Chapter 16

Negation in languages of the Lotuxo sub-group of Eastern Nilotic

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Lokoya, Lopit and Otuho (Lotuxo) are Eastern Nilotic languages spoken in the area around Torit in Eastern Equatoria province, South Sudan. The three languages are verb initial (VSO) and have a marked-nominative case system.

Negation in these languages is normally expressed through a verbal or verb-like construction. The negative morpheme can be regarded as a verb corresponding to 'not be'. Sometimes the negative verb is marked for person, aspect and modality and sometimes it has the same form for first, second and third person. In all three languages, the standard negative construction shows the same constituent order.

Standard negation involves a negative verb and the lexical verb. The negative verb is clause initial. The lexical verb is marked with the subordinating prefix (except in Otuho) and maintains its person marking. The lexical verb is placed after the subject to give an NEG SVO word order. The subject retains its nominative marking when it is placed before the lexical verb and after the negative verb. It is likely that the negative construction originated as a bi-clausal construction.

1 The languages

Lokoya, Lopit and Otuho (Lotuxo) are Eastern Nilotic languages spoken in the area around Torit in Eastern Equatoria province, South Sudan. They are members of the Lotuxo sub-group of the Eastern-Nilotic languages, which are listed, together with the estimated number of speakers, in Table 1. There are two other languages in this sub-group, Lango and Dongotongo. I have no data from these languages, and they are not included in this study. The members of the Eastern Nilotic language family are listed in Figure 1.
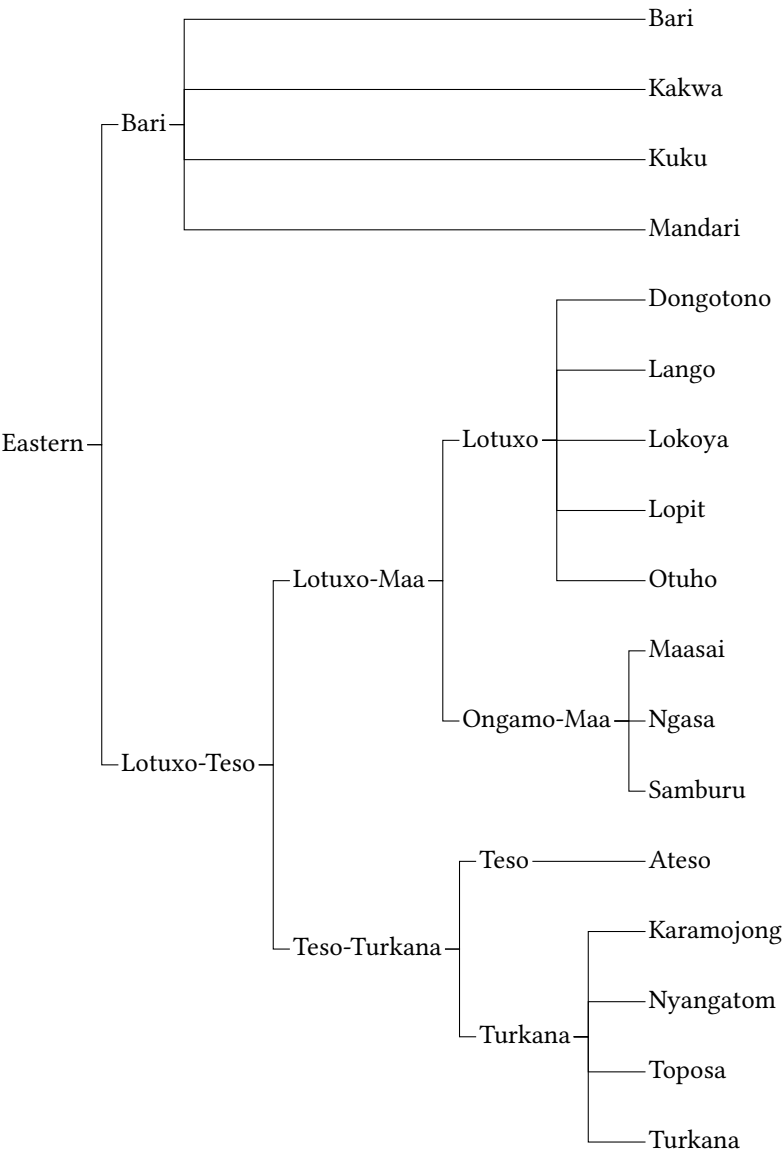
Bari

Kakwa

Kuku

Mandari

Dongotono

Lango

Lokoya

Lopit

Otuho

Maasai

Ngasa

Samburu

Ateso

Karamojong

Nyangatom

Toposa

Turkana

Figure 1: The Eastern Nilotic languages (based on Lewis et al. 2016)

Table 1: The languages of the Lotuxo sub-group.

Language	Speakers
Dongotongo	1,000
Lango	38,000
Lokoya	12,000
Lopit	50,000
Otuho (Lotuko)	140,000

A map showing the location of the speakers of the Nilotic languages is given in Figure 2. The location of Lango is not marked, but is in the area to the south of the Dongotongo area (included in the area marked Lotuxo).

The Lokoya, Lopit and Otuho languages have much in common with each other and with the other Eastern Nilotic languages. The following is a general description of the three languages in this study based on my fieldwork and on the work of Muratori (1938) and Westerman (1944).

Lokoya, Lopit and Otuho have a nine-vowel system and display the Advanced Togue Root (ATR) feature, and a process of vowel harmony based on this feature. There are tones (at least High and Low), used for both lexical and grammatical distinctions. There are two grammatical genders, feminine and masculine. Number marking follows a tripartite system of singulative, plurative and replacement number marking (Dimmendaal 2000). The languages have a marked nominative case system with nominative and absolutive case. The nominative case is differentiated from the absolutive by a change in the tonal pattern across the noun.[1] The case system is similar in Otuho and Lokoya.

The three languages are verb-initial and have an unmarked word order of verb-subject-object (VSO) or verb-agent-patient (VAP).[2] There is bound pronominal marking on the verbs which indexes the subject and, sometimes, the first and second person objects. The pronominal subject marking is shown in Table 2. The first, second and third person singular markers (/a-/, /ɪ-/, /ɛ-/) are widespread in

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[1]See Moodie & Billington (2020: 256) for a description of the case system in Lopit.

[2]Lokoya differs in word order from the other two languages in that it can have an unmarked SVO order as well as VSO. Often, nominal agents/subjects tend to follow a SVO order whereas pronominal agents/subjects tend to follow a VSO order. This may be explained by the tendency for pronouns to be used when the agent/subject is known or clear from the context. On the other hand, nominal agents/subjects tend to constitute new information and are clause initial.

