAN.drink.IMPF *NEG* man milk
 ‘It is not the man who drinks milk.’
- b. Abola łiin *xen* šom.
 3INAN.drink.IMPF man *NEG* milk
 ‘It is not milk that the man drinks.’

STANDARD NEGATION

- Nonetheless, even when not pre-verbal, *xen* frequently still occurs clause-initially as this is a focus position

- (2') a. *Xen* *ɦiin* *abola* *šom*.
 NEG man 3INAN.drink.IMPF milk
 ‘It is not the man who drinks milk.’
- b. *Xen* *šom* *abola* *ɦiin*.
 NEG milk 3INAN.drink.IMPF man
 ‘It is not milk that the man drinks.’

NEGATION IN IRREALIS CLAUSES

- ▶ However, *xen* is only found in realis clauses
- ▶ In irrealis clauses, the negator *dzib* is used instead
- ▶ Xwere Gonom has two morphological irrealis categories
 - **Conditional:** marks the antecedent, but not the consequent, in sentences expressing that some event or state is contingent on something else
 - **Optative:** used in expressing hopes, wishes, desires and so on; also functions as an imperative and (co)hortative

NEGATION IN IRREALIS CLAUSES

- In conditional sentences, the conditional verb in the antecedent is negated with *dzih*

(3) Ti' lo' **dzih** adiigiza goḡo, gooxo'sian hau.
if **NEG** 3INAN.come.COND rain 2SG.CS.be_dry.CONSEC 2SG.CS
'If it doesn't rain, you'll be dry.'

NEGATION IN IRREALIS CLAUSES

- Verbs in the optative are likewise negated with *dzib*

(4) **Dzib** yidahnishin tšemen yan-ga.
NEG 1INCL.CS.see.OPT.DU cat 1DU.INCL.CS-DAM
'Hopefully the cat won't see me and you.'

NEGATION IN IRREALIS CLAUSES

- ▶ However, *dzih* is used not only with morphologically irrealis verbs but also with semantically irrealis verbs
- ▶ For example, though the consequent in conditional sentences does not take conditional marking, it is negated with *dzih* rather than *xen*

(5) Ti' lo' adiigiza goĝo, *dzih* gooxo'sian hau.
if 3INAN.come.COND rain NEG 2SG.CS.be_dry.CONSEC 2SG.CS
'If it rains, you won't be dry.'

NEGATION AND ASPECT

► In the affirmative, there are eleven aspects/moods

- (6) a. Realis:
 - i. Imperfective: imperfective, progressive, continuative, simultaneous
 - ii. Perfective: perfective, terminative, immediative, anterior, consecutive
- b. Irrealis: conditional, optative

NEGATION AND ASPECT

- ▶ In the affirmative, there are eleven aspects/moods
- ▶ However, in the negative, this is reduced to eight

(6) a. Realis:

- i. Imperfective: imperfective, progressive, ~~continuative~~, simultaneous
 - ii. Perfective: perfective, ~~terminative~~, ~~immediative~~, anterior, consecutive
- b. Irrealis: conditional, optative

NEGATION AND ASPECT

- There is no distinction between the progressive and continuative, with only the negative progressive being possible

- (7) a. Eretsepe ģein tsiigi.
3INAN.look_for.PROG boy pearl
'The boy is looking for pearls.'
- b. **Xen** eretsepe ģein tsiigi.
NEG 3INAN.look_for.PROG boy pearl
'The boy isn't looking for pearls.'

NEGATION AND ASPECT

- There is no distinction between the progressive and continuative, with only the negative progressive being possible

(8) a. Eretsepeen ġein tsiigi.

3INAN.look_for.CONT boy pearl

‘The boy is still looking for pearls.’

b. ***Xen** eretsepeen ġein tsiigi.

NEG 3INAN.look_for.CONT boy pearl

Intended: ‘The boy isn’t still looking for pearls.’

NEGATION AND ASPECT

- Similarly, the distinctions between the perfective, immediative and terminative are collapsed into perfective in the negative

- (9) a. Hiredžii deme tshadl-a.
 3NH.AN.hunt.PF 1SG fish-DAM
 ‘I caught a fish.’
- b. **Xen** hiredžii deme tshadl-a.
 NEG 3NH.AN.hunt.PF 1SG fish-DAM
 ‘I didn’t catch a fish.’

NEGATION AND ASPECT

- ▶ Similarly, the distinctions between the perfective, immediative and terminative are collapsed into perfective in the negative

- (10) a. Hire'džin deme tshadl-a.
 3NH.AN.hunt.IMM 1SG fish-DAM
 'I've just caught a fish.'
- b. ***Xen** hire'džin deme tshadl-a.
 NEG 3NH.AN.hunt.IMM 1SG fish-DAM
 Intended: 'I haven't just caught a fish.'

NEGATION AND ASPECT

- Similarly, the distinctions between the perfective, immediative and terminative are collapsed into perfective in the negative

- (II) a. Hire'džitlid deme tshadl-ar-a.
3NH.AN.hunt.TERM.PL 1SG fish-PL-DAM
'I stopped hunting for fish.'
- b. ***Xen** hire'džitlid deme tshadl-ar-a.
NEG 3NH.AN.hunt.TERM.PL 1SG fish-PL-DAM
Intended: 'I didn't stop hunting for fish.'

