(A)symmetries in imperative negation in Eastern Bantu

Daniël Van Olmen (Lancaster University)
Maud Devos (Royal Museum for Central Africa)
with Valentin Rădulescu (Lancaster University)

Abstract

This article applies the analytical framework of (a)symmetry, previously used for standard negation, to imperative negation in Eastern Bantu. It is shown, based on a 106-language sample, to exhibit asymmetries similar to standard negation, sometimes contrary to earlier claims (e.g. finiteness), as well as specific to the negation domain under investigation (e.g. intersubjectivity). Eastern Bantu imperative negation is also revealed to be asymmetric in ways not attested in standard negation (e.g. realis negative with irrealis positive, neutralization from negative to positive). In view of these findings, the article makes a case against general functional motivations of the type proposed for standard negation asymmetries in the literature. Instead, it contends, on the one hand, that more specific explanations may be needed (e.g. the relative insignificance of directional marking in negative imperatives) and, on the other hand, that diachrony accounts for most asymmetry in imperative negation. It is argued that the diachronic instability of negative imperatives, compared to imperatives and due to factors like frequency and politeness, produces a greater variety of constructions, which need not be connected to their positive equivalents and can therefore give rise to asymmetry.

1   Introduction

Imperatives and their negative equivalents have been investigated in some detail for Bantu (e.g. Nurse 2008; Ngonyani 2013; Bernander 2020). In their survey of 100 languages, Devos & Van Olmen (2013: 9-24) identified the constructions in (1) as the main imperative strategies in the family. The imperative proper in (1a) consists of just the verb root and the final vowel *-a*. The main clause use of the subjunctive in (1b) involves a subject prefix, the verb root and the ending *-e*. It is often characterized as more polite than (1a) but it is also the default option for directives following an initial imperative proper. The construction in (1c) may be regarded as a hybrid: it contains the subjunctive suffix *-e* but shares with the imperative the absence of a subject marker – and, in Shangaci in particular, also the tone of the ending in *-é*, as the comparison with *-á* in (1a) and *-e* in (1b) shows.

(1)   Shangaci (P312; personal knowledge)
         a.   *khool-á*
                 take-FV
                 'Take!'
         b.   *u-khoól-e*
                 SM2SG-take-SBJV
                 'Take, please!'
         c.   *ní-khool-é*
                 OM1SG-take-SBJV
                 'Take me!'

(2) Gogo (G11; Rossel 1988: 50)
andic-é
write-SBJV
'Write!'

This hybrid typically appears instead of the imperative proper in (1a) exclusively when an object marker is required (one common exception to the latter's incompatibility with object prefixes is the first person singular; see Marlo 2014). It can also occur without an object marker, though, in several languages. Gogo in (2) is a case in point.

    The major negative imperative strategies that Devos & Van Olmen (2013: 24-43) distinguished for Bantu are illustrated in (3) to (6), in order of decreasing frequency. The construction in (3), the formal counterpart of (~~2~~1b), involves the main clause use of the negative subjunctive. In (4), there is a negative auxiliary,[1] accompanied by an infinitive. The Gogo one derives from a lexical verb meaning 'stop'. Other recurrent but less common sources of negative auxiliaries are 'know' and 'not want'. The construction in (5) features a non-verbal negative marker dedicated to the negative imperative. The origins of such items and the verb forms with which they combine vary considerably. In Nkoya, they are, respectively, a concessive conjunction and the emphatic progressive. In (6), finally, we can see a negative infinitive – which, specifically in Langi, employs only the final part *tʊkʊ* 'not' of its normal circumverbal negation.

(3) Shangaci (P312; personal knowledge)
u-si-khool-e
SM2SG-NEG-take-SBJV
'Don't take!'
(4) Gogo (G11; Rossel 1998: 50)
lec-é   ku-ly-a
PROH-SBJV INF-eat-FV
'Don't eat!'
(5) Nkoya (L62; Yukawa 1987: 176)
enga   ú-mon-á
PROH   SM2SG-see-PROG
'Don't see!'
(6) Langi (F33; Dunham 2005: 162)
kʊ-rɪm-a   kɪ-dundii   tʊkʊ
INF-cultivate-FV   CL7-hill   NEG
'Don't cultivate the hill!'
(8) Myene (B11; Teisseres & Dubois 1957: 23)
a-gend-a
NEG-go-FV
'Don't go!'
(9) Kela (C75; Forges 1977: 108)
po-kádáng-é
NEG-roast-SBJV
'Don't roast!'

As evidenced by (8) and (9), which can be compared to (1a) and (2), negated imperatives proper and negated hybrid forms do occur. They are, however, very infrequent.

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[1] PROH in (4) stands for "prohibitive", a term that is sometimes used in place of/preferred to "negative imperative", but we reserve this label for negative elements that are specialized for the expression of 'don't!'.

The aim of Devos & Van Olmen's (2013) study was to map and contrast the variation in (negative) imperatives across Bantu. As the above overview suggests, they found much more diversity in the negative imperative than in the imperative domain, a result that they attributed to the comparative diachronic instability of negative imperatives. This phenomenon was argued to be due to a range of factors but, most notably, to a greater pressure on negative imperatives than on imperatives to develop new strategies for reasons of politeness (see Devos & Van Olmen 2013: 2-8, 43-45). What is not part of the article – and what the present contribution seeks to undertake – is an in-depth examination of the grammatical (dis)similarities between imperatives and negative imperatives.

Our approach to this investigation takes as its starting point the concept of (a)symmetry developed by Miestamo (2005: 51-56) for his typological study of standard negation. We can characterize it as follows: the grammatical structures of domain f(x) differ from those of x (not) only in the presence of f() marking. Symmetry in negation is thus the situation where negative marking is the sole dissimilarity between a positive and a negative, as with *niet* 'not' in Dutch standard and imperative negation in (10).

(10) Dutch (Indo-European; personal knowledge)
    a.   *wij   gaan   (niet)   weg*
         1PL.NOM   go.PL.PRS NEG   away
         'We are (not) going away.'
    b.   *ga   (niet)   weg*
         go.IMP   NEG   away
         '(Don't) go away!'

Asymmetry can be constructional and/or paradigmatic. We have constructional asymmetry in negation when a negative construction minus the negative marking does not correspond to any positive construction. Pite Saami standard (as well as imperative) negation in (11) is a case in point. Both sentences allow the exact same paradigmatic distinctions but the negative construction in (11b) features a negative auxiliary with the agreement and tense-mood marking that, in the positive construction in (11a), is carried by the lexical verb, which appears in its non-finite "connegative" form in (11b). Paradigmatic asymmetry in negation occurs when the distinctions made in the negative differ from those in the positive. English imperative (as well as standard) negation in (12) can serve as an example.

(11) Pite Saami (Uralic; Wilbur 2014: 139, 229)
    a.   *månnå   aj   mujhta-v   gu ...*
         1SG.NOM   also   remember-1SG.PRS   when
         'I also remember when …'
    b.   *ittji-v   mån   mujte*
         NEG-1SG.PST   1SG.NOM   remember.CONNEG
         'I didn't remember.'
(12) a.   Go away!
    b.   Do go away!
    c.   Do not go away!

The negative imperative in (12c) is constructionally symmetric with the imperative in (12b) but the option of emphasis in positive (12a) and (12b) is neutralized in (12c).

This notion of (a)symmetry has proven valuable. Miestamo's (2005) initial research into standard negation and follow-up studies of imperative negation (e.g. Miestamo & van der Auwera 2007; Van Olmen 2019, 2022, subm.) have revealed various cross-linguistic tendencies.

The lexical verb's loss of finiteness or – put differently – the finiteness asymmetry in (11), for instance, is found in standard negation in roughly a quarter of the world's languages (Miestamo 2005: 173) and, to a not dissimilar degree, in imperative negation (Van Olmen subm.; contra Miestamo & van der Auwera 2007: 70). The opposite situation, i.e. a comparatively less finite lexical verb in the positive, does not occur or is extremely rare. Likewise, although the presence in the negative of the positive emphatic element or – in other words – the emphasis asymmetry in (12) is a fairly infrequent phenomenon (emerging in the standard negation of just four of the 179 sample languages of Miestamo 2005: 173), the reverse is not attested. Importantly, standard and imperative negation need not behave in the same way. In the former domain, for example, the negative often has extra optional or compulsory irrealis marking and in no language is the negative realis while its positive equivalent is irrealis (Miestamo 2005: 96-109, 208-209). In the latter domain, however, this opposite pattern is a (minor) possibility (van der Auwera & Devos 2012: 176-177, 181). Imperative negation even exhibits a type of asymmetry that Miestamo (2005) does not attest in standard negation: one in specialization. A language may not possess any dedicated negative construction matching its imperative (Aikhenvald 2010: 170; Van Olmen 2021: 528) or any dedicated positive construction corresponding to its negative imperative (Jary & Kissine 2016: 133-137; Van Olmen subm.). The literature on such asymmetries, to be discussed more thoroughly in the remainder of this article, can inform our study of the (dis)similarities between imperatives and negative imperatives in Bantu and tell us how they fare compared to (imperative) negation in general.

Unlike in Devos & Van Olmen (2013: 8, 55-56), who sampled languages from the whole Bantu-speaking region, the focus here is on what is called Eastern Bantu in Grollemund et al.'s (2015: 13297) phylogenetic tree. This group is made up of the languages from the zones D, E, F, G, JD, JE, M, N, P and S in Maho's (2009) update of Guthrie's (1971) geographical classification. The zones can be seen in Figure 1 (J comprises JD and JE).
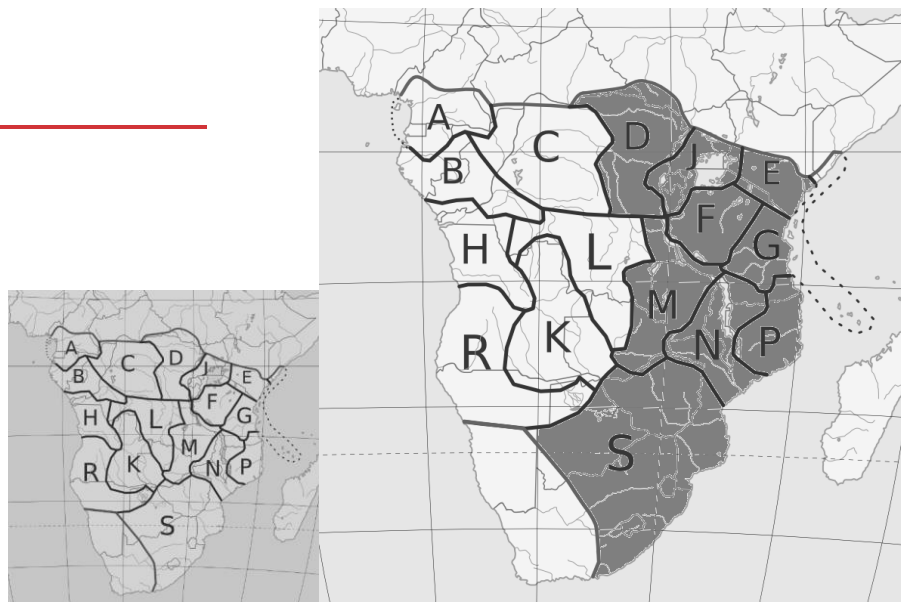

Figure 1: Bantu zones[2]

The motivation for limiting the study to Eastern Bantu is twofold. The Bantuist contributor to the present article already has great familiarity – through language proficiency, fieldwork and earlier research (e.g. Devos 2008a, 2013; Devos & Calawia 2017; Devos et al. 2017) – with this group of languages in particular. Such knowledge can only add to an in-depth analysis of imperative negation. Furthermore, concentrating on fewer zones also creates space for better coverage of their linguistic diversity. Devos & Van Olmen (2013) investigated circa 100 languages for zones A to S. The present paper looks at 106 languages for zones D to S. This sample is of the convenience type in that it contains all languages for which sufficient information on (negative) imperatives is available to us. As a result, there is some variation in the extent to which every zone is represented. The sample includes, for instance, 17.65% of the E languages listed in Maho (2009) but only 13.33% of the D languages. Its coverage is nevertheless quite broad, as the overview in the Appendix shows.