Figure 2: The Nilotic Languages (copyright Monika Feinen, reproduced with permission).

Nilo-Saharan languages (Greenberg 1966: p.86). Note that these are [−ATR] in their underlying form but can be realised differently according to ATR vowel harmony and mid-vowel assimilation processes.[3]

Table 2: Number/person marking for subjects

		singular	plural
	1st	a-	ɛɪ-, ei-
person	2nd	ɪ-, i-	ɪ-, i-
	3rd	ɛ-, e-, ɔ-, o-	ɛ-, e-, ɔ-, o-

Verbs are marked for aspect and mood in Lopit and for aspect in Otuho and Lokoya. Mood in Otuho and Lokoya is expressed with particles or adverbs. There is no grammatical tense and temporal reference is provided by adverbs, prepositional phrases and discourse context. Adjectival concepts are mostly expressed with stative property verbs, often in relative clause constructions.

This study is based on field work with Lopit, Otuho and Lokoya speakers in Melbourne, with Lopit speakers in the Kakuma Refugee camp in northern Kenya and on recordings made with Lokoya speakers in Torit. The Lopit work is based on the grammar of Moodie and Billington (2020) and the Otuho work has been augmented by the work of Muratori (1938, 1948) and Coates (1985). I have also utilized the sketch grammar of Westermann (1944) for Lokoya (or Oxoriok).

In this paper, I use broad phonetic transcription in glossed examples and tables. Abbreviations used in glosses are given at the end of the paper. The transcription of vowels in any example reflects the results of any harmony and assimilation processes present. The in-text examples are also given in broad phonetic transcription. Square brackets are used to indicate what was transcribed. Where words or stems are discussed in general terms rather than in an extract from a transcription, they are transcribed without tones (e.g. /beŋ/, 'not be', Otuho), as the tones in any particular utterance depend on a number of factors such as case, aspect, number.

In this paper, I will first examine standard negation in the three languages (section 2). I will then look at negation in non-declarative clauses (section 3), in stative predications (section 4) and in non-main clauses (section 5). I will then briefly compare negation across the Eastern Nilotic group (section 6). A summary and some conclusions follow in section 7.

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[3]With some verbs in Otuho and Lokoya, the first-person singular prefix is /e-/ or /ɛ-/.

2 Overview of standard negation

2.1 Introduction

Standard negation is described as "the basic way(s) a language has for negating declarative verbal main clauses" (Miestamo 2005: p.1). Standard negation in the three languages in this study is expressed through verbal constructions. I propose that the negative morpheme is best regarded as a negative verb, even though it does not always have the full range of features found in the verb in the Lotuxo sub-group. The basic declarative clausal structure in these languages is VERB SUBJECT OBJECT. I propose that, in a negated construction, the order is NEG.VERB SUBJECT VERB OBJECT.

I will now present reasons why the negative morpheme should be regarded as a verb, using some examples from the languages studied. As shown in (1), the negative verb [ábéŋ], indexes the person of the subject.

(1) Otuho
     á-béŋ   ní   è-góɲú àmòlòŋ
     1SG-not.be 1SG.NOM 1SG-see baboon.ABS
     'I don't see the baboon.' MB3-001 00:45:48

As shown in (2), the negative verb, /ɲa/, in Lopit can be marked for the irrealis mood with the prefix [ŋaî-] and for the person of the subject.

(2) Lopit
     [á-ŋaî-ɲà   náŋ   l-á-mweí   ][á-ŋaî-ibóɲ náŋ
     1SG-IRR-not.be 1SG.NOM SBO-1SG-be.sick 1SG-IRR-meet 1SG.NOM
     xò=xìjò   xʊ̀ná l-ɔ̀-lʊ́ɲà   ]
     with=people.ABS REL.PL SBO-3-be.many
     'If I weren't sick, I would have met many people.' MB1-014 01:25:40

In these constructions, the subject has nominative case marking. Since these languages are verb initial, I propose that the subjects are, in fact, subjects of the negative verbs. These languages are marked-nominative languages and it is generally accepted that there is no nominative case before the verb (König 2008).[4] If the negative word (e.g. [ábéŋ] or [áɲaîɲà]) were not a verb, one would expect the subject to have absolute case marking since it would proceed the

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[4]The rule is expressed by König as "In preverbal position the core participants S, A and O occur always in one case form only, namely the morphologically unmarked one" (2008: p.240). The absolutive is the unmarked case (Moodie & Billington 2020: p.262).

verb ([èɡóɲú] or [lámweí]). This supports the hypothesis of the verbal nature of the negative constituent.[5]

However, not all the negative words in these languages share the full range of verbal features. It appears that there could be a pattern of syncretism of the pronominal markers. As is discussed in §2.3 and §2.4, the negation word for first, second and third person is usually expressed as /ɪŋa/ in Lopit and /awaŋ/ in Lokoya respectively. Nevertheless, in these cases, the subjects retain their nominative marking when placed after the negator and before the lexical verb. In addition, in both Lopit and Lokoya, the subordinate marker is used on the lexical verb, which often occurs where there are two verbs in a construction.

For these reasons, I proposed that the negation word in these languages is best regarded as a verb or a verb-like word. I will now present standard negation in each of the three languages before discussing the construction in some detail in §2.5.

2.2 Standard negation in Otuho

In Otuho, the negative constituent can be regarded as a verb, in this case /beŋ/, 'not be'. To show this in detail, I will first describe case marking in this marked nominative language. Examples (3) and (4) show the change in case marking when the word for baboon changes from the absolutive-marked object [àmòlòŋ] in (3) to the nominative-marked subject [ámólóŋ] in (4).[6] Note that the word order changes from VSO to VOS as a result of the prominence hierarchy (Moodie & Billington 2020: p.248).

(3) Otuho
     è-góɲú ní   àmòlòŋ
     1SG-see 1SG.NOM baboon.ABS
     'I see the baboon.' MB3-001 00:40:41

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[5]This kind of construction also occurs with other words that are derived from auxiliary-like verbs. The word /lɔɟɔ/ or/laɟɔ/ in Lopit is often used to introduce an adverbial clause as in i, where it can be translated as 'when'. It is probably derived from the verb /ɟɔ/, 'say' and could be glossed as /l-a-ɟɔ/, (SBO-1SG-say). It is verb-like in that it indexes the subject of the subordinate clause, which is in the nominative case.

