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The First Person Singular Subject Negative Portmanteau in Luganda and Lusoga

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A number of studies have provided analyses of Swahili *si-*, a portmanteau morpheme that conflates and replaces the first person singular subject and negative prefixes. In this short paper I present the corresponding facts from Luganda and Lusoga, two closely related Bantu languages spoken in Uganda. While the Luganda portmanteau *si-* bears a clear resemblance to Swahili *si-*, three analyses are considered for corresponding *ti-* in Lusoga. Although *ti-* looks like the main clause negative prefix occurring without a first singular subject, i.e. *ti-Ø-*, I argue that, despite differences, it has to treated in the same portmanteau terms as the other cases. Interestingly, while Luganda *si-* replaces the otherwise expected *ti-n-* and *n-ta-* sequences in main vs. relative clauses, respectively, Lusoga *ti-* only replaces the former.

1. Introduction

As is well known in Bantu studies, there are often morphological irregularities in the expression of the first person singular subject marker in negative paradigms (Kamba Muzenga 1981: 87). Perhaps the best known such "irregularity" concerns the appearance of *si-* in the following present and past paradigms from Swahili (Ashton 1944: 36, 71):

(1)

present	*Affirmative*				*Negative*			
1sg	ni-	na-	tak-a		1sg	si-		tak-i
2sg	u-	na-	tak-a		2sg	h-	u-	tak-i
3sg	a-	na-	tak-a		3sg	h-	a-	tak-i
1pl	tu-	na-	tak-a		1pl	ha-	tu-	tak-i
2pl	m-	na-	tak-a		2pl	ha-	m-	tak-i
3pl	wa-	na-	tak-a		3pl	ha-	wa-	tak-i

past	*Affirmative*				*Negative*				
1sg	ni-	li-	tak-a		1sg	si-		ku-	tak-a
2sg	u-	li-	tak-a		2sg	h-	u-	ku-	tak-a
3sg	a-	li-	tak-a		3sg	h-	a-	ku-	tak-a
1pl	tu-	li-	tak-a		1pl	ha-	tu-	ku-	tak-a
2pl	m-	li-	tak-a		2pl	ha-	m-	ku-	tak-a
3pl	wa-	li-	tak-a		3pl	ha-	wa-	ku-	tak-a

As seen in the affirmative forms, six distinct subject prefixes mark person and number followed by a present (*na-*) or past (*li-*) tense marker, the verb root *-tak-* 'want', and the inflectional final vowel (FV) *-a*. The corresponding negatives show an initial *ha-* which undergoes vowel elision before *u-* '2sg.' and *a-* '3sg.' (noun class 1), different tense allomorphs in the present (Ø) and past (*ku-*), and the FV *-i* in the present. The first person singular is notably irregular: rather than the expected sequence **ha-ni-*, a single portmanteau form *si-* "conflates" both the negative and 1sg. "slots" (see Stump 2017ab for a formal approach to such conflation, including Swahili). In the following two sections I discuss the analogous situations in Luganda and Lusoga, two very closely related Bantu languages spoken in Uganda

that however differ from each other in rather significant ways. I end with some diachronic discussion and a brief conclusion.

2. Luganda

In order to identify the underlying representations of the subject markers (SMs) in Luganda, we begin with the present tense affirmative forms in (2).

(2) Present tense affirmative

	singular		*plural*	
1st person	ǹ-nímá	'I cultivate'	tú-lìmá	'we cultivate'
2nd person	ò-límá	'you cultivate'	mú-lìmá	'you cultivate'
3rd person	à-límá	's/he cultivate'	bá-lìmá	'they cultivate'

Aside from a few sound changes, these resemble those just seen in Swahili, although now we can add tone: the singular SMs are underlyingly toneless and realized L(ow), while the plural SMs are H(igh). Since it is the 1sg. prefix that interests us, we take particular note that it consists of a nasal consonant which in the example causes the /l/ of the verb root /-lim-/ 'cultivate to become [n] by a process known as Meinhof's Rule (see Katamba & Hyman 1991 for the full Luganda details). Although the 1sg. SM is always a homorganic nasal when followed by a consonant (cf. *m̀-bál-á* 'I count', *ŋ̀-gúl-á* 'I buy'), when it is directly followed by a vowel, it is realized [n]. We can thus determine from the following general past affirmative forms that the underlying consonant has to be /n/:

