

Negation markers, focus markers and Jespersen cycles in Kikongo (Bantu, H16): a comparative and diachronic corpus-based approach

Jasper DE KIND^{*1}, Maud DEVOS[#], Gilles-Maurice DE SCHRYVER^{*°} & Koen BOSTOEN^{*+}

*KongoKing Research Group, Department of Languages and Cultures, Ghent University

[#]Royal Museum for Central Africa, Tervuren

[°]Department of African Languages, University of Pretoria

⁺Université Libre de Bruxelles

jasper.dekind@ugent.be

1. Introduction

In Bantu languages, negation is commonly marked verb-initially (cf. Meeussen 1967, Kamba Muzenga 1981; Güldemann 1999). Two types exist:

- Pre-initial negative marker: NEG-SC-R-FN
- Post-initial negative marker: SC-NEG-R-FN

In Kikongo (Bantu H16/H10), however, negation is considered to be doubly marked: a first negation marker appears in verb-initial position (type 1), while a second negation marker is expressed post-verbally. As Laman (1912: 113) puts it in his Kikongo grammar:

I. **Ka-ko.**

§316 In the negation *ka* (*ke*) -*ko* (cf. *ne-pas* of the French), not, *ka* is put at the beginning and *ko*. at the end of the negative sentence or modifier.

Ka tubamweni ko. We have not seen them.

Ko is often put at the end of the sentence, even if it contains several clauses:

Ka tumweni bayizidi zono ko. We have not seen those who came yesterday.

We observe the same structure in other Kikongo varieties. The verb-initial marker (which is typically **ke/ka**, with allomorphs **ki** (1sg) and **ku** (2sg)), precedes the verbal prefix. The postverbal marker follows after the verb, but not necessarily immediately after the verb.

¹ The PhD research of the first author is funded through a FWO fellowship.

(1) KIMBATA (KK fieldwork 2012)

Khatu, **kisendila** mpfumu **ko**.

Nkatu	ki-send-il-a	N-fumu	ko
No	NEG1.1sg-weed-APPL-FV	NP9-chief	NEG2

‘No, I am not weeding for the chief’

(2) KISOLONGO (KK fieldwork 2012)

Pé, **kindééle ko**, láámbalala kwame ndáámbalééle.

Pe	kiN-lal-idi	ko	lambalal-a	ku-ame	N-lambalal-idi
No	NEG1.1sg-sleep-PRF	NEG2	lie.down-FV	PP17-POSS1sg	SC1sg-lie.down-PRF

‘No, I don’t sleep, I’m only lying down.’

This double negation strategy is reminiscent of the French negation *ne...pas*, as Laman (1912, cf. supra) already noticed. In a recent article, Devos & van der Auwera (2013) give an overview of post-verbal negative markers in Bantu, and argue that these markers take part in what is generally known as a Jespersen cycle.

This Jespersen cycle can probably be best illustrated by means of the French example *ne...pas*. As Devos & van der Auwera (2013: 6) explain: “The original marker in French was *ne*. In a later stage *ne* was reinforced by *pas*, originally meaning ‘step’ [and initially used with movement verbs]. In colloquial speech, the original negator is falling into disuse, leaving *pas* as the only sentential negator. “

(3)	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
	<i>ne</i>	<i>ne...pas</i>	<i>pas</i>

Following the research of Devos & van der Auwera (2013), in this paper we would like to give a more detailed account of double negation in one specific language cluster, i.e. Kikongo (as opposed to a wide comparative Bantu approach). Kikongo is a dialect continuum, containing several speech varieties which may differ significantly from each other. In this research, data from different varieties will be considered. These data were gathered both through elicitation (fieldwork) as through corpus research.

Being part of my Ph.D. research on Information Structure in Kikongo, attention will be paid in the first place to the role of focus markers in the Kikongo negation strategy. Focus markers play an essential role in Jespersen cycles, as it is assumed that the second negator (e.g. *pas* in French), originally has an emphatic function (cf. Devos & van der Auwera 2013: 205-206). Thus, one of the research questions will be to investigate the etymology of the second negator **ko** in Kikongo and its function as focus marker.

As a first step, however, the syntactic behavior of this negator **ko** in the contemporary Kikongo varieties will be addressed. As Laman (1912, cf. supra) claims, “*ko* is often put at the end of the sentence”. We will see, however, that the position of **ko** in Kikongo is highly variable and we will try to determine the conditioning of its position in the negative phrase.