(i) [làjɔ́   náŋ   l-á-wú   à=tòrìt][á-bót   náŋ   à=bòlìs]
     when.1SG 1SG.NOM SBO-1SG-go to-Torit 1SG-go.direct 1SG.NOM to.police
     'When I go to Torit, I will go straight to the police.' MB1-160 00:14:20

Similar constructions are found in Otuho (/ette/, 3.go, 'and then' (Muratori 1938: p.156)).

[6]The first-person singular pronoun changes from /ni/ in the nominative to /nani/ in the absolutive. This is unusual and has only been observed for this pronoun in this language.

(4) Otuho

ì-góɲú nàní ámólóŋ
3SG-see 1SG.ABS baboon.NOM
'The baboon sees me.' MB3-001 00:38:25

Another variation from the unmarked word order can occur when there is clefting, whereby the subject or object is expressed before the verb. In the following example, the speaker is emphasising that it was the baboon (and not a different animal) that saw him. The subject /amoloŋ/ no longer has nominative case marking. This is an example of no nominative case before the verb, as discussed above in §2.1.

(5) Otuho

àmòlòŋ ì-góɲú nàní
baboon.ABS 3SG-see 1SG.ABS
'(It is) The baboon (who) sees me.' MB3-003 00:19:16

When the utterances in (3) and (4) are negated, as shown in (6) and (7) respectively, the negative verb /beŋ/ is clause-initial and the subject is placed before the lexical verb /goɲu/. The subjects, /ni/ and /amoloŋ/, retain their nominative marking, supporting the hypothesis of the verbal characteristics of the negative constituent.

(6) Otuho

á-béŋ ní è-góɲú àmòlòŋ
1SG-not.be 1SG.NOM 1SG-see baboon.ABS
'I don't see the baboon.' MB3-001 00:45:48

(7) Otuho

ò-béŋ ámólóŋ ì-góɲú nàní
3SG-not.be baboon.NOM 3SG-see 1SG.ABS
'The baboon doesn't see me.' MB3-001 00:46:25

2.3 Standard negation in Lopit

This is similar to Otuho and involves the verb or verb-like constituent /ɲa/, 'not be'. The morpheme /ɲa/ can be regarded as the base form or root of the negative verb. In simple negation, the negative constituent /ɪɲa/ does not have the normal pronominal marking and can be regarded as an allomorph of the verb /ɲa/. It is used for 1st, 2nd and 3rd person and I gloss it as 'not.be'. It might be a syncretic

form, possibly coming from the second person form /ɪ-ɲa/. As shown in (9), the negative constituent is clause initial, the subject appears before the lexical verb and maintains its nominative case marking.

(8) Lopit
    eí-wóló mɔ́lɔ́ŋ   nàŋ
    3>1-see baboon.NOM 1SG.ABS
    'The baboon sees me.' MB1-133 00:10:51

(9) Lopit
    íɲà   mɔ́lɔ́ŋ   l-eí-wóló   nàŋ
    not.be baboon.NOM SBO-3>1-see 1SG.ABS
    'The baboon does not see me.' MB1-133 00:12:22

In more complex negation constructions, normal pronominal prefixing is used, as illustrated in (2). In addition, prefixing can be used on the negative verb /ɲa/ to mark modal, subordinate, and sequential constructions. This is discussed in §5. It should be noted that, unlike Otuho, the lexical verb /wolo/ in (9) is prefixed with what I call the (Lopit) subordinate marker, SBO /l-/.

A further example of the verbal nature of the negative constituent is provided in example (10). Clauses in Lopit can be coordinated using the sequential prefix /x-/ on the verb in the second clause (Moodie & Billington 2020: p.351). When the second clause is a negative construction, the sequential prefix combines with the negative verb to form the word /xɔɲa/ in the Dorik dialect and /xɪɲa/ in the Ngutira dialect (Moodie & Billington 2020: p.302). The prefix /x-/ has only been observed as a prefix with verbs.

(10) Lopit
    á-lìxà   náŋ   xòlòŋì wùnìk dè=tìm   x-ɔ̀ɲà
    1SG-hunt.PFV 1SG.NOM days.ABS three   in=forest.ABS SEQ-not.be
    l-á-ròmà   nàbó tiàŋ
    SBO-1SG-find.PFV one.F animal.ABS
    'I hunted for three days in the bush and didn't find one animal.' MB1-314
    00:16:51

2.4 Standard negation in Lokoya

This uses two morphemes, /awaŋ/ and /kaŋ/ in standard negation. From the data so far available, /awaŋ/ is used for the negation of clauses with intransitive and stative verbs. The morpheme /kaŋ/ is used for negation with transitive verbs.

Both /awaŋ/ and /kaŋ/ are often expressed as /aŋ/. In addition, there is another morpheme, /ɪkɛ/, which is used as the negator in some non-verbal predicates (see §4.1). I will first examine /awaŋ/.

The verb /awaŋ/ shows similar syntactic behaviour to its counterparts in Otuho and Lopit. As shown in (12), the negative constituent is clause initial, the subject appears before the lexical verb and maintains its nominative case marking. From the limited work carried out to date, the initial vowel /a/ does not change with the person of the subject and is possibly a syncretic form in the negative verb paradigm. Note that the lexical verb /wak/ in the negative construction is marked with the prefix /x-/. This prefix does not show gender or number agreement and is glossed as the negative subordinate marker (x-, NEG.SBO), in contrast to the normal (non-negative) subordinate marker.[7]

(11) Lokoya
à-wàk   náŋ   àndén dí=tòrít   mòíté
1SG-want 1SG.NOM INF.go to=Torit tomorrow
'I want to go to Torit tomorrow.' MB2-005 01:21:29

(12) Lokoya
áwàŋ náŋ   x-á-wàk   àndén dí=tòrít
not.be 1SG.NOM NEG.SBO-1SG-want INF.go to=Torit
'I don't want to go to Torit.' MB2-005 01:22:50

Some examples with /kaŋ/ are given in (13) and (14). The verbs /isara/, 'give' and /ŋoxi/, 'finish', 'consume', are both transitive. The construction with /kaŋ/ is similar to that for /awaŋ/ in that the subject maintains its nominative case and the lexical verb is prefixed with the negative subordinator /x-/, 'NEG.SBO'. There is no initial vowel in this negator. This contrast with all the other negators or negative verbs and is a topic for further research.

