

# Expressing Future Time Reference in Kambaata

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## ABSTRACT

Kambaata (Highland East Cushitic) is an aspect-marking language with a prominent opposition between perfective and imperfective aspect. The absolute location of an event in time (tense) is expressed by devices other than verbal inflection or inferred from the aspectual value of a verb. The present article discusses the devices that are applied to encode future in Kambaata. Firstly, imperfective verb forms can be interpreted as expressing future reference. Secondly, the language has grammaticalised two purpose constructions into imminent and/or intentional future constructions. Furthermore, certain converb forms can be used to express that events in subordinate clauses are later in time than events expressed in the matrix clause. A comparison with related languages shows that Kambaata is a typical Highland East Cushitic language, as far as the means used to encode future time reference are concerned.

*Keywords:* *Cushitic, Aspect, Tense, Future, Purpose clause.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Highland East Cushitic language Kambaata is primarily an aspect-marking language. The opposition between perfective and imperfective aspect is not only indicated by inflectional morphology on main (= final) verbs but also on various subordinate (= non-final) verb forms. This does not mean that tense marking is entirely absent from Kambaata utterances but the absolute location of an event in time is expressed by devices other than verbal inflection or inferred from the aspectual value of a verb. This article attempts to determine the means of expressing future in Kambaata. In the following section (§2), the essentials of Kambaata verbal morphology and the aspect system are summarised. This equips us with the necessary background knowledge for the section on the use of the imperfective (§3) and the use of purpose constructions (§4) for the expression of future. Section 5 addresses briefly how relative future is encoded in converb clauses. The results are recapitulated in section 6 and viewed from a comparative Highland East Cushitic perspective.

For a quicker understanding of the examples presented below, readers should keep in mind that Kambaata is a consistently head-final language, i.e. the main verb (or copula) is the last constituent of a sentence and subordinate clauses precede main clauses. The only notable exceptions to this rule are cleft

sentences, in which the predicate (marked by a copula) may precede the subject of the sentence.

## 2. OVERVIEW OF VERBAL MORPHOLOGY

Kambaata is an exclusively suffixing language and all inflectional morphemes are located after the verbal stem. A sketch of the morpheme structure of a (declarative affirmative) main verb is given in Table 1, an example is provided in (1).<sup>1</sup>

**Table 1.** Structure of a declarative affirmative main verb.

Stem: Root (+ Derivation)	Inflection			(Object Suffix)	(ikke)
	Subject Agreement	Aspect	Subject Agreement		
	1s: -∅	IPV: -a(a)	1s: -m(m)		
	2s: -t	PVE: -e(e)	2s: -nt		
	3m: -∅	PVO: -o(o)	3m: var.		
	3f/p: -t	PROG: -ayyoo	3f/pl: (-'V)		
	3hon: -een		3hon: var.		
	1p: -n		1p: -m(m)		
	2p/hon: -teen		2p: -nta(a'u)		

- (1) *sazános ikke* < *saz-∅-á-no-s<sup>2</sup>* *ikke*  
 advise-3m-IPV-3m-3mO INACT  
 'He used to advise him.'

The verbal stem consists of the root and derivational morphemes. Each affirmative declarative main verb has two subject agreement markers. The first agreement slot is occupied by the inherited Afroasiatic subject morphemes; the second slot contains agreement morphemes that were probably grammaticalised in the more recent HEC history (Tosco 1996, Crass 2012). Aspect morphemes are placed in the slot between the subject agreement positions. Four aspectual

<sup>1</sup> Some negative and non-declarative main verbs have a different structure: Non-imperfective negative verbs and jussive-imperative verbs lack the second subject agreement morpheme (cf. Treis 2012).

<sup>2</sup> In some persons, the discontinuous subject agreement morphemes and the inserted aspect markers have merged so that the boundaries between them are blurred. From a synchronic point of view, it is, therefore, often more appropriate to analyse the three components as constituting one complex portmanteau morpheme of person, gender, number, honorificity and aspect. In the following examples, inflectional morphemes are not broken up in the glosses.

values are distinguished in main verb paradigms: (i) imperfective (IPV), (ii) perfective with a characteristic *e*-vowel (PVE), (iii) perfective with a characteristic *o*-vowel (PVO) and (iv) progressive (PROG). The functions of these aspect morphemes can be briefly described as follows: The imperfective marks an event as non-completed, either because the event is habitual, a general truth, on-going or expected to happen in the future (more details are given in §3). The two perfective verb forms mark events as being completed. The exact functional differences between the two perfectives are not yet understood and require further investigation. The two paradigms overlap in certain persons and verbal conjugations. If a distinction can be made between an *e*- and an *o*-form, it is the *o*-form that is used in sequential narratives, for events in the recent past and in certain adverbial clauses (e.g. conditional clauses).<sup>3</sup> See the use of the *o*-perfective main verb at the end of (2), taken from a sequential narrative; note also the perfective aspect marking on the converbs preceding the main verb.

