Negation in Dorig (Oceanic, Vanuatu)

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Dorig, an Oceanic language spoken on Gaua island in northern Vanuatu, shows a wealth of constructions for encoding negative polarity. Standard negation on verbs contrasts 14 positive TAM categories with 9 negative; together, they form a "TAMP" system made of 23 portmanteau categories. All 9 negative TAMP morphemes are formally discontinuous ("double negation"), and synchronically non-compositional. In addition to these verbal negators, Dorig has separate constructions for negating non-verbal predicates, existentials, locatives, and imperatives. While this study highlights the richness of negative structures in this particular language, it places them in their typological and areal contexts. Dorig appears to be mostly representative of its northern Vanuatu neighbours, but also quite extreme in some respects.

1 The language of Dorig

The present chapter will focus on **Dorig**, an Oceanic language of Vanuatu. This is the first ever publication dedicated entirely to this language, based on my fieldwork data. Whenever relevant, I will occasionally cite the facts of Dorig's neighbours, so as to place the language in its areal context. Like other chapters in this volume, I will follow closely the structure of the typological questionnaire designed by the editors (Miestamo & Veselinova 2019) – including in the precise ordering and numbering of its sections.[1]

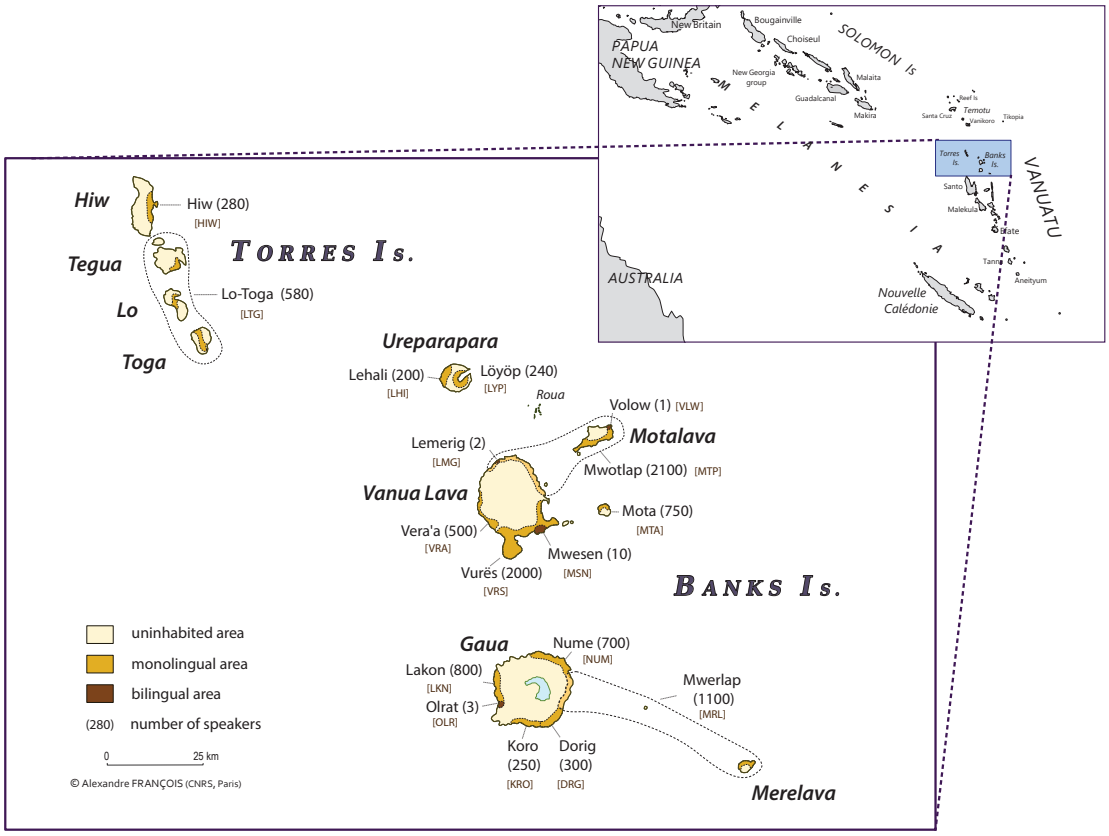
1.1 Context and sources

Dorig (ISO: `wwo`; Glottolog: `weta1242`) is one of the five languages spoken on the island of Gaua, in the Banks islands of northern Vanuatu [*Map 1*]. Like all the 138 indigenous languages of the Vanuatu archipelago (François *et al.* 2015), it belongs to the Oceanic subgroup of the Austronesian phylum. More specifically, Dorig belongs to a dialect chain that goes around the island of Gaua – itself a portion of the broader *Torres–Banks linkage* (François 2014:182).

The language's 300 speakers live mostly in the village of *Dōrig* [ⁿdɒriɣ] on Gaua's south coast. Dorig speakers entertain social and linguistic ties with their immediate neighbours on the island. The two languages genealogically closest to Dorig, as measured using Historical Glottometry, are Nume and Koro (François 2016a:56; Kalyan & François 2018:79).

[1] I am grateful to the editors Matti Miestamo and Ljuba Veselinova for their invitation to take part in the present volume.

Map 1 – Location of Dorig (Gaua, Banks Islands) in northern Vanuatu



The grammar of negation shows a lot of cross-linguistic variation across the vast Oceanic family (see Hovdhaugen & Mosel 1999), to say nothing of the broader Austronesian phylum (see Vossen & van der Auwera 2014) – so the present study should not be taken as representative of such large ensembles. That said, Dorig can be seen as quite typical of the grammatical structures found in its local environment of Vanuatu (especially the Torres & Banks languages) as it shares most of their semantic categories and formal tendencies, while still presenting several structural features that make Dorig quite an original system.

Apart from a wordlist under the obsolete glossonym Wetamut (Tryon 1976), nothing was known of Dorig until I conducted fieldwork on it, as part of my 2003 survey of Banks languages. I was only able to stay in the Dorig area for nine days altogether (4–12 August 2003), with no opportunity of returning there since, due to uneasy access; a second trip scheduled in 2011 was finally cancelled due to the lack of reliable transportation.

My 2003 stay still allowed me to record substantial data, thanks to the "conversational questionnaire" I had designed for that purpose (François 2019). This data collection method was supplemented by language immersion, as I learned to speak and understand the language in its daily context, took field notes, and recorded the spontaneous speech of native speakers. Out of 16 recordings, I transcribed 13 narratives, totalling 14,300 words (see François 2008); most of that corpus is archived online.[2] The examples cited in this study

[2] My audio recordings are freely accessible at *https://tiny.cc/Francois-archives*. My field questionnaire for Dorig can be accessed at *https://tiny.cc/AF_Q_Dorig*.

come either from my field notes or from that text corpus. Whenever possible, I will provide permanent (DOI) links to sentences in their original context.[3]

Various elements of the Dorig language have been presented in my comparative studies of the Torres–Banks area. François (2010:407 sqq.) presents the phonology of Dorig, with a focus on its (C)(C)V(C) syllabic template. I have published information on Dorig's vowel system (François 2005a:461-2, 491); on its noun articles (François 2007); its possessive morphology (François 2005a:486); its space system (François 2015); and its personal pronouns (François 2016a). The present article is the first publication ever dedicated specifically to Dorig. As for the data I will provide on other languages of the Banks and Torres Islands [§4.7, Appendix], their source will usually be my own field notes and publications; the reader is also referred to the description of Vera'a by Schnell (2011), and the grammar of Vurës by Malau (2016).

1.2 Grammatical overview

This short grammatical overview of Dorig focuses on the elements relevant to the present study on negation.

1.2.1 Phonology, morphophonology

Dorig has a (C)(C)V(C) syllabic template, with optional consonants (François 2010:407): e.g. *āv* [aːv] 'fire', *loq* [lɔk͡pʷ] 'wet', *wrēt* [wrɪt] 'squid', *rqa* [rk͡pʷa] 'woman', *tger* [tɣɛr] 'disappear', *m̄kār* [ŋ͡mʷkaːr] 'flying fish'. (From now on, Dorig forms will be spelled in the language's orthography; a phonetic key is provided in an Appendix.)

Several prefixes have a form C(V)- with an elidable vowel: e.g. *m(e)-* 'Perfect', *s(o)-* 'Irrealis', *v(a)-* 'Stative', *v(e)-* 'Attributive'. The prefix vowel normally elides when the first syllable of the phonological word can accommodate a C- prefix into the maximal |CCVC| template: ***m****(e)-* + ***t****ur* 'stand' → *m-tur* [**mt**ur]. By contrast, when a verb already starts in a consonant cluster (e.g. ***tg****er* 'disappear'), the prefix will surface as CV-, revealing its underlying vowel (e.g. *m****e****-tger* 'disappeared', *s****o****-tger* 'will disappear').

Morphemes of the form C(V)- with an elidable vowel qualify as prefixes, because their surface shape is determined by syllabification rules that apply at the higher level of the phonological word. In addition, Dorig also has CV morphemes whose surface form is independent of the next morpheme: I will analyse them as proclitics, or just particles. For example, while the Irrealis *s(o)-* is a prefix, the Sequential aspect – with its fixed shape *so* [sɔ] – is better analysed as a particle rather than an affix. Compare (1) and (2):

(1) Na **s**-wōr bas nēr nēr **s**-mat. {⚓3195#S5}
1sg **IRR**-bewitch all 3pl 3pl **IRR**-die
'I would bewitch them all so they'd die.'

[3] If an example is followed by an anchor icon ⚓ and a string of characters, adding that string to the prefix *https://doi.org/10.24397/pangloss-000* yields a valid DOI identifier. For example, {⚓3195#S5} yields the URL *https://doi.org/10.24397/pangloss-0003195#S5*.

(2) Ni me-tmarga, ni **so** mat. {⚓3195#S26}
3sg PFT-old.man 3sg **SEQ** die
'He got old, and then died.'

These notes on the morphophonology of Dorig will be relevant when discussing the negation, the main object of this paper; in particular, when analysing morphemes as affixes or particles.

1.2.2 Morphosyntax of Tense–Aspect–Mood

Dorig is an SVO language with fixed word order. Simple verbal clauses follow the general template in (3), where the pointy brackets indicate the limits of the verb phrase:

(3) *subject* ⟨ TAM_1 **verb**$_{HEAD}$ adverb (TAM_2) *object* (TAM_2) ⟩ adjuncts

The (emically defined) class "adverb" includes words whose function is to modify the verb head inside the verb phrase.[4] They may correspond to English manner adverbs (ex. (8): *tavul* 'well'), or floating quantifiers (1: *bas* 'all'), among others. Adverbs always follow immediately the verb, or more generally the predicate head. The adverbial slot can also be occupied by a second verb, in a serial verb construction (as in (7) below); in all cases, the predicate head is the first verb.

The TAM system of Dorig collapses into a single paradigm the categories of Tense, Aspect and Mood. A given predicate inflects for only one TAM category at a time: e.g. a verb takes either the (realis) Perfect *m(e)-* or the Irrealis *s(o)-*, but cannot combine them.

The coding of TAM usually involves a preverbal element TAM_1: we've seen several examples of this in §1.2.1 – e.g. Irrealis *s(o)-*, Sequential *so*, Perfect *m(e)-*. Several TAM morphemes are discontinuous, involving a first element TAM_1 (prefix or particle), and a second element TAM_2 (particle). The latter inserts sometimes before the object (as in 4), sometimes after it (as in 5). Examples of discontinuous TAM morphemes include the Potential *s(o)-… lala*, or the Imperfective *t(o)-… ti*:

(4) Kmār ⟨**so-** briñ **lala** nēk⟩. {⚓2306#S41}
1ex:du **POT$_1$-** help **POT$_2$** 2sg
[*POTENTIAL*] 'We can help you.'

(5) Kma ⟨**t-** var o masle bē neñ **ti**⟩ kak 'Krēwelav'. {⚓3254#S27}
1ex:pl **IPFV$_1$**-call ART path water DEM **IPFV$_2$** QUOT (name)
[*IMPERFECTIVE*] 'We call that river "Krēwelav".'

As we'll see soon, standard negation in Dorig always takes the form of bipartite morphemes, whose elements occupy the same slots as TAM_1 and TAM_2 in (4).

