Tense-marking in Khoekhoe temporal clauses

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1 Introduction

+ Examples in this talk emanate predominantly from my own corpus (unreferenced examples).

-All citations from external sources/literature are referenced.

+ This talk concerns tense-aspect markers in the middle-field (see later).

1.1 Grammatical preliminaries

1.1.1 The Khoekhoe tense-aspect markers

+ There are 4 tense distinctions (rem.past, rec.past, present [morphologically unmarked], future), as well as one uncertain TAM-marker (*ga/ka)*; and

+ 3 aspect distinctions (perfective, imperfective, and 'perfect'). These are shown below:

Table 1: Khoekhoegowab tense-aspect-markers (TAM)

Tense		Aspect	
ge	remote past (REM.PST)	**ra**	imperfective (IPFV) [~ progressive]
go	recent past (REC.PST)	**a**	stative (STAT)
-	present (PRS)	**-**	perfective (PFV) [~ punctual]
nî	future (FUT)	hâ	perfect (PERF) [~completive/perfective, Haacke 2013]
ga/ka	*irrealis (IRR) [indefinite/ potential tense, Hagman 1977/Haacke 2013]*		

2   The Main clause and TAM

+ Tense-aspect markers (TAM) cannot be fronted alone, and thus cannot appear alone in the prefield

+ Main clauses is marked for sentence mood (DECL, INT etc.), esp. the declarative clause.

+ The verb is clause-final with tenses largely preverbal

+ The syntactic fields analysis for the basic Khoekhoe (declarative) clause is presented below following Güldemann et al. (2019: 57), and Witzlack-Makarevich (2006).

(1) *[PRE-FIELD]*   =**(S/A PRO) ge**   *[MIDDLE-FIELD]*   **PREDICATE**   *[POST-FIELD]*

+ *ge* represents the position of various clause type markers (*ge*=declarative; *kom…o*=assertive; *kha*=interrogative, etc.). Below in an example of a main clause.

(2)   **[PrF] [clause-2nd] [middle-field   ]   [PRED] [PostF   ]**
       [axa-b]   *ge*   *|gawa-s tsîn-a   dana-s   ai   go   ǂnui   hâ   i*
       boy-M.S.SBJ DECL   hat-F.S also-OBJ   head-F.S on   REC.PST put.on   PERF PST
       'The boy was also wearing a hat on the head.'

3   Corpus

+ This talk draws on a corpus of is concerned only with subordinate clauses that have some type of element occupying the middle-field.(subordinate clauses with an empty middle-field are not considered here). This results in a (sub-corpus of) **263** subordinate clauses studied here.

Table 2: Corpus distribution of tense-aspect-markers in Khoekhoe subordinate clauses

Subordinate clause type	Set		#
Adverbial clauses	All		158
	Temporal clauses only (excl. COND)	85 (54%)	
	Temporal clauses with =*o* (excl. COND)	64 (75%)	
Complement clauses			34
Relative clauses			71
Total			**263**

4   General position of TAM in subordinate clauses

+ In terms of distribution TAM is almost always clause-second in subordinate clause, albeit not strictly in most part.

+ The position of TAM remain largely variable for subordinate clauses, except temporal clauses with the conjunction =*o*, which shows a striclty clause-second position for tense(aspect) marking (TAM).

+ The example below examplifies the variable position of TAM in a subordinate clause of manner. The variation here does not lead to ungrammaticality:

(3)   *#|nai i ‖gam-e ra |gûmâ=se*

　　 |nai　　 *i*　　　 *‖gam-e*　　　　 ***ra***　　 *|gû-mâ=se*

　　 already 3C.S.SBJ water-C.S:OBL　 IPFV　 boil-stand=MANNER

　　 'As water is already standing boiling,'

+ Consider the change in position of TAM below (in the same manner clause)

(4)　 *|nai*　　　　 *i*　　　　 ***ra***　　 *‖gam-e*　　　 *|gû-mâ=se*

　　 already　　 3C.S.SBJ　 IPFV　 water-C.S:OBL　 boil-stand=MANNER

　　 'As water is already standing boiling,'