The rest of this article is structured as follows. In Section 2, we define our object of study and examine the related asymmetry, distinctive of imperative negation, in specialization. Section 3 looks at the asymmetries that the literature has identified for negation in general whereas, in Section 4, we focus on the other asymmetries that, according to previous research, are specific to imperative negation. Section 5, finally, presents our overall discussion and conclusions.

2   Object of study

2.1   Comparative concepts

For a study of imperative negation, it is important that we only consider comparable (negative) imperative constructions. This requirement is not as trivial as it may seem. Rombi (1983: 160), for one, mentions (13a) as a strategy in Maore to tell someone not to do something. This construction's "basic" meaning, however, is negative declarative present indicative and belongs to the domain of standard negation. If we used it to establish (a)symmetry with the imperative proper in (13b), we would be comparing entities of dissimilar status, in our view.

(13)   Maore (G44D; Rombi 1983: 160, 156)
        a.   *ka-u-si-som-a*
              NEG-SM$_{2SG}$-PRS-read-FV
              'Don't read!' or 'You don't read.'
        b.   *rem-a*
              hit-FV
              'Hit!'

The present article therefore adopts the comparative concept that Jary & Kissine (2016) propose for the Imperative and its adaptation by Van Olmen (2021, subm.) for the Negative Imperative.[3]

The former states that the Imperative is "a sentence-type whose only prototypical function is to provide the addressee(s) with a reason to act, that is suitable for the performance of

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[3] Henceforth, we will capitalize Imperative and Negative Imperative when referring to constructions that meet the criteria of our comparative concepts. As the overview in (1) to (9) already suggests, these constructions come in a variety of forms. To describe such forms, we will often draw on the terms that have traditionally been employed in Bantu studies to label them, like "subjunctive" for a verb with a subject prefix and an *-e* suffix and "infinitive" for a verb with a *ku-* prefix and an *-a* suffix (Meeussen 1967: 111-112). It is probably worth repeating that, if these forms conform to our comparative concepts, we regard them as (Negative) Imperatives and that our study is thus not restricted to imperatives (with lowercase i) like (1), which obviously do count as Imperatives.

the full range of directive speech acts, and whose manifestations are all morphologically and syntactically homogeneous with the second person" (Jary & Kissine 2016: 132). This concept defines directivity not as getting someone to do something but as giving them a motive to take action. This reformulation aims to integrate advice and permission as ordinary directive speech acts. With advice in its purest sense, for example, it is of no real concern to the advisor whether the advisee actually does anything. It is not an attempt by a speaker to have an addressee act in a certain way. Rather, the speaker presents a course of action that they believe could be advantageous to the addressee, who is free to follow it or not. The comparative concept then expects this broader meaning of directivity to be the ~~imperative's~~ Imperative's only prototypical one. This condition allows us to leave~~discount~~ cases like 'you must read!', 'I want you to read!' and the Nyungwe one in (14) out of our study.~~.~~

(14) Nyungwe (N43; Courtois 1900: 74)
      u-nidza-phat-a
      SM$_{2SG}$-FUT-grasp-FV
      'Grasp!' or 'You will grasp.'

They may serve as a directive in particular contexts (possibly with a special intonation) but it is not the basic function of these constructions. Consider (14) again: although speakers could use it – in the second person and in specific circumstances only – to issue a directive, it is, in essence, a future declarative construction. Imperatives also need to be able to convey the entire array of directive speech acts. This prerequisite sets them apart from constructions dedicated to the expression of invitations, permissions or other more specific acts (e.g. Aikhenvald 2010: 223-228). An English example to clarify the point would be *could you open the door?*: this construction is probably directive in (nearly) all cases but does not constitute an ~~imperative~~ Imperative because it is essentially limited to conveying requests. Lastly, Jary & Kissine (2016) stipulate that only those constructions directed at a first/third person (e.g. 'let's go!', 'let them eat cake!'; Aikhenvald's 2010: 3 "non-canonical" I~~i~~mperatives) that form a structurally homogeneous paradigm with the second person one(s) should be considered I~~i~~mperatives.[4] This part of their comparative concept has relatively little bearing on our study, however, as we are concerned solely with constructions aimed at a second person. Their reference to morphology and syntax is nevertheless worth drawing attention to. It emphasizes that the distinctiveness of the I~~i~~mperative as a "sentence-type"/construction may be morphological (e.g. a specialized affix) and/or syntactic (e.g. the lack of subject pronouns).

      Ignoring the issue of first or third person constructions, our comparative concept for N~~n~~egative I~~i~~mperatives goes as follows: they are constructions that prototypically only serve to give the addressee(s) a reason not to act and are fit to perform the whole range of negative directive speech acts. This concept means that, as discussed above, constructions like the Maore one in (13a) are not taken into account here. The motivation is that they do not satisfy the criterion of having negative directivity – a term that we understand as being geared toward non-action and as covering more specific acts such as commanding, encouraging and suggesting non-action – as their sole prototypical meaning. The comparative concept can also be argued to enable us to exclude a construction like (15) from the domain of N~~n~~egative I~~i~~mperatives.

(15) Shangaci (P312; personal knowledge)
      orów-á   o-sáyeél-a

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[4] In French, *mangeons!* 'let's eat!' would be I~~i~~mperative according to the comparative concept, as it ties in formally with *mange!* 'eat!' and *mangez!* 'y'all eat!'. Its equivalent in English would not, though: it differs from *eat!* in the presence of the auxiliary *let* and the pronoun *us/'s*.

stop-FV INF-sweep-FV
'Stop sweeping!'

The auxiliary's cessative semantics are still very much present (cf. Devos & Van Olmen 2013: 30-31 on Bantu languages where the meaning of such verbs has bleached and they have become prohibitive auxiliaries). Thus, (15) can only function as a negative directive to stop doing something, is unsuitable to express any negative directive speech act to refrain from doing something and does not count as a ~~negative~~ Negative I~~i~~mperative. It does instantiate Shangaci's imperative proper, of course, as a comparison with (1a) shows.

2.2   Challenges

The implementation of these comparative concepts is not unproblematic. First, it is often difficult to establish whether a construction can convey an array of (negative) directive speech acts. Grammatical descriptions rarely address explicitly the (negative) directive potential of the constructions that they discuss. One of the exceptions, though still quite vague, is Ochwaya-Olouch (2003: 224), who writes that the imperative proper in Nyala "expresses directives such as commands, orders or exhortations". We may sometimes tentatively conclude from examples that a range of speech acts is possible. Botne et al.'s (2006: 50-52) illustrations of the Saamia imperative proper and hybrid constructions, for instance, suggest some variation, with orders ('bring me food'), advice ('warm yourself by the fire') and requests ('weed it for me'). Most sources, however, say little more, or even less, than Petzell (2008: 178) for Kagulu: "Imperative clauses are used to express commands." Our study will nevertheless presume that constructions characterized in grammars as (~~n~~negative~~e~~) imperatives, commands, prohibitions and the like are able to convey the variety of (negative) directive speech acts, unless specified otherwise. We are in line with Jary & Kissine (2016) in this respect. Even for languages with specialized constructions for acts like invitations, permissions and warnings, they argue that "it is not always clear that these forms genuinely stand in complementary distribution with (~~n~~negative) ~~i~~imperative sentences" (Jary & Kissine 2016: 123).

Second, it is not always easy to determine whether (negative) directivity is the only prototypical function of a construction. The problem is especially acute for what tends to be called the (negative) subjunctive in Bantu studies. It is known to occur in a range of contexts, of which many are subordinate. For the Ndamba subjunctive, for instance, Novotná (2005: 132-134) lists purpose and concessive clauses, temporal ones headed by 'until' and, like in (16), complement clauses of 'want'.

(16) Ndamba (G52; Novotná 2005: 134)
      n-ku-luv-a   *a-yis-i*
      SM1SG-PROG-want-FV   SM3SG-come-SBJV
      'I want him/her to come.'

These uses are not at issue here, however. Being subordinate, they are constructionally different from the subjunctive's main clause appearances in (17a) and (17b), which are said to have an "imperative meaning" and convey "a polite imperative" respectively (Novotná 2005: 130-131). Evidently, directivity is one of the functions of the main clause subjunctive in Ndamba. Yet, it may also express a suggestion or offer in the first person, like in (17c), and a recommendation or obligation in the third and second person, like in (17d) and (17e). While (17c) could be seen as a directive aimed at oneself, we cannot be entirely sure that (17d) or (17e) is indeed directive.

(17) Ndamba (G52; Novotná 2005: 130, 131, 132, 130, 131)

a. *mu-vet-i*
SM2PL-wait-SBJV
'Y'all wait!'

b. *u-n-tang-i*
SM2SG-OM1SG-help-SBJV
'Help me please!'

c. *n-ku-tang-i*
SM1SG-OM2SG-help-SBJV
'Let me help you.'

d. *a-pa-hemel-i*   *mahali-apa*
SM3SG-OMCL17-buy-SBJV   place-PROX.DEM
'He/she should buy the place here.'

e. *mu-dumul-i*   *njilu*
SM2PL-cut-SBJV   firewood
'Y'all should cut firewood.'

Such lack of clarity – on potential ambiguity with purely modal as well as, for instance, optative interpretations – is not uncommon in our sources. At the same time, we have multiple indications for a variety of Eastern Bantu languages that (negative) directivity is, if not the only, at least a very typical/highly conventionalized function of the main clause (negative) subjunctive. For Luguru, Mkude (1974: 93) writes: "The subjunctive is used independently only in exhortative and desiderative expressions." The rest of his grammar suggests that "exhortative" refers to the meaning 'let …!' but "desiderative" is not specified further. The only other examples of main clause subjunctives in his description serve as (mild) commands. Similarly, Nurse (2000: 146) states, about Ilwana, that "the data base offers no information on [the subjunctive's] use outside the imperative" and a corpus study of Shangaci by Devos (2008b: 8) shows that 82.68% of main clause subjunctives act as ~~imperatives~~directives, with another 13.41% conveying weak obligation. In view of this evidence, we do analyze the (negative) subjunctive as a (~~n~~Negative) ~~i~~Imperative construction here if the source discusses it as one of the strategies or as the strategy for (negative) directivity.

2.3   Asymmetry in specialization

Not all languages have constructions that satisfy the requirements of our comparative concepts. Yagua (Peba-Yaguan), for one, has neither an ~~I~~imperative nor a ~~N~~negative ~~I~~imperative. The most basic constructions that it has to give an addressee a reason (not) to act "are formally ambiguous with the future non-imperative predications" (Payne & Payne 1990: 315), i.e. '(don't) do!' with 'you will (not) do'. One could say that it exhibits symmetry in lack of specialization. There are also languages that have either no ~~I~~imperative or no ~~N~~negative ~~I~~imperative. Like Yagua, Nyulnyul (Nyulnyulan) avails itself of 'you will do' to provide someone with a motive to take action but does possess a dedicated prohibitive marker *arriban* 'don't!' (McGregor 2011: 210, 289, 357). Lower Chehalis in (18) can exemplify the opposite pattern: (18a) involves a dedicated ~~I~~imperative affix *-aʔ*; (18b), the primary way in the language to give an addressee a reason not to act, need not be directive (translating literally as 'your filling it is not').

(18) Lower Chehalis (Salishan; Robertson 2014: 108, 110)
a. *√yəl-áʔ-əc*
help-IMP-1SG.PFV
'Help me!'

b.　*√hílu-Ø*　　*Ɂə-s-√ləč'-ə́n*
　　　NEG-3.PFV　　2SG.POSS-NMLZ-fill-3.PFV
　　　'Don't fill it!' or 'You do not fill it.'

