

Chapter 31

-KA- Tense and Negation

The -KA- Tense has three different uses. Firstly, when someone is narrating a story or reporting an incident that happened in the past, we use the Narrative Past Tense. Secondly, when someone is going to do something, we use the Consecutive Subjunctive Tense. Finally, when it is used for newspaper headlines, we use the “Headline” Tense. In Narrative Past Tense and Consecutive Subjunctive, the *-ka-* tense marker is used as an infix while in the “Headline” Tense, it is used as the prefix *ka-*.

Section A: The Narrative Past Tense

When the *-ka-* tense is used for narratives, it is introduced by the simple past *-li-* tense marker. After the *-li-* tense marker is used for introduction, the *-ka-* tense marker is subsequently used to narrate the story. For example:

Nilinunua samaki, nikapika kutumia mafuta, tukala.
I bought fish, (and) cooked it with oil, (and) we ate.

As you can see from the above example, the *-ka-* tense marker is preceded by the *-li-* tense marker. Also note that the *-ka-* tense marker has the built in meaning “and” so we do not need to use the Swahili word *na*.

When used as a narrative past tense, the *-ka-* tense marker is used as a regular tense marker (follows the STV Rule).

Personal Subject Prefix + -KA- Tense Marker + Verb

When using the *-ka-* tense marker with Bantu, Arabic and Monosyllabic verbs, the STV Rule taught above applies. Here are examples using each kind of verb:

Alisoma barua, akamwonyesha mama yake, wakalia.

He/She read the letter, (and) showed it to his/her mother (and) they cried.

Mlirudi safari, mkawaleteta wenzangu zawadi, mkasahau kuniletea mimi.

You (pl.) returned from the trip, (and) brought gifts for my companions (and) forgot to bring me (a gift).

Tulichuma nyanya kutoka shambani, tukazisafisha, tukazipika, tukazila.

We picked tomatoes from the farm, (and) washed them, (and) cooked them (and) ate them.

Please note, as in the final example above, that Monosyllabic verbs drop their infinitive *ku-* marker when used with the *-ka-* tense marker. Also, object infixes can be used with the *-ka-* tense marker.

If one would like to emphasize the chronological order of events, it is possible to use the word *halafu* which means “then.” For example:

Alisoma barua, halafu akamwonyesha mama yake, halafu wakalia.

He/She read the letter, (and) then showed it to his/her mother (and) then they cried.

Practice Exercise A

Translate the following sentences into English.

1. *Tulikwenda Marekani, tukatembelea Disney World, tukafurahi.*
2. *Walinalika nyumbani, wakupika muhogo na maharagwe, tukala.*
3. *Mmilikaji aliagana na mhandisi kutengeneza mashua, mhandisi akaisanifu, akanunua vifaa kutoka Urusi, akamaliza mradi katika miezi miwili.*
4. *Mto ulifurika, ukaharibu mazao yetu, tukapata hasara?*
5. *Soko la hisa lilianguka, watu wengi wakupoteza kazi zao, wakaamua kupunguza matumizi yao.*
6. *Rubani aliwatahadharisha abiria, akabadili mwendo na mwinuko, akaendelea kusafiri wakati wa tufani.*

7. *Ndege aliruka, akatua juu ya mti, akajenga kiota, akaimba, akalala.*
8. *Mweka wa kitega uchumi alipanda mahindi kuyatumia kama mazao, akaweka nia yake, akapata pesa nyingi.*
9. *Zeruzeru alipata kazi ya kuendesha treni, halafu akafanya kazi kwa muda wa miaka ishirini, halafu akastaafu.*
10. *Lori lilimwaga shehena yake, likaangukia katika korongo, likashika moto.*

Section B: Negation of the Narrative Past Tense

When the narrative past tense is negated, the *-ka-* tense is replaced using the negative tense marker *-si-*. In addition, the verb must be in its subjunctive form (see Chapter 37 for more on Subjunctives).

Personal Subject Prefix + *-SI-* Tense Marker + Subjunctive Verb

For example:

Nilinunua samaki, nikapika kutumia mafuta, tusile.

I bought fish, (and) cooked it with oil, (and) did not eat (it).

In the example above, since the *-si-* negative tense marker is being used to negate the narrative past tense, the built in meaning “and” remains, so we do not need to use the Swahili word *na*.