+ The following table shows the statistical distribution of TAM in the clauses studied here:

- Below are clauses marked only once for TAM (224 middle-field TAM occurrences)

Table 3: Khoekhoegowab tense-aspect-markers (TAM) – single marking

PreF	Syntactic Subject	MF1	MF2	MF3	MF4	MF5	MF6	PRED	PostF	Clause Type
		129								ADV
			4							ADV
		25								COMP
			2							COMP
				1						COMP
		62								REL
			1							REL
Total (224 occurrences)		216	7	1	0	0	0			
Percentage (100%)		96.43%	3.13%	0.45%	0%	0%	0%			

+ The following table shows the distribution of double TAM marking in (SUB) clauses

Table 4: Khoekhoegowab tense-aspect-markers (TAM) in Dependent clauses – marked double

PreF	Syntactic Subject	MF1/CL-2nd	MF2	MF3	MF4	MF5	MF6	PRED	PostF	Clause Type
		10		10						ADV
		2			2					ADV
		3					3			ADV
		4		4						COMP
		1			1					COMP
		3	3							REL
		1		1						REL
		1				1				REL
Total (25 occurrences)		25	3	15	3	1	3			
Percentage		50%	6%	30%	6%	2%	6%			

+ The table (above) shows a predominant tendency of TAM as first element in the middle-field (MF1).

- However, it will be argued that such position seems to have 'become' a rule for Khoekhoe temporal clauses, such that one may argue rather for a clause-second position/Wackernagel position for TAM in Khoekhoe temporal clauses with $=\boldsymbol{o}$

5   The temporal clause

+ There are three basic types of temporal clauses in Khoekhoe, introduced by *o*, *hîa* and (spatio-temporal) ***postpositions***, respectively. These are exemplified below.

(5) temporal clause with the linker =*o* '**when**' – Temporal (~conditional), most frequent:

‖goaga = b		go	ani-b-a		ā = **o**
morning = 3M.S.SBJ		REC.PST	chicken-M.S-DSBJ		cry = when

'When the cock crowed in the morning [lit. chicken cry](~In the morning, when…)'

(6)   conditional clause *(if)* with the linker =*o*

χapas ga ǂkhariro o

χapa-s	*ga*	*ǂkhari-ro* = **o**
vessel-F.S.SBJ	POT	small-DIM = if

'If the vessel/the dish is small,'

(7) temporal clause with *hîa* *'while'* (simultaneous event):

ǂkhari !âro-e b tà ais ‖ga !gapi hîa

ǂkhari	*!â-ro-e* = *b*		*ta*	*ai-s*	*‖ga*	*!gapi*	*hîa*
small	part-DIM-C.S:OBJ = 3M.S.SBJ		IPFV	face-F.S	toward	ride	while

'While he rode a little distance,'

(8) temporal clause with a ***postposition (e.g. !nūb ai)***:

tsîs[b] goro ‖khae‖nâ !nūbai, ama-e,

tsî = *b*		*go-ro*	*‖khae.‖nâ*	*!nū-b*	*ai,*	*ama-e,*
and = M.S.SBJ		REC.PST-IPFV	hand.over	moment-M.S	on	true-C.S.OBL

'And when he was handing [her] over, right,'

+ This talk is actually solely concerned with the first type as in (5).

6   Clause-second TAM position in (temporal) clauses with =*o*

+ (9) shows TAM preceding the 'deposed-subject' (Haacke 2013, *i.a.*) argument

(9)   ‖*goaga* = *b*   *go*   *ani-b-a*   *ā* = *o*
         morning = 3M.S.SBJ   REC.PST.PFV   chicken-M.S-OBL   cry = when
         'When the cock crowed in the morning [lit. chicken cry] (~In the morning, when...)'

+ TAM precedes the object argument in (10).