Lower Chehalis and Nyulnyul may be characterized as displaying asymmetry in specialization. In Van Olmen's (subm.) typological study, this phenomenon occurs in 8.50% of his 200-language sample, with almost equal numbers for absent ~~imperatives~~ Imperatives and absent ~~N~~negative ~~I~~imperatives. Another 6.00% of his languages lack both an ~~I~~imperative and a ~~N~~negative ~~I~~imperative.

　　　Specialization asymmetry or symmetry in lack of specialization, though found in almost 15% of the world's languages, is not really attested in Eastern Bantu. The only case that comes close to asymmetry is Ganda in (19), at least as described by Ashton et al. (1954). The imperative proper in (19a) is said to require immediate compliance. Its negative equivalent would be (19b) but is constructionally identical to the negative ~~indicative~~ declarative present. The different tone on the second person singular prefix in (19c) does produce a dedicated ~~N~~negative ~~I~~imperative construction. However, it is said to have a meaning of delayed compliance. The positive counterpart of this construction would be (19d) but is the same as the positive ~~indicative~~ declarative present (Ashton et al. 1954: 456).

(19)　Ganda (JE15; Ashton et al. 1954: 462)
　　a.　*kòl-a*
　　　　do-FV
　　　　'Do now!'
　　b.　*t-o-kòl-a*
　　　　NEG-SM2SG-do-FV
　　　　'Don't do now!' or 'You don't do.'
　　c.　*t-ò-kòl-a*
　　　　NEG-SM2SG-do-FV
　　　　'Don't do later!'
　　d.　*ò-kòl-a*
　　　　SM2SG-do-FV
　　　　'Do later!' or 'You do.'

The fact that essentially every language in our sample possesses both ~~I~~imperative and ~~N~~negative ~~I~~imperative constructions means that we can examine all of them, in Section 3 and 4, for asymmetries in ~~I~~imperative ~~N~~negation.

3　　General asymmetries in negation

3.1　Asymmetry in finiteness

As discussed in Section 1, Miestamo (2005: 173) observes a tendency in standard negation, in roughly a quarter of languages, for the lexical verb to become less finite in the negative, relative to the positive. Possible indications of this asymmetry include the lexical verb's acquisition of nominal features like case or a nominalizer, its appearance as a typically dependent form like a converb or infinitive and/or its syntactic dependence on a new finite element (Miestamo 2005: 74-75). An example comes from Luvale, a non-sample language, and its standard negation of the future in (20) (Miestamo 2005: 90)

(20)　Luvale (K14; Horton 1949: 121, 134)

    a.   *mwa-ling-a*
        FUT.CL1-do-FV
        'He will do.'
    b.   *k-exi*   *kw-iz-a-ko*
        NEG-AUX   INF-come-FV-NEG
        'He will not come.'

When negating the construction in (20a) with two-part *ka ... ko* 'not', the lexical verb loses its subject prefix and becomes an infinitive, marked by *kw-*, while a new finite element, the auxiliary *exi,* is introduced, as in (20b). The explanation for such phenomena in the languages of the world is said to be two-fold:

- while positive clauses may present stative states of affairs (e.g. 'he feared death') or dynamic ones (e.g. 'they danced'), negative clauses (e.g. 'they didn't dance') tend to "report absence of events, … negate change and thus refer to the inert state of the universe where nothing happens" (Miestamo 2005: 197);
- nouns typically express more time-stable concepts than verbs (see Givón's 2001: 53-54 scale of temporal stability).

Combining these points, Miestamo (2005: 206) argues that, in finiteness asymmetry, the lexical verb becomes "less verby and more nouny" and manifests in this way the stativity of standard negation.

According to Miestamo & van der Auwera (2007: 71), ~~F~~finiteness asymmetry ~~wo~~should be less characteristic of ~~I~~imperative ~~N~~negation~~, according to Miestamo & van der Auwera (2007: 71)~~ because, like its positive counterpart, the ~~N~~negative ~~I~~imperative still requires activity from the addressee(s) "to stop what they are doing at the moment or to prevent some possible state of affairs". [Formatted: Indent: First line: 1 cm]

Th~~e~~is argument invoking what could be described as "illocutionary dynamicity" notwithstanding, Eastern Bantu contains numerous cases of finiteness asymmetry in ~~I~~imperative ~~N~~negation. In Gusii, it is of the Neg-LV type (Miestamo 2005: 75-80): the lexical verb loses finiteness – a *ko*-marked infinitive in (2~~10~~1c), compared to the imperative proper in (2~~10~~1a) and the hybrid in (2~~10~~1b), used when object markers occur – and the *Neg*ator has a position relative to the *L*exical *V*erb – the prefix *ta-* in (2~~10~~1c). In Southern Sotho, the ~~N~~negative ~~I~~imperative construction in (2~~21~~c) exhibits finiteness asymmetry of the Neg-FE type (Miestamo 2005: 80-81): the lexical verb is less finite – unlike in the imperative proper in (2~~21~~a) and the hybrid in (2~~21~~b), it is syntactically dependent on the deficient verb *ke* in (2~~21~~c) – and the *Neg*ator occupies a place relative to the new *F*inite *E*lement – the prefix *sē-* on *ke* in (2~~21~~c).[5]

(2~~0~~1)   Gusii (JE42; Ongarora 2008: 144, 145, 145)
    a.   *rar-a*
        sleep-FV
        'Sleep!'
    b.   *mo-ak-e*
        OM3SG-hit-SBJV
        'Hit him/her!'
    c.   *ta-ko-rar-a*
        NEG-INF-sleep-FV

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[5] Southern Sotho possesses two more ~~N~~negative ~~I~~imperative constructions: a counterpart to (2~~2~~0a), preceded by *sē-* 'not' and requiring the presence of an indeterminate prefix *ka-*, and a counterpart to (2~~2~~0b), simply marked by an extra *sē-* (Doke & Mofokeng 1957: 191).

'Don't sleep!'

(2122) Southern Sotho (S33; Doke & Mofokeng 1957: 190, 191, 191)

a. *rèk-a(-ng)*
    buy-FV-PL.ADD
    '(Y'all) buy!'

b. *li-rèk-è(/li-rek-e-ng)*
    OM_{CL8/10}-buy-SBJV/OM8/10-buy-SBJV-PL.ADD
    '(Y'all) buy them!'

c. *sē-ke(-ng)*   *ŭ(/l)-a-bu-a*
    NEG-AUX-PL.ADD   OM2SG(/OM2PL)-PST-talk-FV
    'Don't (y'all) talk!'

Two more types can be exemplified with languages that we have already discussed. The Langi Nnegative Iimperative construction in (6), repeated here as (22c23c), is a case of Neg-Cl (Miestamo 2005: 81): the lexical verb is less finite – a *kʊ*-marked infinitive instead of the imperative proper in (2332a) or subjunctive in (2332b) – and the *Neg*ator is positioned with respect to the entire *Cl*ause – clause-final *tʊkʊ*, after the object, in (2332c). The Gogo Nnegative Iimperative in (2), repeated as (2443b) below, is an instance of NegVerb (Miestamo 2005: 81-86): the lexical verb loses finiteness – a *ku*-marked infinitive versus the hybrid construction in (2443a) – and a new, intrinsically *Neg*ative *Verb* is introduced – the prohibitive auxiliary *lecé* 'don't!' in (2443b).

(2332) Langi (F33; Dunham 2005: 142, 162, 162)

a. *n̄-twal-a*
    OM1SG-send-FV
    'Send me (home)!'

b. *ʊ-lɔɔl-w-ɛ*
    SM2SG-marry-PASS-SBJV
    'Be married!'

c. *kʊ-rɪm-a*   *kɪ-dundii*   *tʊkʊ*
    INF-cultivate-FV   CL7-hill   NEG
    'Don't cultivate the hill!'

(2443) Gogo (G11; Rossel 1998: 50, 50)

a. *andic-é*
    write-SBJV
    'Write!'

b. *lec-é*   *ku-ly-a*
    PROH-SBJV   INF-eat-FV
    'Don't eat!'

Recurring lexical sources in Eastern Bantu for such negative verbs are 'leave off (Xing)!', 'stop (Xing)!' and 'know (that you might X)!' (see also Devos & Van Olmen 2013: 30-34, Bernander et al forthcsubm.).

In our sample, 43.40% of languages exhibit finiteness asymmetry in Iimperative Nnegation. This figure is substantially higher than Van Olmen's (subm.) finding of 21.64% for the world's languages. Still, both numbers clearly indicate that Miestamo & van der Auwera's (2007) illocutionary dynamicity does not actually prevent (Nnegative) Iimperatives from having finiteness asymmetry. The question then arises whether Miestamo's (2005) explanation for standard negation can/should be extended to iImperative Nnegation. In our view, the answer is no. One sign that stativity is indeed at play in standard negation is the character of its finite

element, which tends to be or derive from a (negative) stative copula or (negative) existential (Miestamo 2005: 207, 221-224). In Eastern Bantu imperative negation, by contrast, new finite elements are usually dynamic in origin: they have evolved out of imperative forms – compare *lec-é* in (243b) to *andic-é* in (243a) – that encourage the addressee to refrain from or cease doing something or to make themselves aware of the negative consequences of their behavior.

A follow-up question is therefore: what does motivate asymmetry in finiteness in imperative negation? Constructions with 'leave off' and 'stop', for one, could be said to emphasize the negative nature of the directive speech act, at least at first, and to have conventionalized as negative imperatives, with a non-finite lexical verb, afterward. Another construction in Eastern Bantu of interest here is the negative infinitives in (210c) and (232c). They are free-standing non-finite verb forms and, cross-linguistically, such forms are – as pointed out by both Evans (2007: 319) and Aikhenvald (2010: 275-284) – often recruited as (negative) directive strategies. Initially anyway, as non-conventionalized options, they are useful because they just present a state of affairs and leave the offer of a reason (not) to act to be inferred by the addressee. In languages such as Gusii and Langi, this strategic way of "be[ing] incomplete" (Brown & Levinson 1987: 227) has then developed into a specialized negative imperative construction. Crucially, however, languages do not use free-standing non-finite verb forms only for negative directives. In the same vein, one can easily imagine strategies involving a non-finite lexical verb that stress the positive character of a directive speech act (e.g. 'start Xing!'). For some reason, these options do not appear to evolve into dedicated imperative constructions to the same extent as their negative counterparts, in Eastern Bantu or in the world's languages (Van Olmen subm.). There is, in other words, no direct functional explanation for finiteness asymmetry in imperative negation. It results from the fact that strategies like free-standing non-finite verbs and emphasizing auxiliaries (as well as insubordination, for instance) tend to conventionalize more in negative directive than in positive directive contexts.

A possible reason for this difference is the comparative diachronic instability of negative imperatives. This phenomenon has been noted for various languages. For the history of Egyptian, for example, Grossman & Polis (2014: 42) contrast "the frequent innovation of prohibitive ... constructions" to "the relative stability of the affirmative imperative system". Similar observations exist, for instance, for Latin and Dutch (e.g. Van Olmen 2010: 494-495, Devos & Van Olmen 2013: 3-4). This lack of stability can probably be attributed to a variety of factors, which need not be mutually exclusive. A first one concerns frequency. If negative imperatives occur much less often than their positive counterparts (e.g. Van Olmen 2011: 64), one may assume that they are less entrenched and thus more susceptible to change. A second factor is the need for negative first, which Horn (2001: 450) suggests is even stronger in directives than in assertives. It may motivate a language to develop a novel negative imperative construction that has its negator in preverbal position. Another factor relates to what Evans (2007: 393) describes as follows: "The face-threatening nature of requests and commands places strong pressures on the language system to come up with new variants whose pragmatic force is freed from the history of existing formulas." This pressure may apply to negative imperatives even more so than to imperatives, if De Clerck (2006: 279-282) is correct. He argues that the former tend to pose a greater face threat than the latter. Both generally restrict the addressee's freedom of action or, put differently, threaten their so-called negative face. Negative imperatives, however, are usually also a threat to their so-called positive face. The addressee's wish to be liked and accepted is at risk when a speaker tells them to refrain from or cease doing something, since such an act boils down to an unfavorable evaluation of their anticipated or current conduct.