Another issue addressed is the possible emergence of a third negative marker, as was observed by Devos & van der Auwera (2013: 248-252). This third marker is the locative possessive pronoun

belonging to class 17. This marker also appears in negative phrases, as illustrated in the example from the Kisikongo New Testament of 1926 below:

(4) KISIKONGO (NT 1926: John 20, 13)

Bakatwidi Mfumu ame, **kizeye ko kwame ko** kuna bansidi.

Ba-katul-idi	N-fumu	ame	ki-zay-idi	ko
SC2-take.away-PRF	NP9-chief	POSS1sg	NEG1.1sg-know-PRF	PRON17
ku-ame	ko	kuna	ba-n-sal-idi	
PP17-POSS1sg	NEG2	DEM17	SC2-OC1-leave-PRF	

‘They took my Lord away and I don’t know where they have put him.’

We find thus at first sight triple negation in Kikongo as well. The etymology of this LOC POSS 17 will also be examined.

Finally, we could consider the question whether Jespersen cycles are indeed taking place in Kikongo, and if we can find attestations of the different stages of the cycle in the Kikongo (diachronic) corpus.

2. The postverbal marker **ko**

2.1. Syntactic behavior

2.1.1. Occurrence of **ko** as postverbal negative marker

The postverbal negative marker **ko** is used in all kinds of negative clauses: 1) main negative clause; 2) subordinate negative clause; 3) prohibitive (i.e. negative subjunctive); 4) negative non-verbal predication

Main negative clause:

(5) KIMBATA (KK fieldwork 2012)

Khatu, **kisendila mpfumu ko**.

Nkatu	ki-send-il-a	N-fumu	ko
No	NEG1.1sg-weed-APPL-FV	NP9-chief	NEG2

‘No, I am not weeding for the chief’

(6) CIWOYO (KK fieldwork 2012)

Bamavangila **ko** ku mphutu.

ba-ma-vang-il-a	ko	ku	N-putu
SC2-OC6-make-APPL-FV	NEG2	LOC17	NP9-Europe

‘They didn’t make them in Europe.’

Subordinate negative clause, including relative clause:

(7) KISIKONGO (JW, Tusansu, p. 278)

O Kurese adieyi kavovesa kw’awana **ke** balenda vutuka **ko** kuna Yerusaleme?

O	Kurese	adieyi	ka-vov-isa	kwa	awana	ke-ba-lend-a
AUG1	Cyrus	what	SC1-tell-PRF	CONN17	DEM2	NEG1-SC2-can-FV
vutuk-a	ko	kuna	Yerusaleme			
return-FV	NEG2	DEM17	Jerusalem			

‘What does Cyrus tell those [the Israelites] who cannot return to Jerusalem?’

- (8) KISIKONGO (JW, Tusansu, p. 57)

[...] ubatumini kuna Engipito kadi **ke** kwakala diaka **madia ko** kuna Kenani.

u-ba-tum-idi kuna Engipito kadi ke-ku-akal-a diaka

SC1-OC2-send-PRF DEM17 Egypt because NEG1-SC17-to.be-FV also

ma-dia ko kuna Kenani.

NP6-food NEG2 DEM17 Ca’naan.

‘He has sent them to Egypt because there wasn’t any food anymore in Ca’naan.’

Prohibitive:

- (9) KISIKONGO (JW, Tusansu, p. 30)

Kufinam’oko ko

ku-finam-a o ko ko

NEG1.2sg-come.near-FV AUG17 PRON17 NEG2

‘Do not come any closer’

Negative non-verbal predicate (often as initial part of cleft-construction):

- (10) CIWOYO (KK fieldwork 2012)

Nan’ bulizi lipowa?

nani Ø-bul-izi li-powa

who SC1-break-PRF NP5-pot

‘Who has broken the pot?’

Minu **ko** yalibulizi.

minu ko ya-li-bul-izi

PRON1sg NEG2 SC1sg-OC5-break-PRF

‘It’s not me who has broken it.’

- (11) KIMBATA (KK fieldwork 2012)

Nani budidi kiinzu?

nani Ø-bul-idi ki-inzu

who SC1-break-PRF NP5-pot

‘Who has broken the pot?’