- (2) *Kabar-îi*                      *hittig-ûnta*                      *roshsh-á*                      *min-îichch*  
today-mOBL.CRD like\_this-fACC<n> study-fGEN house-mABL  
*wáall*                      *roshsh-a-sí*                      *od-áata*                      *qakkíchch-uta-n-s*  
**come.1s/3mPCO** study-fGEN-3mPOSS things-fACC tiny-fOBL-J-3mPOSS  
*ma'nn-á*    *al-í*                      *torr-í*                      *ir-i-ssá*                      *aaz-í*  
bed-fGEN top-mACC **throw-1s/3mPCO** farm-mGEN-3pPOSS inside-mACC  
*zah-îi*                      *fúll-o*  
walk\_around-mDAT **go\_out-3mPVO**

‘On that day, too, he came home from school, threw his exercise books onto his tiny bed and went out to their farm to walk around.’ (Kambaatissata 1989: 8.19)

The progressive is a verb form that has been grammaticalised very recently (it is not shared with the most closely related languages (dialects) Alaaba and K’abeena) from a periphrastic construction consisting of an imperfective converb and an existential verb (*yoo-* ‘be (located)’). The progressive marks a durative event as being in the process of happening at the reference time (which is the event time of the narrative in (3)).

- (3) [...] *gag-îiha-n-sa*                      *it-táa=r-a*                      *bajig-óon*  
self-mDAT-J-3pPOSS eat-3fIPV=NMZp-mACC happiness-fLOC  
***hacc-itáyyoo’u***  
**search.MID-3fPROG**

(When observing birds, the protagonist of a story watches the following on-going event:) ‘[...] they were happily searching for food for themselves.’ (Kambaatissata 1989: 8.19f)

Progressive marking encodes iteration (*ub-áyyoo’u* ‘he keeps on falling’) with punctual verbs (e.g. *ub-* ‘fall’) and an incipient change of state (*qeree’rr-*

<sup>3</sup> In the literature on HEC related languages, cognate and/or functional equivalent paradigms are labelled “perfect” or “present perfect” (see e.g. Crass 2012).

*áyyoo'u* ‘he growing tall’) with inchoative-stative verbs (*qeraa'rr-* ‘be(come) tall’).

As (4) shows, the morpheme *íkke* is a tense particle found at the right edge of the verb; it is used to mark an event as situated in the past and no longer relevant to or no longer actual for the present situation (4);<sup>4</sup> it is glossed INACT.

- (4) *mát-o qeraa'rr-ua sut-ichch-í al-éen yóo íkké*  
 one-mOBL tall-mOBL tree\_sp-SG-mGEN top-mLOC COP1.3 INACT.REL  
*handár-ch-ut*  
 dove-SG-fNOM

(Speaking about a dove flying towards the protagonist:) ‘a dove that had been on a high *suta*-tree’ (Kambaatissata 1989: 8.21)

The morpheme *íkke* also marks situations as counterfactual (5), irrespective of whether the hypothetical situation does not hold at the speech time or did not hold at some time prior to the speech time.<sup>5</sup>

- (5) [...] *gír-at yóo-ba' ikkeeraan man-ch-í beet-í*  
 fire-fNOM COP1.3-NEG HYP.COND people-SG-mGEN child-mGEN  
*héechch-at makk-áta ik-káa-ba'a íkke*  
 life-fNOM comfortable-fACC become-3fIPV-NEG INACT

‘If there was no fire, the life of human beings would not be comfortable.’ (Kambaatissata 1989: 4.55)

Aspect marking is considered primary and tense marking secondary in Kambaata because the latter is not marked inflectionally and superimposed on aspect marking. The verb form to which *íkke* is attached can be marked for any aspectual value. Among the aspectual categories, the distinction between imperfective and perfective is considered primary due to the following reasons: (i) the two perfective paradigms are functionally similar and formally overlapping; (ii) in negative main verb forms, only a two-way distinction between imperfective and non-imperfective forms is made (cf. Treis 2012); (iii) the progressive is diachronically based on the imperfective (converb) form; (iv) for some verbs, imperfective/progressive and *e-/o*-perfective are based on different stems; and (v) converbs make only a two-way distinction between perfective and imperfective forms. All this shows that the opposition between imperfective and perfective is more entrenched in the verbal system and that the distinction between imperfective and progressive and between *e-* and *o*-perfective is subordinate.