These factors may not be the entire story (for others, see Devos & Van Olmen 2013: 44-45, Grossman & Polis 2014: 42-43) but they explain why languages are more prone to develop

new Negative Imperatives. If such constructions happen to include a less finite lexical verb (e.g. due to an emphasizing auxiliary or the free-standing use of a non-finite form), they are likely to produce finiteness asymmetry with the diachronically more stable Imperative (note, in this respect, that 97% of the sampled Bantu languages in Devos & Van Olmen 2013: 22 still possess the imperative proper).

3.2 Asymmetry in reality status

Another common asymmetry that Miestamo (2005: 173) finds in standard negation (mentioned briefly in Section 1), in approximately one eighth of languages, has to do with the marking of reality status. He shows that negative verbal declarative main clauses, compared to their positive equivalents, have extra optional or obligatory irrealis marking while the reverse pattern, a realis negative with an irrealis positive counterpart, does not occur (Miestamo 2005: 96-109). For a clear example, let us turn away from Bantu for a moment. Maung, an Iwaidjan language from Australia, has the choice in the affirmative between zero-marked realis in (25a) and *ji*-marked irrealis in (25b) but, as (25c) shows, the presence of *-ji* is compulsory in the standard negation of both (Miestamo 2005: 9).

(25)   Maung (Capell & Hinch 1970: 67)
    a.   *ŋi-udba*
        1SG>3-put
        'I put.'
    b.   *ŋi-udba-ji*
        1SG>3-put-IRR
        'I can put.'
    c.   *marig   ŋi-udba-ji*
        NEG   1SG>3-put-IRR
        'I didn't/can't put.'

The explanation for this phenomenon is fairly straightforward: "The association between negation and non-reality on the formal level iconically reflects the association between negation and non-reality on the functional level." (Miestamo 2005: 208) For Imperative Negation, the positive and the negative can both be argued to be part of the functional domain of the non-realized: the (lack of) action that the (Negative) Imperative gives the addressee a reason for is not yet the case in reality. At the same time, however, one could hypothesize, as van der Auwera & Devos (2012: 172) do, that Negative Imperatives, being negative, "have a double reason for being encoded as irrealis (or a double chance)" and that there is still a motivation for an asymmetry à la standard negation in Imperative Negation.

If we analyze the subjunctive in Eastern Bantu as a marker of irrealis,[6] we do find numerous instances of the "expected" pattern in our sample. In Nyaturu, for example, the one Negative Imperative construction in (26d) is always marked by the subjunctive suffix. It has a symmetric positive equivalent in (26c), which functions as a polite Imperative, but

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[6] We are aware that such an analysis is not uncontentious. As Nurse & Devos (2019: 226) point out, the subjunctive's recurrent "illocutionary …, modal and extra-modal uses" in Bantu (e.g. optatives, hortatives, deontic modality, conditionals, futures) do share that "they all refer to events that are not realised yet, which brings to mind the notion of "irrealis"." Admittedly, final *-e* can be found in more factual uses too, such as "narratives", "past imperfectives" and "subordinate clauses of anterior or simultaneous taxis" (Nurse & Devos 2019: 226). Whether they all actually relate to the subjunctive diachronically is not entirely clear, though (Nurse & Devos 2019: 226-227). In any case, some caution seems to be in order, which is why we present the analysis of the subjunctive as irrealis in an *if*-clause.

the regular Iimperative in (262a), which can only be negated by (264d), ends in *-a*, unless non-first person object markers are present. In that case, the hybrid in (262b), with subjunctive *-e*, is required.[7]

(2426)   Nyaturu (F32; Olson 1964: 178, 179, 204, 207)
    a.   *keŋk-a*
        carry-FV
        'Carry!'
    b.   *mu-yanj-e*
        OM3SG-love-SBJV
        'Love him!'
    c.   *u-rék-e*
        SM2SG-leave.alone-SBJV
        'Please leave it alone!'
    d.   *u-ta-taf-eé*
        SM2SG-NEG-fetch-SBJV
        'Don't fetch!'

In short, the negative in (2426) is always irrealis whereas the positive need not be. Asymmetry of this (standard negation) kind is attested in 32.08% of our sample. This number exceeds van der Auwera & Devos's (2012: 178) and Van Olmen's (2019) typological observations for Iimperative Nnegation of, respectively, 5.03% (of 179 languages) and 10.42% (of 48 languages), as well as Miestamo's (2005) result above for standard negation. However, we should not overinterpret these differences. Unlike Eastern Bantu, many languages lack any type of irrealis marking and are simply not able to exhibit the asymmetry.

    What *is* of note is that Iimperative Nnegation in Eastern Bantu also displays reality marking asymmetry in the opposite direction. Tharaka in (275) is a case in point. Its one Nnegative Iimperative construction in (275c) contains a prohibitive auxiliary, probably deriving from 'know', that is marked like the imperative proper with *-a*. Its positive counterpart also normally ends in this suffix, as (275a) shows, but subjunctive *-e* is required with non-first person object markers, like in (275b).

(275) Tharaka (E54; Lindblom 1914: 26, 26, 26)
    a.   *m-bir-a*
        OM1SG-tell-FV
        'Tell me!'
    b.   *mu-ki-e*
        OM3SG-wake.up-SBJV
        'Wake him/her up!'
    c.   *mani-a*   *ku-bi*
        PROH-FV   INF-go
        'Don't go!'

What motivates the choice of *-a* and *-e* in (275a) and (275b) (a phenomenon that occurs in many Bantu languages, though with varying conditions) is a matter of considerable debate (e.g.

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[7] Olson (1964: 4, 207) does not explain why the final vowel in (24d26d) is long (cf. 264c) or mention it as a possibility in his general discussion of the negative subjunctive. There are, however, other verb forms with long final vowels, i.e. habitual and recent past ones, and, for the habitual present continuous, Olson (1964: 184) writes that they are due to the insertion of the habitual suffix *-a* before the final vowel *-a*. The *-eé* in (264d) could thus also be a reflex of this additional suffix, which may be pluractional in origin.

Buell 2005: 129-134, Devos & Van Olmen 2013: 18-21, Marlo 2014: 22-33), which we do not have the space to go into. Let it suffice to say that, at face value, irrealis is possible in the positive in (2~~7~~4) but impossible in the negative and that Tharaka is one of no less than 36.68% of languages in our sample with such an asymmetry, unheard of in standard negation. Its emergence in ~~I~~imperative ~~N~~negation is not unique to Eastern Bantu, though. It is also found in 2.23% of van der Auwera & Devos's (2012: 178) languages and 2.08% of Van Olmen's (2019).

In another 20.75% of our sample languages, the situation is more ambiguous. The reason is the existence of multiple positive and negative constructions corresponding to one another. Kwaya, for instance, has two ~~I~~imperative constructions – the imperative proper with -*a* in (~~26a~~28a) and the more polite subjunctive with -*e* in (2~~6~~8b) – and two ~~N~~negative ~~I~~imperative constructions – the one ending in -*a* in (2~~8~~6c)[8] and the prohibitive auxiliary *sig* in (2~~8~~6d), which is marked with subjunctive -*e* (and derives from 'leave off').

(2~~6~~8) Kwaya (JE251; Sillery 1932: 281, 281, 284, 284)

    a. *kol-a*
        do-FV
        'Do!'
    b. *u-kol-e*
        SM$_{2SG}$-do-SBJV
        'Please do!'
    c. *u-ta-kol-a*
        SM$_{2SG}$-NEG-do-FV
        'Don't do!'
    d. *u-sig-e*   *oku-kol-a*
        SM$_{2SG}$-PROH-SBJV INF-do-FV
        'Don't do!'

As no mention is made of any difference between the negative ones, apart from frequency, we can only assume that they both serve as counterparts to both positive constructions. The result is a complex picture. Contrasting (~~26a~~28a) to (2~~8~~6d) indicates an asymmetry à la standard negation while the comparison of (2~~8~~6b) and (2~~8~~6c) reveals an asymmetry in the opposite direction. A way out would be to say that irrealis is an option in the positive as well as the negative.

The discussion in the preceding paragraphs shows that, in Eastern Bantu (like in the languages of the world), reality marking asymmetry can go in either direction in ~~I~~imperative ~~N~~negation. This fact makes any appeal to an overarching functional motivation, like Miestamo's (2005) for standard negation, highly questionable. In fact, our data supports van der Auwera & Devos's (2012: 182) claim, which fits in well with our argument in Section 3.1 about the diachronic instability of ~~n~~Negative ~~I~~imperatives, that "the explanation [for (lack of) irrealis marking in imperatives and/or negative imperatives] ... must be that imperatives and prohibitives are the results of partially independent diachronies". The main clause use of the subjunctive can introduce irrealis in the positive and/or the negative, for instance. Along the same lines, it must be the specific discourse contexts in which the prohibitive auxiliaries in (2~~7~~5c) and (2~~8~~6d) arose as negative directive strategies that led the first one to be marked as an imperative proper and the second one as a subjunctive. For the ~~n~~Negative ~~I~~imperative construction with -*a* in (~~26b~~28b), finally, it is tempting to hypothesize that it has ~~indicative~~ declarative origins (cf. the verb forms in footnote ~~6~~8 and Devos & Van Olmen 2013: 28-30).

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[8] To be clear, (~~26c~~28c) *is* a Negative Imperative construction and not a negative declarative one. The Kwaya second person negative declaratives look like ~~is not an indicative (cf.~~ *utakukola* 'you don't do', *utakolere* 'you didn't do' and *utakole* 'you won't do'~~;~~ (Sillery 1932: 283-284).

3.3 Asymmetry in emphasis

Miestamo (2005: 109) characterizes this asymmetry (see also Section 1 on English) as follows: "Negatives involve marking that expresses emphasis in non-negatives and that is not [always] present in the corresponding affirmative." For a fairly straightforward example in standard negation, let us once more abandon Bantu briefly. In the affirmative, English has the option to make a statement in a "neutral" way, as in (29a), or in a more emphatic way by adding *do*, as in (29b). In the negative in (29c), by contrast, *do*'s presence is required (cf. *I sleep not well*) and has no emphatic effect anymore (see also Section 1).

(29) a.   I sleep well.
     b.   I do sleep well.
     c.   I do not sleep well.

This type of asymmetry It may occurs in only 2.23% of Miestamo's (2005: 178)his sample languages for standard negation but the oppositereverse pattern is not attested at all (Miestamo 2005: 178). His motivation for these facts phenomenon is that "the typical discourse function of negatives is (explicit or implicit) denial of a proposition present in the context. As negatives typically contradict propositions whose content is supposed in the context, they constitute an abrupt speech act in this sense and therefore often need extra emphasis." (Miestamo 2005: 210) Intuitively, this explanation seems applicable to Iimperative Nnegation too: when you say 'don't X' to someone, they tend to be Xing already, in the context, or you tend to have reason to believe, from the context, that they intend to X (see also Miestamo & van der Auwera 207: 71-72). It is thus not unlikely that (Nnegative) Iimperatives exhibit the same asymmetry as standard negation.

There is no case of emphasis asymmetry in Van Olmen's (2019) typological study of 60 languages but, in our Eastern Bantu sample, it is attested in 3.77% of languages and only in the expected direction. One of them is Shi in (3027). It employs the imperative proper (and its hybrid alternative with object markingmarking, neither of which can be exemplified here for reasons of space) to talk to subordinates and the subjunctive in (27a30a) for all other contexts. This construction may contain the "pluractional" suffix *-ag*. This marker is known to possess a variety of different meanings across Bantu (e.g. Güldemann 1996: 365, Schadeberg 2003: 72). In Shi, it "can be added to most … tenses" and "has little semantic load, but sometimes expresses slight emphasis" (Polak-Bynon 1975: 213).