(13) Lokoya
káŋ òtúlò   lé   x-e-ìsárà-k   àxárí   do=oìtó
not.be man.NOM this.NOM NEG.SBO-3-give-DAT water.ABS to=boy.ABS
'This man didn't give water to the boy.' MB2-025 00:38:42

(14) Lokoya
káŋ òtúlò   x-ì-ŋóxí   àɲárí
not.be man.NOM NEG.SBO-3-finish food.ABS
'The man didn't finish the food.' MB2-025 00:32:18

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[7]In non-negative constructions, the Lokoya subordinate markers show agreement for singular gender (l-, SBO.M; and n-, SBO.F) and for plural (x-, SBO.PL). See (48) for an example of /n-/, SBO.F.

The negative morpheme is often expressed as /aŋ/, which appears to be a shortened form of both /awaŋ/ and /kaŋ/ as it is used for both intransitive and transitive constructions, as illustrated in (15) and (16) respectively. It has some verbal characteristics in that it is clause-initial and the subject which follows it is marked nominative.

(15) Lokoya
áŋ   náŋ   x-à-wón   x=à-xítéŋ   a-ìbòŋ
not.be 1SG.NOM NEG.SBO-1SG-exist with=F-cow 3-be.white
'I don't have a white cow.' MB2-025 00:17:40

(16) Lokoya
áŋ   náŋ   x-á-tèxó   òwárù
not.be 1SG.NOM NEG.SBO-1SG-see.PFV leopard
'I didn't see the leopard.' MB2-019 01:25:26

2.5 Discussion of the standard negation construction

The use of a negative and a lexical verb in the negative construction occurs in some of the world's languages, mainly Oceanic, Salish, Yuman and some Paleo-Siberian languages (Payne 1985: pp. 207-222). In his discussion on negative verbs, Payne groups them into auxiliary negative verbs and higher negative verbs. In the first group, the negative verb "acts as a finite auxiliary to the lexical verb which in turn typically occurs in some non-finite form" (Payne 1985: pp. 207). The Lopit negative verb cannot be regarded as an auxiliary verb since the lexical verb maintains its pronominal marking and can also be marked for aspect, as is shown with the verb /iwus/ in the contrast between (17) and (18). That is, the lexical verb is finite.

(17) Lopit
íɲà   náŋ   l-a-íwús-ò   ʃaî
not.be 1SG.NOM SBO-1SG-drink-IPFV tea.ABS
'I'm not drinking tea' MB1-269 00:32:18

(18) Lopit
íɲà   náŋ   l-a-îwús   ʃaî
not.be 1SG.NOM SBO-1SG-drink.PFV tea.ABS
'I didn't drink tea.' MB1-269 00:32:50

In Payne's other group, the negative verbs take a full sentential complement. The Lopit negative verb might belong to this group. For example, in (19), 'I'm not

going to Torit', could be interpreted as something like 'I am not that I'm going to Torit' (or 'I am not the one that I am going to Torit'), where the expression [láwú àtòrít], '(that) I'm going to Torit', could be a relative clause.

(19) Lopit
       íɲà   náŋ   l-á-wú   à=tòrít
      not.be 1SG.NOM SBO-1SG-go.IPFV to=torit.
      'I'm not going to Torit.' MB1-163 00:05:54

Under some circumstances, /ɪɲa/ can be translated as 'there is not' or 'there is no' (see §4.4). If this were the case here, one might interpret the construction in (19) as 'It is not me that I am going to Torit' or as 'It's not that I'm going to Torit'. However, since the subject maintains its nominative case marking when the negative is formed, these interpretations are not possible. In addition, the use of the first-person pronominal marking in the verb /wu/ means that (19) could not be interpreted as 'I am not the one (who is) going to Torit'.

An alternative interpretation of the negative construction can be made using the concept of the CONTROL relation (Kroeger 2004: pp. 103-134). We can consider (19) as a bi-clausal construction, [íɲà náŋ], 'I am not', and [láwú àtòrít], '(that I am) going to Torit'. The clause [láwú àtòrít] can be regarded as a SENTENTIAL COMPLEMENT, i.e. a finite subordinate clause which functions as an argument of the verb [íɲà] (Kroeger 2004: p. 109). This clause is finite in that the verb has pronominal and aspect marking. A possible lexical entry for the verb /ɲa/, 'not be', is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: A possible lexical entry for the verb /ɲa/

/ɲa/, 'not.be'	<agent,	proposition >
	|	|
	subject	S-COMP

The subject of the main clause is [náŋ], 'I', and it can be described as the CONTROLLER which CONTROLS the subject of the subordinate clause (the CONTROLLEE). As a result, in (19), the subject of the subordinate clause [láwú àtòrít] is the first-person singular pronoun [náŋ] and is indexed on the verb [láwú] with the first-person pronominal marker /a/.

Similar analyses can be applied to standard negation in both Otuho and Lokoya. It should be noted that all these analyses are tentative and further research is required.

3 Negation in non-declarative clauses

3.1 Negative imperatives

The three languages have a range of constructions for the negative imperative. Both Otuho and Lopit use a negative imperative prefix on the lexical verb. Lopit also uses a separate (auxiliary) verb. Lokoya uses a separate morpheme, which might be a verb or a particle.

In Otuho, the negative imperative is expressed with the verbal prefix [xɛ̀-] as shown for the second person imperative in (20). The prefix is the same in the plural, as shown in (21).

(20) Otuho
      xɛ̀-ló   tòɾìt
      NEG.IMP-go.SG Torit
      'Don't go to Torit!' MB3-004 00:21:49

(21) Otuho
      xɛ̀-fwátà   tòɾìt
      NEG.IMP-go.PL Torit
      'Don't go to Torit!' MB3-004 00:22:06

In Lopit, there is a special construction for negative imperatives. It involves the negative imperative prefix /xaɪ-/ together with the word /idek/, which can be translated as 'leave', 'give up', 'don't do'. Some examples are given in (22) and (23).

(22) Lopit
      ídèk   xaɪ-íɾɔ̀
      not.do.IMP NEG.IMP-speak
      'Don't talk!' MB1-014 00:36:40

(23) Lopit
      ídèk   xai-ísò   nàŋ   xíɾíŋɔ̀
      not.do.IMP NEG.IMP-give 1SG.ABS meat.ABS
      'Don't give me meat!' MB1-324 00:09:38

In Lokoya, the morpheme /ko/ is used, together with the standard imperative, to express the negative imperative. The same form is used for singular and plural, as is illustrated in (24) and (25). I have insufficient data to determine whether /ko/ is a particle or a verb (or has been derived from a verb).

(24) Lokoya

kó   ì-ló

NEG.IMP IMP-go.SG

'Don't go!' MB2-023 00:35:42

(25) Lokoya

kó   ì-fún-ù

NEG.IMP IMP-come.PL-VEN

'Don't come!' MB2-023 00:37:27

3.2 Negative Interrogatives

The Otuho and Lopit languages use prefixes on the negative verb for negative polar questions. I have not yet been able to determine how negative polar questions are expressed in Lokoya.