Kamono ko mbudidi kyo.

ka mono ko N-bul-idi kyo

NEG1 PRON1sg NEG2 SC1sg-break-PRF PRON7

‘It’s not me who has broken it.’

The Ciwoyo example above in (10) demonstrates that the postverbal marker **ko** is the only negative marker in non-verbal predicates in this Kikongo variety. Such is also the case for plural participants (cf. ex. 6). This suggests that Ciwoyo in some cases already reached the third stage of a Jespersen cycle.

2.1.2. Position of NEG2 **ko**

With regard to the positioning of **ko**, the above examples already illustrate that the position of this postverbal negative marker is not fixed. This is different from the French postverbal marker *pas*, which is expressed IAV.

Devos & van der Auwera (2013: 213) show that the positioning of **ko** in Kimanyanga (Kikongo H16b) is pragmatically determined. They consider that the ‘normal’ position of **ko** is sentence-final (cf. also Laman 1912 supra). However, when a constituent is put under contrastive focus, the marker **ko** precedes this focused constituent:

(12) Kimanyanga (Makokila, cited in Devos & van der Auwera 2013: 213)

- a. **ki-tuú-d-ídí** malongá vaméezako
1SG.NEG1-put-PRF 6.plate 16.9.table-NEG2
‘I have not put the plates on the table.’
- b. **kituúdídíko** málóngá vaméeza (kaántsi nzúngu)
‘I have not put THE PLATES on the table (but the pot).’
- c. **kituúdídí** málóngakó vaméeza (kaántsi músúku)
‘I have not put the plates ON THE TABLE (but in the kitchen)’

However, in several other varieties, it seems to be the other way around. Consider the elicited Kisikongo example below. The ‘normal’ position of the postverbal negator (without clear focus), seems to be after the object, but preceding the adjunct(s).

(13) Kisikongo (fieldwork 2013, Antwerp)

Nkatu, **kiamwene** o mpangi’aku **ko** mazono ku zandu.
nkatu ki-a-mon-idi o N-pangi aku ko mazono
No NEG1.1sg-PST-see-PRF AUG1 NP1-brother POSS2sg NEG2 yesterday
ku Ø-zandu
LOC17 NP9-marker
‘No, I didn’t see your brother yesterday at the market.’

We see the same in Kimbata, in which **ko** follows the object, as in (14), but precedes the adjunct, as in (15).

(14) KIMBATA (KK fieldwork 2012)

Khatu, **kisendila** mpfumu **ko**.
Nkatu ki-send-il-a N-fumu ko
No NEG1.1sg-weed-APPL-FV NP9-chief NEG2
‘No, I am not weeding for the chief.’

(15) KIMBATA (KK fieldwork 2012)

Ntunginzo kataleenga gaseeka, kanzi theba **kazitasima ko** mu kibaka.
N-tungi-N-zo ka-ta-leng-a ga Ø-seeka kanzi
NP1-worker-NP9-house SC1-PRES-plaster-FV LOC16 NP9-red.stone but
N-teba ka-zi-ta-sim-a ko mu ki-baka
NP10-kaolin NEG1-SC10-PRES-stick-FV NEG2 LOC18 NP7-wall.

‘The bricklayer has plastered the wall, but the white clay (kaolin) doesn’t stick well on the wall.’

However, when the adjunct is contrastively focused, the negative marker **ko** follows the focused adjunct in some varieties. Such strategy is found in several Kikongo varieties, such as Kimbata (16), Kindibu (17) and Fiote (18).

(16) KIMBATA (KK fieldwork 2012)

Mesa mayilamene ku nsadima baya unkaka.

mesa	ma-yi-laman-idi	ku	N-sadima	baya	unkaka
NP6-table	SC6-make-PRF	LOC17	NP9-worker	NP5-wood	other

‘The table has been made by another carpenter.’

Kabayidikidi mo ku Mputu ko.

ka-ba-yidik-idi	mo	ku	N-putu	ko
NEG1-SC2-make-PRF	PRON6	LOC17	NP9-Europe	NEG2

‘It has not been made in Europe.’

(17) KINDIBU (NT 1923 : John 7, 24)

Ke luzengi mambu mu mpolo **ko**, kansi se luzengi nkanu a unsongi.