(10)   *tsī gu go nē ǀgui apaǃaosa ū o*

         tsī   *gu*   *go*   *nē*   *ǀgui*   *apa.ǃao-s-a*   *ū* = *o*
         and   3M.P.SBJ   REC.PST.PFV   here   one   pear-F.S-OBJ   take = when
         'And (t/here) when they took one pear,'

+ Having the TAM marker immediately before the verb, makes the clause at best unnatural, if not ungrammatical (11-12), as shown by the following two examples, altered from above.

(11)   *‖*goaga* = *b*   *ani-b-a*   *go*   *ā* = *o*
         morning = 3M.S   chicken-M.S-OBL   REC.PST.PFV   cry = when
         'Intended: When the cock crowed in the morning [lit. chicken cry]'[1]

(12)   *tsî̄   gu   nē   ǀgui   apa.ǃao-s-a   go   *ū* = *o*
         and   3M.P.SBJ   here   one   pear-F.S-OBJ   REC.PST.PFV   take = when
         'And (t/here) when they took one pear,'

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[1] Temporal clause of the type ‖*goaga* = *b* *ani-b-a* *ra* *ā* = *o* 'When the cock crows in the morning' (habitual event) – with the aspect marker appearing (only later in the clause) outside of the clause-second/Wackernagel position in a temporal clauses with =*o* do not seem to provide counter evidence for the present analysis of this clause type. This is because such (subordinate) clauses do not have overt tense marking and posited a likely presence of a (morphologically unmarked) present tense in such a case would not be very helpful. In fact, the most plausible argument in such a (subordinate) clause is to maintain that tense is underspecified. This is in fact the case here. This subordinate clause type (with no overt tense marking) draws its tense reading generally from the main clause, in such a case. Condiser the same habitual event if tense were to be overtly/transparently specified – e.g. regarding a remote past (habitual) event. In such a case, it would be ungrammatical for Namibian Khoekhoe: *‖*goaga* = *b* *ani-b-a* *gere* *ā* = *o* 'When the cock crowed in the morning (~would crow.../used to crow...)'.

6.1 TAM in other temporal clauses

+ The position of TAM in other temporal clauses is less strict, similar to the adverbial clause of manner shown earlier:

(13) temporal clause with *hîa/îa* **'while',** TAM occurs away from the clause-second position

tsî i ‖nā ‖gan-e ra nēsisa# |aoba !gam -'e# |gû‖gam-i xa## îa

tsî	*i*	*‖nā*	*‖gan-e*	*ra*	*nēsi-s-a*
and	1C.S.SBJ	that	meat-C.S:OBL	IPFV	now-F.S-OBL

|ao-b-a	*!gam-he*	*|gû-‖gam-i*	*xa*	*îa*
blood-M.S-OBL	kill-PASS	boil-water-C.S	by	while

'And now while that meat gets blood cooked out of it by the water'

7   Repeated TAM in non-standard varieties

+ There's a frequent repetition of TAM markers in non-standard varieties (without any clause-internal pause present). This involves the clause-second TAM. Evidence from the spoken Namibian Khoekhoe, and the Richtersverld Nama is shown below:

7.1 The spoken Namibian Khoekhoe

+ the repetition of tense, ga/*ka* in (14) below.[2]

(14)   *tsîts ga oms ngâ kara ǂgâo,##*

tsî=ts	*ga*	*oms*	*!nâ*	*ka-ra*	*ǂgâ=o,##*
and=2M.S.SBJ	POT	house	inside	POT-IPFV	enter=when

'And when you enter inside the house,'

(15)   *tsî da ga ǁnāpa kara sīo,##*

tsî	*da*	*ga*	*ǁnā-pa*	*ka-ra*	*sī=o,##*
and	1C.P.SBJ	POT	there-PLACE	POT-IPFV	arrive=when

'And when I get/reach there,'

+ In the above examples, it appears that while tense can be away from the verb, aspect is easily closer to the verb.

- Of course, the aspect (*ra*) can occur with the initial *ga/ka* and the clause remains acceptable/grammatical, as shown in (16).