(3) General past affirmative

	singular		*plural*	
1st person	n-à-lím-à	'I cultivated'	tw-áá-lìm-á	'we cultivated'
2nd person	w-à-lím-à	'you cultivated'	mw-áá-lìm-á	'you cultivated'
3rd person	y-à-lím-à	's/he cultivated'	b-áá-lìm-á	'they cultivated'

The above forms show two other things. First. instead of the expected (noun class 1) 3sg. *a-* SM, a [y] is observed before the tense marker (TM) *-a-*. Parallel to the mid vowel of 2sg. *o-*, I will assume that before a vowel class 1 has an allomorph /e-/, perhaps as a rule of referral to the (animal) class 9 prefix *e-* (cf. *è-lím-á* 'it (class 9) cultivates', *y-à-lím-à* 'it (class 9) cultivated'). An equally plausible, slightly more abstract (but historically correct) analysis could recognize 2sg. and 3sg. class 1 as /u-/ and /i-/, since these vowels do not occur word-initially, and hence would automatically lower to [o] and [e]. (For further discussion of all of these issues, see Hyman & Katamba 1999 and references cited therein.)

This brings us to the second issue, vowel coalescence. The examples in (3) also show that the singular SMs lose their syllabicity, with /e-/ and /o-/ gliding to [y] and [w], respectively. The plural SMs /tu-/ and /mu-/ also undergo gliding, this time with compensatory lengthening (CL) of the TM *-a-*. In the case of (class 2) 3pl., the /a/ of /bá-/ is deleted by a general rule in the language, again triggering CL of the following (identical) vowel (cf. /bá-el-a/ → *b-éèl-á* 'they sweep'). In Luganda in general, a CV + V sequence results in a long vowel, while an onsetless V + V is realized short. (Long vowels are obligatorily shortened before a geminate consonant and in clitic group-final position (Hyman & Katamba 1990).) Whether there is CL or not will turn out to have implications for our analysis of both Luganda and Lusoga.

Before moving on to the negative forms, in order to further establish the expected SM forms, let us consider a third set of affirmative verb forms, the general future affirmative:

(4) General future affirmative

	singular		*plural*	
1st person	ǹ-dí-lìm-á	'I will cultivate'	tú-lì-lìm-á	'we will cultivate'
2nd person	ò-lí-lìm-á	'you will cultivate'	mú-lì-lìm-á	'you will cultivate'
3rd person	à-lí-lìm-á	's/he will cultivate'	bá-lì-lìm-á	'they will cultivate'

As seen, the same SMs are observed as in the present tense in (2), since they are followed by the consonant-initial TM *-lí-* 'general future'. The only detail we note is that the /l/ of *-lí-* becomes [d] after the 1sg. nasal prefix *n-*. It does not become [n] since it does not meet the conditions of Meinhof's Rule, which strictly targets voiced consonants followed by a nasal within the verb stem (Katamba & Hyman 1991:188). I also do not follow a detail of Luganda orthography, which transcribes /l/ as *r* after the front vowels /i/ and /e/, hence without tones: *ndirima* 'I will cultivate'.)