Ke	lu-zengi-i	ma-ambu	mu	N-polo	kansi	se
NEG1	SC2pl-cut-SBJ	NP6-word	LOC18	NP9-appearance	but	then
lu-zengi-i	N-kanu	a	u	N-songi		
SC2pl-cut-SBJ	NP9-judgement	CONN	AUG	NP9-justice		

‘Don’t judge according to appearance, but (then) judge according to justice.’

(18) FIOTE (NT 1929 : Matthew 6, 13)

kututualani mu mpukumumu ko, kansi ututanina mu nkwa mbi.

ku-tu-twalan-i	mu	N-pukumunu	ko	kansi
NEG1.2sg-OC1pl-bring-SBJ	LOC18	NP9-temptation	NEG2	but
u-tu-tanin-a	mu	N-kwa	N-bi	
SC2pl-OC1pl-deliver-FV	LOC18	NP1-person	NP9-evil	

‘And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.’

In Kisikongo no such examples have been found so far. Instead, in most cases, contrastive focus on the adjunct is marked by the non-verbal predication construction **ke ... ko** (19-20)

(19) KISIKONGO (NT 1926: Corinthians I 7, 6)

Ediadi mpovèle muna nswa, **ke** mu nkanikinu **ko**.

Ediadi	N-vov-idi	muna	N-swa	ke	mu	N-kanikinu	ko
DEM5	SC1sg-tell-PRF	DEM18	NP9-approval	NEG1	LOC18	NP9-commandment	NEG2

‘But this I say by way of concession, not of commandment.’

(20) KISIKONGO (JW: Tusansu p. 275)

O Nkand’a Nzambi awei usongelanga vo Nzambi okala yo wantu ova ntoto **ke** mu nitu **ko**, kansi mu mwanda?

O	n-kanda	a	N-zambi	awei	u-songel-ang-a	vo
AUG3	NP3-book	CONN	NP9-God	how	NP3-show-PRES-FV	that
N-zambi	o-kal-a	ya	o	wa-ntu	o	va
NP9-God	SC1-to.be-FV	CONJ	AUG2	NP2-man	AUG16	LOC16
ke	mu	nitu	ko	kansi	mu	mu-anda
NEG1	LOC18	NP9-flesh	NEG2	but	LOC18	NP3-spirit

‘How does the Bible show that God being with people on earth is not physically [lit. in flesh], but figuratively [lit. in spirit]?’

The position of **ko** indeed seems to be related to Information Structure, but it differs regionally in how it is used to convey contrastive focus. With regard to adjuncts, it precedes the focused adjunct in some varieties (Kimanyanga), while in others, it follows the focused adjunct (Kimbata, Kindibu, Fiote). The conditioning of the position of **ko** is still unclear in most cases, and this issue definitely requires further research.

What is clear, though, is that **ko** does not have a fixed position in the sentence. It has thus not fully been conventionalized as a neutral negative marker without focus function, as is the case with the French *pas*.

2.2. Origin of **ko**

To retrieve the possible origin of the postverbal negator **ko**, some different paths will be explored. First, the different uses of **ko** (outside negation) will be addressed. This will hopefully shed light on a possible evolution from one use to the other. Second, we will have a look in the historical Kikongo sources and see if there are differences between contemporary Kikongo and 17th century Kikongo with regard to negation strategies

2.2.1. Different uses of **ko** and first hypotheses

Although **ko** is nowadays primarily used as a negation marker, it is also used with other functions. For instance, it looks formally exactly the same as the anaphoric pronoun of class 15 and 17. This is illustrated in the following examples:

(21) Kisikongo (NT 1926: Luke 11, 3)

O dia kweto kwa lumbu ya lumbu, utuvana **ko** e lumbu yawonso

O	∅-dia	ku-eto	kwa	∅-lumbu	ya	∅-lumbu
AUG15	NP15-food	PP15-POSS1pl	CONN17	NP7-day	CONN	NP7-day
u-tu-van-a	e	∅-lumbu	i-awonso			
SC2sg-OC1pl-give-FV	AUG8	NP8-day	PP8-every			

Give us day by day our daily bread. (Lit.: our daily food, give it to us every day)

(22) Kisikongo (JW: Tusansu, p. 226)

“Ovo kwakaka unete, unsamunwina **ko** kuna unsidi, yankatula.”

ovo	ku-akaka	u-nat-idi	u-n-samunwin-a	ko
if	NP17-other	SC2sg-take-PRF	SC2sg-OC1sg-tell-FV	PRON17
kuna	u-n-sal-idi	ya-n-katul-a		
DEM17	SC2sg-OC1-put	SC1-OC1-take.away-FV		

'If you have taken him away, tell me where you have put him.'