(16) | *tsî=ts* | *ka-ra* | *om-s* | *!nâ* | *ǂgâ=o,##* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| and=2M.S | POT-IPFV | house-F.S | inside | enter=when |

'And when you enter inside the house,'

+ But notice the ungrammaticality if the tense marker appears preverbally, (18-19).

(18) | **tsî* | *da* | *ǁnā-pa* | *ka-ra* | *sī=o,##* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| and | 1C.P.SBJ | there-PLACE | POT-IPFV | arrive=when |

*'Intended: And when I get/reach there,'

(19) | **tsî* | *da* | *ǁnā-pa* | *ga* | *sī=o,##* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| and | 1C.P.SBJ | there-PLACE | POT | arrive=when |

*'Intended: And when I get/reach there,'

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[2] The phonological variation between *ga* and *ka* involves tone. However this is not important for the present discussion. Tone is thus not marked in this talk (altogether) similar to standard Khoekhoegowab orthography.

7.2 The Richtersveld Nama

+ The status of various clause types (main vs. subordinate) still needs to be studies for peripheral varieties of Khoekhoe. I therefore only show cases doubly marked TAM in the Richtersveld Nama variety. This is a pervasive way of marking TAM (Witzlack-Makarevich 2006:23) notes.

(20) *tsî=n*   *go*   *‖nā -n -a*   *go*   *!gû.*
      and = 3C.P.SBJ   REC.PST   that-3C.P-DSBJ   REC.PST   depart
      'And those ones departed.' (Witzlack-Makarevich 2006:23)

(21) *ti-ta*   *ge*   *go*   *!ā-s-a*   *go*   *mû*
      1-1S.SBJ   DECL REC.PST   settlement-F.S-OBJ   REC.PST   see
      'I saw the settlement' (Witzlack-Makarevich 2006:25)

+ Here, Witzlack-Makarevich analysis the TAM as part of the clause-second material. This analysis finds support in the presented talk on temporal clauses.
- However due to variability of TAM position in other clauses, it may be plausible to conclude that the left-most position of TAM in the middle-field is largely rather a predominant tendency for most subordinate clauses for Namibian Khoekhoe data, while it is strictly the case for a subset of temporal clause with =*o*.
-This is because the clause-second/Wackernagel slot itself is a strict position in Khoekhoe clauses - hardly variable, if at all. In such a reading only temporal clauses with =*o* would here be seen as having a (strict) clause-second position.
+The above phenomenon falls outside the repetition of TAM after clause-internal pauses, which is observed in all clauses, including main clauses:

+ Below is a main clauses with a clause-internal pause, and TAM repeated

(22) *o i ge ra mai-e sī# ēga klonde ra dī##*
      o   *i*   *ge*   *ra*   *mai-e*   *sī*   *ēga*   *klon-de*   *ra*   *dī*
      CNJ   1C.S.SBJ DECL IPFV porridge-C.S:OBJ arrive later lump-F.P:OBL IPFV do
      'The porridge then forms lumps later'

8   Conclusion and summary

+ In Khoekhoe subordinate clauses, TAM generally shows close affinity to the clause-second/Wackernagel position.

- Due to possible syntactic variability, this may be seen only as a (very) strong tendency, except for temporal clauses with =*o* where the clause-second position of TAM appears to be quite strict, at this stage.

+ While tense may easily be away from the verb (even in a clause-second position, for =*o* clauses), the same is not observed for aspect alone (where an aspect marker appears twice)

References

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Abbreviations

ADV	Adverb	P	Plural
ASSERT	Assertive clause	PASS	Passive
C	Common	PERF	Perfect
CNJ	Conjunction	PRO	Pronoun
D	Dual	PRS	Present
DECL	Declarative	PST	Past
DIM	Diminutive	SBJ	Subject
DSBJ	Deposed-subject	REC	Recent
F	Feminine	REM	Remote
FUT	Future	S	Singular
IPFV	Imperfective	SBJ	Subject
M	Masculine	SUBJ	Subjunctive
NEG	Negative		
OBJ	Object		
OBL	Oblique		