Polar interrogatives in Otuho use the same construction as the corresponding positive clause except that there is a difference in prosody, with increasing pitch at the end of the question. Negative polar interrogatives can be formed using the negative verb /beŋ/, prefixed with the marker [xɛ́-] which I gloss as a negative interrogative marker. It has the same form as the negative imperative marker, except that is has a High instead of a Low tone. A pair of affirmative and negative polar questions is given in (26) and (27). The word order with the negative question verb is the same as the word order in negative declarative clauses, as shown in (6) and (7), for example.

(26) Otuho

í-túk   íjè   àŋíjò ŋìrjà

2-finish 2SG.NOM VN.eat food.ABS

'Have you finished eating the food?' MB3-004 00:31:55

(27) Otuho

xɛ́-bɛ́ŋ   íjè   í-túk   àŋíjò ŋìrjà

NEG.Q-not.be 2SG.NOM 2-finish VN.eat food.ABS

'Haven't you finished eating the food (yet)?' MB3-004 00:32:20

In Lopit, polar interrogatives use the prefix /x-/ on the lexical verb. Negative polar interrogatives can be formed using the negative verb /ɲa/ together with the question marker /x-/. A pair of affirmative and negative polar questions is given in (28) and (29). As with Otuho, the word order in the negative polar question is the same as the word order in negative declarative clauses, such as in (9). In

(29), the subject [íjé], 'you', is placed in front of the lexical verb, which maintains its pronominal prefix and is also prefixed with the subordinate marker /l-/. The word [xɔ́ɲà] is glossed as 'Q-not.be'. This is somewhat similar to /ɪŋa/, discussed above, except that /ɔ-/ is used, instead of /ɪ-/, for the first, second or third person.

(28) Lopit
x-í-t:ɔ́xɔ̀   íjé
Q-2-finish 2SG.NOM
'Have you finished?' MB1-293 00:20:02

(29) Lopit
x-ɔ́ɲà   xàtí íjé   l-í-t:ɔ́xɔ̀   ´
Q-not.be but 2SG.NOM SBO-2-finish
'Haven't you finished (yet)?' MB1-330 00:39:01

4 Negation in stative predications

There are several different kinds of stative predications and different ways of describing them. I use the terminology of Payne (1997) and of Dryer (2007). The languages have stative predications with and without copula verbs. The copula verbs are similar across the three languages: /aɾa/, 'be' and /w:on/ ~ /wɔn/, 'be, exist'. Sometimes standard negation is used with a copula verb, even if there is no copula verb in the positive construction.

4.1 Identity or nominal predication

There are two main types of identity or nominal predications. The first is illustrated in the Lopit example (30) and can be described as an equative predicate nominal (Payne 1997: p. 114) or as a referential nominal predicate (Dryer 2007: p. 233). The copula verb /ɾa/ has a fused form in most situations. The form /aɾa/ is generally used for first, second and third person in these situations.[8]

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[8]Like /ɪŋa/, /aɾa/ does not usually show pronominal indexing. However, it can have pronominal and modality marking and thus be considered to be a form of the verb /ɾa/, 'be', as shown with in the following.

(i) Lopit
í-maì-ɾá íjè   xábʊ́ í-maì-lʊáxà-k   íjè   íjòxoì
2-COND-be 2SG.NOM chief.ABS 2-COND-help-DAT 2SG.NOM 1PL.ABS
'If you were the chief, you would help us.' MB1-006 00:37:12

(30) Lopit

  árá xàbʊ̀   lɔ̀rɛ̀wâ   lìtí
  be chief.NOM husband.ABS my.M.ABS
  'The chief is my husband.' MB1-162 00:15:50

The negation of (30) is given in (31). The construction is similar to standard negation. The negative verb is clause-initial, and the subject is placed after the negative verb and before the copula.

(31) Lopit

  íɲà   xàbʊ̀   l-árá lɔ̀rɛ̀wâ   lìtí
  not.be chief.NOM SBO-be husband.ABS my.M.ABS
  'The chief is not my husband.' MB1-341 00:27:52

Sometimes, this kind of stative predication is expressed without copula verbs. Demonstratives can be used, as shown in (32). When this verbless copula construction is negated, the copula verb, /ra/, 'be', is introduced with the negative verb, as shown in (33). Once again, this is similar to the standard negation construction.

(32) Lopit

  xábʊ́   ìl:ɛ́ŋ
  chief.ABS this.M.NOM
  'This is the chief.' MB1-341 00:26:38

(33) Lopit

  íɲà   ìl:ɛ́ŋ   l-árá xábʊ́
  not.be this.M.NOM SBO-be chief.ABS
  'This is not the chief.' MB1-341 00:26:59

In Otuho, stative predications usually have no copula verb, as illustrated in (34). As in Lopit, in example (32), the demonstratives have nominative case and are placed after the noun phrase, which is in the absolutive case. When the negative construction is formed, a copula verb (/ara/ or /w:ɔn/) is usually added, as shown in (35).

(34) Otuho

  xóbú   xóxoì òlò
  chief.ABS our.ABS this.M.NOM
  'This is our chief.' MB3-004 00:40:26

(35) Otuho

ò-béŋ   árá xóbú   xóxoì   òlò
3sg-not.be be   chief.abs our.abs this.m.nom
'This is not our chief.' mb3-004 00:40:55

Identity or nominal predications in Lokoya are usually constructed without a copula verb, as shown in (36).

(36) Lokoya

òxóbú   òtúló   xíndàŋ
chief.nom husband.abs my.m.abs
'The chief is my husband.' mb2-025 00:00:56

The negation of (36) is given in (37). A different negator /ɪkɛ/ is used and this is glossed as neg and can be described as the nominal predicate negator. This negator does not appear to have any verbal characteristics and could be described as a particle. It is only observed in non-verbal nominal predication.

(37) Lokoya

òxóbú   ìkɛ́ òtúló   xíndàŋ
chief.nom neg husband.abs my.m.abs
'The chief is not my husband.' mb2-025 00:02:01

The second type of identity or nominal predication has been called proper inclusion (Payne 1997: p. 114) or non-referential nominal predication (Dryer 2007: p. 233). In both Otuho and Lopit, a copula verb is used, as shown in (38) and (40) respectively. In the Otuho examples, (39) is the negation of (38). This construction is also similar to standard negation.