I will here make the choice to gloss TAM morphemes as bipartite ('POT_1-… POT_2'), even when one of their elements is otherwise attested (e.g. *s(o)-* 'Irrealis'): this is to avoid the trap of searching for compositionality when we're in fact dealing with entrenched, grammati-

[4] This lexical class of VP-internal "adverb" (or "postverb" or "adjunct") is frequently found in northern Vanuatu languages (cf. François 2004:137-142; 2017:316; Schnell 2011:91; Malau 2016:122-4).

calized units of phraseology. This view can be taken as a *constructional* approach to morphosyntax – in the sense of the *construction grammar* (Fillmore *et al.* 1988, Croft 2001, Barðdal *et al.* 2015). It will also guide us in our analysis of negation morphology.

2 Clausal negation

2.1 Standard negation

2.1.1 Negation in declarative verbal main clauses: overview

An important characteristic of Dorig is that polarity (positive vs. negative) is really in-built inside the TAM markers. For example, the Perfect *m(e)-* we saw earlier, or the Potential *s(o)-… lala*, are incompatible with negation; they should really be labelled "positive perfect" and "positive potential" respectively. Indeed, their negative counterpart is a different morpheme altogether, which is not compositional. In other terms, the TAM system of Dorig is really a single paradigm of "TAMP" – *Tense-Aspect-Mood-Polarity*.[5]

Table 1 shows the TAMP system of Dorig, and gives a preliminary idea of how declarative verbal main clauses deal with polarity.

Table 1 – Dorig's Tense-Aspect-Mood-Polarity system shows non-trivial correspondences between positive and negative TAM markers.

	Positive	polarity	Negative	polarity
Realis domain	Sequential	*so …*		
	Iamitive	*m(e)-… nok*	Nondumitive	*sowse … te*
	Permansive	*… mlēti*	Discontinuative	*s(o)-… nok tēmē*
	Perfect	*m(e)-…*	Negative realis	*s(o)-… tēmē*
	Stative	*v(a)-…*		
	Imperfective	*t(o)-… ti*		
	Immediate past	*qra … ti*		
	Dilatory (realis, irrealis)	*qra …*		
Irrealis domain	Irrealis	*s(o)-…*	Negative future	*(v)te … tēmē*
	Imperative	*[ar] …*	Prohibitive	*(v)te …*$_{DUP}$ *te* ~ *tog v(a)-…* ~ *tog … te*
	Hortative	*o …*		
	Potential	*s(o)-… lala*	Negative potential	*(v)te … late*
	Counterf^{al} (apodosis)	*v(a)-…*		
	Counterf^{al} (protasis)	*vit …*	Negative counterf^{al}	*vit (v)te… te*

[5] Malau (2016:461) also describes the neighbouring language Vurës as having a "TAMP" system.

The table's left-hand side lists the 14 TAM markers in the affirmative: e.g. the Imperfective *t(o)-… ti* illustrated in (5) above. The right column then shows the nine corresponding negative TAM morphemes. For example, the Potential *s(o)-… lala* seen in (4) above maps onto the Negative potential *(v)te… late*. Evidently – as will soon be discussed – there is no one-to-one correspondence across polarities, neither in terms of morphology nor semantics.

The following subsections will help understand this table, by describing the behaviour of negation in declarative verbal clauses.

2.1.2 Word order rules

Miestamo (2007:553) defines *standard negation* as "the basic means that languages have for negating declarative verbal main clauses". As Table 1 shows, standard negation in Dorig always takes the form of a discontinuous morpheme, of the type {NEG_1 … NEG_2}. This type of negative morpheme, known in the literature as "double negation", is present in about 10 percent of the world's languages (Dryer 2013a) – cf. *ne… pas* in Standard French.[6] Rather than the misleading label "double negation", I will describe these morphemes simply as "discontinuous" morphemes, in a way parallel to their positive equivalents.

The two elements occupy the same slots as the TAM markers {TAM_1 … TAM_2} [§1.2.2], which they replace. The segment represented by the dots includes the verbal head, or the head + its modifiers in the case of complex predicates (*verb+verb* or *verb+adverb*). The object phrase (whether an NP or a pronoun) is normally located outside the boundaries of negation, after NEG_2, just like we saw in (4) for the positive potential.

The rules of word order are illustrated in two sentences taken from our corpus. Ex. (6) shows the Nondumitive *sowse… te* 'not yet', with a nominal object:

(6) Tōlkma **sowse** wdōñ **te** o āv.
1EX:TRI NDUM$_1$ set.up NDUM$_2$ ART fire
'We haven't set up the fire yet.' [Drg.Heron.32]

Ex. (7) shows the Negative potential *(v)te… late* carried by a complex (serial) verb, and followed by a pronominal object:

(7) Na wōdek **vte** mōl tētēg **late** kmur. {⚓3162#S31}
1sg maybe NEG:POT$_1$ return follow NEG:POT$_2$ 2du
'I'm afraid I won't be able to follow you.'

Dryer (2013b) classified languages in terms of the position of the negator with respect to the clause's subject, object and verb. Dorig would belong to his subsection 144F "*Obligatory double negation in SVO languages*". Within that group, it falls under type #2 *SNegVNegO* (when NEG_1 is a particle), or under the similar type #7 *S[Neg-V]NegO* (when NEG_1 is a prefix).

Negative clauses in Dorig do not change word order compared to positive clauses: in this respect, they are syntactically symmetrical (cf. Miestamo 2005:153, Dahl 2010:23).

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[6] As we'll see in §4.7.1, so-called double negation is widespread in Vanuatu. Thus, about neighbouring Vera'a, Schnell (2011:31) notes: "All negative TAM markers are circummorphemes".

2.1.3 Declarative statements in the realis domain

In Dorig, the negation of declarative verbal main clauses thus takes different forms depending on the aspect and modality of the clause. Table 1 reveals some regularities, or at least some trends. Essentially, negative morphemes in declarative REALIS statements (top half of Table 1) tend to involve a postverbal particle (TAM_2) ***tēmē***; I will provisionally gloss it 'NEG:INDIC' for 'Negative indicative'. By contrast, IRREALIS statements (potential, conditional, imperative, hortative) often involve a postverbal particle ***te***.

While this is generally true, Dorig is in fact more complex than this binary contrast – with *tēmē* sometimes found in irrealis (future) contexts, and *te* sometimes found in some realis (nondumitive) statements.

2.1.3.1 Aspect categories in positive vs. negative polarities

In the affirmative, the Stative particle *v(a)-* serves to assign a stative property (whether an adjective or a stative verb) to the subject:

(8) Na **va-** vrēgēl tavul na vara-n.
1sg STAT- know well ART:POSS country-3sg
'I know her country well.'

This is a purely aspectual marker, underspecified with respect to tense. While its default interpretation is the present, it can equally refer to a past situation: thus *na va-vrēgēl* in (8) can translate 'I know (now)' or 'I knew (then)'.

In order to negate a sentence like (8), one cannot just combine the Stative *v(a)-* with the negation *tēmē*: such a sentence is rejected as ungrammatical.

(8') *Na **va-** vrēgēl tavul **tēmē** na vara-n.
1sg STAT- know well **NEG:INDIC** ART:POSS country-3sg

Instead, the Stative regularly changes to an Irrealis prefix *s(o)-* in the negative:

(8") Na **so**-vrēgēl tavul **tēmē** na vara-n.
1sg **IRR**-know well **NEG:INDIC** ART:POSS country-3sg
'I **don't** know her country well.'

The principle illustrated in (8–8") with Stative *v(a)-* also applies to other realis TAM categories. Thus a Perfect *m(e)-* becomes *s(o)-… tēmē* when negated:

(9) Na **m**-tek ni a gvur.
1sg **PFT**-see 3sg LOC house
'I saw him at home.'

(9') Na **s**-tek **tēmē** ni a gvur.
1sg **IRR**-see **NEG:INDIC** 3sg LOC house
'I **didn't** see him at home.'

Finally, a clause in the Imperfective will also replace its discontinuous marker *t(o)-… ti* with the combination *s(o)-… tēmē*:

(10) Na lña ra ta Krō, radōn nēk **t**-roñ tavul **ti**, …
ART:POSS voice.of HUM:PL ABL Koro some 2sg **IPFV$_1$**-hear well **IPFV$_2$**
'The language of Koro, parts of it one understands easily, …'

… radōn nēk **s**-roñ tavul **tēmē**.
some 2sg **IRR**-hear well **NEG:INDIC**
'… parts of it one **doesn't** understand easily.' [AF.BP3.18b]

As a result, the combination *s(o)-… tēmē* is semantically ambiguous between various interpretations: it may encode a negative Stative, a negative Imperfective, or a negative Perfect.[7] The semantic distinctions made in positive statements are here neutralised under a single, semantically vague category of "Realis negative". Thus, (11) is ambiguous whether it negates a perfect, an imperfective or a stative predicate:

(11) O mẽrmẽr **s**-ñor tavul **tēmē**.
ART child **IRR**-sleep well **NEG:INDIC**
'The baby {did not sleep ~ doesn't sleep ~ is not sleeping} well.'

The semantic space of verbal aspect is cut up differently in the positive and in the negative. This lack of a one-to-one correspondence between positive and negative polarities, which was visible in Table 1 [§2.1.1], is typical of northern Vanuatu languages in general.[8]

2.1.3.2 An irrealis prefix?

When used alone, the prefix *s(o)-* is usually devoted to future, prospective, potential, or imperative predicates – as we saw in ex. (1); hence its gloss 'Irrealis'.

It may come as a semantic oddity that such an Irrealis morpheme should be used in statements about semantically 'realis' situations, whether past (9') or present (8", 10). Yet this is arguably due to a paradox inherent to negation itself: even when set in a realis (past or present) situation, the state-of-affairs that is being negated remains virtual, and indeed un-realised. A sentence like (9') could thus be paraphrased:

(9') '*For me to see him at home* [IRREALIS] was not the case [REALIS]'

In his major typological survey of negation, Miestamo (2005:208) discusses this subtype[9] under the label "*A/NonReal* paradigmatic asymmetry", and explains it in these words:

> "[T]he association between negation and non-reality on the formal level iconically reflects the association between negation and non-reality on the functional level."

Miestamo (2005:192, 2013b) discusses the distribution of A/NonReal asymmetry, and finds it in 13% of his sample (40 languages out of 297). He notices a "Circum-Pacific" distribution,

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[7] The same applies to certain less frequent TAMP categories shown in Table 1 and not discussed here, such as the Dilatory aspect *qra* 'only then [in the past or future]', or its derivative the Immediate past *qra… ti* 'just now'.

[8] See François (2003:33-37, 2005b:132) for similar observations about the language Mwotlap; Schnell (2011:31, 52, 95) about Vera'a; Malau (2016:461) about Vurës.

[9] For other general references, see also Elliott (2000) and Cristofaro (2012).

along the Pacific Rim: indeed, the connection between negation and irrealis is attested in Caddo (Mithun 1995), Tlingit (Leer 2000:111), Bininj Gunwok (Evans 2003:373) or other Australian languages (McGregor & Wagner 2006). By contrast, the pattern is very rare among northern Vanuatu languages, which usually reserve irrealis morphology for future or potential contexts; in that sense, Dorig is locally unique in enforcing this sort of modality reversal, whereby negative statements impose an irrealis verb in semantically "realis" (past, present) contexts.

The preceding lines provide us with a likely scenario to account for the historical emergence of the combination *s(o)-… tēmē*, and its original connection with Irrealis prefix *s(o)-*. That said, today the construction *s(o)-… tēmē* as a whole has lost its original connection with the irrealis (see §2.1.4): taken as a construction, it is now exclusively used in realis contexts. It is not compositional any more: for the modern speaker of Dorig, *s(o)-… tēmē* is simply a single, bipartite morpheme coding for Realis negation. Under this view, an alternative way of glossing (9'), acknowledging the holistic nature of that construction, is 'NEG:RL$_1$- … NEG:RL$_2$':

(9") Na **s**-tek **tēmē** ni a gvur.
1sg **NEG:RL$_1$**-see **NEG:RL$_2$** 3sg LOC home
'I didn't see him at home.'