Before moving on to the discussion of the expression of future time reference, Table 2 gives an overview of all independent and dependent verb

<sup>4</sup> For more information on languages that have a past tense that “suggests that a situation that once held is no longer actual” see Timberlake (2007: 307).

<sup>5</sup> According to Timberlake (2007: 322), it is common for languages to correlate past tense and counterfactuality.

types that are distinguished in Kambaata. The table may serve as a reference point for the following sections. The verbs are arranged from left to right on a scale of decreasing finiteness, or said differently, on a scale of decreasing inflectional potential. All grammatical categories that are obligatorily marked on the respective verbs and all category values are listed.

**Table 2.** *Inflectional categories on main verbs and dependent verbs in Kambaata.*

	MAIN VERBS		RELATIVE VERBS		CONVERBS		PURPOSIVES		VERBAL NOUNS
SUBJECT AGREEMENT	1s 2s 3m 3f/p 3hon	1p  2p/hon	1s 2s 3m 3f/p 3hon	1p  2p/hon	1s/3m  2s/3f/p  3hon	1p  2p/hon	1s/3m  2s/3f/p  3hon	1p  2p/hon	-
ASPECT	Imperfective Progressive <i>e</i> -Perfective <i>o</i> -Perfective		Imperfective Progressive <i>e</i> -Perfective <i>o</i> -Perfective		Imperfective  Perfective		-		-
MOOD	Indicative Imperative/Jussive Preventive		-		-		-		-
SWITCH REFERENCE	-		-		+		+		-

Main verbs, relative verbs and converbs can still be marked for negation.

### 3. IMPERFECTIVE ASPECT AS EXPRESSING FUTURE TIME REFERENCE

The imperfective aspect can evoke future time reference. However, the Kambaata imperfective is best described more generally as encoding events that are not completed at the reference time. It is used, for instance, for general truths (6), habitual events (7) and (non-durative) events carried out at the speech time (8).

- (6) *Mánn-u min-i-sí am-áta*  
 men-mNOM house-mGEN-3mPOSS mother-fACC  
*sharr-anó=g-ánka handar-itíi sharr-itáa'-indo?*  
 chase\_away-3mIPV.REL=SIM-mACC<n> dove-fNOM.CRD chase\_away-3fIPV-Q  
 ‘Do doves chase away (their children) like men chase away their wife(s) (lit. “mother(s) of the house”)?’ (Kambaatissata 1989: 8.20)

- (7) *Mexx-ú bar-iháa hoog-íshsh-o-nne*  
 single-mACC day-mACC.CRD become\_tired-CS1-3mPVO-1pO  
*y-ít nunnur-táa-ba'a*  
 say-2s/3fPCO complain-3fIPV-NEG  
 ‘They don’t complain a single day that they are tired (lit. “complain saying ‘it made us tired’’).’ (Kambaatissata 1989: 3.97)
- (8) [...] *alúud-iin baa'yyaat-amm-ó bar-í boorajj-áan-ta-s*  
 above-mICP mention-PS-3mPVO.REL day-mACC training-mLOC-J-DEF  
*dag-an-téenuunta qaag-insáam*  
 find-PS-2pPURP<sub>DS</sub> remember-CS1.1pIPV  
 ‘We remind you to attend the training on the date mentioned above [...].’ (Kambaatis-  
 sata 1989: 8.28)

The imperfective verb form also marks an event as happening in the future, i.e. at a point later in time than the speech event. In (9) the imperfective verb form is used in the apodosis of a conditional clause. In (10), the imperfective form of ‘meet’ is found in the quoted direct speech of a protagonist.