NEGATIVE CONCORD AND FRONTING

- ▶ Clausal negation does not require an accompanying negative indefinite
- ▶ Though the use of a negative indefinite does require clausal negation

(12) a. **Xen** aṭhana deme thawa (**xer̥ii**).
 NEG 3INAN.see.IMPF 1SG basket (**not_one**)

‘I can’t see a (single) basket.’

b. **Xen** aṭhana deme **xežod**.
 NEG 3INAN.see.IMPF 1SG **nothing**

‘I can’t see anything.’

NEGATIVE CONCORD AND FRONTING

- However, clausal negation is absent when any negative word or phrase is fronted

(I2') a. Thawa **xeṛii** aṭhana deme.

basket **not_one** 3INAN.see.IMPF 1SG

'I can't see a single basket at all.'

b. **Xežod** aṭhana deme.

nothing 3INAN.see.IMPF 1SG

'I can't see anything at all.'

SPECIALISED NEGATORS

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- *Te'* — *nondum* negator: something has yet to occur prior to the reference time

(I3) *Te'* iziǵii iǵiid.
not_yet 3INAN.eat.PF 1PL.EXCL
'We haven't eaten yet.'

SPECIALISED NEGATORS

- *Dliḡi* — “*non iam*” negator: something that was the case prior to the reference time no longer holds

(I4) *Dliḡi* sarazoma gaṭha haum.
no_longer 3H.sleep.PROG brother 2SG.CS.OBL
‘Your brother isn’t asleep any more.’

SPECIALISED NEGATORS

- ▶ *Maan* — assertive future-time negator: forcefully denies the possibility of something happening after the reference time

(15) *Maan* ɖoɖogii deme.

NEG 1SG.fall.PF 1SG

‘I will not fall!’

SPECIALISED NEGATORS

► *Tšorom* — avertive negator: an event was expected to happen but did not

(16) *Tšorom* idiiḡi goḡo.
NEG 3INAN.fall.PF rain

‘It didn’t rain (even though it was meant to).’

SPECIALISED NEGATORS

- *Žein* — frustrative negator: an event happened but was not successful or did not have the expected result

(17) *Žein* ikaalii šedle hogoo.

NEG 3INAN.hide.PF squirrel nut

‘The squirrel didn’t hide the nuts (even though it tried to).’

NEGATION IN NON-DECLARATIVES

NEGATION IN IMPERATIVES

- ▶ Where negation in declarative clauses uses one of *xen*, *dzib* and so on, imperatives are negated with the prohibitive particle *ke'*
- ▶ There are two verbal categories used to express the imperative
 - **Optative:** used variously for general, habitual and non-immediate commands; a general polite imperative form
 - **Perfective:** used for single-action, immediate and urgent commands; used for other perfunctory requests with familiar people of the same or lower status

NEGATION IN IMPERATIVES

► Negating the optative:

- (18) a. **Dzih** opohliš sii.
NEG 3INAN.drink.OPT 3SG.H
'Hopefully (s)he won't drink.'
- b. **Ke'** opohliš!
NEG 3INAN.drink.OPT
'Don't drink!'

► Negating the perfective:

- (19) a. **Xen** soḍogii sii.
NEG 3H.fall.PF 3SG.H
'(S)he didn't fall.'
- b. **Ke'** moḍogii!
NEG 2SG.NCS.fall.PF
'Don't fall!'

NEGATION IN IMPERATIVES

- However, with a perfective imperative, it is possible to use *maan* in place of *ke'* for added force:

(20) a. *Ke'* obolii!

NEG 3INAN.drink.PF

'Don't drink!'

b. *Maan* obolii!

NEG 3INAN.drink.PF

'Don't you dare drink!'/ 'You'd better not drink!'

NEGATION IN INTERROGATIVES

- Finally, questions typically use the irrealis negator *dzih*

(21) Gaa **dzih** iteḥii kii loža?

Q **NEG** 3INAN.throw.PF 2SG.NCS net

‘Didn’t you use a net?’

(22) Toš-oga **dzih** siṭhanii kii?

who-DAM **NEG** 3H.see.PF 2SG.NCS

‘Who didn’t you see?’

SUMMARY

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- ▶ I've shown you the basics of clausal negation in Xwere Gonom
- ▶ This uses a pre-verbal particle, *xen* by default
- ▶ Which is replaced by *dzib* in irrealis and interrogative contexts
- ▶ Additional specialised negators are available, e.g. prohibitive *ke* or *dliḡi* 'no longer'
- ▶ Clausal negation interacts with other areas of grammar such as aspect and the presence/position of a negative indefinite


Amağoorah na bed dzo'om!

‘[I] owe you for [your] eyes [and] ears!’

‘Thanks for your attention!’

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ABBREVIATIONS

1	first person
2	second person
3	third person
AN	animate
COND	conditional
CONSEC	consecutive
CONT	continuative
CS	consanguineous
DAM	differential argument marking
DU	dual
EXCL	exclusive
H	human
IMM	immediative
IMPF	imperfective

INAN	inanimate
INCL	inclusive
NCS	non-consanguineous
NEG	negative
NH	non-human
OBL	oblique
OPT	optative
PF	perfective
PL	plural
PROG	progressive
Q	question particle
SG	singular
TERM	terminative

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