This analysis is the one retained hereafter, and adopted already in Table 1 [§2.1.1]. As a result of this constructional analysis, I will argue below that modern Dorig, taken synchronically, does not actually constitute a case of *A/NonReal* asymmetry [§2.1.5].

2.1.3.3 Phasal negation and pragmatic presuppositions

We just saw that several aspect distinctions made in the affirmative are neutralised in the negative. One semantic boundary, though, is solid enough to be preserved across polarities: these are the contrasts involving phasal aspects with pragmatic presuppositions: 'already' vs. 'not yet', 'still' vs. 'no longer'.

- ***The rectangle of phasal aspects***

Let us call *t* the moment when a state of affairs *P* changes into its opposite state *Q* (e.g. *alive → dead*; *sick → cured*; *single → married*; *wet → dry*; etc.). If I wish to express that *t* has taken place already, I may formulate this by reference to the new state Q ('the shirt is dry already'), by using what will be defined below as a IAMITIVE aspect. Alternatively, I may express the same event through a pragmatically synonymous formulation, this time making reference to the initial state *P* ('it's no longer wet'). The latter construction, sometimes called DISCONTINUATIVE (van der Auwera 1998:44), involves a phasal negation 'not… any more, no longer'.

Another possibility is that the event *t* (the change from *P* to *Q*) has not happened yet. Again, I may choose to express this by reference to *P* ('it's still wet'), which is a PERMANSIVE; or by reference to *Q*, by employing what I'll call a NONDUMITIVE ('it's not dry yet').

Table 2 summarizes these four patterns, in the form of a rectangle of phasal aspects (cf. François 2003:325). The table indicates the forms taken by the relevant morphemes in Dorig. The predicates used as examples are the adjectives *loq* 'wet' and *wow* 'dry'.

Table 2 – The rectangle of phasal aspects in Dorig
(referring to a change of state from P to Q, happening at time t)

	reference to state P	reference to state Q
t {*P*→*Q*} has not happened	PERMANSIVE (12) *va-loq* ***mlēti*** STAT-wet PERM 'it's **still** wet'	NONDUMITIVE (13) ***sowse*** *wow* ***te*** $NDUM_1$ dry $NDUM_2$ 'it's **not** dry **yet**'
t {*P*→*Q*} has happened	DISCONTINUATIVE (12') ***s***-*wow* ***nok*** ***tēmē*** $NEG:RL_1$-wet IAMIT $NEG:RL_2$ 'it's **not** wet **any more**'	IAMITIVE (13') *va-wow* ***nok*** STAT-dry IAMIT 'it's dry **already**'

Note the binary relations that define the quadrangular structure of Table 2:

- the permansive (12) is the pragmatic equivalent of the nondumitive (13)
- the discontinuative (12') is the pragmatic equivalent of the iamitive (13')
- the discontinuative (12') is the semantic opposite of the permansive (12)
- the iamitive (13') is the semantic opposite of the nondumitive (13)

The following subsections will illustrate each of these cases, with a special focus on the negative morphemes (grayed cells in Table 2).

- ***Iamitive and nondumitive***

Dorig constrasts two types of perfect aspects: the Perfect *m(e)-* and the Iamitive *m(e)-… nok*:

(14) I ntu-k **m**-lāg le tuar sn̄ar.
PERS child-1sg PFT-marry LOC other month
'My child got married last month.'

(15) I ntu-k **m**-lāg **nok**.
PERS child-1sg PFT-marry IAMIT
'My child is married (now/already).'

An important semantic property of the Iamitive is to entail a pragmatic presupposition. Local cultural expectations imply that an individual should get married at some point in life; the event '*X get married (at some point)*' is presupposed or "pre-defined", and usually the relevant question is whether that expected event has yet happened, or not. A sentence like (15) therefore typically translates in English using adverbs like *now* ('she's married now') or *already* ('she's married already'). Just such observations inspired Östen Dahl to propose the term *iamitive* – from Latin *iam* 'now, already' – as a label for this type of aspect category (see Olsson 2013, Dahl & Wälchli 2016). The semantic contrast between Perfect and Iamitive is pervasive in northern Vanuatu (cf. François 2003:118-130).

That contrast finds its mirror image with negative polarity. A clause in the Perfect is simply negated with the Negative realis [§2.1.3.1]:

(14′) I ntu-k **s**-lāg **tēmē** le tuar sñar.
PERS child-1sg NEG:RL$_1$-marry NEG:RL$_2$ LOC other month
'My child didn't get married last month.' [NEG. REALIS]

The negative counterpart of the iamitive, on the other hand, is a specific construction equivalent to English 'not yet'. Among various names, that construction has sometimes been called *nondum*, after its Latin equivalent (Veselinova & Devos 2021); I propose to label it *nondumitive*, to highlight the mirror-relationship with the *iamitive*. In Dorig, the nondumitive is a discontinuous morpheme of the form *sowse… te* – as in (6) above, or (15′):

(15′) I ntu-k **sowse** lāg **te**.
PERS child-1sg **NDUM$_1$** marry **NDUM$_2$**
'My child isn't married yet.' [NONDUMITIVE]

The nondumitive also comes with pragmatic presuppositions – the very same ones we saw with the iamitive. Thus, (15′) implicitly refers to the expectation that one should marry some day; the nondumitive states that such a predefined moment has not materialized yet at the moment of utterance. Likewise in (6), in a context where the subject was supposed to be cooking food, the (predefined) moment of lighting the fire had not taken place yet.

While the nondumitive is pragmatically similar to the permansive 'still' [see Table 2], its main role is to form the polarity counterpart of the iamitive – in Dorig as much as in other languages.

As far as the morphology is concerned, one must note here a puzzling case of opacity between the ordinary Realis negation *s(o)-… tēmē* on the one hand, and the Nondumitive *sowse… te* on the other hand [Table 1]. While English simply contrasts *not* with *not yet*, Dorig treats the two morphemes as formally unrelated with each other. The first element *sowse* is opaque, being found exclusively in this context; as for the second element *te*, it clearly bears a relation with the negative domain, yet not in a way that would make it easy to gloss on its own (see §4.7 for its etymology).

- ***Permansive and discontinuative***

Another example of a phasal aspect with pragmatic implications is the permansive, expressed in English with *still* – see (12) above. Dorig expresses the positive permansive with an adverb *mlēti* 'still' (etymologically *mlē* 'again' + *ti* 'progressive aspect'):

(16) Ni m-mat nok, le — ni va-ēs **mlēti**?
3sg PFT-dead IAMIT or 3sg STAT-alive PERM
'Is he dead already — or is he still alive?' [Drg.Heron.67]

The permansive particle *mlēti* is generally incompatible with negation.[10] As we saw in Table 2, the polarity counterpart of the permansive is the DISCONTINUATIVE 'no longer, not any more'. In Dorig, the discontinuative is obtained by combining the Realis negation *s(o)-… tēmē* [§2.1.3.2] with the iamitive *nok*:

[10] The only case when the permansive *mlēti* can combine with a negation is when forming a sentential reply "Not yet" – see §3.1.2 below.

(17) Ni va-semm̄ mlēti? – Obek, ni **s**-semm̄ **nok** **tēmē**.
3sg STAT-sick PERM – NEG:EXIST 3sg NEG:RL_1-sick IAMIT NEG:RL_2
'Is she still sick? – No, she's **not** sick **any more**.'

Such a combination must be understood literally as:

(18) { it is already the case }$_{\text{IAMITIVE}}$ that [*she's not sick*]$_{\text{NEG:REALIS}}$

2.1.4 Declarative statements in the irrealis

2.1.4.1 The negative future

In the affirmative, the TAM category of Irrealis encoded with *s(o)-* may express intention, promise, threat… – in a way equivalent to an English future:

(19) Na **s**-la āt min kmur.
1sg IRR-take thither DAT 2du
'I will give it to you.' [AF.BP3-29a]

Paradoxically, a sentence like (19'), apparently marked in the Irrealis, can only receive a realis interpretation:

(19') Na **s**-la **tēmē** āt min kmur.
1sg **IRR**-take NEG:INDIC thither DAT 2du
'{ I didn't give it ~ I'm not giving it } to you.' (* '*I won't give it to you*')

In modern Dorig, the construction *s(o)-… tēmē* is best seen, synchronically, as a single (discontinuous) morpheme encoding 'Realis negative' [§2.1.3]. In order to negate an irrealis statement like (19), the verb must replace its mood prefix *s(o)-* with a preverbal particle specifically coding for Irrealis negative [see Table 1], namely *vte* or *te*:

(19") Na **vte** la **tēmē** āt min kmur.
1sg NEG:FUT_1 take NEG:FUT_2 thither DAT 2du
'I won't give it to you.' [AF.BP3-29b]

The preverbal element *(v)te* never occurs alone. It only exists as the first element in three discontinuous morphemes of standard negation, all with irrealis semantics:

- *(v)te… tēmē* Negative future 'I won't V…'
- *(v)te… late* Negative potential 'I can't V…'
- *(v)te… te* Prohibitive 'Don't V…!'

In line with our principle to gloss bipartite morphemes as constructional units, I will gloss these respectively as NEG:FUT_1… NEG:FUT_2; NEG:POT_1… NEG:POT_2; and $PROH_1$… $PROH_2$.

The Negative future, illustrated in (19") above, is rare in daily speech; I was only able to hear it under elicitation. Much more common are the latter two types of irrealis negation: the Negative imperative or Prohibitive [§2.2.2], and the Negative potential.

2.1.4.2 The negative potential

In the affirmative, potential statements of the type 'I can V' are expressed using, once again, a discontinuous TAM morpheme *s(o)-… lala* – see (4) above, or (20):

(20) O m̄at neñ ni **s**-daw rōrōw **lala** o tdun.
ART snake DIST 3sg POT_1-do wrong POT_2 ART person
'That snake can be harmful to people.' [Drg.q.Anemol.03]

This diptych *s(o)-… lala* combines the prefix *s(o)-* for Positive irrealis with a postverbal (TAM_2) particle *lala*. The latter results from the grammaticalisation of a former adverb [§1.2.2] *lala* meaning '(do) successfully, e.g. when hunting'. In synchrony, there are good reasons to view *s(o)-… lala* as a single (albeit discontinuous) non-compositional morpheme simply coding for (affirmative) potential modality; hence the gloss POT_1-…POT_2.

The negative potential, in turn, is a discontinuous morpheme *(v)te… late*. The negative counterpart of ex. (4) above is (4'):

(4') Kmār **vte** briñ **late** nēk.
1ex:du $NEG:POT_1$ help $NEG:POT_2$ 2sg
'We can't help you.' [*NEGATIVE POTENTIAL*]

The particle *late* originates in a combination of *lala* with **te*, which is essentially a particle of negation [see §4.7 for its history]; synchronically, it is unanalysable.

Whether in the positive or negative, the potential mood may refer semantically to a situation in the present or future – as in (4–4') or (7). It can also refer to a habitual possibility – as in (20) or (21):

(21) Tuar qōñ ni s-van {*nēk* ***te*** *tek* ***late*** *ni*}
INDF day 3sg IRR-go 2sg $NEG:POT_1$ see $NEG:POT_2$ 3sg
ni t-van ti. {⚓3195#S38}
3sg $IPFV_1$-go $IPFV_2$
'Sometimes [the sorcerer] can just walk around without being seen.'
– *liter*. 'sometimes he'll walk {*you can't see him*} yet he's walking.'

2.1.5 Summary: a case of categorial asymmetry across polarities

If we consider the *s(o)-* prefix individually, one might make the case that Dorig belonged to Miestamo's (2005) *A/NonReal* typological subtype – one where negative predicates are marked as irrealis. However, the existence of separate negations for irrealis clauses implies that the (discontinuous) morpheme *s(o)-… tēmē* is in fact exclusively realis: its link with irrealis semantics is only a matter of etymology. Under a constructional analysis, modern Dorig does not, after all, instantiate the *A/NonReal* type, because it preserves the contrast between realis and irrealis moods under both polarities.

Among the subtypes proposed by Miestamo (2005; 2013a,b), Dorig does not instantiate "A/NonReal", but it constitutes a neat case of "A/Cat", i.e. *paradigmatic categorial asymmetry*. Indeed, most contrasts in TAM fail to translate from one polarity to the other.

