

GADDANG AFFIRMATIVES AND NEGATIVES

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INTRODUCTION

Introduction

1. Affirmation
2. Negation

ALTHOUGH THIS PAPER IS PRIMARILY A DESCRIPTION OF Gaddang¹ affirmatives and negatives, it also illustrates the fact that certain underlying psychological phenomena of a culture may be reflected by the language of that culture. In this case the frequency of affirmation and the nature of its occurrences within the language points to the extrovertive nature of Gaddang personalities.

Sapir commented on the possibility of such substrata psychological phenomena coming to the surface in the structural expressions of a language when he wrote: "Language may be looked upon as a symbolic system which reports or refers to or otherwise substitutes for the direct experience; it does not as a matter of actual behavior stand apart from or parallel to direct experience, but completely inter-penetrates with. . . (and) vocabulary is a sensitive index of the culture of the people."²

Gaddangs express themselves freely and with strong feelings, punctuating their expressions liberally with affirmatives; these occurring in a wide variety of contexts. The negatives do not occur with this wide distribution.

1. *Affirmatives.* Affirmative forms are manifested both by verbal and non-verbal expressions. In this paper these are called speech and non-speech forms. The speech forms have the highest degree of occurrence. The non-speech forms carry only a nominal function load.

1.1 *Speech forms.* Speech forms divide into two types — lateral and bilateral.

1.1.1 *Laterals.* Lateral affirmatives are morphemes that occur only as minimal response forms:

¹ The Gaddangs are a semi-nomadic people living in scattered areas of the Cagayan Valley and eastern Bontoc of north-central Luzon in the Philippines. There are about 2,500 speakers of the linguistic group, who still retain their own distinct culture. Data used for this paper were gathered during the years 1957-62 under the auspices of the Summer Institute of Linguistics.

² Sapir, Edward. "Selected Writings of," pp. 7-32, as quoted in *Anthropological Linguistics*, Anthropology Department, University of Indiana, Vol. 1, pp. 31.

- on* is an affirmative signalling agreement with a statement made by another speaker or an affirmative response to a query: *ma wara?* *on*. "Why, are there some?" "Yes."
- one* is an affirmative signalling only agreement with a statement made by a speaker: *ay napato. one*. "It is hot!" "Yes." It is similar to the English slang expression "You bet!"
- iqi*³ is an affirmative with similar distribution as *on*, but is used almost exclusively by women and children: *Natay into abbin da?* *iqi*. "Did their child die?" "Yes."
- husto* is an affirmative borrowed from Spanish through Ilocano with wide distribution including assent, agreement, approval: *Dama na?* *Husto*. "Is that enough/ Can it be?" "It is/yes."

1.1.2 *Bilaterals*. Bilateral affirmatives are morphemes that may occur as minimal responses, but they may also occur as affixed or compounded forms. *It is the high function load of these forms that gives the Gaddang language its strongly assertive character:*

- antu* is an affirmative which may occur as a minimal response form with similar distribution as *on*: *antwenay yaw?* *antu*. "Is this it?" "Yes." It may also occur prefixed to a base construction: *awan nakuy?* *antuyan*. (*antu* + *iyen*) "There is none maybe?" "Yes, there is!" It may also occur with the verb + actor construction: *mano kami antu*. "We will go, yes."
- korog* is an affirmative that may occur as a minimal response form when prefixed with *ga-*: *narakat iyo lalaki gakorog*. "That man is no good, it's true." It may also occur compounded with another affirmative form: *onkorog!* (*on* + *korog*) "Yes, indeed!" (emphatic affirmation.)
- olud* is an affirmative response form with similar distribution as *on*: *wara pirak ngu?* *olud*. "Do you have money?" "Yes." It may also occur compounded with another affirmative form: *hustolud* (*husto* + *olud*) "Yes/enough." It may also occur suffixed to verb and descriptive forms and to class II pronouns.⁴ *ginumwanglud* (*ginumwang* + *olud*) "Arrived, yes." *napatolud* (*napato* + *olud*) "It's hot, yes." *kongkolud* (*kongko* + *olud*) "That's what I said, yes." This form may also occur compounded with negative forms, adding emphasis to the negation: *awanlud* (*awan* + *olud*) "There is one, yes!" *amenalud* (*amena* + *olud*) "It is not/It cannot be, yes!" good." *mekamulud* (*mekamu* + *olud*) "I don't know, yes."

³ The letter *q* is used here to symbolize the glottal catch.

⁴ The author's "Gaddang Personal Pronouns," unpublished ms.

1.2 *Non-speech forms.* Non-speech forms are nonverbal gestures that are frequently used to signal affirmation. These have a wide distribution and may or may not occur simultaneously with the speech forms in minimal response expressions. These gestures are an abrupt upward motion of the head, or the raising of one or both eyebrows.

2. *Negatives.* Negative forms contrast between those which are part of the regular phonemic and morphemic systems of the language and those which, although orally produced, are not part of these systems.

2.1 *Systemic Speech Forms.* Of the negative forms listed, *awan* and *ame*— have the highest frequency occurrence in the language.

ame— is a negative response form which occurs most frequently in combination with a class I or class II personal pronoun-verb construction: *amek anggam*. “I don’t like.” *ameka mat-tangit*. “Don’t you cry!” In this position it negates the action of the verb.

It may also occur in combination with the third person singular pronoun *na* as a minimal response form. In this distribution it functions grammatically as a verb signalling objection or dislike for certain conditions or actions: *amena* “It is not good.”

awan is a negative response form occurring most often as a negating attributive occurring in noun phrase constructions: *awan a ilak sitaw*. “There are no mosquitos here.”

As a negating attributive, this form may also occur with verb constructions signalling absence of quantity: *awan akkwang ko*. “I have nothing to do/I am doing nothing.”

bakkan is a negative response form occurring most frequently as a minimal expression indicating a mistake, a mis-statement, or some kind of erroneous action. The stem may also take CVCCV reduplication to emphasize the negating principle: *bakka-bakkan*. “No, indeed!”

2.2 *Non-systemic Speech Forms.* These negatives occur only as minimal responses.

tst is a negative response form signalling strong dislike to a request or of emphatic negation to a question. It is most widely used by children. *Ara kangkamannu. tst*. “Hurry up!” “No, I don’t want to!”

mMq is a negative response form signalling disagreement. Lexically, it is closer to the English “no” than any of the other Gaddang negatives. This form consists of a voiced bilabial nasal followed by a voiceless bilabial nasal and a final glottal catch: *unmangkayo so talun.² mMq*. “Are you-all going to the forest?” “No.”