Please note when *-si-* negative tense marker is used, the Monosyllabic verbs drop their infinitive *ku-* marker. Also, object infixes can be used with the *-si-* negative tense marker.

Practice Exercise B

Translate the following sentences into English.

11. *Tulikwenda Marekani, tukatembelea Disney World, tusifurahi.*
12. *Walinalika nyumbani, wasipike muhogo na maharagwe, tusile.*
13. *Mmilikaji aliagana na mhandisi kutengeneza mashua, mhandisi akaisanifu, akanunua vifaa kutoka Urusi, asimalize mradi katika miezi miwili.*
14. *Mto ulifurika, ukaharibu mazao yetu, tusipate hasara?*
15. *Soko la hisa halikuanguka, watu wengi wasipoteze kazi zao, wasiamue kupunguza matumizi yao.*

16. *Rubani aliwatahadharisha abiria, akabadili mwendo na mwinuko, asiendelee kusafiri wakati wa tufani.*
17. *Ndege aliruka, akatua juu ya mti, akajenga kiota, akaimba, asilale.*
18. *Mweka wa kitega uchumi alipanda mahindi kuyatumia kama mazao, akaweka nia yake, asipate pesa nyingi.*
19. *Zeruzeru alipata kazi ya kuendesha treni, halafu akafanya kazi kwa muda wa miaka ishirini, halafu asistaafu.*
20. *Lori lilimwaga shehena yake, likaangukia katika korongo, lisishike moto.*

Section C: Consecutive Subjunctive (going to do something)

When used as a consecutive subjunctive, the *-ka-* tense denotes the meaning of “going and” doing something. This does not have anything to do with the future tense but rather refers to the aspect of the action i.e. the action is going to take place. Since the consecutive subjunctive has the meaning of “going” to do something, it cannot be used with verbs that indicate “coming near” such as *ja, sokea, karibia* and *rudi*.

Before using the *-ka-* tense marker as a consecutive subjunctive, one must be familiar with the verbal construction of the singular and plural requests as taught in Chapter 30. The *-ka-* tense marker is inserted as an infix in the verbal construction as follows:

Personal Subject Prefix + *-KA-* Tense Marker + Subjunctive Verb

Nikanunue shampuu.

Let me go (and) buy shampoo.

Wakalime shamba la mboga.

Let them go (and) cultivate the vegetable farm.

As you can see from the examples above, unlike the singular and plural requests which are only directed to the 2nd person singular and plural, the consecutive subjunctive can use any Subject Prefix from any Noun Class.

Ndege ikachukue abiria.

Let the plane go and carry passengers.

Consecutive subjunctive can be used as an object infix from any noun class. Here are some examples:

Nikainunue.

Let me go (and) buy it.

Wakalilime.

Let them go (and) cultivate it.

Ikawachukue.

Let it (the plane) go (and) bring them (the passengers).

Also, the verb *enda* can be used in its command form or request form in conjunction with the *-ka-* tense marker to emphasize the action of going. For example:

Nenda ukasome.

Go and read. (or simply *ukasome*)

Uende ukasome.

Would you (sing.) go and read. (or simply *ukasome*)

Practice Exercise C

Translate the following sentences into English.

21. *Nikamalize kusoma shairi.*

22. *Mkawape wananchi wa Kenya dawa hizi.*

23. *Akawaambie tumerudi safari.*

24. *Nendeni mkalipe faini ya kosa la kuegesha gari.*

25. *Nikazongoe zawadi za Krismasi.*

26. *Mkauzime moto sasa hivi.*

27. *Mende mkamsaidie kufyatua matofali.*

28. *Wakanong'one usiku mzima.*

29. *Twende tukamtembelee bibi yetu.*

30. *Akamlishe mamba yule.*

Section D: Negation of the Consecutive Subjunctive (not going to do something)

When the consecutive subjunctive is negated, the *-ka-* tense is replaced using the negative tense marker *-si-*. In addition, the verb remains in its subjunctive form.

Personal Subject Prefix + -SI- Tense Marker + Subjunctive Verb

For example:

Nisinunue shampuu.

Let me not buy shampoo.

Ndege isichukue abiria.

Let the plane not carry passengers.

Wasililime.