(2730)   Shi (JD54; Polak-Bynon 1975: 227, 247)
     a.   *òo-shákul-(ag)-e*
           2SG-pound-PLA-SBJV
           '(Do) pound!'
     b.   *òo-rha-shakul-ag-a*
           2SG-NEG-pound-PLA-FV
           'Don't pound!'

The language has three negative Negative Iimperative constructions: the negative subjunctive counterpart to (27a30a); a prohibitive auxiliary one, with 'know' as the lexical source; and (2730b), the primary one according to Bashi Murhi-Orhakube (2005: 100). Crucially, the pluractional marker, used for emphasis elsewhere, is an obligatory part of the latter construction.

3.4 Asymmetry in verbal categories

3.4.1 Tense-aspect-mood (TAM)

Miestamo (2005: 116) simply characterizes this asymmetry as one that "affects the marking of tense-aspect-mood". In standard negation, it may take the form of, inter alia, the use of different TAM markers ~~(e.g. a past tense morpheme specific to positive clauses and one specific to negative ones)~~ and the omission of positive TAM markers in the negative (Miestamo 2005: 116-128). Nkore-Kiga in (31) is a case in point: the standard negation of the present continuous in (31a) involves not just adding negative *ti-* but also replacing the tense-aspect prefix *ni-* with its negative counterpart *diku-*, like in (31b) (Miestamo 2005: 327).

(31) Nkore-Kiga (JE13/14; Taylor 1985: 159)
    a.   *ni-n-teer-a*
        PRS.CONT-SM$_{1SG}$-strike-FV
        'I'm striking.'
    b.   *ti-n-diku-teer-a*
        NEG-SM$_{1SG}$-NEG.PRS.CONT-strike-FV
        'I'm not striking.'

~~Such~~TAM asymmetries occur in 27.93% of his sample languages (Miestamo 2005: 178). Crucially, however, no cross-linguistic trends related to particular TAM values – unlike for (ir)realis marking, for example – can be established for standard negation. A more general phenomenon that *can* be considered a tendency is the frequent neutralization of positive TAM distinctions in the negative. Luvale, a non-sample language, can serve as an example: in the affirmative, it distinguishes the perfect in (32a) from the remote past in (32b) but, in the negative, the distinction disappears, as (32c) corresponds to both (32a) and (32b) (Miestamo 2005: 312).

(32) Luvale (K14; Horton 1949: 120, 125, 127)
    a.   *tù-na-líng-i*
        SM$_{1PL}$-PERF-do-FV
        'We have done.'
    b.   *twa-ling-ile*
        PST.SM$_{1PL}$-do-REM.PST
        'We did.'
    c.   *ka-twa-ci-ling-ile-ko*
        NEG-PST.SM$_{1PL}$-CL4-do-REM.PST-NEG
        'We have not done / did not do it.'

One motivation that Miestamo (2005: 205) proposes for neutralization appeals to economy: "It is not as economic to maintain a large number of distinctions in an infrequent category [i.e. negative verbal declarative main clauses] than it is in a more frequent one [i.e. positive ones]." If we assumed that ~~N~~negative ~~I~~imperatives tend to be less common than ~~I~~imperatives (see Section 3.1), this explanation would also apply to ~~I~~imperative ~~N~~negation. Still, it remains a rather vague one in our view. Another motivation suggested by Miestamo (2005: 211) relies on the concept of discourse presuppositionality: "Since negatives typically occur in contexts where the corresponding affirmative is supposed or somehow present, many aspects of the negated content are known to the speakers, and there is less need to explicitly specify its different properties such as its temporal aspects or its participants". As mentioned in Section 3.3, discourse presuppositionality probably plays a role in ~~I~~imperative ~~N~~negation as well: people usually say 'don't!' either when something is already being done, to mean 'stop!', or when they expect that something is going to be done, to mean 'refrain from!'. It therefore seems reasonable to assume

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that (Nnegative) Iimperatives will exhibit TAM asymmetry too.[9]

We have evidence for the types of asymmetry in TAM known from standard negation in 9.43% of our Eastern Bantu sample. Most cases involve hortative marking. In some languages, it is compulsory in the positive but absent from the negative. Maore in (2833) is one of them. The imperative proper in this language cannot express plurality and the subjunctive with the hortative prefix *na-* in (3328a) needs to be used instead. *Na-* is, however, not part of its negative counterpart in (3328b).

(3328)   Maore (G44D; Rombi 1983: 158, Madi 2004: 147)
     a.   *na-mu-reng-e*
         HORT-SM$_{2PL}$-take-SBJV
         'Y'all take!'
     b.   *mu-si-m-rem-e*
         SM$_{2PL}$-NEG-OM$_{3SG}$-hit-SBJV
         'Don't y'all hit him/her!'

In other languages, it is optional in the positive but not possible in the negative. Venda in (3429) is a case in point. The polite positive subjunctive in (3429a) typically appears with hortative *kha-* but can also be employed without it. The prefix cannot occur in Venda's only Nnegative Iimperative in (3429b).

(3429)   Venda (S21; Poulos 1990: 320, 323)
     a.   *(kha-)vha-dzhen-e*
         HORT-SM$_{3PL}$-enter-SBJV
         'Please enter!'
     b.   *vha-songo-shum-a*   *fhano*
         SM$_{3PL}$-PROH-work-FV   here
         'Don't work here!'

Like in (3429a), the meaning of this optional hortative is not always clear. In Shangaci (personal knowledge), however, it renders the imperative Imperative more urgent. The same effect is found in Bena, in its distinct hybrid construction with *ha-* in (350).

(350) Bena (G63; Morrison 2011: 283)
     ha-gón-e
     HORT-sleep-SBJV
     'Sleep!!!'

Such distinctions come close to a difference in tense that Iimperatives are known to make in the world's languages, between immediate and delayed compliance (Aikhenvald 2010: 128-133). It occurs in 10.00% of Van Olmen's (2022) 160-language sample but is neutralized in the negative in half of them and never appears solely in the Nnegative Iimperative. Discourse presuppositionality is probably part of the explanation. His corpus study of Dutch additionally suggests that, on the whole, Nnegative Iimperatives are simply less "time-specific" than Iimperatives (e.g. 'don't worry!' often concerns not just the present but also the foreseeable future). In this regard, it may not be so surprising that the hortative option does not exist in the

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[9] The rest of this section only takes into account languages for which we have enough data. Sanderson (1922: 40-41), for instance, writes that a continuative suffix may be added to Yao's imperative proper and subjunctive but does not say anything about its potential appearance in or incompatibility with the language's nNegative iImperative constructions.

negative in these Bantu languages. Still, consider Nyakyusa in (36~~1~~) too.

(36~~1~~) Nyakyusa (M31; Persohn 2017: 253, 285)
    a.   *(aa=)mu-si-kol-eg-e*
        FUT=SM_{2PL}-OM_{CL10}-grasp-IPFV-SBJV
        'Y'all stick to them!'
    b.   *(aa=)mu-nga-sob-esy-a*   *…*
        FUT=SM_{2PL}-NEG-get.lost-CAUS-FV
        'Don't y'all lose …!'

It is one of at least two languages in our sample that express a tense distinction with a dedicated marker, *aa=* here, in both positive and ~~negative~~ Negative I~~i~~mperatives.

    What is interesting from a standard negation perspective is that Eastern Bantu ~~i~~Imperative N~~n~~egation also has cases where TAM marking is obligatorily present in the negative but optional or absent in the positive or where it only appears to be a possibility in the negative. One value involved in these asymmetries multiple times is the future. Cuwabo can serve as a first example.

Besides an imperative proper as well as a regular positive and negative subjunctive, this language has the ~~negative~~ Negative I~~i~~mperative in (37~~2~~). It contains no overt negation but does feature a future marker *náá-* that does not occur in any positive counterpart.

(37~~2~~) Cuwabo (P34; Guérois 2015: 385)
    o-náá-kúttúl-e   *óttú*   *óbo*
    SM_{2SG}-FUT-spill-SBJV   CL14.flour CL14.DEM
    'Don't spill the flour!'

The construction "is morphologically and tonally similar to the conjoint future" but is different syntactically in that it does not trigger "P[redicative]L[owering] on the following object" and "can appear sentence-finally" (Guérois 2015: 385). The origins of (37~~2~~) are unknown but, in our view, it must be its particular diachrony that accounts for the presence of *náá-* (and the absence of a negative marker). The same holds for other ~~negative~~ Negative I~~i~~mperatives with future marking that is unique to them. More generally, it is obviously not unexpected that future-marked constructions may develop into N~~n~~egative I~~i~~mperatives, because of the latter's diachronic instability (see Section 3.1) and inherent future orientation. A second example in which the future plays a role comes from Nyankore. Its N~~n~~egative I~~i~~mperative in (38~~3~~a) – unlike its positive constructions, the imperative proper and the subjunctive – can express delayed compliance by adding *ri-*.

(38~~3~~) Nyankore (JE12; Morris & Kirwan 1972: 10)
    a.   *o-ta-(ri)-gyend-a*
        SM_{2SG}-NEG-REM.FUT-go-FV
        'Don't go (at a far future date)!'
    b.   *mu-rya-gyend-a*
        SM_{2PL}-REM.FUT-go-FV
        'Y'all go at a far future date!' or 'Y'all will go at a far future date.'

Nyankore therefore seems to contradict the cross-linguistic tendency for tense distinctions discussed in the preceding paragraph. The situation is, however, primarily a consequence of our comparative concepts (see Section 2.1). There exists a positive equivalent to (38~~3~~a) but, as (38~~3~~b) shows, it "is the same in form as the indicative far future" (Morris 1972: 10) and is not

analyzed as a specialized ~~i~~Imperative here. Note that the construction in (38~~3~~4a) does differ from its ~~indicative~~ declarative counterpart, in the position of the negative prefix.

Future markers are not the only ones that recur in asymmetries of the "unexpected" type (from the point of view of standard negation). Several languages in our sample have ~~negative~~ Negative I~~i~~mperatives with a compulsory marker *ka-* that occurs in a verb slot normally reserved for TAM marking and is not found in any ~~imperative~~ Imperative construction. Kikuyu in (39~~4~~) is one of them.

(39~~4~~) Kikuyu (E51; Barlow 1951: 20)
   mu-ti-ka-gwat-e
   SM2PL-NEG-?-take.hold-SBJV
   'Don't y'all take hold!'

*Ka- has been reconstructed for proto-Bantu as an andative or motional prefix (Meeussen 1962: 109) but conveys no such meaning in (34~~9~~). We will nevertheless examine the phenomenon in Kikuyu not in the present section but in Section 4.2, which looks at asymmetry in directional/locational marking.

In conclusion, in standard negation, TAM asymmetry is quite common, with 27.93% of Miestamo's (2005: 175) 179 languages displaying it. In I~~i~~mperative N~~n~~egation, this type of asymmetry seems to be less widespread: 16.67% of Van Olmen's (2019) typological sample and, as mentioned above, 9.43% of our Eastern Bantu languages. One explanation for this difference that does not minimize the potential impact of negation's discourse presuppositionality in the latter domain is that (N~~n~~egative) I~~i~~mperatives simply tend to make/allow fewer TAM distinctions than (negative) declaratives in the world's languages (Aikhenvald 2010: 119-164, 177-190). In other words, they just have less that could be asymmetric in one way or another. However, the present section suggests, once more, that one overarching motivation is too simple for I~~i~~mperative N~~n~~egation. Neutralization in tense, for one, may be attributed to the more particular usage feature of N~~n~~egative ~~i~~Imperatives that they are generally less time-specific. Moreover, 10.38% of our Eastern Bantu languages exhibit "reverse" TAM asymmetry, a fact that cannot be explained by discourse presuppositionality. In our view, it is probably best considered as a by-product of the development – independent from any positive I~~i~~mperative and driven by the general factors, discussed in Section 3.1, behind change in the domain – of, for instance, future- and *ka*-marked constructions into new N~~n~~egative I~~i~~mperatives.

