

Counterfactual conditional sentences in Mbugu

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OBJECTIVES

- To describe counterfactual conditional sentences in Mbugu;
- To compare the structures with those of neighboring languages such as Pare.

INTRODUCTION

Mbugu (also referred as Ma'a): spoken in West Usambara Mountains, Tanzania

Two Varieties in Mbugu

1. Inner Mbugu (*Kimbugu cha ndani*, hereafter referred to as KN)
A so-called "mixed language" (Mous 1994, 2001 and 2003)
It has a Bantu concord system and many words of non-Bantu origin
2. Normal Mbugu (*Kimbugu cha kawaida*, hereafter referred to as KK)
The variety is thought to be almost the same as Pare (G22)

These two varieties share the same morphological and syntactic system except numerals, demonstratives and possessives (Abe 2016).

The Main difference between two varieties is seen in vocabulary; Inner Mbugu has a many words of non-Bantu origin, which are reported to have originated from several languages (many of them have been identified as being related to southern Cushitic languages, cf. Mous 1996 and 2003).

COUETFACTUAL CONDITIONAL SENTENCES

In counterfactual conditional sentences in Mbugu, both protasis and apodosis state counterfactual propositions. No distinction in construction is observed between subjunctive past and subjunctive past perfect. The conjunctive *kai* (*kama* in KK) appears in the protasis, and the conjunctive *aNgá* appears in the apodosis. Whereas *kai* appears in normal conditional, *aNgá* only appears in the counterfactual conditional sentences. The appearance of *aNga* is optional. The constructions are as shown below. The differences between Inner Mbugu and Normal Mbugu are highlighted.

protasis: affirmative

kai (kama in KK) S-ée-(O/REF)-V-(Verbal Inflectional Suffix(es))-je/ie
if S-PST₂-(O/REF)-V-(VIS)-PST₁

apodosis: affirmative

aNgá S -sée-(O)-V-(VIS)-je/ie
if (CF) S-CFM-(O)-V-(VIS)-PST₁

(1) If we had worked, we would have got food.

KN *kai* tw-ée-boʔi-je *namálo* aNgá tu-sée-pát-íe *viʔayú*
if S.1PL-PST₂-do-PST₁ CL9.work if (CF) S.1PL-CFM-get-PST₁ CL8.foods
KK *kama* tw-ée-roNg-íe *Ndimá* aNgá tu-sée-pát-íe *vidzó*
if S.1PL-PST₂-do-PST₁ CL9.work if (CF) S.1PL-CFM-get-PST₁ CL8.foods

protasis: negative

kai (kama in KK) NegS-ée-(O)-V-(VIS)-je/ie

apodosis: affirmative

aNgá NegS-sée-(O)-V-(VIS)-je/ie

(2) If you had not teased her, she would have liked you.

KN *kai* tú-ée-mw-éNdelédz-e aNgá é-sée-ku-dúmú-je
if NegS.2SG-PST₂-O.3SG-tease-PST₁ if (CF) S.3SG-CFM-O.2SG-like-PST₁
KK *kama* tú-ée-mw-éNdelédz-e aNgá é-sée-ku-kúNdi-je
if NegS.2SG-PST₂-O.3SG-tease-PST₁ if (CF) S.3SG-CFM-O.2SG-like-PST₁

protasis: affirmative

kai (KK kama) S-ée-(O)-V-(VIS)-je/ie

apodosis: negative

aNgá NegS-sée-(O)-V-(VIS)-je/ie

(3) If I had eaten well last week, I would have not been sick today.

KN *kai* n-ée-ʔá-je ki-kuʔó wíki i-táhó-je
if S.1SG-PST₂-eat-PST₁ NPx.CL7-good CL9.week S.CL9-pass-PST₁
aNgá sí-sée-ʔá-í-w-e waʔi
if (CC) S.1SG-CFM-make.sick-APPL-PASS-PST₁ today
KK *kama* ni-l-íe ki-tana wíki i-kélí-é
if S.1SG-eat-PST₁ NPx.CL7-good CL9.week S.CL9-pass-PST₁
aNgá sí-sée-wádʒídʒ-w-é jó
if (CC) S.1SG-CFM-make.sick-PASS-PST₁ today

(cont.)

protasis: negative

kai (KK kama) NegS-ée-(O)-V-(VIS)-je/ie

apodosis: negative

aNgá S-sée-(O)-V-(VIS)-je/ie

(4) If we had not worked, we would have not got food.

KN tetú-ée-bóʔi-je *namálo* tetú-sée-pát-íe *viʔayú*
NegS.1PL-PST₂-do CL9.work NegS.1PL-CFM-get-PST₁ foods
KK tetú-ée-roNg-íe *Ndimá* tetú-sée-pát-íje *vidzó*
NegS.1PL-PST₂-do CL9.work NegS.1PL-CFM-get-PST₁ foods

DISCUSSION

Nurse describes *aNgá* (-nga- in Nurse 2008: 251-252) in apodosis as belonging to the "concessive," "conditional," "potential," "irrealis," "may," and "if/when" forms. However, in Mbugu, it exists only in the "irrealis" mood. A similar form of the prefix -sée- used in apodosis is -sáa-, which is used as a negative prefix. However, -sée- does not seem to have a negative meaning. It is used as a counterfactual conditional marker. Mous (2003: 142) describes -sáa- as an irrealis TAM and shows only negative irrealis examples. As I described above, -sáa- appears in both affirmative and negative apodoses; therefore, it is more proper to refer to -sáa- as a counterfactual marker.

Mous (1997: 127) mentions that the future TAM -ne- appears with high frequency in apodoses of counterfactual conditional sentences; however, during the collection of my own field data, it has never appeared in such sentences. In Pare, which has been thought to be a substratum language of Mbugu, there is the future tense marker -ne-. As far as Mreta (1998: 102) describes, it does not seem to be related to counterfactual conditional sentences. Mreta neither mentions -sáa- nor -sée-; therefore, my own data collection and comparison of Pare with Mbugu will be needed in the future research.

ABBREVIATIONS

APP	VIS (applicative)	CFM	counterfactual marker	CF	counterfactual
NegS	negative subject prefix	NPx	noun prefix	PASS	passive
PL	plural	PST ₁	past 1	PST ₂	past 2
		O	object prefix	S	subject prefix

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND CONTACT

Special thanks to: my Mbugu teachers, Ms. Asha Mbaruku (born in 1949), Ms. Ester Nesala Waziri (born in 1965) and Ms. Sabita Shabani (born in 1974).

All the data on the Mbugu people and their languages in this paper are from my field research in the Lushoto District, Tanzania (July-August 2014 and July-August 2015). My study on the Mbugu people and their languages is supported by Grants-in-Aid for JSPS Fellows (No. 14J40066).

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