- (9) *Ta ichch-áta xoophph-úmb-o=dda zákk-o*  
 DDEM1.fACC food-fACC finish.MID-1sNREL-mOBL=COND after-mOBL  
*górr-u af-áno-'e*  
 hunger-mNOM seize-3mIPV-1sO  
 ‘If I don’t finish this food, I will be hungry (lit. “hunger will seize me’’) later.’
- (10) *Aayíchch “daqqan-teenánta” y-itáa-'e bagáan*  
 Mum.fNOM meet-2pIPV say-3fIPV-1sO CONTRAST  
*kú'nn daqqam-mu'nnáan kabar-ée iill-inéemm*  
 see! meet-1pNCO today-mDAT reach-1pPVE  
 ‘Mum used to say to me “you will meet (one day)”, but - see! – up until today we haven’t met (lit. “we have reached even today without meeting’’).’ (Kambaatissata 1989: 8.21)

The imperfective can mark future events irrespective of the temporal distance between the time of the speech event and the time of its (expected) realisation. In (10) the future event is in the distant future whereas it is in the immediate future in (11). Holding a knife in his hands, the speaker of (11) announces an action that is going to be carried out in a moment.

- (11) *Xon-é fayy-á ciil-á uurrishsh-áta qixx-ú*  
 aforementioned-fGEN healthy-mACC infant-mACC length-fACC equal-mACC  
*lam-ú=bb-a á'nn béenk lam-éenta-'nne-n*  
 two-mACC=PLACE-mACC do.1pPCO divide.1pPCO two-fDAT<n>-2pPOSS-n  
***aass-ináan-ki'nne*** [...] **give-1pIPV-2pO**

‘[...] we are going to divide that healthy child lengthwise into two equal parts and give (one part) to each of you.’

The Kambaata imperfective is not only used to encode events that are non-completed at the speech time but also at a reference time *prior* to the speech time, i.e. the imperfective can mark habitual events in the past; cf. (12) below and *yitáa'e* ‘she used to say to me’ in (10) above.

- (12) [...] *ir-í aaz-éen cír y-ú abbíshshee-t*  
 farm-mGEN inside-mLOC stroll say-mACC exceed.1s/3mPCO.VV-COP3  
***iitt-anóo-hu***  
**love-3mIPV.NMZ1-mNOM**

(Utterance about a daily activity of the protagonist in the past:) ‘[...] he loved it very much to stroll across the farm (lit. “[...] it is exceedingly that he loved to stroll across the farm”).’ (Kambaatissata 1989: 8.19)

Accordingly, an event that is future relative to the time of a past reference event is also marked by imperfective aspect. In (13), the event of worrying (main clause) is prior to the speech time; the event of going is also prior to the speech time but seen from the reference time it is in the future and thus marked by the imperfective.

- (13) *Ga'aasíga inq-ó haakiim-í min-í mar-anó=tannée*  
 next\_day teeth-fGEN doctor-mGEN house-mACC go-3mIPV.REL=REAS  
*haww-áyyoo-haa íkke*  
 be\_worried-3mPROG.REL-mCOP2 INACT

‘He was worried because he would go to the dentist the next day.’

The imperfective is the most common verb form in utterances about the future; future constructions with a more restricted use are discussed in the following.

## 4. PURPOSE CLAUSE-BASED FUTURE CONSTRUCTIONS

### 4.1 FUTURE CONSTRUCTIONS BASED ON PURPOSIVE VERBS

Kambaata has two paradigms of subordinate verb forms that are specialised in encoding purpose meaning and are thus labelled “purposives” (cf. the purposive column in Table 2): the purposive verb ending in *-ó-ta* is used to encode that the purpose and the matrix clause share one subject (SS: same subject) (14), whereas the purposive verb ending in *-un-ta* indicates that the subjects of the purpose clause and the matrix clause are different (DS: different subject) (15).<sup>6</sup>

- (14) *Zammar-tóta*      *af-óo-se*      *fan-tóo=da* [...]   
 sing-2s/3fPURP<sub>SS</sub>    mouth-mACC-3fPOSS    open-3fPVO.REL=COND   
 ‘When (the bird) opened its beak to sing [...].’

- (15) *Lál-u*      *meqqeerr-áta*    *da’ll-í*      *úujj-unta*   
 cows-mNOM    afterbirth-fACC    do\_fast-3mPCO    drop-1s/3mPURP<sub>DS</sub>   
*qeegill-éeta*      *it-is-éenno*   
 enset\_type-fACC    eat-CS1-3honIPV   
 ‘One feeds *qeegillee*-enset to cows so that they drop the[ir] afterbirth quickly.’