Another function of **ko** can be found in the Kikongo grammar of Laman (1912: 226)

“§318. **Ko** is used partly in the same manner as kwandi (see 168, Note), in order to emphasize or bring out a matter more strongly, partly to express a difference of opinion politely:

Muntu bela ye bela, niaka ko lutidi mu mbote	Man is always sick, but to be well is the best.
Mini ye mini mitekanga, mvula ko lutidi mu mbote	The sun which shines forth is good, but the rain is much better
Mundele ko .	Why, it is the white man.
Kamba ko ?	Not so? It is so, isn't it?

NOTE. Many adverbs and conjunctions are formed with **ko**, such as nako, nanako, perhaps so; mpeleko, although; kiongoloko, just so.”

Ko is thus described as some kind of focus marker by Laman (1912) for central Kikongo (Kimanyanga), but this function is not described in other grammars, such as Bentley (1887) and Ndonga Mfuwa (1995) for southern Kikongo (Kisikongo). So far, it has not been attested yet in the corpus, but this search definitely requires to be continued. The evolution from a focus marker to a negative marker fits in well within the Jespersen cycle pattern: the focus marker **ko** could first be used to emphasize the negation, but later lost this emphatic function and became neutral.

2.2.2. Negation and **ko** in 17th century Kikongo

The diachronic study of Kikongo has the extraordinary advantage compared to other Bantu languages that it has early written sources at its disposal. The first running text dates back to 1624, and consists of a catechism written in a southern Kikongo variety, translated from Portuguese. It is thus possible to examine the change in negation strategies over a period of 400 years.

When we look at negation structures in the catechism, we see that the postverbal marker **ko** is already used in most of the cases:

(23) KIKONGO 1624 (Bontinck & Nsasi 1978 [1624] : 84)

Kubobe **ko** o ngeeye bo aikaala o Zamb a mpungu bu nfuulu onso ee?

Ku-vov-ele	ko	o	ngeeye	bo	a-ikaal-a	o
NEG1.2sg-say-PRF	NEG2	AUG1	PPRO2sg	that	SC1-to.be-FV	AUG1
Zambiampungu	bu	N-fulu	onso	ee?		
NP9-God	LOC	NP9-place	every	QW		

‘Haven’t you said that God is everywhere?’

(24) KIKONGO 1624 (Bontinck & Nsasi 1978 [1624] : 58)

Ya nkii bo **ke** mu mifuunu miame **ko**, [...]

Ya nki bo	ke	mu	mi-fuunu	mi-ame	ko
because	NEG1	LOC18	NP4-merit	PP4-POSS1sg	NEG2

‘Because it is not by my merits [...]’

However, in several cases **ko** is absent. To give an idea: in the French translation, the preverbal negative marker in French **ne/n’** occurs 125 times, while **ko** in Kikongo only occurs 85 times. The cases in which is absent are mostly prohibitives. Around 28 instances have been found in which **ko** is absent in these cases, while 9 have been found in other contexts.

(25) KIKONGO 1624 (Bontinck & Nsasi 1978 [1624] : 138)

ketussaadi munaa ilumbu yo tuingu, kanaa munaa ilumbu ya asantu,

ke-tu-sal-i	muna	i-lumbu	ya	o	tu-mingu	kana
NEG1-SC1pl-work-SBJ	DEM18	NP8-day	CONJ	AUG13	NP13-Sunday	nor
muna	i-lumbu	ya	a-santu			
DEM18	NP8-day	CONN	NP2-saint			

‘Let’s not work on Sundays, nor on the days of the Saints.’