The complexity takes place both on the formal and semantic planes. With respect to form, one can't just identify a single morpheme of negation that would be constant across all negative markers. Instead, the various markers of negation are synchronically opaque,

and non-compositional. On the semantic level, the derivation from positive to negative clauses is anything but straightforward [see Table 1]: while some aspectual contrasts are maintained, others are neutralised. One positive TAM marker, the Sequential, can't even be negated at all. All in all, Dorig's Tense-Aspect-Mood categories in the negative have a grammatical reality of their own – formally and semantically – with no straightforward way to derive a positive category into its negative counterpart.

2.2 Negation in non-declaratives

The previous section focused on declarative sentences. We will now examine utterances with non-declarative illocutionary force.

2.2.1 Questions

Little needs to be said about questions. Interrogative sentences make use of the same verbal categories as we saw in the declarative: e.g. Negative Realis (22), Nondumitive (23), the Negative Potential (24).

(22) Nēk **s**-tek **tēmē** ni?
2sg NEG:RL_1-see NEG:RL_2 3sg
'Didn't you see her? ' [Drg.d12.Sintia:22] [*NEG. REALIS*]

(23) Nēk **sowse** vārdēñ **te** ma ni?
2sg $NDUM_1$ meet $NDUM_2$ with 3sg
'Haven't you met with her already?' [Drg.d12.Sintia:42] [*NONDUMITIVE*]

(24) **Te** ttās **late** kēl aqri?
NEG:POT_1 bad NEG:POT_2 again today:FUT
[the phone] 'Can't it go wrong again today?' [Drg.q.Tel:05] [*NEG. POTENTIAL*]

Interrogation is here only marked by prosody.

2.2.2 Prohibition

In the positive, an order can be encoded by an Imperative. If the subject is a 2nd person dual or plural, it involves a special imperative pronoun *ar* 'IMP:2NSG' (imperative non-singular) – contrasting with Ø for 2sg:

(25) (Ø) sēw ma! ≠ **Ar** sēw ma!
(IMP:2sg) descend hither IMP:2NSG descend hither
'Come down!' ≠ 'Come down (y'all)!' [*IMPERATIVE*]

Table 1 represents the Imperative category as *[ar]*…: this stands for the alternation between preverbal Ø and *ar*.

Another common way to formulate an order is simply to use an Irrealis clause in *s(o)-*:

(26) Nēk **s**-sēw ma! ≠ Kmur **s**-sēw ma!
2sg IRR-descend hither 2du IRR-descend hither
'Come down!' ≠ 'Come down (you two)!' [*IRREALIS*]

Except for the imperative prosody, such clauses are formally identical to the declarative sentences in the Irrealis.

As for the prohibitive, it involves constructions that all differ from declaratives. One common construction is the discontinuous morpheme *(v)te… te*. This requires the overt presence of a subject pronoun – unlike the imperative (25) – and reduplication of the verb:

(27) Nēk **vte** sēwsēw **te** ma!
2sg **PROH$_1$** descend~DUP **PROH$_2$** hither
'Don't come down!' [*NEGATIVE IMPERATIVE*]

A non-singular subject of a Prohibitive can be either an ordinary pronoun or a special imperative pronoun. Thus, the dual equivalent of (27) can be *Ar (v)te… te* as in (51) or (62) below, but it can also take the form *Kmur (v)te… te* as in (28):

(28) Kmur **vte** vanvan tvilag **te** vak! {⚓3254#S7}
2du **PROH$_1$** go~DUP beyond **PROH$_2$** DIREC
'Don't you (two) ever walk beyond that point over there!'

In terms of morphology, the Prohibitive can thus be seen as the negative counterpart of the Imperative *[ar]…* of (25), but also of the Irrealis with imperative reading *s(o)-…* of (26). This double correspondence was represented in Table 1 in §2.1.1.

Dorig has in fact not one construction for prohibitives, but three, which are perfectly synonymous. The first construction is *(v)te… te*, which we just saw in (27)-(28). The second one consists of a clause-initial prohibitive particle *tog*, and a *v(a)-* prefix, following the template (29):

(29) ***Tog*** subject ⟨***v****(a)-* verb … ⟩ …

Even though it is homophonous with the Stative, the prefix *v(a)-* is likely to represent here a different morpheme, namely the Counterfactual [§2.4.2]. In any case, the best analysis here is again to assign a single meaning 'Prohibitive' to the construction as a whole (i.e. *tog… v(a)-* 'PROH$_1$… PROH$_2$'):

(30) **Tog** nēk **v-**savāg nēk vatm̄e sa neñ!
PROH$_1$ 2sg **PROH$_2$**-boast 2sg like FOC DIST
'Stop showing off like that!' [AF-BP3-34b]

(31) Kmur s-van, **tog** nēk **va-**vavgat min i Wrisris. {⚓3197S12}
2du IRR-go **PROH$_1$** 2sg **PROH$_2$**-talk~DUP with PERS (name)
'As you walk together [to the Underworld], don't talk to Wrisris.'

That prohibitive can be used with 3rd person subjects:

(32) **Tog** ra=rqa **v-**van gin o qāti bē!
PROH$_1$ PL=woman PROH$_2$-go OBL ART source water
'Women must not go to the river source.' [AF-BP3-30b]

Finally, a third construction exists, that is somewhat a hybrid of the other two. It takes the form of a sequence *tog… te*, which I also gloss 'Prohibitive':

(33) **Tog** dōdōm mawmawis **te** aē!
PROH$_1$ think~DUP suffer~DUP **PROH$_2$** ADV:ANAPH
'Don't worry about it!' [Drg.d04.Kava:41]

(34) Ar **tog** vanvan rās **te** vak!
2nsg:IMP **PROH$_1$** go~DUP far **PROH$_2$** DIREC
'Don't you (two) walk too far over there!' [Drg.Heron.30]

Dorig's three prohibitive constructions are used in the same pragmatic contexts, and are in fact perfectly interchangeable:

(35) Nēk (v)**te** simsim **te**!
2sg PROH$_1$ drink~DUP PROH$_2$

(35') Nēk **tog** simsim **te**!
2sg PROH$_1$ drink~DUP PROH$_2$

(35") **Tog** nēk **v-**sim!
PROH$_1$ 2sg PROH$_2$-drink
'Don't drink it!'

This diversity of forms for the prohibitive adds to the profusion of negative morphemes we had seen already.[11]

Finally, we can situate these three constructions within the typology of prohibitive patterns proposed by van der Auwera & Lejeune (2013). Dorig belongs to their subtype #4, labelled "special imperative + special negative":

- *special imperative*: the three prohibitives involve morphosyntactic patterns specific to them, and not found in the positive affirmative (obligatory reduplication, obligatory presence of the personal pronoun);
- *special negative*: the three prohibitives employ (bipartite) negators that are all reserved to the expression of the prohibitive, and never used in declaratives.

Van der Auwera & Lejeune's typological study includes a sample of six Vanuatu languages, which pertain to different subtypes. Among that sample, the language geographically closest to Dorig, namely Mwotlap, is also assigned to subtype #4.

2.3 Negation in stative predications

The previous pages examined declarative verbal clauses. Following the structure of the reference questionnaire (Miestamo & Veselinova 2019), we now turn to *stative predication*. As we'll see, this umbrella category encompasses again quite different types of negation.

[11] In addition, Dorig also has a marker of apprehensive modality, which in some contexts may be used as an indirect form of prohibitive: this will be briefly discussed in §4.5.

2.3.1 Equational and inclusional predicates

In the absence of a copula like English *be*, nouns in Dorig are directly predicative.[12] Usually, the predicate, here shown between brackets ⟨…⟩, is a whole noun phrase (NP or DP):

(36) Ni ⟨o tdun vi-lwo nami kma⟩. {⚓3197#S35}
3sg ART person ATTR-great POSS 1ex:pl
'He is a major figure for us.'

Such nominal predicates are negated using the negator *tēmē*. Whereas verbs required it to combine with a pre-verbal TAMP morpheme (as in *s(o)-… tēmē* or *vte… tēmē*), non-verbal predicates feature *tēmē* as the sole marker of negation. When *tēmē* occurs alone like this, I propose to gloss it 'NEG:INDIC' [§2.1.3]:

(37) O masa ⟨oror nami m̄erm̄er **tēmē**⟩.
ART knife toy POSS child NEG:INDIC
'A knife is **not** a toy for children.' [Drg.d05.Naef:43]

The structure applies to inclusional predicates like (37), and also to equational ones (38):

(38) ⟨Ni **tēmē**⟩.
3sg NEG:INDIC
'That's not him.' [Drg.d12.Sintia:04]

2.3.2 Negation of attributive predicates

Dorig has a category of adjectives. Unlike verbs, adjectives can modify nouns, by means of the 'Attributive' prefix *v(e)-* (cf. (36) above). In predicate position, adjectives take the same array of TAMP markers as stative verbs. If the meaning is stative, then the adjective inflects for Stative *v(a)-*:

(39) **Va**-wē. {⚓3189#S14}
STAT-good
'It's okay / That's fine / It's beautiful.'

In principle, adjectival predicates are negated following the same rules as for verbs [§2.1]. Thus the Stative, Perfect, or Imperfective aspects in the positive are all negated with the Negative Realis *s(o)-… tēmē*:

(40) Na bē-k **s**-wē **tēmē**.
ART:POSS body-2sg **NEG:RL$_1$**-good **NEG:RL$_2$**
'My body is aching.' (*lit*. my body is not well) [Drg.d02.Krae:06]

However, my corpus shows several examples of adjectives where the negation *tēmē* has kept the stative *v(a)-*:

[12] This is true of other languages in north Vanuatu – e.g. Mwotlap (François 2005b:128), Vera'a (Schnell 2011:32), Vurës (Malau 2016:68), Hiw (François 2017:326) – and widespread in Oceanic (van Lier 2016).

(41) **Va**-wē **tēmē**! {⚓2306#S67}
STAT-good NEG:INDIC
'That's not okay.'

Such a combination is excluded with stative verbs – see (8'-8") above – but it is allowed with adjectives. This is coherent with our earlier observation about nominal predicates [§2.3.1], suggesting that *non-verbal predicates* are ruled by simpler rules than verbal ones. To negate a non-verbal predicate, it only takes the addition of the negator *tēmē*. This is the only domain where Dorig negation shows full "symmetry" (in Miestamo's terms) between polarities.

The rule also works with a handful of adjectives that happen to be incompatible with the stative prefix (e.g. *arās* 'remote, far away'). They are simply negated by adding *tēmē*:

(42) Arās soqsoq sa! – Bek ! Arās **tēmē**.
far INTSF DIST NEG:EXIST far NEG:INDIC
'That's really far! – Not at all! It's not far.' [Drg.q.d01.Rot:21]

Finally, Dorig has a word *taṃ̄rag* 'be like…' (derived from *ṃ̄rag* 'like…'), that behaves neither like an adjective or a verb. It takes the same negation as other non-verbal predicates, namely *tēmē*:

(43) Taṃ̄rag **tēmē** aēsa le Vanuatu.
be.like NEG:INDIC here LOC Vanuatu
'It's not like here in Vanuatu.' [BP3-28a]

2.3.3 Existential, possessive, locative predicates

In the affirmative, Dorig has two ways to create an existential clause. One strategy is to use the posture verb *tog* 'stay', inflected for Imperfective:

(44) Ni m-tek vak le qātgi wiag, magte **t-tog** **ti**.
3sg PFT-look DIREC LOC trunk Dioscorea old.woman $IPFV_1$-stay $IPFV_2$
'He looked up above the wild yam: an old woman was there.' [Drg.Heron.59]

The other strategy involves the word *aē*.[13] When found in predicate function, *aē* encodes the existential (Eng. *there is*):

(45) O tne vre ⟨**aē**⟩, Diwtag. {⚓3195#S45}
ART location.of village EXIST (name)
'There is an abandoned village, (called) Diwtag.'

Existential constructions are also used to encode predicative possession. The equivalent of Eng. *I have an N* is a structure meaning literally "There is my N" ~ "My N exists". This may refer to alienable (46) or to inalienable (47) possession:

[13] The original use of *aē* is as an oblique anaphoric 'about it, with it, at it, there', used in adjunct position [see ex. (33)]. The same word in predicate position takes up an existential meaning 'be there; there is'.