The full paradigms of the SS and DS subject purposives are given in Table 3. The purposive endings consist of three separable morphemes, none of which is an aspect morpheme.<sup>7</sup> The first morphemes mark subject agreement, the middle morpheme is the actual purposive marker and the last morpheme (*-ta*) is a subordinator diachronically related to a demonstrative.

**Table 3.** *Kambaata purposive paradigms.*

		SS PURPOSIVE	DS PURPOSIVE
1s	3m	-Ø-ó-ta	´-Ø-un-ta
2s	3f/p	-t-ó-ta	´-t-un-ta
3hon		-een-ó-ta	-éen-un-ta
1p		-n-ó-ta	´-n-un-ta
2p/hon		-teen-ó-ta	-téen-un-ta

DS purposives can never function as main verbs of a sentence. SS purposives, however, can be used as the main verb in one context, i.e. questions about one’s intentions or plans; cf. (16)–(17).

<sup>6</sup> Please consult Treis (2010: 6–14) for details on the morphology, syntax and use of the Kambaata purposive verbs.

<sup>7</sup> The morphemes are usually not broken up in the glosses.



- (16) *M-á at-tóta?*  
 what-mACC do-2s/3fPURP<sub>SS</sub>  
 ‘What do you intend to do? / What are going to do?’
- (17) *Āā wol-ú maláx!*  
 yes other-mACC cheat.2sIMP
- Káan xooff-oommí-da ammóo*  
 IDEM1mACC finish-1sPVO.REL-COND however
- wol-íta huj-íta aass-ito-’é-ta?*  
 other-fACC work-fACC give-2s/3fPURP<sub>SS</sub>-1sO-2s/3fPURP<sub>SS</sub>
- ‘Come on, cheat someone else (but not me)! When I have finished this (task) you want / are going to give me another job?!’ (Kambaatissata 1989: 3.97)

Purpose clauses encode “that one verbal situation, that of the matrix clause, is performed with the intention of bringing about another situation, that of the purpose clause” (Schmidtke-Bode 2009: 20). The motivating event expressed in a purpose clause is unrealised at the time of the event in the matrix clause and, as such, purpose clauses are inherently future-oriented. It is the inherent future orientation of purpose clauses that facilitated the interpretation of purpose constructions as constructions expressing future. As purposive verbs alone are not used as main verbs outside questions, it is purpose cleft constructions that grammaticalised into constructions encoding imminent or intended future events in Kambaata. Purposive clauses (like all other constituents in a Kambaata sentence) can be focused by clefting. In cleft sentences, a copula is suffixed to the focused constituent, which becomes the non-verbal predicate, while the remainder of the sentence is relativised and nominalised and thus becomes the subject of the sentence. In (18), line (a), the SS purpose clause is the non-verbal predicate (note the copula) while the main clause in line (b) is relativised and turned into the subject of the cleft sentence. (A DS purposive clause would be focused accordingly.)

- (18) a {*Káan-in xa’mm-itótaa-n-ti-bala*}<sub>PREDICATE OF CLEFT SENTENCE</sub>  
 IDEM1.mACC-n ask-2s/3fPURP<sub>SS</sub>.VV-n-COP3-DISBELIEF
- b {*das-soontí-hu*}<sub>SUBJECT OF CLEFT SENTENCE</sub>  
 be\_late-2sPVO.REL.NMZ1-mNOM
- ‘Unbelievable, it took you such a long time to ask this [simple question]?’ (Lit. ‘Unbelievable, it is to ask this that you were so late?’)

SS purpose cleft constructions with an empty subject position (‘(it) is to V’, ‘(it) is in order to V’) have come to be used to encode imminent or intentional future (‘(Subject) is going to V / is about to V / plans to V’). While some examples, given an appropriate context, might still allow a purposive cleft interpretation,

only an imminent or intentional future interpretation is plausible for utterances such as (19)–(20).

- (19) *Xeen-á ub-ótaa-t*  
rain-mACC fall-1/3mPURP<sub>SS</sub>.VV-COP3

[Context: There are black clouds in the sky.] ‘It is going to rain.’

- (20) *Téma aansh-ótaa-t*  
just\_now wash-1s/3mPURP<sub>SS</sub>.VV-COP3

[Context: A mother asks her daughter whether she has finished the washing that she was supposed to do. The daughter answers:] ‘I am going to wash it immediately.’