(38) Otuho

áɾá íɲí   ètíj:énàní
be   3sg.nom teacher.abs
'He/she is a teacher.' mb3-004 00:44:41

(39) Otuho

ò-béŋ   íɲí   l-áɾá   ètíj:énàní
3sg-not.be 3sg.nom sbo-be teacher.abs
'He/she is not a teacher.' mb3-004 00:46:18

Corresponding examples are given for Lopit in (40) and (41). These have the same constructions as Otuho.

(40) Lopit
    áɾá íɲɛ́   xaìtíj:énàní
    be 3SG.NOM teacher.ABS
    'He/she is a teacher.' MB1-329 00:17:06

(41) Lopit
    íɲà   íɲɛ́   l-áɾá   xaìtíj:énàní
    not.be 3SG.NOM SBO-be teacher.ABS
    'He/she is not a teacher.' MB1-329 00:17:12

In Lokoya, a copula verb is not used for proper inclusion or non-referential nominal predication, as shown in (42). When negated, the negator /ɪkɛ/ is used, as shown in (43). This is the same as with equative predicate nominals or referential nominal predicates, as discussed in relation to (37).

(42) Lokoya
    lálá   mɔ̀ɲɛ̀   ò-írìjá tànání
    my.ABS father.ABS M-liria person.ABS
    'My father is a Lyria man.' MB2-006 00:23:31

(43) Lokoya
    lálá   mɔ̀ɲɛ̀   ìkɛ́ ò-írìjá tànání
    my.ABS father.ABS NEG M-liria person.ABS
    'My father is not a Lyria man.' MB2-025 00:03:36

4.2 Property predications

Property assignment or attributive construction predicates in all three languages are usually expressed with a stative verb construction (or intransitive verbal predicate), as shown in (44) for Lopit. The same constructions are used for both permanent and temporary property assignment.

(44) Lopit
    ɛ̀-xálàn íɲɛ́   bínɔ̀
    3-be.lazy 3SG.NOM very
    'He is very lazy.' MB1-128 00:37:11

This kind of expression is negated using standard negation, as shown in (45).

(45)   Lopit
ínà   náŋ   l-á-xálàn
not.be 1SG.NOM SBO-3-be.lazy
'I am not lazy.' MB1-128 00:36:05

The situation is similar in Otuho, and examples of property predication and its negation are given in (46) and (47). Once again, standard negation is used.

(46)   Otuho
ò-múnò   íɲí
3SG-be.happy 3SG.NOM
'He is happy.' MB3-004 00:53:59

(47)   Otuho
ò-béŋ   íɲí   ò-múnò
3SG-not.be 3SG.NOM 3SG-be.happy
'He is not happy.' MB3-004 00:54:07

Examples for Lokoya are given in (48) and (49). Note that, as mentioned in footnote 2, nominal subjects tend to follow an SVO order and that the subordinate marker changes to the negative subordinate marker. When SVO order is used in these languages, the subject loses its nominative case marking and is marked with the absolutive case. This is an example of 'no case before the verb' in marked nominative languages as discussed in §2.1. In the negative construction in (49), the subject, [aító], 'girl', is placed after the negative verb (or the verb-like negative word) and hence is marked with the nominative case.

(48)   Lokoya
aìtó   n-ò-múnò
girl.ABS SBO.F-3-be.happy
'The girl is happy.' MB2-002 00:26:16

(49)   Lokoya
áwàŋ aító   x-ò-múnò
not.be girl.NOM NEG.SBO-3-be.happy
'The girl is not happy.' MB2-002 00:26:45

4.3 Locative predications

Negation in locative predications in Otuho is similar to standard negation. That is, the negative verb /beŋ/ is used in the clause initial position. This is shown in example (51).

(50) Otuho
ò-wón   àmɔ́lɔ́ŋ   ɔ̀tɔ̀=xídɛ̀ jànì
3sG-exist baboon.NOM on=top   tree.ABS
'The baboon is on (top of) the tree.' MB3-004 00:53:05

(51) Otuho
ò-béŋ   àmɔ́lɔ́ŋ   ò-wón   ɔ̀tɔ̀=xídɛ̀ jànì
3sG-not.be baboon.NOM 3sG-exist on=top   tree.ABS
'The baboon is not on (top of) the tree.' MB3-004 00:52:14

In Lopit, standard negation can also be used in locative predicate constructions with the copula verb, /w:ɔn/, 'exist', as shown in (52) and (53).

(52) Lopit
ɔ̀-w:ón mɔ́lɔ́ŋ   dɛ̀=jànì
3-exist baboon.NOM in=tree.ABS
'The baboon is in the tree.' MB1-162 00:38:14

(53) Lopit
íɲà   mɔ́lɔ́ŋ   l-ɔ̀-w:ón   dɛ̀=jànì
not.be baboon.NOM sBO-3-exist in=tree.ABS
'The baboon is not in the tree' MB1-171 00:01:45

Lokoya also uses the copula verb, /won/, 'exist', in locative predications, as shown in (54). In contrast to Lopit and Otuho, Lokoya does not use standard negation for the negative of these constructions. Only the negative verb is used, as shown in (55).

(54) Lokoya
ò-wón àxárí   dì xáŋ
3-exist water.ABS in house.ABS
'There is water in the house.' MB2-025 00:16:05.

(55) Lokoya
áwáŋ áɲàrí   dì=ðàðá   àxàŋ
not.be food.ABS in=interior house.ABS
'There is no food inside the house.' MB2-019 01:26:35

4.4 Existential predications

Existential predications can overlap with locative predications in some languages (Dryer 2007: p. 240). However, in Lopit, Otuho and Lokoya there are some exis-

tential predicates with no overt attribution of a location. An example of an existential predication is given in (56), where the copula verb /wːɔn/, 'exist', 'be available', is used with a dummy subject. The negative existential predication is given in (57) using the negative verb /ŋa/ with no lexical or copula verb. Here, [íɲà] can be translated as 'there is not' or 'there is no'. Negation of this kind of existential (perhaps best described as 'non-locative existential') is different from standard negation. The noun /xɪsʊŋ/ in (56) is in the absolutive case as it is the existential predicate (i.e. not a subject).

(56) Lopit
      ɔ̀-wːɔ́n xìsʊ́ŋ   xʊ́ná l-ɔ́-bwɔ̀r
      3-exist cows.ABS of.F.PL SBO-3-be.white
      'There are white cows (lit. it exists cows which are white)' MB1-341
      00:17:51

(57) Lopit
      íɲà   xìsʊ́ŋ   xʊ́ná l-ɔ́-ɲóɾì
      not.be cows.ABS of.F.PL SBO-3-be.green
      'There are no green cows.' MB1-341 00:18:08

Another example of a non-locative existential is given in (58). Once again, there is no copula verb in the negative construction. However, it is worth noting that, since the negative clause ([lɛ́ɲà dáxá], 'if there is no food') is subordinate, the negative verb has the third person pronominal prefix (referencing a dummy subject).