With the above established, we now consider the corresponding negative forms of the three tenses we have examined. We start with the present tense negative:

(5) Present tense negative

	singular		*plural*	
1st person	sí-lìm-á	'I don't cultivate'	tè-tú-lìm-á	'we don't cultivate'
2nd person	t-ó-lìm-á	'you don't cultivate'	tè-mú-lìm-á	'you don't cultivate'
3rd person	t-á-lím-á	's/he does cultivate'	tè-bá-lìm-á	'they don't cultivate'

Aside from (irrelevant) tonal differences with the corresponding affirmative forms in (2), we note the following: First, we see from the plural forms that the negative prefix is *tè-* before a consonant. Second, the (surface) realization of the negative prefix is *t-* before a vowel, which is realized short: *t-ó-*, *t-á-*. Finally, we see that the 1sg. negative SM is realized as the portmanteau morpheme *si-*, exactly as in Swahili in (1). Thus, instead of the expected, but ungrammatical **te-n-* sequence, *si-* represents the same conflation of the SM and TM "slots" as in Stump's (2017a: 437-8; 2017b: 122) analysis of Swahili.

The same distribution of *si-*, *t-* and *te-* is observed in the general future negative:

(6) General future negative

	singular		*plural*	
1	sí-lì-lìm-á	'I won't cultivate'	tè-tú-lì-lìm-á	'we won't cultivate'
2	t-ó-lì-lìm-á	'you won't cultivate'	tè-mú-lì-lìm-á	'you won't cultivate'
3	t-á-lì-lìm-á	's/he won't cultivate'	tè-bá-lì-lìm-á	'they won't cultivate'

Except for 1sg., the general past negative shows the *te-* allomorph throughout, since it is followed in all forms by a consonantal SM:

(7) General past negative

	singular		*plural*	
1	s-áá-lìm-á	'I didn't cultivate'	tè-tw-áá-lìm-á	'we didn't cultivate'
2	tè-w-á-lìm-á	'you didn't cultivate'	tè-mw-áá-lìm-á	'you didn't cultivate'
3	tè-y-á-lìm-á	's/he didn't cultivate'	tè-b-áá-lìm-á	'they didn't cultivate'

The 2sg. and 3sg. forms show that /o-/ and /e-/ must first glide to [w] and [y], again without CL, which then allows the negative prefix to be realized *te-*. Turning to the 1sg. we observe that the vowel of the TM is long, since *si-a-* involves a CV + V sequence. Other than guaranteeing that the *te-* vs. *t-* realizations will be sensitive to the consonantal outputs of /o-a-/ → [wa] and /e-a-/ → [ya] rather than to the vocalic inputs, the only other question is whether these allomorphs should be independent spell-outs of [+NEG] or whether the allomorphs are derived from a single underlying representation (UR), either /te-/ via vowel deletion or /t-/ with vowel epenthesis. In either case, if the phonology applied all at once to /te-o-a-/ or /t-o-a-/ and /te-e-a-/ or /t-e-a-/ this would presumably produce the incorrect outputs **tw-aa-* and **ty-aa-*. Since parallel questions of analysis arise even more centrally in closely related Lusoga, we will further address such issues in the next section.

3. Lusoga

In this section we will consider the realization of the same SMs in the corresponding Lusoga affirmative and negative tenses. Since there are only tonal differences in the affirmative tenses, these are presented together in (8)-(10).

(8) Present habitual tense affirmative

	singular		*plural*	
1st person	ǹ-ním-á	'I cultivate'	tù-lìm-á	'we cultivate'
2nd person	ò-lím-á	'you cultivate'	mù-lìm-á	'you cultivate'
3rd person	à-lím-á	's/he cultivate'	bà-lìm-á	'they cultivate'

(9) General past affirmative

	singular		*plural*	
1st person	n-á-lìm-á	'I cultivated'	tw-áà-lìm-á	'we cultivated'
2nd person	w-á-lìm-á	'you cultivated'	mw-áà-lìm-á	'you cultivated'
3rd person	y-á-lìm-á	's/he cultivated'	b-áà-lìm-á	'they cultivated'

(10) General future affirmative

	singular		*plural*	
1st person	ń-dì-lìm-á	'I will cultivate'	tù-lì-lìm-á	'we will cultivate'
2nd person	ó-lì-lìm-á	'you will cultivate'	mù-lì-lìm-á	'you will cultivate'
3rd person	á-lì-lìm-á	's/he will cultivate'	bà-lì-lìm-á	'they will cultivate'

As seen, the same SMs and TMs, root *-lim-*, and inflectional final vowel *-a* are observed as in Luganda in each case—a remarkable illustration of just how close these languages are.