The purposive-based future constructions are also used for scheduled events in the near or later future (see the quote from an invitation letter in (21)) or for events judged to be inevitable by the speaker (22).

- (21) *Shaashshig-í 16ch 18 iillán qaxée yóo jeechch-óon [...]*  
April-mGEN 16mABL 18 until COP1.3 time-fLOC

*boorájj-u aass-am-ótaa-t*  
training-mNOM give-PS-1s/3mPURP<sub>SS</sub>.VV-COP3

‘In the time from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> of April [...] training will be held (lit. “given”).’ (Kambaatissata 1989: 8.28)

- (22) *Bollochch-áan birs-éen gizz-á báat-u*  
wedding-mLOC precede-3honPCO money-mACC pay-mNOM

*he’-ótaa-t*  
exist-1s/3mPURP<sub>SS</sub>.VV-COP3

[The numbers of guests coming just to eat but without contributing to the gift is steadily increasing:] ‘Advance payment will (surely) be established (soon) at weddings.’

Intentional future in the past is marked by the morpheme *íkke* INACT:

- (23) *Ayyaan-o-’óon-in alaphph-úi mar-ótaa-t íkke*  
A.-mGEN-ASSOC.fICP-n play-mDAT go-1s/3mPURP<sub>SS</sub>.VV-COP3 INACT

‘I was just about to go and play with Ayyaano and his friends.’ (Kambaatissata 1989: 3.96)

Only purposive clefts based on the SS verb (but not the DS verb) can be used to express imminent or intentional future.

## 4.2 FUTURE CONSTRUCTIONS BASED ON DATIVE-MARKED VERBAL NOUNS

Kambaata is a case-marking language which distinguishes between nominative, accusative, genitive, dative, instrumental-comitative-perlative, ablative, locative and oblique case (Treis 2008: §7.2). Every noun in a sentence has to be marked by case suffixes; the nominal stem is never used in isolation and only a concept of the linguistic analysis.

Verbal nouns are bare of any verbal inflectional morphology (cf. Table 20) but, like other nouns, they are marked for case; see the verbal noun forms based on *ag-* ‘drink’: *ag-ú* ‘drinking’ (mACC), *ág-u* ‘drinking’ (mNOM), *ag-í* ‘of drinking’ (mGEN), *ag-íi(ha)* ‘for drinking’ (mDAT), *ag-íin* ‘by drinking’ (mI CP), *ag-íichch* ‘from drinking’ (mABL), *ag-óon* ‘on drinking’, *ág-o* ‘by, on drinking’ (mOBL).

The dative-marked verbal noun is used as the head of SS purpose clauses, as seen in (24). In most contexts, the dative-marked verbal noun is functionally equivalent to the SS purposive form that has been discussed in §4.1 (cf. Treis 2010: 14–18). In DS contexts, purposive constructions with dative-marked verbal nouns are ungrammatical.

- (24) *Áachch*      *wix-áta*      ***wiit-isiis-íiha***      *wiitim-í*      *min-í*  
 mum.fNOM    grain-fACC    **grind-CS2-mDAT**    mill-mGEN    house-mACC  
*mar-éemmaa’u*  
 go-3honPVE

‘Mum went to the mill to have the grain ground.’ (Kambaatissata 1989: 3.96)

Another striking parallel between the SS purposive and the dative-marked verbal noun concerns the grammaticalisation path that both verb forms have taken. Like the purposive, the dative-marked verbal noun, in combination with a copula, has developed into a construction expressing imminent or intentional future. Dative-marked verbal nouns combine with copulas in focus constructions, see (25), and it is the inherent future orientation of dative verbal noun clauses that has given rise to the future interpretation of these cleft constructions.

- (25) [...] {*muchch-íi*      *batinn-íta*      ***barg-íhaa-t***} PREDICATE OF CLEFT  
 enset\_dish-mDAT    amount-fACC    add-mDAT.VV-COP3

[Answer to the question why vegetables are sometimes added to a certain dish:] ‘[...] (it) is to increase the amount of (lit. “add amount to”) the *muchchu*-dish.’

Given the context in which (26) is made, the utterance can definitely not be interpreted as expressing purpose but only as expressing future time reference.