(46) Namo-n o ak sōsō vi-lwo **aē**. {⚓2306#S1}
POSS-3sg ART ship paddle~REDUP ATTR-big EXIST
'He had a large canoe.'

(47) I nti kmār nok **aē**.
PERS child.of 1ex:du IAMIT EXIST
'We already have children.' [Drg.q.d12.Sintia:36]

The negation of an existential predicate employs a dedicated negator, namely *bek* or *obek* 'NEG:EXIST' (Negative existential) – see (48):[14]

(48) Nēk magse-ñ, i ntō-ñ **obek**. {⚓2306#S41}
2sg alone-2sg PERS child.of-2sg NEG:EXIST
'You are alone, you don't have children.'

With a definite subject, a Negative existential *obek* also serves to negate a locative predicate such as (49):

(49) Ni le mon o vre. {⚓3197#S8}
3sg LOC POSS-3sg ART village
'He is in his village.'

(49') Ni **obek** le mo-n o vre.
3sg NEG:EXIST LOC POSS-3sg ART village
'He isn't in his village.'

We'll see in §3.1.1 how the Negative existential *obek* is also used for negative replies.

2.3.4 Recapitulation

Table 3 recapitulates the different constructions discussed in this section on non-verbal ("stative") predications.

Table 3 – Negation in some non-verbal predicates.

Type of predicate	Positive polarity	Negative polarity
Equational, inclusional	sbj ⟨ NP ⟩$_{PRED}$	sbj ⟨ NP ***tēmē*** ⟩$_{PRED}$
Attributive	sbj ⟨ TAM adjective ⟩$_{PRED}$	sbj ⟨ *s(o)-*/TAM adjective ***tēmē*** ⟩$_{PRED}$
Existential, possessive	sbj ⟨ ***aē*** ⟩$_{PRED}$	sbj ⟨ ***obek*** ⟩$_{PRED}$
Locative	sbj ⟨ LOCATIVE ⟩$_{PRED}$	sbj ⟨ ***obek*** LOCATIVE ⟩$_{PRED}$

[14] The syntactic and phraseological behaviour of Dorig *obek* is parallel to that of equivalent morphemes in northern Vanuatu languages – Hiw *tego*, Vurës *odiañ* (cf. Malau 2016:66), Mwotlap *tateh*, Lemerig *niv*, etc.; see the comparison in François (2011:214, 219-221).

2.4 Negation in non-main clauses

2.4.1 General observations

The rules of negation are essentially the same in main and non-main clauses. Example (50) has two clauses in a causal relation {*P because Q*}. The second clause uses the Negative realis, just like an independent clause would (cf. 9'):

(50) Kmur me-briñ na *sur* o āv **s**-gān **tēmē** na. {⚓2306#S68}
2du PFT-help 1sg CAUS ART fire NEG:RL$_1$-burn NEG:RL$_2$ 1sg
(*lit.* 'You two helped me *so* the fire didn't burn me.')
'You helped me dodge the fire.'

In a relative clause, the subordinator *ka* inserts between the clause's subject and predicate. The relative clause in (51) features a nondumitive. The structure literally reads {*don't go over there, we* SUB *haven't gone there yet* }:

(51) Ar te vanvan vga te vak gēn neñ sa
IMP:2nsg PROH$_1$ go~DUP beyond PROH$_2$ DIREC FOC DIST TOP
gēn ka ***sowse*** *van* ***te*** *aē*.
1inc:pl SUB NDUM$_1$ go NDUM$_2$ ADV:ANAPH
'Don't you two walk beyond the point over there,
where *we haven't been yet*!' [Drg.Heron.21]

The morphosyntax of negation is here identical to the one found in an independent sentence (cf. 6).

2.4.2 Conditional systems

I will here focus on one particular type of syndesis: conditional systems. Conditional systems in Dorig present two semantic subtypes: HYPOTHETICAL vs. COUNTERFACTUAL systems. As Table 4 shows, these two types of conditionals require different negations when the conditional protasis is negated.

Table 4 – Negation in conditional protases

Type of system	Positive protasis	Negative protasis
Hypothetical	{ *KAK* X *m*-V$_1$...}, Y *s(o)-* V$_2$ 'if X *did* V$_1$, then Y *would* V$_2$'	{ *KAK* X ***mtē*** V$_1$ ***tēmē*** ...}, Y *s(o)-* V$_2$ 'if X *did* ***not*** V$_1$, then Y *would* V$_2$'
Counterfactual	{ X *VIT* V$_1$...}, *mrag* Y *v(a)-* V$_2$ 'if X *had* V$_1$, then Y *would have* V$_2$'	{ X *VIT* ***(v)te*** V$_1$ ***te***... }}, *mrag* Y *v(a)-* V$_2$ 'if X *had* ***not*** V$_1$, then Y *would have* V$_2$'

With HYPOTHETICAL systems, the conditional subordinator (Eng. *if*) is the complementiser *kak*, usually followed (in the affirmative) by a verb in the Perfect *m(e)-*:

(52) *Kak* o dmug **m**-kot nēk, nēk s-gār nēk s-dēñ o mrān.
COMP ART mosquito PFT-bite 2sg 2sg IRR-scratch 2sg IRR-reach ART daylight
'If you're bitten by mosquitoes, you'll scratch yourself all night.'

If the protasis is negative, the Perfect marker *m(e)-…* is replaced by a diptych *mtē… tēmē*:

(53) *Kak* nēk **mtē** vrisa wālōg **tēmē** mi (…),
COMP 2sg HYP:NEG run round NEG:INDIC with.it
nēk s-gān o m̃la neñ, v-marmar. {⚓3189#S41}
2sg IRR-eat ART scrubfowl DEM STAT-hard
[*a magic ritual to make meat tender*]
'If you don't run in circles while holding it,
then when you eat the scrubfowl, [its meat] will be too hard.'

The TAMP marker *mtē… tēmē* is only found in this context (although see ex. (76)). The use of the negator *tēmē*, normally reserved to realis or "indicative" modality, is somewhat paradoxical in the case of a hypothesis; but it is coherent with the use of a (realis) Perfect in the affirmative equivalent (52).

As for COUNTERFACTUAL systems, they follow the patterns shown in Table 4, and illustrated here for two positive clauses:

(54) Ni ***vit*** ttuw na mta-n, ***m̃rag*** na mta-n **v**-qel ni!
3sg if:CNTFC hit ART eye-3sg then:CNTFC ART eye-3sg CNTFC-blind OBL:ANA
'If he had hit her eyes, she would have become blind.' [Drg.d08.Rao:15]

In such a system, a negative protasis requires a special negation, namely *(v)te… te*:

(55) Na ***vit*** **te** lōblōb **te** o wrēt sa,
1sg if:CNTFC NEG:CNTFC$_1$ pound~DUP NEG:CNTFC$_2$ ART squid TOP
m̃rag **v**-marmar.
then:CNTFC CNTFC-hard
'If I hadn't pounded this octopus, it would be too hard.' [BP3-33a]

(56) ***Vit*** nēr **te** bālbēl **te** na-ble-gēn o dām,
if:CNTFC 3pl NEG:CNTFC$_1$ steal~DUP NEG:CNTFC$_2$ ART-POSS-1inc:pl ART yam
m̃rag gēn **va**-tatqās.
then:CNTFC 1in:pl CNTFC-bake~DUP
'If our yams hadn't been stolen, we'd be cooking them.' [BP3-33a]

It is noteworthy that the very same negation *(v)te… te* is used for the prohibitive [§2.2.2] and for a negative Counterfactual hypothesis. Indeed, those are two contexts when the speaker elaborates a virtual situation in contrast with reality. Likewise, a language like Latin would use the subjunctive in both cases: the Counterfactual (*si eum occidisset* 'if she had slain him…') and the Prohibitive (*ne facias* 'don't do!').

2.5 Negative lexicalizations

The notion of "negative lexicalization" (Veselinova 2013a) refers to the case when a negative meaning is expressed by lexical rather than morphological means.

Except for the contrast between positive and negative existentials [§2.3.3], Dorig does not have clearcut cases of such a pattern. Among Dorig's neighbours, some languages show

lexicalisation for meanings such as 'not want' (Teanu *mene*), or 'not know' (Hiw *yiñetog*, Teanu *mui*: François 2021). But in such cases, Dorig would use a phrasal negation, as in (8").

2.6 Other clausal negation constructions

Somewhat peripheral to the domain of negation proper is the frustrative adverb *mtēl* '(do) in vain'. A common translation of this adverb is often a negative construction in English, such as 'be unable to, can't':

(57)

Sō	sag	neñ,	t-rev	mlē	namon	o	ak	neñ	ti,
paddle	up	DIST	IPFV$_1$-tow	again	POSS:3sg	ART	canoe	DIST	IPFV$_2$
la	t-*revrev*	***mtēl***	ti.						{⚓2306#S35}
but	IPFV$_1$-tow~DUP	in.vain	IPFV$_2$						

'Once he reached the shore, he tried again to tow his boat, but *didn't manage to*.'
[liter. 'but *he towed in vain*' = he tried to tow it but was NOT able to]

In spite of its English translation, this frustrative construction cannot be considered a proper instance of a negative structure in the grammar of Dorig.

3 Non-clausal negation

3.1 Negative replies

3.1.1 Equivalent of a Negative declarative clause

When answering negatively a yes/no question, Dorig can use either of two strategies:

- the 'light no', consisting of a "prosodic gesture" of the form [↴↓↿] uttered on a vowel /ɔ/: ɔ̀ɔ̀ɔ̌ [↴ɔ.↓ɔ.↿ɔ];
- the 'heavy no', which is the Negative existential used absolutely.

The use of Negative existentials for negative replies is shared by all Vanuatu languages (François 2011:220), and is in fact common typologically (Veselinova 2013b).

A negative reply in Dorig will thus include the Negative existential *obek*, or its shorter variant *bek* – see (17) and (42) above, or (58):

(58)

Namu-k	o	vriñriñ	va-wow	nok?	–	**Bek**,	va-loq	mlēti.
POSS-1sg	ART	thing	STAT-dry	IAMIT		NEG:EXIST	STAT-wet	PERM

'Are my clothes dry yet? – No, they're still wet.' [Drg.q.Adj:41]

The negation *(o)bek* may contradict a negative statement or question uttered by the addressee, in which case it may translate in Eng. as a strong 'yes' (Fr. *si !*, Germ. *doch!*):

(59)

Kmur	vte	briñ	late	na!	–	**Obek**,	va-wē!	{⚓2306#S21}
2du	NEG:POT$_1$	help	NEG:POT$_2$	2sg		NEG:EXIST	STAT-good	

'You won't be able to help me! – **Yes** (we will), that's fine!'

A dialogue like (59) shows that Dorig behaves like Japanese, in that its negative replies disagree with the polarity of the previous utterance, rather than with its propositional

content (see Holmberg 2015, Miestamo 2017).

3.1.2 Equivalent of a Nondumitive clause

The standalone equivalent of the nondumitive *sowse… te* 'not yet' [§2.1.3.3] is a combination of *(o)bek* with the marker of permansive *mlēti*. Such a combination reads literally as:

(60) { it is still the case }$_{\text{PERMANSIVE}}$ that [*no*]$_{\text{NEG:EXIST}}$

… which is in fact parallel to Eng. *not yet* or Fr. *pas encore*.

Note that the negative reply can also be used as a tag in the previous question:

(61) Ni m-lāg nok, le *bek* *mlēti*? – **Bek** **mlēti**.
3sg PFT-marry IAMIT or NEG:EXIST PERM NEG:EXIST PERM
'Is she married, or not yet? – Not yet.' [Drg.d12.Sintia:33]

This standalone nondumitive (61) is formally quite different from its clausal variant (61'):

(61') Ni **sowse** lāg **te**.
3sg **NDUM$_1$** marry **NDUM$_2$**
'She isn't married yet.'

3.1.3 Equivalent of a Prohibitive

A standalone prohibitive uses the interjection *tog!* 'don't!':

(62) **Tog**! Ar te qāgqēg vtē te!
PROH 2nsg:IMP PROH$_1$ throw~DUP away PROH$_2$
'Don't! Don't you throw it away!' [Drg.d09.Karen:41]

This is the same word as the formative found in *tog… v(a)-*, one of the TAMP markers for prohibitive – see (31) in §2.2.2.