However, such exact segmental equivalence does not occur in the corresponding negatives, as seen in the present habitual forms in (11).

(11) Present habitual tense negative

	singular		*plural*	
1st person	tí-lím-à	'I don't cultivate'	tí-tú-lím-à	'we don't cultivate'
2nd person	t-ó-lím-à	'you don't cultivate'	tí-mú-lím-à	'you don't cultivate'
3rd person	t-á-lím-à	's/he does cultivate'	tí-bá-lím-à	'they don't cultivate'

While the same *t-* allomorph of the negative is seen before 2sg. *o-* and 3sg. *e-*, the (preconsonantal) allomorph in the plural is *ti-* (vs. Luganda *te-*). In addition, the 1sg. + negative form is [ti] vs. the portmanteau *si-* in the Luganda negative paradigm. (The expected **ti-n-* sequence is ungrammatical.) The same facts are observed in the general future negative:

(12) General future negative

	singular		*plural*	
1	tí-lì-lìm-á	'I won't cultivate'	tí-tù-lì-lìm-á	'we won't cultivate'
2	t-ó-lì-lìm-á	'you won't cultivate'	tí-mù-lì-lìm-á	'you won't cultivate'
3	t-á-lì-lìm-á	's/he won't cultivate'	tí-bà-lì-lìm-á	'they won't cultivate'

The question that arises from these data is how to analyze what appears to be the 1sg. negative marker *ti-*. There are at least three potential analyses, schematized in (13).

(13)	Negative	1sg. subject	
a.	ti-	Ø-	
b.	t-	i-	
c.	ti-		(portmanteau)

In the first analysis in (13a), there is no overt 1sg. subject prefix. Instead, the preconsonantal negative allomorph *ti-* occurs when followed by the verb root *-lim-* or the future prefix *-lì-*. That this cannot work is seen in the following general past negative forms:

(14) General past negative

	singular		*plural*	
1	ty-áà-lìm-á	'I didn't cultivate'	tì-tw-áà-lìm-á	'we didn't cultivate'
2	tì-w-á-lìm-á	'you didn't cultivate'	tì-mw-áà-lìm-á	'you didn't cultivate'
3	tì-y-á-lìm-á	's/he didn't cultivate'	tì-b-áà-lìm-á	'they didn't cultivate'

As seen, the negative marker is *ti-* throughout—even in the 1sg. form. If the 1sg. SM is Ø, and the negative is directly followed by the past tense prefix *-a-*, we would expect the prevocalic allomorph *t-*, in which case the output should be **t-á-lìm-á*. In other words if the input is *ti-Ø-a-*, the Ø SM would have to block the *t-* allomorph expected before *-a-*. Note that we cannot propose that the 1sg. is a featureless "ghost" consonant, since we would expect /ti-C-a-/ to have the output *[tia], not [tyaa]. We could stipulate that somehow the negative allomorphy cannot see the *-a-* of the TM through the null subject. However, there are other possible analyses that do not require this stipulation.

In the alternative interpretation in (13b) the 1sg. allomorph is *i-* in negative tenses. In this case the prevocalic negative allomorph *t-* is chosen. (Corresponding bimorphemic analyses are adopted by Kamba Muzenga 1981: 185, hence /s-i-/ for Luganda *si-*.) While this works in the present and general future tenses, where *t-i-* would be followed by a consonant, it does not work in the general past negative. As seen in (14), we have to first allow the subject Vs to glide, as we also saw in Luganda in (7): Just as 2sg. /o-a-/ and (class 1) 3sg. /e-a-/ first become [wa] and [ya], an input /i-a/ would also have to become [ya], with the 1sg. and (class 1) 3sg. forms incorrectly becoming homophonous. Homophony would also result if the 1sg. allomorph were not /í-/, rather a segmentless high tonal morpheme /´/ which somehow requires the preceding *ti-* allomorph. One could of course stipulate that the observed

prevocalic *ty-* is somehow due to avoidance of homophony. However, there is a third available solution which does not need to make this stipulation.