- (26) *Ku*                      *adab-óo*              *zákk-o*                      *gaabb-íhaa-t*  
 DDEM1mNOM boy-mNOM after-mOBL regret-mDAT.VV-COP3

[Prediction made when watching a misbehaving child:] ‘This boy will regret (his deeds) soon.’ (Lit. ‘It is so that this boy regrets (his deeds) soon.’)

Dative verbal noun-based constructions are less frequent than purposive-based ones (§4.1). The functional differences between the two future constructions are not yet clear and remain to be investigated in the future. Crass & Meyer (2008: 240f) discuss the grammaticalisation of future constructions in some Ethiosemitic and East Cushitic languages. One of the languages dealt with is K’abeena, a close relative of Kambaata. K’abeena is said to use a verbal noun-based construction for imminent future and a purposive-based construction for intentional future. This division of labour between the constructions is not observed in Kambaata. We have seen in §4.1 that the purposive-based construction of Kambaata covers both functions. However, since I have no examples in which the verbal noun-based future construction is used for intentional future in Kambaata, I cannot exclude that it is also restricted to imminent future as in K’abeena.

Generalisations are very difficult to make, because the dative verbal noun-based future constructions are only attested in elicited data.<sup>8</sup> The possibility that the elicited, verbal noun-based future constructions are calques from the Ethiopian lingua franca Amharic cannot be excluded altogether.

## 5. RELATIVE FUTURE IN CONVERB CLAUSES

Converbs are dependent, non-final verb forms that are morphologically distinct from main verbs, purposive verbs and relative verbs (cf. Table 2). They are used in adverbial function, in clause chains or in verbal compounds. Kambaata distinguishes between perfective, imperfective and negative converbs. Imperfective converbs (ICO) express events that are simultaneous to the event expressed by the next following verb (27).

- (27) *Án*              *wodar-ú*              *fiil-áni-yan*  
 1sNOM cord-mACC **split-1sICO-DS**  
*íse*              *qaanc-á*              *meer-táyoo*              *íkke*  
 3fNOM fibres-mACC twist-3fPROG INACT

‘While I was splitting cords, she was twisting fibres.’

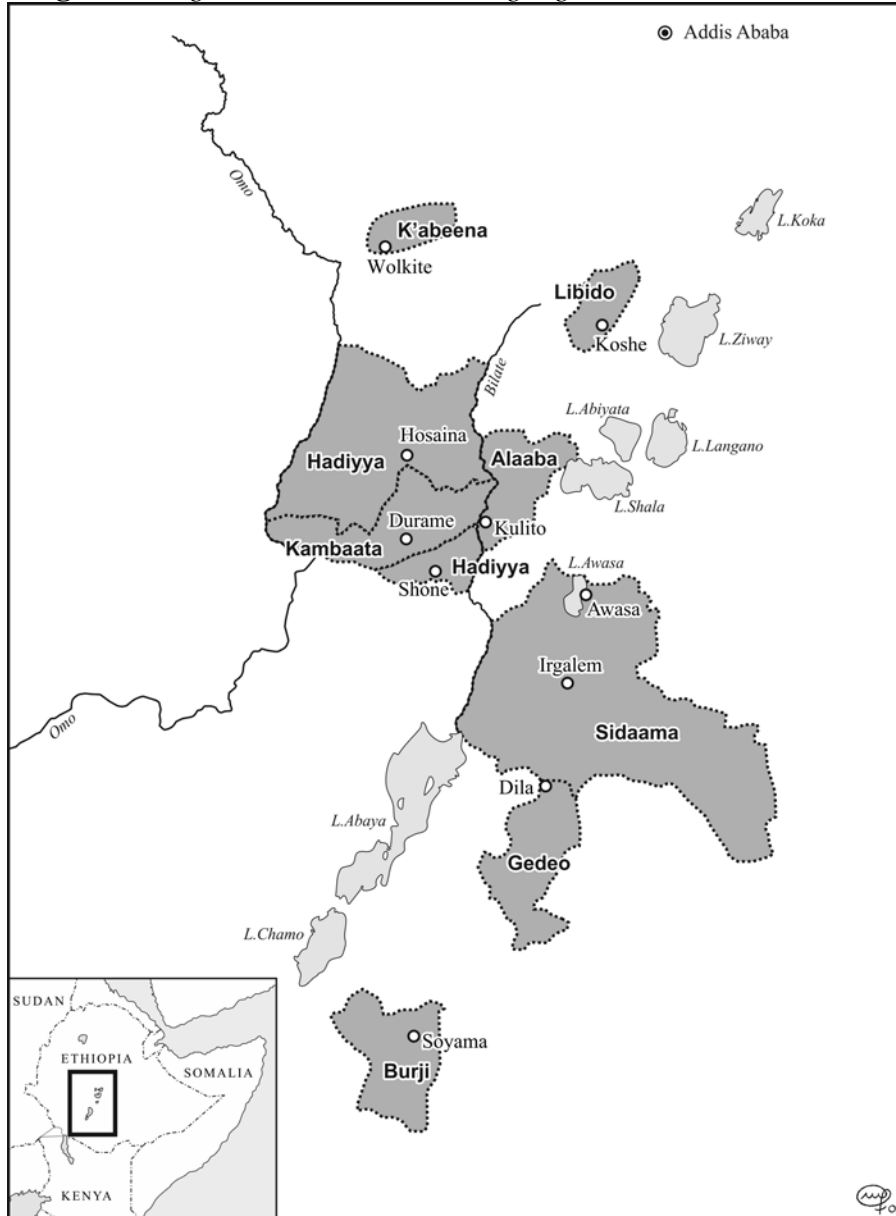
The semantic relation between the perfective converb clause (PCO) and the subsequent clause is vague, though often interpreted as expressing anteriority or manner; see, for instance, (2) and (15).