(58) Lopit
      l-ɛ́-ɲà   dáxá   é-jeí xìjò
      SBO-3-not.be eat.VN.ABS 3-die people.ABS
      'If there is no food, people die.' MB1-341 00:23:35

A pair of utterances demonstrating a positive and a negative existential with the same forms as (56) and (57) is shown in (59) and (60).

(59) Lopit
      ɔ̀-wːɔ́n xìfjôŋ
      3-exist water.ABS
      'There is water.' MB1-341 00:21:57

(60) Lopit
   íɲà   xìʄôŋ
   not.be water.ABS
   'There is no water.' MB1-256 00:07:49

A consultant was asked if one could say the utterance shown in (61). He said that it "will sound incomplete" (MB1-256 00:22:49) and that an utterance like that in (62) would be more acceptable. Example (62) could be regarded as a locative existential construction. This confirms that standard negation is used in locative predicate constructions but not in non-locative existential constructions.

(61) Lopit
   ? íɲà   xìʄôŋ   l-ɔ̀-wːɔ́n
     not.be water.ABS SBO-3-exist
   'There is no water.' MB1-341 00:22:29

(62) Lopit
   íɲà   xìʄôŋ   l-ɔ̀-wːɔ́n   ìní
   not.be water.ABS SBO-3-exist here
   'There is no water here.' MB1-341 00:23:03

The constructions are similar in Otuho. The non-locative existential has no copula verb. This is shown in (63) which is the Otuho equivalent of (60). When a locative predication is made from (63), as shown in (64) the copula verb /wɔn/, 'exist', is used.

(63) Otuho
   ò-béŋ   nàːɾì
   3SG-not.be water.ABS
   'There is no water.' MB3-004 00:33:30

(64) Otuho
   ò-béŋ   ò-wónì   nàːɾì   ì=xàŋ   xɔ̀xɔí
   3SG-not.be 3SG-exist water.ABS in=house.ABS our.ABS
   'There is no water in our house.' MB3-004 00:35:28

Non-locative existentials in Lokoya are similar to the other two languages, as illustrated in (65) and (66). The copula verb is used in the positive construction but not in the negative one.

(65) Lokoya
ò-wón àxìsőm   x-à-bóŋ-íxà
3-exist cows.ABS SBO.PL-3-be.white-PL
'There are white cows.' MB2-025 00:14:08

(66) Lokoya
àwáŋ àxìsőm   x-à-lì
not.be cows.ABS SBO.PL-3-be.green
'There are no green cows.' MB2-025 00:14:37

4.5 Possessive predications

Possessive predicate constructions can also be negated with the negative verb. In Lopit, the comitative construction /wːɔn xɔ/, 'exist with', is often used to express possession, as shown in (67). The negative form is shown in (68).

(67) Lopit
ɛí-wːɔ́n íjòxoì xò=dòŋì?
1PL-exist 1PL.NOM with=drums.ABS
'We have drums (lit. we are with drums).' MB1-329 00:06:09

(68) Lopit
íŋà   íjòxoì l-ɛí-wːɔ́n   xò=dòŋì?
not.be 1PL.NOM SBO-1PL-exist with=drums.ABS
'We have no drums (lit. we are not with drums).' MB1-329 00:06:40

Lokoya uses a similar construction for possessive predicates and the negative form also uses standard negation, as illustrated in (69) and (70).

(69) Lokoya
í-wːɔ́n   xɔ́xɔì   xɔ=àxàɾì
1PL-exist 1PL.NOM with=water.ABS
'We have water.' MB2-001 00:12:58

(70) Lokoya
awaŋ xɔ́xɔì   x-í-wːɔ́n   xɔ=àxàɾì
not.be 1PL.NOM NEG.SBO-1PL-exist with=water.ABS
'We have no water.' MB2-00:24:05

5 Negation in non-main clauses

Negation in non-main clauses is the same as standard negation in Otuho and Lokoya. It is similar in Lopit except that the normal range of pronominal marking is used on the negative verb /ɲa/.

In Otuho, negative constructions in subordinate clauses are similar to those in declarative main clauses. An example of a conditional clause is shown in (71). Otuho uses adverbs (e.g. /ɲa/, /dwo/) to express the modalities such as the conditional, irrealis and hypothetical (Muratori 1938: p.439). The negation of the clause in (71) is shown in (72). The negative auxiliary is clause-initial, and the lexical verb is placed after the subject. The conditional particle /dwo/ and the subject maintain their positions after the clause-initial verb.

(71) Otuho
      á-ŋwaí   dwò ní
      1SG-be.ill COND 1SG.NOM
      'If I were sick…' MB3-004 01:04:27

(72) Otuho
      á-béŋ   dwò ní   á-ŋwaí á-ló dwò ní   tòrìt
      1SG-not.be COND 1SG.NOM 1SG-be.ill 1SG-go COND 1SG.NOM Torit.ABS
      'If I wasn't sick, I could have gone to Torit.' MB3-004 01:02:45

In Lopit, modality is normally expressed with modal prefixes on the verbs such as /ŋaɪ-/, irrealis and /tV-/, obligative (Moodie & Billington 2020: p.237). The negative verb can be marked for modality, and, in these constructions, the normal pronominal marking is used on the negative auxiliary. An example is given in the conditional clause using the irrealis prefix /ŋaɪ-/ in (73) where the subordinate clause is [áŋaîɲà náŋ lámweí], 'if I were not sick'. The negative verb [áŋaîɲà] has pronominal marking /a-/, '1SG', and the lexical verb, [lámweí], retains its pronominal marking.

(73) Lopit
      [á-ŋaî-ɲà   náŋ   l-á-mweí]   [á-ŋaî-ibóŋ náŋ
      1SG-IRR-not.be 1SG.NOM SBO-1SG-be.sick 1SG-IRR-meet 1SG.NOM
      xò=xìjò   xʋ̀ná l-ɔ̀-lʋ́ŋà]
      with=people.ABS REL.PL SBO-3-be.many
      'If I weren't sick, I would have met many people.' MB1-014 01:25:40

In Lokoya, modality is expressed with particles, such as /ara/, which indicate a conditional or irrealis modality. In contrast to Otuho, the conditional particle

precedes the verb. A non-negative conditional construction is shown in (74). In a negative conditional construction, as in (75), the conditional particle maintains its position at the front of the clause and the remainder of the clause has the normal standard negation structure.