In the third analysis in (13c) *ti-* is identified as the corresponding portmanteau morpheme to *si-* in Luganda (and Swahili). In other words, /ti-/ is not further segmented, rather it is a single morph representing both the negative and the first person singular SM. This explains why the form 'I didn't cultivate' is *ty-áà-lìm-á* in (14): /ti-/ spells out both "slots" at once and then undergoes the expected gliding + CL of the following TM *-a-*. This analysis seems the best and most direct way to account for the Lusoga facts, not requiring any stipulation beyond the one we were forced to make for Luganda. However, it was at first elusive: (13a-c) in fact represents the order in which I (and others I have shown the data to) first thought of each of the analyses. In (13a) it is tempting to generalize *ti-* as the negative marker throughout the paradigm (which *si-* could not be in Luganda), since it appears both in 1sg. and before consonantal SMs. The next realization in (13b) is that deletion of the /i/ of /ti-/ would automatically be triggered by 1sg. /i-/, exactly as it is by 2sg. /o-/ and (class 1) 3sg. /a-/. Both Kamba Muzenga (1981: 185-7, 206n) and Bastin (2006: 26-30) show that there is a 1sg. SM allomorph *i-* which shows up sporadically in various Bantu languages. However, as was shown, each of these proposals runs into complications which can be avoided if /ti-/ is analyzed as a 1sg. negative portmanteau morpheme.

4. Discussion and conclusion

In the preceding sections we have analyzed the 1sg. negative subject marking as a portmanteau morpheme *si-* in Luganda, *ti-* in Lusoga. While this interpretation was quite clear in Luganda, where *si-* differs from the *te-* found elsewhere in the (main clause) negative paradigm, two other (ultimately rejected) analyses seemed at first plausible in Lusoga. It was particularly the prevocalic realization *ty-* that pointed towards the ultimate solution. There are however additional data that were not addressed concerning the realization of the 1sg. SM with different negative markers in dependent clauses. As seen in the following present tense relative forms from Luganda, instead of initial *te-*, negation is marked by post-SM *-ta-* in relative clauses:

(15) Present tense relative clause marking in Luganda

		'... that I etc. cultivate'	'... that I etc. don't cultivate'
1st person sg.	:	kyé ń-nímâ	kyé sí-límâ
2nd person sg.	:	ky' óó-límâ	ky' óó-tá-límâ
3rd person sg.	:	ky' áá-límâ	ky' áá-tá-límâ
1st person pl.	:	kyé tú-límâ	kyé tú-tá-límâ
2nd person pl.	:	kyé mú-límâ	kyé mú-tá-límâ
3rd person pl.	:	kyé bá-límâ	kyé bá-tá-límâ

As seen, the post-SM *-ta-* occurs in all forms except the first person singular, where once again *si-* is observed. In other words, the portmanteau morpheme *si-* is not sensitive to the would-be difference in morpheme orders of the expected main and relative clause sequences **te-n-* and **n-ta-*. In other words, if the morphology is spelled out cyclically, both [NEG [1sg ...]] and [1sg [NEG ...]] are spelled out as *si-*.

As seen in (16), the negative marker is also post-SM *-ta-* in relative clauses in Lusoga.

(16) Present tense relative clause marking in Lusoga

		'... that I etc. cultivate'	'... that I etc. don't cultivate'
1st person sg.	:	kyé ń-nímà	kyé ń-tá-límà
2nd person sg.	:	ky' óó-límà	ky' óó-tá-límà
3rd person sg.	:	ky' áá-ímà	ky' áá-tá-límà
1st person pl.	:	kyé tú-límà	kyé tú-tá-límà
2nd person pl.	:	kyé mú-límà	kyé mú-tá-límà
3rd person pl.	:	kyé bá-límà	kyé bá-tá-límà

However, as seen, the first singular is realized with the regular sequence *n-ta-* instead of portmanteau *si-*, which thus only occurs as a conflation of would-be main clause **ti-n-*. While the different properties of *si-* can be modeled synchronically by adding a syntactic restriction on the Lusoga spell-out, this raises the issue of whether Lusoga 1sg. negative *ti-* was in fact a historical contraction of **ti-i-*, with *-i-* being an allomorph of the first person SM. Correspondingly, could Luganda then have derived *si-* from **ti-i-* where one or both vowels were degree 1 (often symbolized as **ị*), thereby spirantizing **t* to [s]?