<sup>8</sup> The purpose cleft constructions commonly found in the corpus of oral and written texts all have a purpose focus interpretation (as e.g. (25)).



Kawachi (2007: 423, 787) on the “be about to”-construction); and negative converb clauses used for the expression of posteriority (future) in complex sentences are also known to exist in K’abeena (Crass 2005: 186), Alaaba (Schneider-Blum 2007: 266ff) and Hadiyya (Sim 1989: 312).

**Figure 1.** *Highland East Cushitic languages.*



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**Research Interests:** Cushitic, Omotic, language description and documentation, anthropological linguistics, song language



## APPENDIX A

### ORTHOGRAPHY

The Kambaata data is written in the official orthography (to which I added accents to indicate the position of phonemic stress; furthermore, I marked all word-medial and word-final glottal stops overtly) (Maatewoos 1992 E.C.). The following graphemes are not in accordance with the IPA conventions: <ph> = /pʰ/, <x> = /tʰ/, <q> = /kʰ/, <j> = /dʒ/, <c> = /tʃ/, <ch> = /tʃ/, <sh> = /ʃ/, <y> = /j/ and <'> = /ʔ/. Length is indicated by double letters, e.g. <aa> = /a:/, <bb> = /b:/, and <shsh> = /ʃ:/. The second consonant of a glottal stop-sonorant cluster is generally written as double, although the cluster only consists of two phonemes, e.g. <'mm> = /ʔm/; this convention helps to distinguish these clusters from glottalised sonorants, which are written <'r> and <'l>. Word-final unstressed /i/ does not occur orthographically, irrespective of its phonological status.

## APPENDIX B

### ABBREVIATIONS

ABL = ablative	n = unanalysed pragmatically
ACC = accusative	determined morpheme
ASSOC = associative	NCO = negative converb
COND = conditional	NEG = negation
COP1 = <i>yoo</i> -copula	NMZ1 = nominalisation (by vowel
COP = <i>-ha/-ta</i> -copula	lengthening)
COP3 = <i>-t</i> -copula	NMZ2 = nominalisation (by enclitic
CRD = coordination	demonstrative pronoun)
CS1 = simple causative	NMZp = plural nominalisation (with
CS2 = double causative	enclitic <i>=r-</i> )
DAT = dative	NOM = nominative
DDEM = determining demonstrative	NREL = negative relative
DEF = definite	O = object
DS = different subject	p = plural
f = feminine	OBL = oblique
GEN = genitive	PCO = perfective converb
hon = honorific, impersonal	POSS = possessive
HYP = hypothetical	PROG = progressive
ICO = imperfective converb	PS = passive
ICP = instrumental-comitative-	PURP = purposive verb
perlative	PVE = <i>e</i> -perfective
IDEM = independent demonstrative	PVO = <i>o</i> -perfective
pronoun	REAS = reason
IMP = imperative	REL = relative
INACT = inactual (past, irrealis)	s = singular
IPV = imperfective	SG = singulative
J = juncture	SS = same subject
LOC = locative	var. = various forms
m = masculine	VV = long vowel
MID = middle	