However, also 17 examples of prohibitives with the marker **ko** have been found:

(26) KIKONGO 1624 (Bontinck & Nsasi 1978 [1624] : 194)

Munaa mukangalu **kabobi** mambu ma mieye manaa mabanga o uü **ko**.

muna	mu-kangalu	ka-bob-i	ma-ambu	ma	mi-eye
LOC18	NP3-conversation	NEG1.1-say-SBJ	NP6-word	CONN6	NP4-mockery(?)
mana	ma-bang-a	o	u-u	ko	
DEM6	SC6-do-FV	AUG14	NP14-evil	NEG2	

‘In conversation, do not say mocking words or those that hurt.’

Nevertheless, it can safely be stated that the majority of cases in which **ko** is absent consist of prohibitives and that the majority of prohibitives is expressed without **ko**. This is different from contemporary Kisikongo (considered to be the heir of the variety described in the catechism), in which prohibitives are consistently marked with **ko**:

(27) KISIKONGO (JW, Tusansu, p. 30)

Kufinam’oko ko

ku-finam-a	o	ko	ko
NEG1.2sg-come.near-FV	AUG17	PRON17	NEG2

‘Do not come any closer’

Regarding other possible functions of **ko** in the 17th century Kikongo variety, only 3 instances of the 85 occurrences of the particle have been found in which it functions not as a negation marker, but as a locative pronoun or a locative prefix of class 17. No other uses have been attested.

(28) KIKONGO 1624 (Bontinck & Nsasi 1978 [1624] : 124)

[...] akatuiidi e mionyo miaa asantu Masse miaaikele **ko**.

a-katul-idi	e	mi-onyo	mia	a-santu	ma-se
SC1-take.away-PRF	AUG4	NP4-soul	CONN4	NP2-saint	NP6-father
mi-a-ikal-idi	ko				
NP4-PST-to.be-PRF	PRON17				

‘[...] and he] took away the souls of the holy Fathers who were there.’

(29) KIKONGO 1624 (Bontinck & Nsasi 1978 [1624] : 82)

Esseetu uaikaala o **ko** mazuulu.

E	se	etu	u-a-ikal-a	o	ko	ma-zuulu
AUG5	father	POSS1sg	SC1-to.be-FV	AUG17	LOC17	NP6-heaven

‘Our Father who is in heaven(s).’

2.2.3. On a possible evolution of **ko**

The data found so far do not show a clear evolutionary path of the development from **ko** as a locative pronoun to a negative marker. It seems, however, not illogical to assume that the third function of **ko**, i.e. an emphatic particle described by Laman (1912), constitutes an intermediate stage between the locative use and the negative use. In many of the world’s languages, locatives are used in focus expressions (cf. class 16 in East-Bantu, ‘there’ in English). This evolution has also been suggested by Devos & van der Auwera (2013: 244). The shift from a focus marker to a neutral negative marker forms part of a typical Jespersen cycle, in that the focus marker is originally used to emphasize or strengthen the negation, but then in a later stage got neutralized through common use. However, apart from the description by Laman (1912), no single attestation of the use of **ko** as a focus marker has been found. This search will be continued through a corpus-based approach, in which will be sought for instances of **ko** outside negation context.

3. The locative possessive pronoun of class 17

In Devos & van der Auwera (2013), it is argued that some Bantu languages even have a third negation marker. One of these is the LOC POSS pronoun belonging to class 17, which also appears in Kikongo. The following example illustrates this:

(30) KISIKONGO (NT 1926: John 20, 13)

Bakatwidi Mfumu ame, kizeye ko **kwame** ko kuna bansidi.

Ba-katul-idi	N-fumu	ame	ki-zay-idi	ko
SC2-take.away-PRF	NP9-chief	POSS1sg	NEG1.1sg-know-PRF	PRON17
ku-ame	ko	kuna	ba-n-sal-idi	
PP17-POSS1sg	NEG2	DEM17	SC2-OC1-leave-PRF	

‘They took my Lord away and I don’t know where they have put him.’

In the following section, I will give a preliminary overview of the grammatical and semantic features of this LOC POSS 17.

As the term suggests, the marker consists of a locative prefix 17 and a possessive stem. This possessive stem is in most varieties coreferential with the subject.

- (31) KISOLONGO (KK fieldwork 2012)
 Pé, kindééle ko, láámbalala **kwame** ndáámbalééle.
 Pe kiN-lal-idi ko lambalal-a ku-ame N-lambalal-idi
 No NEG1.1sg-sleep-PRF NEG2 lie.down-FV PP17-POSS1sg SC1sg-lie.down-PRF
 ‘No, I don’t sleep, I’m only lying down.’