Dorig also has a special interjection for what can be called the "dilatory prohibitive", i.e. 'Not yet!' or 'Wait!':

(63) **Tuqa** titi! so-wdōñ m̄o o āv.
DILAT:PROH POLIT IRR-set.up before ART fire
'*Not yet / Wait!* You must first set up the fire.' [Drg.d10.Bekem:10]

This sort of interjection is a common feature in northern Vanuatu – see Table 8 in the Appendix.

3.2 Negative indefinites and quantifiers

Dorig doesn't have inherently negative indefinites or adverbs equivalent to Eng. *never*, *nobody*, *nothing*, *no X*, etc. These meanings are expressed by combining the expected negation with a generic noun (hyperonym) such as:

- *o tdun* '(a) person' + NEG → 'nobody'
- *o sa(v)* '(a) thing, what' + NEG → 'nothing'

(64) shows the equivalent of *nobody* in an existential clause:

(64) Am̃o, **o** **TDUN** **obek**. {⚓3195#S7}
in.past ART person NEG:EXIST
'In the olden days, [in this island] there was nobody.'

The negated participant can be the syntactic subject as in (64), or an object as in (65):

(65) Kmār s-tek tēmē **o** **SA** aēsei.
1ex:du NEG:RL$_1$-see NEG:RL$_2$ ART what here
'We haven't seen *anything* here.' [Drg.d05.Naef:08]

Just like other nouns, the NP heads *tdun* and *sa(v)* take the common noun article *o*. As we'll see in §4.3 for noun phrases in general, that article *o* remains unchanged whether the sentence is affirmative or negative. Section in §4.2 will discuss the special status of *o sa(v)*.

3.3 Negative derivation and case-marking

Patterns of negative derivation (such as Eng. *un-friendly*, *im-possible*, *time-less*) are rare in Oceanic languages, and totally absent from Dorig.

Likewise, Dorig has no adposition similar to Eng. *without*. In order to express a caritive meaning, one would resort to a complex sentence with a negative existential. For example, *without a child* or *childless* would be expressed by a sentence like (48) above – a strategy which is typologically very common (Veselinova 2013:118).

4 Other aspects of negation

4.1 The scope of negation

Dorig does not have grammaticalized devices to specify the scope of negation. As a rule, the negation is carried by the predicate head (generally, a verb) regardless of which constituent is semantically the focus of the negation:

(66) La Wrisris, ni **s**-mat **tēmē** *attua* soqsoq,
but W. 3sg NEG:RL$_1$-die NEG:RL$_2$ long.ago INTSF
Wrisris ni qra mat wor ti. {⚓3197#S36}
W. 3sg REC.PST$_1$ die just REC.PST$_2$
'[our god] Wrisris *didn't die* a very long time ago, he died just recently.'

In (66), the negation formally surrounds the verb *mat* 'die', even though its semantic scope is really the time adjunct *attua* 'a long time ago' – in a way similar to its English translation.

Because the negation is only marked on the predicate head, sentence (67) would be ambiguous between three readings:

(67) O tdun sa **so**-vsōg **tēmē** o wiag neñ.
ART person this NEG:RL$_1$-plant NEG:RL$_2$ ART yam that
(*lit.* 'This person here didn't plant those yams.')

a) 'It was not this man who planted those yams.'
b) 'This man did not plant those yams (he bought them).'
c) 'This man didn't plant those yams (he planted these other ones).'

The role of indicating the focus of negation would be here played by the sole prosody.

That said, the scope of negation is sometimes specified using a strategy: topicalization, or left-dislocation. Thus, Dorig commonly has complex predicates that involve more than two lexemes – either a serial verb {V+V}, or a verb and its modifier {V+Adjective}, {V+Adverb}; such complex predicates invariably share the same TAMP marking. If that marking is negative, it has scope over the whole predicate: see the examples (7), (8"), (11), (28), (33). In a sentence like (68), the negation is thus shared by the action verb *daw* 'do' and the adverb *tavul* 'well, correctly':

(68) Na **s**-daw tavul **tēmē**.
1sg **NEG:RL$_1$**-do well **NEG:RL$_2$**
'I'm not doing it correctly.'

Dorig can sometimes break up these complex predicates, and distribute them across two separate clauses – one being topicalized, the second under focus. In such cases, each predicate head recovers its own autonomous TAMP marking. Thus compare (68) with its biclausal variant (68'):[15]

(68') Na t-daw t' sa, **va**-wē **tēmē**! {⚓2306#S67}
1sg IPFV$_1$-do IPFV$_2$ TOP **STAT**-good **NEG:INDIC**
'[The way] I'm doing it, that's not correct!'

Breaking apart a complex predicate may be seen as a way to specify the exact scope of the negation.

4.2 Negative polarity items

So-called *negative polarity items* (Baker 1970), sometimes called *scale reversal items* (Haspelmath 1997:34), are certain words – such as English *any* or *ever* – that occur typically in negative contexts, but are also found in other forms of non-assertive sentences, such as questions, hypotheses, generic statements, etc.

In Dorig, this definition fits well a word like *(o) sa(v)* 'what/anything'. This noun is found in negative clauses with the sense 'anything/nothing' – see (65), (69) – but is also frequent in direct questions (70), reported questions (71), or conditional protases (72).

(69) Na vte rev late **o** **sav** gin o pēn sa.
1sg NEG:POT$_1$ write NEG:POT$_2$ ART what OBL ART pen this
'I can't write *anything* with this pen.' [Drg.q.Kwesjen:05]

[15] Because *tavul* is an adverb ('well, properly'), it cannot head a predicate; its clausal equivalent is the adjective *wē* ('good, proper').

(70) **O sav** allon? O gāngēn vata le m̄sa?
ART what inside ART food from LOC garden
'*What*'s inside? Is that food from the garden?' [Drg.d05.Naef:08]

(71) Nēr so-vrēgēl tēmē **o sav** t-bāl nablenēr o wde ti.
3pl NEG:RL$_1$-know NEG:RL$_2$ ART what IPFV$_1$-steal their ART pig IPFV$_2$
'They didn't know *what* exactly was stealing their pigs.' [Drg.Wgatgon.04]

(72) **O sav** gongon m-la gin nēk, kmār so-briñ lala nēk. {⚓2306#S41}
ART what problem PFT-take OBL 2sg 1ex:du POT$_1$-help POT$_2$ 2sg
'*Whatever* problem happens to you, we'll be able to help you.'

By contrast, that word *(o) sav* is incompatible with affirmative statements: these use a different noun instead, namely *vriñriñ* 'thing' (cf. (58)):

(73) O āv m-gān wāl~wēlōg bas wor **o vriñriñ**. (**o sav*) {⚓2306#S59}
ART fire PFT-eat around~INTSF all RESTR ART thing
'The fire consumed *everything* around.'

Human referents work in a different way. Negative statements do not involve the question word *sē* 'who?', but the generic noun *(o) tdun* 'person'. That noun combines with a negation to yield the equivalent of 'nobody' as in (64) or (77); but it is also found in affirmative statements, as in (20) or (36). In other words, while *sav* '(any)thing' does constitute a negative polarity item for non-humans, *tdun* '(any)body' does not.

In the typology of negative indefinites proposed by Haspelmath (2013a, b), *sav* would be an "interrogative-based indefinite", whereas *tdun* is a "generic-noun-based indefinites".

4.3 Marking of NPs in the scope of negation

Dorig has the following noun determiners (François 2007):

- *i* – 'personal article', reserved to human nouns with high individuation such as proper names [→ ex.(31)] or kin terms [→ (14)-(15), (48)]
- *na* – 'possessive article' for common nouns (i.e. non-human, or human with low individuation) that are inalienably possessed (suffixed) [→ (8), (10), (40)]
- *o* – 'common article' for common nouns that are unbound: either alienably possessed as in (46), or simply unpossessed as in (6), (11), (20), (73).
- *tuar* – 'indefinite article' for all nouns, as in (21), (77).

The function of these articles is mostly syntactic, that of a determiner: it's a D in a DP. Crucially, these three articles are underspecified with respect to features such as [±definite], [±specific], or [±referential]. Depending on the context, they may translate as an indefinite ('a', 'some'…) or a definite article ('the'); they may refer to a specific entity, or a generic one. This explains why the same articles are compatible both with positive and negative clauses, whether they are to be interpreted as referential or not:

- ***i** ntu-k* 'my child' is [+def] [+spec] [+ref] in positive clause (15)
  ***i** ntō-n̄* 'your child' is [-def] [-spec] [-ref] in negative clause (48).

- ***o*** *m̄erm̃er* 'the child' is [+def] [+spec] [+ref] in positive clause (11)
  o *tdun* '(any) person' is [-def] [-spec] [-ref] in negative clause (64).
- ***tuar*** *qōn̄* 'some days' is [-def] [-spec] [+ref] in positive clause (21)
  tuar *tdun* '(any) person' is [-def] [-spec] [-ref] in negative clause (77).

A noun marked by one of these determiners will be ambiguous in its interpretation. The same sequence *o masa* '(a/the) knife' is thus found in positive or negative statements alike:[16]

(74) Na m-tek **o** **masa** allon.
1sg PFT-see ART knife inside
'I saw a knife inside.' [-def] [+spec] [+ref]

(74') Na s-tek tēmē **o** **masa** allon.
1sg NEG:RL$_1$-see NEG:RL$_2$ ART knife inside
'I didn't see any knife inside.' [-def] [-spec] [-ref]

The default reading of *o masa* in (74') is non-referential (Eng. *any knife*); but the presence of another modifier, like a possessor or a demonstrative, can override this interpretation by forcing a [+definite] reading:

(74") Na s-tek tēmē **namo-ñ** **o** **masa** allon.
1sg NEG:RL$_1$-see NEG:RL$_2$ POSS-2sg ART knife inside
'I didn't see your knife inside.' [+def] [+spec] [+ref]

In sum, noun phrases bear the same determiners in positive and negative contexts. In this respect, the Dorig system shows perfect symmetry across polarities.

4.4 Reinforcing negation

In order to reinforce its negative statements, Dorig uses an auxiliary *tē* 'Negation intensifier' (INTS:NEG), of unknown origin.[17] The reason it can be analysed as a (verb-like) auxiliary is that it bears the TAMP marking instead of the lexical verb, which follows it immediately.

The ordinary negation (75) can be compared with the intensified negation (75'):

(75) Ni **s**-vit **tēmē** o sav.
3sg NEG:RL$_1$-say NEG:RL$_2$ ART thing
'He didn't say anything.'

[16] While Dorig here behaves like its immediate neighbours, it contrasts with several languages of Vanuatu that employ different NP articles in positive vs. negative sentences. Thus Hiw (Torres Is.) contrasts two indefinite articles, one [+spec] and one [-spec] (François 2016b); further south, Araki also forces the use of *partitive* determiners in irrealis and/or negative clauses (François 2002:54–67).

[17] The form *tē* [tɪ] is unrelated with the *te* [tɛ] we have seen as a formative in several negative morphemes [§2.1.3].

(75') Ni **so-*tē*** vit **tēmē** o sav, ni so mōl. {⚓2306#S26}
3sg NEG:RL$_1$-INTS:NEG say NEG:RL$_2$ ART thing 3sg SEQ return
'He didn't **even** say anything, and left.'

This auxiliary is also attested with the perfect *m(e)-*:

(76) Tōlnēr so ñor, i rār **m-*tē*** ñor tavul **tēmē**.
3TRI SEQ sleep PERS 3du PFT-INTS:NEG sleep well NEG:INDIC
'The three of them went to sleep,
but the two (brothers) didn't manage to sleep **at all**.' [Drg.Vusvusmat.20]

This sequence *m-tē… tēmē* may well be the origin of the homophonous negation we saw in hypothetical sentences [§2.4.2].

4.5 Negation in complex clauses: the case of the apprehensive

Dorig lacks any coordinator that would be specialised for negation, such as Latin *neque*, or Eng. *either… or*.

As for subordination, special mention must be made of negative purposives, or rather their pragmatic equivalent. When a clause P is meant to avoid the realisation of an event Q, many languages – like English – employ a negation in the subordinate clause, in a pattern {P, *so that not* Q} – e.g. *Stand firm, so you don't fall*. In Vanuatu languages, such meanings are usually expressed by a special construction called "apprehensional" – of the type {P, *lest* Q}.