The problem is why the clausal distribution of the portmanteau differs in Luganda and Lusoga. The several questions are WHERE, WHY and HOW did the 1sg. negative portmanteau first come into existence: in main clauses or in dependent clauses? Finding a solution to these questions is complicated by several factors.

First, although other Bantu languages have a negative marker *si-*, either general or restricted to first person singular, its properties vary considerably. In some it's limited to initial position, while in others it occurs in post-SM position. The latter is the case in Swahili, which uses *ha-* in main clauses, as seen in (1), but *-si-* in relative and subjunctive clauses, e.g. *mtu a-si-ye-som-a* 'a man who doesn't read' (Ashton 1944: 112), *tu-si-pig-e* 'that we may not beat' (Ashton 1944: 119). This raises the likelihood that there are multiple sources of negative *si-* in Bantu.

Although a number of Bantu languages show a morpheme *si-* restricted to first person singular (Kamba Muzenga 1981: 204), the distributional details vary. In Kirundi the negative marker is *nti-* in main clauses vs. *-ta-* in dependent clauses. However, it is only the former that is replaced by *si-* in the first person:

(17) Negative marking in Kirundi (Meeussen 1959: 137,140)

a. main clause ("indicatif récent")

i.	nti-tw-aa-kubuura	'nous balayions'	(we were sweeping)
ii.	si-n-aa-kubuura	'je balayais'	(I was sweeping)

b. dependent clause ("conjonctif récent"; /-ta-aa-/ → t-aa-)

i.	tú-t-aa-kubuura	'sans que nous balayions'	(without us sweeping)
ii.	n-t-áa-kubuura	'sans que je balaie'	(without me sweeping)

It seems reasonable to parse Kirundi *sin-* into negative *si-* followed by the 1sg. SM *n-*. However, the opposite ordering obtains in Chibemba /n-si-/ → *nši-*, which consists of the first person singular SM *n-* followed by post-SM *-si-* (*n-shi-lee-tum-a* 'I am not sending') vs. the general initial negative marker *ta-* (*ta-tu-lee-pep-a* 'we are not praying') (Mwita 2016: 21). Evidence can thus be found for both an initial and post-SM negative marker *si.* Note finally that Swahili has a subjunctive and relative clause post-SM allomorph *-si-* which concatenates with the 1sg. SM *ni-: ni-si-som-e* 'shan't I read? mayn't I read?' (Ashton 1944: 120). By restricting the portmanteau si- to main clause negatives, it isn't necessary to cite the Repeated Morph Constraint to rule out **si-si-som-e* and avoidance of haplology to rule out **si-som-e*.

One hypothesis for the *si-n-* of Kirundi (and closely related Kinyarwanda and Ha) is that *si-* may be a predicative marker (Kamba Muzenga 1981: 86-7). The Swahili polarity opposition of *ni/si* seen in (1) is found not only in the first person, but also in predicatives: *ni kitabu* 'it's a book', *si kitabu* 'it's not a book'. Initial *(n)ti-* and *si-* may therefore represent an innovation. Thus compare in Haya the predictative function of *ní* in *ní káto* 'it's Kato' vs. its aspectual function in *ni-ba-lím-a* 'they are cultivating' where *ni-* has been added as a progressive marker (cf. *ba-lím-a* 'they cultivate') (Hyman & Watters 1984: 260-1). Interestingly the 1sg. negative subject forms [si] and [ti] line up perfectly with the corresponding negative predicative markers in Luganda and Lusoga:

(18) Negative predicative markers

a.	Luganda:	sí kìtábó	'it's not a book'
b.	Lusoga:	tí kìtábó	'it's not a book'

If forms such as *si-, te, ti-* and *nti-* could be shown to derive from predicative markers, this might account for why *t-o-* and *t-a-* are realized without compensatory lengthening. As Meeussen (1959: 33) explains concerning Kirundi:

"L'élision se trouve normalement quand les deux voyelles en cause appartiennent à deux mots nettement distincts'; mais on le trouve aussi à l'intérieur du mot avec *ńti-* du négatif...." (Elision normally occurs when the two vowels in question belong to two clearly distinct words; but one also finds it word-internally with the negative [marker] *ńti-*.)

As opposed to Meeussen's "contraction", which occurs with CL within words, his cross-word "élision" refers to vowel deletion without CL. If *nti-* (and other such markers) were historically separated by a full word boundary, we would expect no CL, as is still the case in many Bantu languages. However, Luganda and Lusoga have CL even across words, as seen in the following Luganda phrases (Hyman & Katamba 1999: 352):

(19) Gliding + CL across words in Luganda

a.	o-mu-limi # o-mú	→	ò-mú-limy' óó-mû	'one farmer'
b.	e-fûdu # e-mû	→	è-n-fúdw' èè-mû	'one tortoise'

Thus, if the explanation for the shortness of the vowels of t-o- and t-a- has to do with there having been a word boundary between the negative marker and the SM, Luganda (and Lusoga) would have had to extend CL to phrasal contexts. (We would also have to explain why the marker is *te-* in Luganda vs. the predicative marker *sí-*.) This is why I proposed an allomorph solution beyond the portmanteaus: *t-* before a vowel, *te-* (Luganda) or *ti-* (Lusoga) before a consonant.

What the preceding discussion shows is that there is considerable instability, variablity, and diversity in negative marking in present day Bantu languages. A particularly striking example comes from Lengola, which marks negatives with a postposed possessive pronoun corresponding to the subject. In addition, in the past tense singular (class 1) persons fuse with a preceding *s-* (Stappers 1971: 295):

(20) Past tense negative in Lengola

		singular	*plural*	
1st person	:	s-í-lim-ámi	tú-lìm-ású	'I/we cultivated'

2nd person	:	s-ú-lìm-áyì	nú-lim-ánú	‘you cultivated’
3rd person	:	s-á-lìm-ésé	ɓá-lim-áɓó	‘he, she/they cultivated’

Since Lengola doesn’t spirantize before degree 1 **i*, it is clear that the initial *s-* comes from Proto-Bantu **c* rather than **t,* although other cases may not be as clear (Kamba Muzenga 1981: 109). Finally, even if correspondences aren’t exact, grammatical morphemes are often irregular. Thus although the Standard Swahili negative marker *ha-* derives from **nka-* (Nurse & Hinnebusch 1993: 365), it should instead be realized *k^{h}a*, as it is realized dialectally (Derek Nurse, pers. comm.) and in other languages, e.g. *nkha-* in Chizigula (Kamba Muzenga 1981: 141).

Which brings us to the question of reconstruction. There is general agreement that Proto-Bantu had multiple negative markers. Kamba Muzenga reconstructs initial **nka-* in main clauses, and post-SM *-ti-* and *-ta-* in subjunctive and relative clauses, respectively. Güldeman’s (1999) work has centered around explaining the correlation between the two positions and the clause types in which they are found. However, although I have only given a brief glimpse of this, the situation is more complicated than a simple binary positional contrast, not to mention the wide range of forms that are found (cf. Nurse 2008: 188-9). Even at the level of Luganda-Lusoga we are not sure if *si* and *ti* are cognate. If not why did both languages develop a special form—and with different distributions? While I cannot resolve these diachronic questions, we can at least recognize that despite appearances and distributional differences, Lusoga 1sg. negative subject /ti-/ requires a strikingly similar synchronic portmanteau analysis to Luganda /si-/.

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