3.4.2 Person-number-gender (PNG)

Miestamo (2005: 129) describes this asymmetry as one "affecting the marking of person, number and/or gender". It can manifest itself in standard negation as the use of different PNG markers in negative clauses. These morphemes may but need not be fused with negation. Consider Zulu for an example: the subject markers for certain noun classes have affirmative and negative variants, as *u-* in (40a) and *ka-* in (40b) illustrate for noun class 1a (Miestamo 2005: 131).

(40)   Zulu (S42; Poulos & Bosch 1997: 21)
   a.   *u-sipho*   *u-ya-fund-a*
         CL1A-Sipho   SM_{CL1A}-PRS-learn-FV
         'Sipho is learning.'
   b.   *u-sipho*   *a-ka-fund-i*
         CL1A-Sipho   NEG-NEG.SM_{CL1A}-learn-FV
         'Sipho isn't learning.'

This type of asymmetry also frequently involves the neutralization of positive PNG distinctions in the negative (Miestamo 2005: 128-133). Economy and discourse presuppositionality, as discussed in Section 3.4.1, would again account for this phenomenon. Still, PNG asymmetry is much less frequent than TAM asymmetry in standard negation – arising in, respectively, 12.29% and 27.93% of the 179-language sample (Miestamo 2005: 175). The motivation that Miestamo (2005: 214) offers is that "~~the functional domain of TAM is more closely related to the functional domain of polarity than the functional domain of PNG is~~ tense, aspect and mood categories are [just] more relevant to the occurrence vs. non-occurrence of events than person-number[-gender] categories are." These explanations do not appear to apply to Imperative Negation, however. In Van Olmen's (2019) typological sample, 27.08% of languages have different PNG markers in Negative Imperatives. For some, the asymmetry may be taken as one in its own right (e.g. singular and plural Imperative affixes that are replaced by singular and plural prohibitive ones) but, for most, the substitution of PNG markers clearly derives from the distinct constructions used (e.g. an Imperative with dedicated singular and plural affixes versus a Negative Imperative of irrealis origin and thus also employing the irrealis PNG affixes). Furthermore, neutralization is not very common either in Imperative Negation (6.25%). Its rarity is at least partially due to the fact that many languages simply do not make any PNG distinctions in Imperatives or Negative Imperatives.

For Eastern Bantu, let us first look at neutralization. In 6.60% of our sample languages, we have Negative Imperatives that, unlike their positive counterparts, do not distinguish PNG. In Langi, for instance, both the imperative proper in (41a) and the subjunctive in (41b) possess singular and plural forms. Their negative equivalents in (41c) and (41d) do not, which can be attributed to their non-finite character/origin. Langi is, in this respect, indicative of all the other languages.

(41) Langi (F33; Dunham 2005: 161, 162-163, 162, 162)
    a. *dɔm-a(/i)*
        go-FV/PL.ADD
        '(Y'all) go!'
    b. *ʊ(/mʊ)-lɔɔl-w-ɛ*
        SM2SG/SM2PL-marry-PASS-SBJV
        '(Y'all) be married!'
    c. *kʊ-rɪm-a*   *kɪ-dundii*   *tʊkʊ*
        INF-cultivate-FV   CL7-hill   NEG
        'Don't (y'all) cultivate the hill!'
    d. *apa*   *kʊ-tɪɪdʒ-a*
        PROH   INF-run-FV
        'Don't (y'all) run!'

We have evidence of neutralization in the opposite direction too, though. The solitary ~~negative~~ Negative Imperative construction in Pangwa distinguishes singular from plural, as (42a) shows. Its imperative proper in (42b), by contrast, is vague with regard to number (its more polite positive subjunctive does mark number, with the same morphemes as its ~~negative~~ Negative Imperative). This type of PNG asymmetry is found in 3.77% of our sample, all in roughly the same way.

(42) Pangwa (G64; Stirnimann 1983: 116-117)
    a. *u(/mu)-tan-e*   *xu-tov-a*
        SM2SG/SM2PL-NEG-SBJV INF-hit-FV
        'Don't (y'all) hit!'

b. *hek-a*
go.away-FV
'(Y'all) go away!'

Importantly, we do not regal languages like Bukusu in (43~~37~~) as instantiating PNG neutralization. Although its ~~negative~~ Negative I~~i~~mperative in (43~~37~~a) has a singular and a plural form and its imperative proper in (43~~37~~b) makes no such distinction, the latter is restricted to a singular interpretation and is therefore not number-neutral. To issue a directive to multiple addressees, the subjunctive in (43~~37~~c) (which *can* also appear with second person singular *o-*) needs to be used.

(43~~37~~)   Bukusu (JE31C; Austen 1975: 183, 183, 184)
    a.   *o(/mu)-xa-ič-a*   *taa*
          SG₂SG/SM₂PL-NEG-come-FV NEG
          'Don't (y'all) come!'
    b.   *xol-a*
          work-FV
          'Work!'
    c.   *mu-lim-e*
          SM₂PL-work-SBJV
          '(Y'all) work!'

The Bukusu pattern is found in 16.98% of our sample and is analyzed as a case of substitution here and included in the next paragraph. The rationale is that positive I~~i~~mperatives can express singularity through ø- or *o-*, in (43~~37~~b) and (43~~37~~c) respectively, but ø- is always replaced by *o-* in the N~~n~~egative I~~i~~mperative in (43~~37~~a).

Unlike neutralization, the use of different PNG markers is rampant in Eastern Bantu I~~i~~mperative N~~n~~egation. Rombo is a typical example. In its imperative construction in (44~~38~~a), the suffix *-ini* expresses plurality and its absence singularity. In its N~~n~~egative I~~i~~mperative construction in (44~~38~~b), this number distinction is conveyed by the respective prefixes *mu-* and *u-*. Such phenomena are found in no less than 83.96% of our sample.

(38~~44~~)   Rombo (E56; Montlahuc 2000: 108, Shinagawa 2014: 71)
    a.   *ru-á(-ini)*
          open-FV-PL.ADD
          '(Y'all) open!'
    b.   *u(/mu)-tá-sh-é*
          SM2SG/SM2PL-NEG-come-SBJV
          'Don't (y'all) come!'

Among the languages that do consistently employ the same PNG marking in (~~negative~~Negative) I~~i~~mperatives, we find two recurrent types. The first one can be illustrated with Mwiini in (45~~39~~) and the second one with Pogolo in (46~~0~~).

(45~~39~~)   Mwiini (G412; Kisseberth & Abasheikh 2004: xiv, xxxi)
    a.   *si-bool-é / si-som-ee-ni*
          NEG-steal-SBJV / NEG-read-SBJV-PL.ADD
          'Don't steal!' / 'Don't y'all read!'
    b.   *sóom-a / som-áa-ni*
          read-FV / read-FV-PL.ADD

'Read!' / 'Y'all read!'

(4~~0~~6) Pogolo (G51; Hendle 1907: 38, 38)

    a.   *gu(/mu)-lek-e*   *kw-iw-a*
          SM2SG/SM2PL-PROH-SBJV   INF-steal-FV
          'Don't (y'all) steal!'

    b.   *gu(/mu)-fir-e*
          SM2SG/SM2PL-love-SBJV
          '(Y'all) love!'

Mwiini's ~~N~~Negative ~~I~~imperative in (~~39a~~45a) is a hybrid construction. It has a subjunctive ending but no subject markers and signals (singularity/)plurality by (the absence of) *-ni*, just like the imperative in (45~~39~~b). In fact, as Devos & Van Olmen (2013: 25-30) argue, (45~~39~~a) is likely the result of a once full-fledged negative subjunctive's analogy with the imperative proper. The pattern in Pogolo involves a ~~N~~Negative ~~I~~imperative with an auxiliary that inflects in the same way as the ~~i~~Imperative – as a subjunctive in this case, as (46~~40~~a) and (4~~0~~6b) show, but as an imperative proper (which Pogolo does not possess) or a hybrid construction in other languages.

    The above discussion reveals that ~~imperative~~ Imperative ~~N~~negation in Eastern Bantu (not unlike in the world's languages) behaves differently from standard negation with regard to PNG asymmetry. Not only can neutralization go from negative to positive, the use of other markers in the negative than in the positive is an extremely frequent phenomenon. To us, it also seems difficult to attribute these facts to some general functional motivation. For instance, the main reason why Eastern Bantu (~~N~~negative) ~~I~~imperatives tend to mark number in dissimilar ways is that, diachronically, they are usually very different constructions. The ~~negative~~ Negative ~~I~~imperative is often subjunctive in origin and therefore distinguishes second person singular and plural like a subjunctive and unlike the imperative proper. It is obviously possible for such a construction to move more toward its positive equivalent, as in Mwiini in (45~~39~~). But, as argued in Section 3.1, this construction in turn may "soon" be replaced by another one with different or no PNG marking (e.g. an auxiliary construction, a negated infinitive), because of ~~negative~~ Negative ~~I~~imperatives' diachronic instability.

4   Asymmetries specific to ~~i~~Imperative ~~N~~negation

4.1   Asymmetry in intersubjective marking

It is probably unsurprising that (~~negative~~Negative) ~~I~~imperatives, as addressee-oriented constructions that are frequently intended to cause some change in reality (cf. Searle's 1976: 11 "world-to-words" direction of fit) but may also put interpersonal relations at risk (cf. Brown & Levinson's 1987: 61-83 face-threatening act), often exhibit the potential to modify illocutionary strength and/or manage the social bond between the speech participants (see Aikhenvald 2010: 203-223).

    This potential can manifest itself in the use of additional markers (seemingly) dedicated to expressing such "intersubjective" meanings (à la Traugott 2003: 125). Bukusu can serve as an example: it can add the interjection *xé* in the subjunctive in (4~~1~~7) to make it more peremptory. Nyanja in (~~24~~89) is another case in point: it can add to the imperative proper a prefix *ta-* that is described as conveying politeness.

(47~~1~~) Bukusu (JE31C; Austen 1975: 222)

        (*xé*)   *mù-lím-è*
        INTJ   SM2PL-cultivate-SBJV

'Y'all cultivate!'
(48~~2~~) Nyanja (N31C; Demoulin 1983: 126)
    (*ta-*)*lék-a*
    POL-leave-FV
    '(Please) leave!'

Another manifestation involves coopting existing linguistic options, as grammatical categories regularly acquire intersubjective overtones in (~~negative~~Negative) I~~i~~mperatives. In Gogo, for instance, the hybrid construction in (49~~3~~) may feature the pluractional suffix (see Section 3.3) when there is an object marker. This modification is perceived as making the directive more polite. Shangaci in (50~~44~~) can reuse its plural addressee marker *-ni* for a more polite imperative to a single person and Venda in (51~~45~~) its third person plural subject prefix for a more polite subjunctive aimed at one addressee (see Brown & Levinson 1987: 199-201 for an account of these phenomena).[10]

(49~~43~~)   Gogo (G11; Rossel 1988: 50)
    a.   vi-gul-é
         OM$_{CL7}$-eat-SBJV
         'Eat it!'
    b.   *vi-gúl-aj-e*
         OM$_{CL7}$-eat-PLA-SBJV
         'Please eat it!'
(50~~44~~)   Shangaci (P312; personal knowledge)
    khol-aá-ni
    grasp-FV-PL.ADD
    'Y'all grasp!' or 'Please grasp!'
(51~~45~~)   Venda (S21; Poulos 1990: 320)
    vha-dzen-e
    SM$_{3PL}$-enter-SBJV
    'Please enter!'

The most common way in which intersubjective distinctions arise in Eastern Bantu (~~negative~~Negative) I~~i~~mperatives is through the use of different constructions, though. The subjunctive as the imperative proper's polite alternative (see Section 1) is the most widespread case. Another example comes from Venda in (46<del></del>52).