In Dorig, the apprehensive linker is a form *tekor*, followed by a positive irrealis:

(77) Na t-ñor gor ti ***tekor*** tuar tdun s-bāl.
1sg IPFV$_1$-sleep over IPFV$_2$ APPREH INDF person IRR-steal
(my money) 'I sleep on it so nobody can steal it.'
[*liter*. I sleep on it **lest** anyone steals it] [Drg.d05.Naef:14]

This apprehensive particle *tekor* is grammaticalized from a verb *tekgor* [tɛkɔr] 'beware, look out' – etymologically 'watch (*tek*) over (*gor*)'. So a sentence like (77) arguably involves three underlying predicates: "I sleep on it, [*bewaring*] someone might steal it".

Even though *tekor* appears to serve as a subordinator in (77), the very same word also routinely surfaces sentence-initially, as a morpheme coding for apprehensional modality:

(78) Ar te vanvan vga te vak gēn neñ sa gēn ka sowse
IMP:2nsg PROH$_1$ go~DUP beyond PROH$_2$ DIREC FOC DIST TOP 1inc:pl SUB NDUM$_1$
van te aē. **Tekor** kmur s-van wōn i tbi-kmur.
go NDUM$_2$ ANAPH APPREH 2du IRR-go find PERS ancestor-2du
'Don't you two walk beyond the point over there, where we haven't been yet!
You might come across [the ghost of] your ancestor.' [Drg.Heron.15]

Even if *tekor* does not, strictly speaking, encode syntactic subordination, it does encode a form of pragmatic dependency between the two sentences. Indeed, the main function of the apprehensive modality is to present a scenario as undesirable ('you might meet an evil ghost'); this utterance, in turn, serves as a justification for an imperative or a prohibitive,

whether the latter is made explicit or not.[18] As a corollary, the apprehensive is sometimes used as a polite or indirect variant of a prohibitive:

(79) **Tekor** nēk so-dlōm o sri-n!
APPREH 2sg IRR-swallow ART bone-3sg
'[Make sure you] *don't swallow* the bones!' [Drg.q.Rerem.04]

Yet crucially for our purposes, it bears highlighting that apprehensive modality does not, in fact, pertain to negation. Such constructions are relevant to a discussion of negative polarity only insofar as they constitute a pragmatic equivalent of constructions which, in English, might involve negative morphology (cf. 'so *nobody* can steal it'); yet the apprehensive does not, strictly speaking, belong to the set of negative constructions.

4.6 Other aspects of negation

4.6.1 Contrastive negation

In contrastive diptychs of the form {*not P (but) Q*}, some languages employ a special conjunction for 'but' (e.g. German *sondern*, Spanish *sino*). In such cases, Dorig simply uses parataxis:

(80) Bek, o *gasi* *āv* **tēmē**, o sawi o naw wor.
NEG:EXIST ART smoke fire NEG:INDIC ART steam ART salt.water just
'No, that's not smoke, that's just steam!' [Drg.d10.Bekem:26]

4.6.2 Non-negative uses of negatives

Clausal negation is always semantically negative or prohibitive. One case, though, deserves mention, where a formally negative morpheme is routinely assigned a meaning that cannot be reduced to negation strictly speaking.

We saw in §3.1 how the negative existential *bek* ~ *obek* is commonly used as a negative declarative reply ('No!'). The same negation can also commonly take a broader meaning, that of politely contradicting the relevance of the addressee's utterance, even when it was not a yes/no question:

(81) Nēk t-daksa ti? – **Bek**, na m-mōl kēl ma ti na t-rev
2sg IPFV$_1$-do.what IPFV$_2$ NEG:EXIST 1sg PFT-return back hither COORD 1sg IPFV$_1$-tow
namu-k o ak ti, la na t-revrev mtēl ti. {⚓2306#S18}
POSS-1sg ART canoe IPFV$_2$ but 1sg IPFV$_1$-tow~DUP in.vain IPFV$_2$
'What are you doing? – ***No*** (=*nothing in particular, don't worry)*. Just that I was trying to tow my boat on my way back home, and I was unable to do it!'

This polite use of sentential negation is common in the daily phraseology of Vanuatu languages (François 2011:221).

[18] I have developed this argument about the apprehensive of Mwotlap (François 2003:301-312; f/c); see also Malau (2016:679-80) for Vurës. For a typology of apprehensives, see Vuillermet *et al.* (f/c).

4.7 Diachronic notes

In the absence of ancient documents in Dorig, the language's history must be reconstructed based on language comparison with its immediate neighbours. In that perspective, our appendix provides a comprehensive list (so far unpublished) of negative morphemes in all 17 Torres–Banks languages [cf. map in §1.1], based on my firsthand data.

While a full comparison would go beyond the purpose of the present study, I will at least mention here the main paths of change that can shed light on the origin of Dorig negation.

4.7.1 Jespersen's cycle in the Banks islands' languages

The comparison of north Vanuatu languages shows that standard negation was initially (i.e. at the level of PTB or 'Proto Torres–Banks') a simple proclitic *ate=. Mota, a conservative language spoken north of Dorig, has kept that simple system: ***ate*** *aras* <NEG far> 'It's not far'. Out of the 15 languages of the Banks islands, twelve later added a postverbal element, resulting in discontinuous markers, or "double negations". Here is a sample (in IPA) of Realis negations in a few Banks languages, equivalent to Dorig *s(o)-… tēmē*:

(82) Lehali /tɛt… **tæ**/; Löyöp /tɛ… **ʧɛ**/; Mwotlap, Volow /ɛt-… **tɛ**/;
Lemerig /(e)… **ʔæ**/; Vera'a /(ɪʔ)… rɔs/; Nume /veta… *mi*/; Dorig /s(ɔ)-… tɪmɪ/;
Koro /t-… wʊs-*mɪ*/; Olrat /tɛ… wʊs/; Lakon /tɪ… avʊh/; Mwerlap /ti… **tɛa**/.

In five of the languages cited in (82), the element in bold reflects a proto-form *tea. This word *tea can be safely reconstructed as a former numeral meaning 'one': it is found in the form *lavea-tea 'six', liter. '[five]-one' (François 2005a:496). Some modern languages, like Mwotlap in (83), still reflect that form *tea as an indefinite or partitive ('some'):

(83) Kimi ne-myōs ne-gengen ***te*** en, ami lep. {⚓7413#S250}
2pl STAT-want ART-food PARTIT TOP 2pl:IMP take
'[If] you want *some/any* food, help yourselves.'

The next step in the grammaticalisation process was for that partitive to become the second element of a double negation ('not … even a little' → 'not'): see (84) for Mwotlap (François 2003:317).

(84) Imam **et**-ēglal **te**. {⚓7413#S27}
father **NEG:RL$_1$**-know **NEG:RL$_2$**
'Father doesn't know.'

In sum, several languages of north Vanuatu have grammaticalised a former partitive ('some, any' < *tea 'one') into an obligatory component of a bipartite negation.[19] This is an instance of Jespersen's Cycle.[20] In some languages, the cycle has even reached its ultimate

[19] Further south on Ambae island (Vanuatu), Hyslop (2001:260) describes the double negation *hi … tea* in Lolovoli. For an overview of negation in several languages of Vanuatu, with an emphasis on the language Lewo, see Early (1994:89).

[20] About Jespersen's cycle, see van der Auwera (2009), for a general account; Vossen & van der Auwera …/…

consequence – i.e. the loss of the first component of negation (at least in some colloquial registers), so that the negative meaning ends up being carried by *tea on its own:

(85) (*Mwotlap*) – (François 2003:318)
Ino **te**, ikē!
1sg:PRED **NEG** 3sg:PRED
'It's not me, it's him.'

With the form *te* /tɛ/ found in neighbouring languages, the reader will have recognised the postverbal element *te* we had observed earlier in various negative constructions of Dorig: e.g. the nondumitive *sowse… **te*** [§2.1.3.3], the prohibitive *(v)te… **te*** or its variant *tog… **te*** [§2.2.2], the counterfactual protatic *vit (v)te… **te*** [§2.4.2]

While a historical demonstration can show that *te* has its ultimate origin in a former quantifier *tea, this is no longer perceptible to Dorig speakers: in synchrony, the only function that could be assigned to *te* is a general sense of "negation". Strictly speaking, *te* is not even a full-fledged *morpheme*, since it never occurs on its own: it is no more than a formative in several compound morphemes, which are semantically non-compositional.

4.7.2 Morpheme coalescence as the source of Dorig negators

Among the many morphological elements associated with negation in Dorig, many result from processes of coalescence, or contraction, between two formerly separate morphemes.

Thus in the negative potential *(v)te … **late*** [§2.1.4.2], the second element arguably results from a contraction of negative *te* with the former adverb **la* or *lala* coding for the potential: **la* + *te* → *late*. This reduplicated form *lala* is itself cognate with a postverbal morpheme *lai found in some Banks languages, to encode Potential modality, of the form *lai* or *le* – see the forms of the Negative potential in Table 7 of the appendix.

The other common marker of negation, namely ***tēmē***, can also be explained if we follow the path of Jespersen's cycle in north Vanuatu, and pursue our cross-linguistic comparison. Among the 12 Banks languages that have reinforced their initial negation with a second element, (82) showed not only reflexes of *tea, but also of other strengtheners: /rɔs/; /wʊs ~ avʊh/; /mi ~ mɪ/, all of unknown etymology.

My proposal is that the Dorig negation *tēmē* /tɪmɪ/ results from the contraction of *te* /tɛ/ (marker of negation < quantifier *tea) and of a second form **mē* /mɪ/. The latter is not a morpheme in modern Dorig, but is attested (as /mi/ or /mɪ/) as a negative formative in Dorig's two neighbours Nume and Koro. Considering the contrast between the negations in *…te* and those in *…tēmē* (see Table 1 in §2.1.1), it appears that {*te*+**mē*} would combine only in declarative utterances (as opposed to prohibitives), and under so-called "indicative" modality – covering realis contexts (past, present) as well as the rare declarative future [§2.1.4.1]. (Note however that the nondumitive, which is semantically realis or indicative, shows the unexpected form *te* instead of expected *tēmē*.)

2014) for a comparison of Austronesian languages. For case studies dedicated to other Oceanic languages, see Barbour (2015), Roversi & Næss (2019).

The hypothesis of a coalescence {*te*+**mē*} is confirmed if we compare Dorig with its close neighbour Koro. In those contexts where Dorig would have *te*, Koro has a form *wōs* /wʊs/ (which it shares with Olrat /wʊs/ and Lakon /avʊh/); whereas Dorig *tēmē* systematically corresponds in Koro to an augmented negation of the form *wōs**mē***. The morphomic parallelism between the two languages is striking: see Table 5.

Table 5 – Morphomic parallelism between negative morphemes in Dorig and Koro: bare vs. augmented forms of negation.

type	meaning	Dorig	Koro
BARE NEGATION	negative imperative	*(v)te …* ***te***	*t-* … ***wōs***
	negative potential	*(v)te … la-* ***te***	*t-* … *wēs-* ***wōs***
	nondumitive	*sowse …* ***te***	*t-* … ***wōs*** *mele*
AUGMENTED NEGATION	negative realis	*s(o)-…* ***tēmē***	*t-* … ***wōsmē***
	negative future	*(v)te …* ***tēmē***	*vata-…* ***wōsmē***
	non-verbal negation	… ***tēmē***	… ***wōsmē***

In sum, the history of negative morphemes in Dorig implements the Jespersen cycle in three steps:

1. In Pre-Dorig, a quantifier *tea (‘one, some’) was grammaticalised into the 2nd element of negation in several bipartite combinations (*X… tea > *X… te*), to the point of becoming the main marker of negation.
2. While some bipartite combinations in Dorig have kept the bare form *te* /tɛ/, other constructions, found in declarative utterances, have reinforced that second element with a suffix **mē*, yielding an augmented negation *tēmē* (parallel to the augmented negation *wōsmē* of neighbouring Koro).
3. In some contexts – especially, non-verbal predicates [§2.3] – the augmented form *tēmē* now functions as the sole exponent of negation: this constitutes the final stage of a Jespersen cycle.