(74) Lokoya
      ara   á-díxá   náŋ
      COND 1SG-be.sick 1SG.NOM
      'If I were sick...' MB2-025 00:15:24

(75) Lokoya
      ara aŋ náŋ   x-á-díxá   a-ísúr   náŋ
      COND NEG 1SG.NOM NEG.SBO-1SG-be.sick 1SG-dance 1SG.NOM
      'If I were not sick, I would dance.' MB2-025 00:17:35

6 Negation in Eastern Nilotic languages

Eastern Nilotic languages have different ways of expressing standard negation – verbs, prefixes and particles. Some languages use all three methods. These are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Methods of negation in Eastern Nilotic languages

	Lotuxo-Maa				Teso-Turkana			Bari
	Lopit	Otuho	Lokoya	Maa	Turkana	Toposa	Ateso	Bari
verb	ɲa	beŋ	waŋ, kaŋ	ɛɪtʊ	mam	me	mam	
prefix				m-	ma-; pe-; ɲi-	ɲ-; pa-		
particle				ḿmὲ	mɛɛrɛ	meere	mamʊ	ti; tine

In Otuho, Lopit and Lokoya, negation is mostly expressed with the negative verbs. From an examination of the work on Eastern Nilotic languages, it appears that prefixes and particles are mostly used in Maa, Bari and the Teso/Turkana languages (Barasa 2017, Dimmendaal 1983, Schröder & Schröder 1984, Spagnolo 1933, Tucker & Mpaayei 1955). However, sometimes negative verbs, translated

as 'lack', are used, particularly in the Teso/Turkana languages. In addition, in Maa, an auxiliary negative verb is used. The morpheme /ɛɪtʊ/ is described as a "negative perfect(ive) aspect auxiliary verb, indicating that something is not yet done or complete" (Payne & Ole-Kotikash 2008). It does not inflect for person.

Where negative verbs are used in the Teso/Turkana languages, they show limited similarities with Otuho, Lopit and Lokoya. Firstly, there is pronominal marking on the negative verb, as shown with the Turkana verb /mamʊ/, 'lack', in (76), and the Ateso verb /mamar/, 'not.have', in (77).

(76) Turkana
      ɛ-màmʊ̀ kà   nège`
      3-lack   from here
      'He is not here.' (Dimmendaal 1983: 456)

(77) Ateso
      nés á-màmàr   ápòrèí   k=éòŋ
      CONJ 1SG-not.have scar.ABS PREP=me
      '... so I have no scars on me.' (Barasa 2017: 248)

It may be possible to distinguish between a negative verb and a negative particle. In Ateso, the negator /mamʊ/ can be described as a particle since the subject is marked with the absolutive, and not the nominative case, when it moves in front of the lexical verb and after the negator (Barasa 2017: p.208). That is, /mamʊ/ cannot be regarded as a verb (or as verb-like), since if it were a verb, the subject would have the nominative case. This is illustrated with [éòŋ], '1SG.ABS', in example (78).

(78) Ateso
      màmʊ̀ éòŋ   á-ŋàdàkì   àpéséí   kón
      NEG   1SG.ABS 1SG-keep.PAST money.ABS your
      'I have not kept your money.' (Barasa 2017: p.220)

However, sometimes Barasa also gives examples where the subject is in the nominative case. An example is given with [èòŋ], '1SG.NOM', in example (79). The use of the nominative case for the subject [èòŋ], would suggest that /mamʊ/ is still regarded by some speakers as a verb or verb-like.

(79) Ateso
      màmʊ̀ èòŋ   á-gòlòk-ìt   ékèkì
      NEG   1SG.NOM 1SG-close-PFV door.ABS
      'I did not close the door.' (Barasa 2017: p.249)

7 Discussion and conclusions

In Otuho, Lopit and Lokoya, standard negation is almost always expressed with a negative verb. The negative construction is similar across the three languages, using the order NEG.VERB SUBJECT LEXICAL.VERB OBJECT. The subject retains its nominative marking when placed before the lexical verb, since it still follows a (negative) verb. Both the negative verb and the lexical verb are finite, in that they have pronominal marking and can also have aspect or modal marking.

Different negative verbs are used in the three languages: /beŋ/ for Otuho, /ɲa/ for Lopit and /waŋ/ or /kaŋ/ for Lokoya. It is especially interesting as there are many common verbs. For example, the copula verbs are almost identical: /aɾa/, 'be' and /w:on/ ~ /wɔn/, 'be, exist'.

The main differences between the languages in standard negation relate to the extent of pronominal marking, the subordinating prefix marking of the lexical verb and the extent of modal marking on the negative verb. The commonalities and differences across the languages are listed in Table 5.

Table 5: Features of standard negation constructions

Feature	Otuho	Lopit	Lokoya
pronominal marking on negative verb	yes	sometimes	no
pronominal marking on lexical verb	yes	yes	yes
subject has nominative marking	yes	yes	yes
subordinating prefix on lexical verb	no	yes	yes
TAM marking on the negative verb	no	yes	no

A feature of these languages is the bi-clausal nature of standard negation. That is, both the negative verb and the lexical verb are finite. The negative verb can have pronominal marking and be inflected for aspect and modality. The lexical verb also has pronominal marking and, at least in Lopit and Lokoya, has aspect marking. Both verbs index the person of the subject. I have suggested that this construction could be interpreted as a relative clause construction or as a control relation. More research is required to understand these constructions.

Generally, negated non-verbal constructions use a copula verb as well as the negative verb, even if the positive non-verbal construction has no copula. These constructions are of the same form as standard negation. The only exceptions appear to be for non-locative existentials (and Lokoya locative existentials) where the negative verb is used without a copula.

Different constructions to standard negation are used for negative imperatives and negative interrogatives. These use verbal prefixes and/or auxiliary verbs which are unrelated to those used in standard negation.

Negation in non-main clauses is the same as standard negation for Otuho and Lokoya. It is similar in Lopit except that the normal range of pronominal marking is used on the negative verb /ɲa/.

The use of negative verbs appears to be much more prominent in Otuho, Lopit and Lokoya than in the other Eastern Nilotic languages, which mostly use negative verbal prefixes or particles.

Abbreviations

Abbreviations in this chapter follow the Leipzig Glossing Rules, with the following additions.

3>1	3rd person s with 1st person o	SBO	subordinator
CONJ	conjunction	S-COMP	sentential complement
I	Class I	SEQ	sequential marker
II	Class II	VEN	ventive
R	verb root	VN	verbal noun

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