(46~~52~~)   Venda (S21; Poulos 1990: 320, 348)
    a.   *i-ḽ-a(-ni)*
         EPE-eat-FV-PL.ADD
         '(Y'all) eat!'
    b.   *i-dzou(/dzonu)-ḽ-a*
         EPE-just.SG/just.PL-eat-FV
         '(Y'all) just eat!'

When the "aspectual prefix" *dzou-* 'just' is used, as in (46b52b), "expressions of requests or commands are made more polite" (Poulos 1990: 348). The construction is presented as a

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[10] The emphasis marking in Shi in (30~~27~~) could, in principle, be included here. We prefer to keep it separate, however. The pluractional suffix can have an emphatic effect in constructions other than I~~i~~mperatives in this language and, more importantly, its obligatory presence in the negative with no such effect matches standard negation's emphasis asymmetry perfectly (see Section 3.3).

modification of the imperative proper in (5246a) but should probably be regarded as distinct. Plurality is marked by *-ni* in (5246a) but by a variant of the prefix, *dzonu-*, in (5233b) (*i-* is an epenthetic vowel that occurs with certain verb roots).[11]

Eastern Bantu clearly has a variety of means to alter illocutionary strength and/or manage interpersonal relations in its (~~negative~~Negative) ~~I~~imperatives. Establishing asymmetry in inter-subjective marking is, however, not straightforward. The reason is that, very often, grammatical descriptions just do not consider potential differences (e.g. they may list the imperative proper and the subjunctive as ~~imperative~~ Imperative constructions but say nothing about what sets them apart) or do not specify whether an option mentioned for the positive, particularly if it is of the types in (47~~1~~) to (45~~5~~1), can appear in the negative and vice versa. For instance, the Kalanga subjunctive in (5347a), which has high tone when functioning as an ~~imperative~~ Imperative construction, is said to be able to take the plural addressee suffix *-ni* "for emphasis or respect" (Chebanne & Schmidt 2010: 123) but whether or not its symmetric negative equivalent in (5347b) allows the marker is simply not discussed. Similarly, the sources for Bukusu and Nyanja do not tell us whether *xé* in (41~~7~~) and *ta-* in (48~~2~~) are possible in ~~negative~~ Negative ~~I~~imperative constructions or not.

(47~~53~~) Kalanga (S16; Chebanne & Schmidt 2010: 123, 134)
a.   *mú-shing-é(-ni)*   *kwazo*
SM2PL-work-SBJV-PL.ADD   hard
'Y'all work hard!'
b.   *mu-si-sumikel-e*
SM2PL-NEG-preach-SBJV
'Don't preach!'

The numbers below can therefore only include those languages for which the descriptions contain (at least some) indications that there is an intersubjectivity asymmetry. The actual figures are likely to be much higher.

In our sample, asymmetry in intersubjective marking tends to involve fewer distinctions in the negative than in the positive. This phenomenon of neutralization is found in 27.36% of the languages. Mwani in (48~~54~~) is indicative of most of them. The positive displays an opposition between the imperative proper in (5448a) and the more polite subjunctive in (5448b) but the negative has only one option, the negative subjunctive in (5448c). It is constructionally symmetric to (5448b) but comes with no specific intersubjective meaning and serves as the counterpart of (5448a) too. The constructional distinction in politeness in the positive can thus be said to disappear in the negative.

(5448) Mwani (G403; Floor 2010: 10, 19, 19)
a.   *fyom-á-ni*
read-FV-PL.ADD
'Y'all read!'
b.   *mu-fyom-e*
SM2PL-read-SBJV

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[11] It is likely that (5246b) actually derives from an auxiliary construction. *Dzonu*, for instance, may be broken down as follows: a verb *dza* + the plural addressee marker *-ni* + the infinitive marker *u-*. This verb's original meaning is hard to determine. Possible candidates are *-dzá* 'cause a little bit of trouble' and *-èdza* 'resemble' (Van Warmelo 1989: 35, 45). Support for the latter comes from the Venda prohibitive prefix *songo* in (56~~0~~), which has been argued to go back to a verb with similar semantics. According to Warmelo (1989: 273), it results from the amalgamation of the negative prefix *sá-*, the verb *nga* 'be like' and the infinitive marker *u-* of the subsequent verb (see Bernander et al. forthc~~subm~~. too).

        'Y'all read please!'
- c. *mu-si-karíbish-e*
  SM2PL-NEG-invite-SBJV
  'Don't y'all invite!'

However, the ~~n~~Negative ~~I~~imperative construction does not always correspond to the more polite ~~I~~imperative one. In Bena, for instance, we see the common contrast between imperative proper and subjunctive in the positive, as in (~~55~~49a) and (~~55~~49b). Both are negated by the prohibitive auxiliary construction in (~~55~~49c) (the origin of *taan*, marked as subjunctive here, is unclear to us).

(~~55~~49)   Bena (G63; Morrison 2011: 280, 282, 288)
- a. *kung-a   u-mu-oto*
  light-FV   AUG.CL6-CL3-fire
  'Light the fire!'
- b. *mu-bit-e*
  SM2PL-go-SBJV
  'Y'all go please!'
- c. *u-taan-e   u-hu-gend-a*
  SM2SG-PROH-SBJV   AUG.CL15-INF-walk-FV
  'Don't walk!'

Moreover, the positive intersubjective distinctions need not be (just) between imperative proper and subjunctive. Venda is a case in point. It does possess the usual pair of constructions in the positive (the subjunctive tends to carry an extra hortative prefix *kha/nga-*) but it also has at its disposal the construction with *dzou/dzonu* in (~~52~~46b), which Poulos (1990: 348) points out is not possible in the negative. The ~~negative~~ Negative ~~I~~imperative construction in the language is (~~56~~0).

(~~50~~56)   Venda (S21; Poulos 1990: 323)
    ni-songo-dzhen-a
    SM2PL-PROH-enter-FV
    'Don't y'all enter!'

Interestingly, intersubjectivity asymmetry in the opposite direction is extremely rare in Eastern Bantu. The only potential case in our sample is Southern Sotho. Doke & Mofokeng (1957) only mention the imperative proper in (~~51a~~57a) (and its hybrid form if object markers are present; see Section 3.1) for the positive but list three options for the negative: the negative hybrid in (~~57~~1b), the construction with *ka-* in (~~57~~1c)[12] and the negated auxiliary construction in (~~57~~1d). Crucially here, the latter is said to express a more peremptory negative directive.

(~~57~~1) Southern Sotho (S33; Doke & Mofokeng 1957: 190, 191, 191, 191)
- a. *rèk-a(-ng)*
  buy-FV-PL.ADD
  '(Y'all) buy!'
- b. *sē-rek-ē-(ng)*
  NEG-read-SBJV-PL.ADD

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[12] Doke & Mofokeng (1957: 191) suggest that this *ka-* derives "from a contraction of the deficient verb *-ke* [found in (~~38d~~44d) too], *u-sē-ke ŭa-* becoming sē-ka". See also Section 4.2.

'Don't (y'all) read!'
c. *sē-ka-rèk-a-(ng)*
    NEG-?-read-FV-PL.ADD
    'Don't (y'all) read!'
d. *sē-ke(-ng)*   *ŭ(/l)-a)-bu-a*
    NEG-AUX-PL.ADD   SM$_{2SG}$(/SM$_{2PL}$)-PST-talk-FV
    'Don't (y'all) talk!'

In other words, neutralization of intersubjective distinctions is much more typical from positive to negative than the other way around. Eastern Bantu Iimperative Nnegation is completely in line with the cross-linguistic tendencies in this regard. In Van Olmen's (2022) balanced typological sample of 160 languages, 7.50% exhibit less differentiation in ~~negative~~ Negative Iimperatives (for another 6.25%, the sources do not discuss whether intersubjective distinctions in the positive can occur in the negative) and just 1.88% have less differentiation in Iimperatives.[13] This study also offers some evidence from usage for this trend: 58.68% of the Dutch Iimperatives in a corpus of plays contain some form of intersubjective modification (e.g. modal particles, tags, politeness markers) versus only 31.08% of the Nnegative Iimperatives.

The above type of neutralization is, of course, a phenomenon well-known from standard negation. As discussed in Section 3.4, in this domain, TAM and PNG distinctions in the positive are often reduced in the negative and, to explain the phenomenon, Miestamo (2005: 211) appeals to the idea that negation presupposes the presence of the corresponding affirmative in the discourse. We are not convinced, though, that this account is relevant for intersubjectivity in Iimperative Nnegation. It is not immediately clear to us why the positive state of affairs' presence in the context would make the desire or need to modify illocutionary strength and/or manage interpersonal relations less strong.

One could perhaps argue that the wish to have someone stop doing something or refrain from some anticipated course of action before they actually take it overrides any intersubjective considerations of the mitigating or politeness kind. But it may equally well be a reason for more peremptory Nnegative Iimperative constructions. Moreover, if Nnegative Iimperatives are generally more face-threatening than Iimperatives, as put forward in Section 3.1, would we not expect the former to exhibit more means for mitigating illocutionary strength and/or interpersonal management? In short, we have at present no genuine explanation for the facts of intersubjectivity asymmetry in Eastern Bantu or the world's languages. A final, very tentative suggestion has to do with the whole range of ways in which languages can provide addressees with a reason (not) to act. Maybe, the more challenging nature of negative directives means that, to perform them, speakers simply rely more on new, less established strategies with certain intersubjective overtones. They would not count as nNegative Iimperative constructions (see Section 2.3) and be part of any comparison to Iimperative constructions, until they fully conventionalize – if they do so at all (and if they do, in keeping with our claim about the comparative diachronic instability of Nnegative Iimperatives, they may simply replace the more established strategies). This hypothesis might account for the assumed lower frequency of Nnegative Iimperatives too. Still, support for it can only come from research examining all positive and negative directive strategies in multiple languages.[14]

4.2 Asymmetry in directional/locational marking

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[13] Let us add, for completeness's sake, that 10.00% of Van Olmen's (2022) languages display the same intersubjective distinctions in Iimperatives and Nnegative Iimperatives.

[14] Van Olmen (2010: 478) did observe that, in Dutch usage, the directive infinitive is a very marginal competitor of the iImperative while the negative directive infinitive is almost as frequent as the nNegative Iimperative.

In many languages, it is a distinct feature of Imperatives – compared to declaratives and interrogatives, for instance – to be able to mark direction and/or location (Aikhenvald 2010: 133-138). Direction typically involves giving the addressee a motive to go (away from the speaker) or come (to the speaker) and act, respective terms for which are andative and venitive. Location usually means providing them with a reason to do something close to or at a distance from the speaker, which we can label as proximal and distal respectively. Consider Trio in (258), which has: a regular Imperative ending in *-kë* in (82a); a venitive Imperative to come and act with the suffix *-mïi* in (82b); and a dislocative Imperative to do something not in the speaker's proximity ending in *-ta* in (82c) (the latter is explicitly said not to have an andative meaning).

(82) Trio (Cariban; Carlin 2004: 304, 307, 306)
    a.   *enïh-kë*
            drink-IMP
            'Drink it!'
    b.   *ene-mïi*
            look-VEN.IMP
            'Come and look at it!'
    c.   *ene-ta*
            look-DISLOC.IMP
            'Look at it somewhere else!'

In other languages, one can make such distinctions in the Imperative but they are not limited to the construction. Bantu appears to belong to this group (e.g. Nicolle 2003). What is of interest here is that, for four languages (i.e. 3.78% of our sample), we have evidence that, in Imperative Negation, an andative distinction through the prefix *ka-* is possible in the positive but not in the negative. Makwe is one of them. *Ka-* can be added to its imperative proper in (93a) as well as its more polite subjunctive in (93c), as (93b) and (93d) illustrate (but note that the former turns into a hybrid, ending in *-e*). Inserting the prefix in its sole Negative Imperative construction, the negative subjunctive in (93e), is ungrammatical, however.