- (32) FIOTE (NT 1929 : John 1, 21)
 Banyuvula: Buna nki? Ngeye Elia **kwaku** e? Yandi wavova: Kiena **kwami** ko.
 ba-n-yuvul-a buna nki ngeye Elia ku-aku e
 SC2-OC1-ask-FV DEM14 what PPRO2sg Elijah PP17-POSS2sg QW
 yandi u-a-vov-a ki-een-a ku-ami ko
 PPRO1 SC1-PST-say-FV NEG1.1sg-to.be-FV PP17-POSS1sg NEG2
 ‘They asked him: What then? Are you Elijah? He said: I am not.’

It is mainly used as a focus marker, which is why Laman (1912: §168) terms it ‘emphatic pronoun’:

“The independent emphatic pronouns are used when one wishes to give special emphasis to the personal pronoun .. They may be placed either immediately after a pronoun (wlth or without verb), or after a verb or, in fact, after any word whatsoever. They may be used both subjectively and objectively. In the latter case they are preceded by a combined personal pronoun.

<i>Mono kwami nkembi dio .</i>	I myself or I indeed have said it.
<i>Yeto kweto.</i>	We (we ourselves or we indeed).
<i>Wenda kwaku!</i>	Go, you!
<i>Nzau kwandi.</i>	An elephant, an elephant indeed.
<i>Kiau kwandi nzolele sumba.</i>	I want to buy that very one.
<i>Umpana kwami nlangu.</i>	Give me water.”

As the examples below show, the LOC POSS 17 appears both in affirmative and negative clauses as a focus marker:

- (33) KINDIBU (NT 1923 : John 9, 9)
 Akaka vo : Ke wau **kwandi** ko, kansi ufwanana ye yandi. Kansi yandi wavova vo : Mono **kwame**.
 akaka vo ke wau ku-andi ko kansi u-fwanan-a
 other that NEG1 DEM3 PP17-POSS1 NEG2 but SC1-ressemble-FV
 yandi kansi yandi u-a-vov-a vo mono ku-ame
 PPRO1 but PPRO1 SC1-PST-say-FV that PPRO1sg PP17-POSS1
 ‘The other said: No, it’s not him, but he looks like him. But he himself said: It is really me.’

- (34) KISIKONGO (NT 1926 : John 9, 29)
 Tuzeye wo vo o Nzambi wavova kwa Mose : vo i ndiona, ke tuzeye ko **kweto** ko kuna katùka.
 tu-zay-idi wo vo o N-zambi u-a-vov-a
 SC1pl-know-PRF PRON14 that AUG1 NP9-God SC1-PST-speak-FV
 kwa Mose vo i ndiona ke tu-zay-idi ko
 CONN17 Moses FM PPRO1 NEG1 SC1pl-know-PRF PRON17
 ku-eto ko kuna ka-tuk-a
 PP17-POSS1pl NEG2 DEM17 SC1-come.from-FV
 “We know that God has spoken to Moses. But as for this man, we don’t know where he comes from.”

However, several examples have been found of the LOC POSS17 in negative clauses, in which a clear focus context is absent:

- (35) KISIKONGO (NT 1926 : Luke 13, 27)
 Kizeye ko **kwame** ko kuna nutuka
 Ki-zay-idi ko ku-ame ko kuna nu-tuk-a
 NEG1.1sg-know-PRF PRON17 PP17-POSS NEG2 DEM17 SC2pl-come.from-FV
 “I don’t know where you come from.”

- (36) FIOTE (NT 1929 : Acts 23, 5)
 Paulu wavova: Zimpangi, kizeyi **kwami** ko, vo yandi i ngudi anganga
 Paulu u-a-vov-a ziN-pangi ki-zay-idi ko vo yandi i
 Paul SC1-PST-say-FV NP10-brother NEG1.1sg NEG2 that PPRO1 FM
 n-gudi a N-ganga
 NP9-superior CONN NP9-priest
 ‘Paul said, “I didn’t know, brothers, that he was high priest.’