4.7.3 Synthesis: Dorig in its areal context

The 17 Oceanic languages of the Torres–Banks linkage of northern Vanuatu vary considerably in the forms of their words, yet share a number of structural and typological features in the internal organisation of their grammars (François 2011). This is true for the semantic domain of negation.

Thus, all Torres–Banks languages draw a formal contrast between (*a*) a set of clausal negators carried by the predicate phrase (DRG *s(o)-… tēmē*, etc.), and (*b*) a “Negative existential” word (DRG *obek*), which is itself a predicate of its own. That NEG:EXIST word [§2.3.3] is used in existential, locative and possessive clauses, and also forms negative replies (“No !”).

In most languages, standard negation takes the form of bipartite morphemes, resulting historically from a Jespersen Cycle. Those morphemes are portmanteau forms that combine polarity with semantic features of Tense, Aspect, Mood: this results in a TAMP system, with often non-compositional morphemes. Crucially, a widespread configuration in the region is

the lack of one-to-one correspondence between positive and negative TAMP morphemes, either in form or in meaning – an asymmetry known as "A/Cat" in typological work (Miestamo 2005, 2013b).

Among the Torres–Banks languages, this study focused on Dorig, chosen as a solid representative of these typological tendencies. In fact, Dorig also stands out among its neighbours, due to several features that are more original. For example, the contrast between *te* and *tēmē* negations, bearing strong links with clausal modality (declarative vs. imperative; "indicative" vs. "subjunctive") is unique to Dorig, and only paralleled by its neighbour Koro. Also original to Dorig is the general insensitiveness of noun phrases and determiners to the polarity of the clause: while some of its neighbours, for example, show different indefinite articles in positive vs. negative contexts, Dorig follows no such rule. Finally, Dorig knows virtually no case of lexicalised negation.

In that sense, Dorig constitutes an extreme case: that of a language in which the complexities of negative constructions are all concentrated in the predicate phrase, yet virtually absent from the rest of the clause.

5 Conclusion

In terms of typological properties, we saw that Dorig contrasts its standard negation in declarative clauses with prohibitives and existentials. Questions or subordination have no impact upon the marking of negation.

Standard negation in Dorig involves obligatory double negation. Linguistic structures show signs of symmetry and of asymmetry across polarities:

- SYMMETRY: Negative clauses have the same properties as affirmative ones with respect to word order; valency and case; quantifiers and determiners on NP. Non-verbal predicates are usually symmetric. A change of polarity preserves several contrasts between certain aspects (especially, phasal aspects) and certain modal markers (e.g. the general contrast realis vs. irrealis).
- ASYMMETRY: Negative clauses differ from affirmative ones with respect to T.A.M. categorisation ("A/Cat asymmetry" in Miestamo 2005): categories that are distinct in the affirmative are merged under the negative, or vice-versa.

Table 6 recapitulates all the negative constructions we have examined for Dorig, with a reference to each relevant section.

Table 6 – The negative constructions of Dorig! recapitulation

TAMP negators			
Negative realis	'doesn't/didn't V'	*s(o)*-V *tēmē*	2.1.3.2
Discontinuative	'no longer V'	*s(o)*-V *nok tēmē*	2.1.3.3
Nondumitive	'not V yet'	*sowse* V *te*	2.1.3.3
Negative future	'won't V'	*(v)te* V *tēmē*	2.1.4.1
Negative potential	'can't V'	*(v)te* V *late*	2.1.4.2
Prohibitives	'don't V'	*(v)te* V_{DUP} *te* ~ *tog v(a)*-V ~ *tog* V *te*	2.2.2
Negative counterfactual	'if X hadn't V'	*vit* X *(v)te* V *te*	2.4.2
Other negative constructions			
Non-verbal predicates	'isn't P'	P *tēmē*	2.3.1
Negative existential	'there's no X'	X *(o)bek*	2.3.3
Negative possession	'Y doesn't have X'	X POSS-Y *(o)bek*	2.3.3
Negative locative	'X is not at LOC'	X *(o)bek* LOC	2.3.3
Standalone negation	'No.'	*(o)bek*	3.1.1
Standalone nondumitive	'Not yet.'	*bek mlēti*	3.1.2
Standalone prohibitive	'Don't!'	*tog*	3.1.3
Standalone dilatory prohibitive	'Don't yet!'	*tuqa*	3.1.3
Apprehensive construction [*not negative proper*]	'so that not V'	*tekor* + clause	4.5

6 Appendices

6.1 Orthography of Dorig

Here are the spelling conventions for Dorig :

orth	*a*	*ā*	*b*	*d*	*e*	*ē*	*g*	*i*	*k*	*l*	*m*	*m̄*	*n*	*n̄*	*o*	*ō*	*q*	*r*	*s*	*t*	*u*	*v*	*w*
IPA	a	aː	ᵐb	ⁿd	ɛ	ɪ	ɣ	i	k	l	m	ŋ͡mʷ	n	ŋ	ɔ	ʊ	k͡pʷ	r	s	t	u	v	w

6.2 Glosses

Glosses follow the *Leipzig glossing rules*. Additional glosses include the following:

APPREH	apprehensive modality	DIST	distal demonstrative
ART	article for common nouns	du	dual
ATTR	attributive prefix for adjectives	DUP	reduplication
CNTFC	counterfactual	EXIST	existential
COMP	complementiser	IAMIT	iamitive
DEM	demonstrative	IMP	imperative
DILAT	dilatory (temporal delay)	INDIC	indicative

INTSF	intensifier
IPFV	imperfective
IRR	irrealis
LOC	locative
NDUM	nondumitive
NEG:RL	negative realis
nsg	non-singular
OBL	oblique
PARTIT	partitive
PERM	permansive
PERS	personal article (for humans)
POSS	possessive classifier
POT	potential
REC.PST	recent past
SEQ	sequential aspect
STAT	stative aspect
TOP	topicalizer
TRI	trial number

6.3 Negative morphemes in Torres–Banks languages

While the present study was dedicated to negative constructions in the Dorig language, the very same linguistic categories can be consistently observed across all seventeen languages of the Torres and Banks Islands. In line with a very common configuration in the region (François 2011), this perfect isomorphism of structures goes along with an intense diversity of phonological forms.

The following tables, based on my firsthand notes, list all the negative morphemes of Torres–Banks languages, provided here for the first time in print. Forms are given in IPA. The letter 'X' refers to the predicate head – or the whole predicate phrase (e.g. complex predicate, verb+adverb, verb+verb, etc.) carrying the negative morphemes. If the head must be reduplicated, it is coded as 'X^{2}'.

Table 7 – Negative constructions in Torres–Banks languages: four clausal negations.

	NEGATIVE REALIS 'did~does not X'	NONDUMITIVE 'hasn't X yet'	NEGATIVE FUTURE 'will not X'	NEGATIVE POTENTIAL 'cannot X'
Hiw	tati X	tati X kʷe	tat X	tat X
Lo-Toga	tatə X	tatə X kʷɛ	tat X	tat hɔ X
Lehali	tɛt (nɛ) X tæ	tɛt X kʷɔ	tɛt X tæ	tɛt X vɪstæ
Löyöp	tɛ(t) X ʧɛ	tɛ X ʧɛk͡pʷɛ	(tɛ)t X ʧɛ	(tɛ)t X taŋ͡mʷas ʧɛ
Mwotlap	ɛt X tɛ	ɛt X k͡pʷɛtɛ	tit X tɛ	tit X vɪstɛ
Volow	ɛt X tɛ	ɛt X tɛᵑg͡bʷɛ	t- X tɛ	t- X vɪhtɛ
Lemerig	(ɛʔ) X (k͡pʷæl) ʔæ	(ɛʔ) X ʔæ kiʔi(s)	?	(ɛʔ) X ŋ͡mʷæs-ʔæ
Vera'a	(ɪʔ) X rɔs	(ɪʔ) X ʔɪn	mɛ X rɔs	mas X ŋ͡mʷas
Vurës	ɣVtV- X	ɣVtV- X tɛn	mitV- X	mitV- X lɛ
Mwesen	ɛtɛ X	ɛtɛ X vɪs	mɛtɛ X	mɛtɛ X lɛ
Mota	ɣate X	ɣate X tk͡pʷe	tete X	tete X lai
Nume	vɛta X mi	vitis X mi	manta X	manta X lɛ
Dorig	s(ɔ)- X tɪmɪ	sɔwsɛ X tɛ	(v)tɛ X tɪmɪ	(v)tɛ X latɛ
Koro	t- X wʊsmɪ	t- X wʊs mɛlɛ	v(tV)- X wʊsmɪ	t- X wɪs wʊs t- X wʊswʊs
Olrat	tɪ X wʊs	tɪ X wʊs mɛlɛ	tɪ X wʊs	tɪ X ɪs wʊs
Lakon	(ɣ)a(tɪ) X avʊh	(ɣ)a(tɪ) X avʊh malɛ	(ɣ)a(tɪ) X avʊh	(ɣ)a(tɪ) X ɪs avʊh
Mwerlap	ti- X t͡ɛa	ti- X tɪkʷɪ t͡ɛa	ᵐbit X t͡ɛa	ᵐbit X lɪ t͡ɛa

Table 8 – Negative constructions in Torres–Banks languages: prohibitive constructions and standalone negations.

	Clausal prohibitive: 'Don't do X !'	*Standalone prohibitive*: 'Don't!'	*Negative existential = Standalone negation*	*Standalone nondumitive:* 'Not yet.'	*Standal. dilatory prohib.* 'Don't yet ! Wait!'
Hiw	tati X^2 takə X^2	təɣɔ	təɣɔ	tɔkʷe	(kʷe)tukʷe
Lo-Toga	tatə X^2 mit X^2	tatəɣɛ	tatəɣɛ	takʷɛ	meləkʷɛ
Lehali	sɛv X^2	?	tɛtɣɛ tɛtɣɔsɔn	tɔkʷɔ	tɔkʷɔ vɔtjæ
Löyöp	tɛt X^2	tɔ	mɛp	ʧɛk͡pʷɛ	ʧɛk͡pʷɛ
Mwotlap	(ni)tɔɣ X^2	nitɔɣ	tatɛh	tatɛh k͡pʷɛtɛ	makʊh
Volow	sap X^2	sap	tatɪh	tatɪh tɛⁿg͡bʷɛ	magʊh
Lemerig	ʔɔkiʔi X^2 (n)ʔɔɣ (ʔɛn) X^2 ʔɛn X^2	ʔɔkiʔi	niv	niv kiʔi(s)	ʔɔkiʔi
Vera'a	ʔɔvi(ʔi) X^2	ʔɔviʔi	ɣitaɣ	ɣitaɣ ʔɪn	k͡pʷɛʔi
Vurës	mitV= X kere X^2 nitɔɣ X^2	nitɔɣ	ɔⁿdiaŋ	ɔⁿdiaŋ tɛn	kɪti
Mwesen	mɛtɛ X nitɔɣ X^2	nitɔɣ	ɛnɛŋ	ɛnɛŋ vɪs	turtɪk͡pʷ
Mota	nipea (we) X^2	nipea	taɣai	taɣai tuk͡pʷe	taɣai tuk͡pʷe
Nume	tɔɣ vɛ- X^2	tɔɣ	ᵐbɛk	ᵐbɛk tuk͡pʷa ᵐbɛk vaɛnti	tuk͡pʷa
Dorig	tɔɣ v(a)- X tɔɣ X^2 tɛ (v)tɛ X^2 tɛ	tɔɣ	(ɔ)ᵐbɛk	(ɔ)ᵐbɛk mlɪti	tuk͡pʷa (titi)
Koro	t- X^2 wʊs t- X^2 lɛr	?	ᵐbɛk	ᵐbɛk mɛlɛ	tuk͡pʷa
Olrat	mɪtɪ X^2 lɛj	sʊw	taɣa	taɣa mɛlɛ	asval ti
Lakon	mɪtɪ X^2 lɛː	ta	ta	ta malɛ	læwʊn tɔtɔ
Mwerlap	(wɔ)tɔkɔr X^2 tɔɣ X^2	tuɣutu	tɪɣɪ	tɪkʷɪt͡ɛa	tukʷɪt͡ɛa tukʷatu

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