(93) Makwe (P231; personal knowledge)
    a.   *telek-a*
            cook-FV
            'Cook!'
    b.   *ka-lal-e*
            AND-sleep-SBJV
            'Go and sleep!'
    c.   *u-li-e*
            SM$_{2SG}$-eat-SBJV
            'Please eat!'
    d.   *u-ka-lal-e*
            SM$_{2SG}$-AND-sleep-SBJV
            'Please go and sleep!'
    e.   *u-na-(*ka)-ikal-e*
            SM$_{2SG}$-NEG-AND-sit-SBJV
            'Don't sit!'

The opposite situation of directional (or locational) distinctions being made in the negative but not the positive is not found. Put differently, we seem to have a unidirectional asymmetry here in Eastern Bantu. It is probably not a coincidence that, for a further 14.15% of languages in our

sample, the sources list the andative as an option in ~~imperative~~ Imperative constructions but fail to mention it for ~~N~~negative ~~I~~imperative ones.

These results are consistent with Van Olmen's (2022) typological findings for ~~imperative~~ Imperative ~~N~~negation. Directional/locational asymmetry from positive to negative occurs in three of his 160 languages, with another seven for which the description does not discuss whether the positive distinctions are possible in the negative, and the reverse asymmetry is not attested (though four languages make the same distinctions in positive and negative). Moreover, the study suggests that there is a basis in usage for the pattern. In a very large corpus of online English, *come and X!* and *go (and) X!* account for 0.31% of all ~~I~~imperatives and *do not/don't come and X!* and *do not/don't go (and) X!* for just 0.08% of all ~~N~~negative ~~I~~imperatives. We would contend that these observations are motivated by a certain level of insignificance of direction/location for negative directives. In our view, when such speech acts are performed, it is normally much less relevant to the speaker or the addressee *where* something does not happen than it not happening in the first place. One can, of course, conceive of contexts where a speaker may wish to say 'don't go and do it!' (e.g. if they want the addressee to stay put or come to them and perform the action) or 'don't do it here!' (e.g. if they prefer the addressee to complete the action somewhere else). Still, it would be less circuitous to simply issue the directive 'come and do it!' or 'do it there!' instead.

To finish this section, it is probably important to stress that we did not take every instance of *ka-* in (~~N~~negative) ~~I~~imperative constructions into account for directional/locational asymmetry. Madi (2004: 464), for instance, discusses the ~~imperative~~ Imperative construction in (60~~54~~) for Maore. It features *ka-* (and a harmonic final vowel) and is said to possess no negative counterpart. However, the meaning attributed to it is one of insistence, which is why the construction is not included in the present counts. It is nevertheless plausible that it was andative at some point. As Mauri & Sansò (2011: 3497-3500) argue, there exists a cross-linguistic pathway of change from 'go', whose meaning then bleaches, to the ~~imperative~~Imperative.

(60~~54~~)   Maore (G44D; Madi 2004: 464)
    k(a)-u-sóm-o
    INSIST-SM$_{2SG}$-read-FV
    'Read then!'

Our data also contains several ~~negative~~ Negative ~~I~~imperative constructions of which *ka-* is a compulsory element (see Devos & Van Olmen 2013: 27 too). The Southern Sotho one in (57~~1~~c) is a case in point, as is the Kikuyu one in (61~~55~~). Again, no directional or locational semantics are mentioned for the prefix here and the phenomenon is therefore not taken into consideration for the asymmetry at issue[15]. In addition, our Kikuyu sources make no allusions to the potential presence of andative marking in the language's ~~imperative~~ Imperative constructions either.

(55~~61~~)   Kikuyu (E51; Barlow 1951: 20)
    mu-ti-ka-gwat-e
    SM$_{2PL}$-NEG-?-take.hold-SBJV
    'Don't y'all take hold!'

Why *ka-* is a part of (55~~61~~) and other comparable constructions is currently not immediately clear to us. But a direct directional/locational origin does not seem likely for this ~~negative~~ Negative ~~I~~imperative construction. To our knowledge (e.g. Aikhenvald 2010: 351-362), there is no established cross-linguistic pathway of change from '(not) go' to ~~negative~~ Negative

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[15] A reviewer notes, though, that they can still get the andative reading in (61), i.e. 'don't y'all go and take hold!'

~~i~~Imperatives. Moreover, Englebretson (2015: 132) actually analyzes *ka-* in (~~55~~61) as a current present tense marker. It indeed occupies a verb slot typically reserved for TAM marking and we therefore analyze the situation in Kikuyu (and other languages) as an instance of TAM asymmetry (see Section 3.4.1).

5   Conclusions

We hope to have shown that ~~imperative~~ Imperative ~~negation~~ Negation in Eastern Bantu exhibits its asymmetries similar to standard negation, sometimes contrary to claims made in the literature (e.g. Miestamo & van der Auwera 2007 on finiteness), as well as asymmetries specific to its domain of negation (e.g. intersubjectivity). However, we also aspire to have demonstrated that Eastern Bantu ~~I~~imperative ~~N~~negation often behaves in ways unheard of in standard negation (e.g. a realis negative with an irrealis positive; PNG neutralization from negative to positive). Crucially, in view of such observations, we have argued throughout the article that general functional explanations like those proposed by Miestamo (2005) for standard negation largely fail to capture the facts of ~~I~~imperative ~~n~~Negation in Eastern Bantu (and the world's languages). More particular motivations may be at play (e.g. the relative insignificance of directional/locational marking in ~~n~~Negative ~~i~~Imperatives) but, in our view, it is diachrony that is behind most asymmetry in ~~i~~Imperative ~~n~~Negation. More precisely, ~~I~~imperatives tend to undergo comparatively little change – as evidenced by, for instance, the ubiquity of the imperative proper in Eastern Bantu. Negative ~~I~~imperatives, by contrast, are much less stable diachronically – a phenomenon that we have suggested may be due to, inter alia, their lower frequency and corresponding level of entrenchment, negation-related factors (e.g. the negative first principle) and politeness-driven pressures. As a result, ~~N~~negative ~~I~~imperatives display a much greater variety of source constructions (e.g. a realis one, a less finite one), which need not be connected to their positive counterparts and can therefore give rise to asymmetry.

In fact, for ~~I~~imperative ~~N~~negation in Eastern Bantu, asymmetry is the typical situation. We only seem to have one language in our sample with complete symmetry: Hehe with its hybrid forms in (~~56~~62).

(~~56~~62)   Hehe (G62; Velten 1899: 182)
   a.   *(si-)púlik-é*
         NEG-hear-SBJV
         '(Don't) hear!'
   b.   *(si-)púlik-ág-e*
         NEG-hear-PLA-SBJV
         '(Don't) y'all hear!'

There are, of course, other languages with *some* symmetry in their system of (~~N~~negative) ~~I~~imperatives. Zezuru can serve as an example. It has an imperative proper in (~~57a~~63a), a ~~N~~negative ~~I~~imperative showing finiteness asymmetry in (~~63~~57b) (but marking number like the imperative proper) and a more polite and entirely symmetric (negative) subjunctive in (~~63~~57c).

(~~63~~57)   Zezuru (S12; Fortune 1955: 268, 269, 269)
   a.   *ip-a(-yi)*
         give-FV-PL.ADD
         'Y'all give!'
   b.   *reg-a(-yi)   ku-tor-a*
         PROH-FV-PL.ADD INF-take-FV
         'Don't (y'all) take!'

c.   *u(/mu)-(sa)-tor-e*
     SM$_{2SG}$/SM$_{2PL}$-NEG-take-SBJV
     'Please (don't) (y'all) take!'

Languages like Zezuru make up 37.74% of our sample. In the remaining 61.32%, I̶imperative N̶negation exhibits no symmetry at all. Asymmetry is therefore much more widespread in Eastern Bantu (N̶negative) I̶imperatives than in standard negation in the world's languages: Miestamo (2005: 171) categorizes 42.46% of his languages as both symmetric and asymmetric and only 17.32% as asymmetric. Complete symmetry occurs in 40.22% of his sample, compared to just 0.94% in our data. It is also much less frequent in I̶imperative N̶negation in the world's languages, accounting for 22.92% of Van Olmen's (2019) typological sample. In his data, both symmetry and asymmetry is found in 29.17% of languages and full asymmetry in 47.92%.

A question that this omnipresence of asymmetry in I̶imperative N̶negation in Eastern Bantu as well as in general raises in our view is: to what extent can/should we actually regard I̶imperatives and N̶negative I̶imperatives as a paired set of constructions in language? Their many formal differences could be interpreted as reflecting that, functionally too, the one is not just the positive/negative equivalent of the other. This issue has to be left for future research, however.

Abbreviations

1,2,3	first, second, third person
ADD	addressee
AUG	augmentative
AUX	auxiliary
CAUS	causative
CL	noun class
CONNEG	connegative
CONT	continuous
DEM	demonstrative
DISLOC	dislocative
EPE	epenthesis
FUT	future
FV	final vowel
HORT	hortative
IMP	imperative
INF	infinitive
INSIST	insistent
INTJ	interjection
IPFV	imperfective
IRR	irrealis
NEG	negation
NMLZ	nominalizer

NOM	nominative
OM	object marker
PASS	passive
PERF	perfect
PFV	perfective
PL	plural
PLA	pluractional
POL	polite
POSS	possessive
PROG	progressive
PROH	prohibitive
PROX	proximal
PRS	present
PST	past
REM	remote
SBJV	subjunctive
SG	singular
SM	subject marker
VEN	venitive

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Appendix: Sample languages with identification codes based on Maho (2009)

D13	Mituku	G64	Pangwa	N43	Nyungwe
D14	Enya	JD51	Hunde	P11	Ndengeleko
D25	Lega	JD52	Havu	P13	Kimatuumbi
D28	Holoholo	JD53	Shi	P21	Yao
D42	Nande	JD61	Kinyarwanda	P22	Mwera
D43	Nyanga	JD62	Rundi	P23	Makonde
E51	Kikuyu	JD66	Ha	P23.1	Makwe
E53	Meru	JE13	Nyankore	P25	Mawiha
E54	Tharaka	JE14	Kiga	P31	Makhuwa
E55	Kamba	JE15	Ganda	P311	Koti
E56	Dhaiso	JE22	Haya	P312	Shangaji
E623	Rombo	JE23	Zinza	P32	Lomwe
E65	Gweno	JE25	Jita	P34	Cuwabo
E701	Ilwana	JE251	Kwaya	S12	Zezuru
E741	Sagalla	JE31	Masaba	S14	Karanga
F22	Nyamwezi	JE31C	Bukusu	S15	Ndau
F22C	Konongo	JE31E	Tachoni	S16	Kalanga
F23	Swumba	JE32F	Nyala	S16B	Nambya
F32	Nyaturu	JE34	Saamia	S21	Venda
F33	Langi	JE411	Idakho	S302/304	Kutswe/Pulana
G11	Gogo	JE42	Gusii	S303	Pai
G12	Kagulu	M11	Pimbwe	S31	Tswana
G22	Asu	M14	Cilungu	S311	Kgalagadi
G35	Luguru	M25	Safwa	S32	Northern Sotho
G36	Kami	M301	Ndali	S32B	Lobedu
G403	Mwani	M31	Nyakyusa	S33	Southern Sotho
G412	Mwiini	M42	Bemba	S408	Sumaleya Ndebele
G42	Swahili	M54	Lamba	S41G	Mpondomise
G42B	Jomvu	M61	Lenje	S42	Zulu
G42F	Fundi	M63	Ila	S43	Swati
G44B	Njuani	N11	Manda	S51	Tswa
G44D	Maore	N14	Chimpota	S53	Tsonga
G51	Pogolo	N21	Tumbuka	S61	Copi
G52	Ndamba	N31B	Chewa	S62	Gitonga
G62	Hehe	N31C	Nyanja		
G63	Bena	N41	Senga		