- (37) KISOLONGO (Tavares 1915: 150)
 K’ufua **kuaku** ko.
 Ku-fw-a ku-aku ko
 NEG1.2sg-die-FV PP17-POSS2sg NEG2
 ‘You won’t die’

- (38) KISIKONGO (JW: Tusansu, p. 281)
 O Yesu awayi kasongela vo o dila ke diambi **kwandi** ko [...]?
 O Yesu awayi ka-songel-a vo o dil-a dia mbi
 AUG1 Jesus how SC1-show-FV that AUG15 grieve-FV CONN5 NP9-evil
 ku-andi ko
 PP17-POSS1 NEG2
 ‘How did Jesus demonstrate that it is normal to grieve [...]?’

Although it is not clear in what degree the LOC POSS 17 still may have a focus function in such examples, it is reminiscent of yet another Jespersen cycle in which an emphatic pronoun may begin to lose its focus function and become neutralized in a negative construction. However, contrary to the negative marker **ko**, the LOC POSS 17 does not (yet?) have a negative value on its own. In some Kikongo varieties, as in the Ciwoyo examples below, **ko** is the only negative marker, since the verb-initial marker has begun to disappear in certain contexts, such as with plural participants and non-verbal predicates:

- (39) Ciwoyo (KK fieldwork 2012)
 Bamavangila **ko** ku mphutu.
 ba-ma-vang-il-a ko ku N-putu
 SC2-OC6-make-APPL-FV NEG2 LOC17 NP9-Europe
 ‘They didn’t make them in Europe.’

- (40) Ciwoyo (KK fieldwork 2012)
 Nan’ bulizi lipowa?
 nani ∅-bul-izi li-powa
 who SC1-break-PRF NP5-pot
 ‘Who has broken the pot?’

Minu **ko** yalibulizi.
 minu ko ya-li-bul-izi
 PRON1sg NEG2 SC1sg-OC5-break-PRF
 ‘It’s not me who has broken it.’

In this perspective, it is difficult to consider the LOC POSS 17 as a negative marker in a Jespersen cycle, since it cannot express negativity by itself. The replacement of **ko** by **kwame** would rather mean the opposite, ‘It is really me who has broken it’.

4. Summary: Jespersen cycles in Kikongo?

Parallels with Jespersen cycle in French

- Negation is doubly marked
- The second negator is originally a focus marker, although more attestations of this use would be welcome
- In some varieties, such as Ciwoyo, the preverbal marker has already started to disappear in certain contexts, which is comparable to the third stage in French (\emptyset ...pas)

Differences with Jespersen cycle in French

- The position of the postverbal negative marker **ko** is not fixed and seems to be pragmatically conditioned
- No attestations of stage 1 are found. In the oldest Kikongo source available, dating from 1624, stage 2 was already reached.
- A third possible negative marker, i.e. the LOC POSS 17, has been observed. However, it is not clear yet in which degree this marker still conveys a focus function. Moreover, it is never used alone to express negativity and can thus not be considered to be a negative marker on its own.

5. References

Anonymous. 1926. *Luwawanu Luampa*. London: British and Foreign Bible Society. [New Testament in Kisikongo]

Anonymous. 1929. *Luwawanu Luamona*. [New Testament in Fiote]

Bentley, William Holman. 1887. *Dictionary and grammar of the Kongo language as spoken at San Salvador, the ancient capital of the old Kongo empire, West Africa*. London: Baptist Missionary Society and Trübner & Co.

De Cleene, N. & L. De Clercq. 1920. *Evanzeli Isantu. I Pfumu Etu Yezu Kristo ayi Mambu ma Bapostolo*. [New Testament in Kiyombe]

Devos & van der Auwera 2013. Jespersen cycles in Bantu: double and triple negation. *Journal of African Languages and Linguistics* 34 (2): 205-274.

Güldemann, Tom. 1999. Word Order. In Jean-Marie Hombert & Larry M. Hyman (eds.), *Bantu Historical Linguistics: Theoretical and Empirical Perspectives*, 545-588. California: Stanford CSLI publications.

Kamba Muzenga, J.G. 1981. *Les formes verbales négatives dans les langues bantoues*. Tervuren: RMCA.

Laman, Karl Edward. 1912. *Grammar of the Kongo language (Kikongo)*. New York: Christian Alliance Publishers.

Vuylsteke, R.P.P. 1923. *Evangelia Ziya. Nsangu za Yezo-Kristo ye za Ntumwa Zandi*. Tumba Mission. [New Testament in Kindibu]