Let them not cultivate it.

As you can see from the examples above, when the consecutive subjunctive is negated, the meaning of “going and” doing something does not apply. Also, the verb *enda* cannot be used with negative consecutive subjunctive since it also carries the meaning of going.

Please note when *-si-* negative tense marker is used, the Monosyllabic verbs drop their infinitive *ku-* marker. Also, object infixes can be used with the *-si-* negative tense marker.

Practice Exercise D

Translate the following sentences into English.

31. *Nisimalize kusoma shairi.*
32. *Msiwape wananchi wa Kenya dawa hizi.*
33. *Asiwaambie tumerudi safari.*
34. *Msilipe faini ya kosa la kuegesha gari.*
35. *Nisizongoe zawadi za Krismasi.*
36. *Msiuzime moto sasa hivi.*
37. *Msimsaidie kufyatua matofali.*
38. *Wasinong'one usiku mzima.*
39. *Tusimtembelee bibi yetu.*
40. *Asimlishe mamba yule.*

Section E: The “Headline” Tense

When used as a “headline” tense by the media, the *-KA-* tense marker can only be used with 3rd person singular in M-/WA- noun class. In this case, the *ka* tense marker is used without any subject prefix and without altering the verb in order to make the headline brief and catchy.

Personal Subject Prefix + -KA- Tense Marker + Verb

For example:

Mtu kaiba saa ya mkono ya Rais.

Person steals President's watch.

If the example above was not used as a headline, the sentence would be written without the *ka-* tense as follows:

Mtu aliiba saa ya mkono ya Rais.

A person stole the President's watch.

Practice Exercise E

Translate the following sentences in English.

41. *Mbunge aliyepo kachaguliwa tena.*

42. *Paka kaula panya saba katika dakika kumi.*

43. *Tausi dume kaibwa kutoka zu.*

44. *Msafishaji madirisha kaanguka ghorofa thelathini.*

45. *Kiongozi wa watalii kaepuka poromoko la theluji.*

New Vocabulary

agana: agree with

aliyepo: He/She who is there (incumbent)

amua: decide

chuma: pick

dume/ma-: male animal(s)

epuka: avoid, escape

faini ya/za kosa la kuesha gari: parking fine(s)

fyatua tofali/ma-: make brick(s)

ghorofa: floor(s)

halafu: then

haragwe/ma-: kidney bean(s)

hasara: loss

karibia: come close

kiota/vi-: nest(s)

korongo/ma-: ditch(es), channel(s)

Krismasi: Christmas(es)
matumizi: spending, expenditure(s)
msafishaji/wa-: cleaner(s)
mweka/waweka wa kitega uchumi: investor(s)
mwendo/mi-: speed(s)
mwinuko/mi-: altitude(s), slope(s)
nia: intention(s), aim(s)
nong'ona: whisper
poromoko/ma- la/ya theluji: avalanche(s)
sanifu: design
shampuu: shampoo(s)
shehena: cargo(es)
sogea: come close
soko/ma- la/ya hisa: stock market(s)
tahadhari: warn, caution
tausi: peacock(s)
tua: land, settle
tufani: storm(s)
zeruzeru/ma-: albino(s)
zima: whole, good, extinguish
zongoa: unwrap

Key to Exercises

Answers to Practice Exercise A

1. We went to America, (and) visited Disney World, (and) we were happy.
2. They invited me to the house, (and) they cooked cassava and kidney beans, (and) we ate.
3. The owner contracted the engineer to manufacture a boat, the engineer designed it, (and) bought the materials from Russia, (and) completed the project in two months.
4. The river flooded, (and) it destroyed our crops, (and) we incurred a loss?
5. The stock market collapsed, (and) many people lost their jobs, (and) decided to reduce their spending.
6. The pilot warned the passengers, (and) changed his speed and altitude, (and) continued to travel during the storm.

7. The bird flew, (and) landed on top of a tree, (and) built a nest, (and) sang, (and) slept.
8. The investor planted maize to use it as a crop, (and) kept his/her intention, (and) got a lot of money.
9. The albino got a job to drive the train, (and) then he/she worked for a period of twenty years, (and) then retired.
10. The truck spilled its cargo, (and) went into the ditch, (and) caught fire.

Answers to Practice Exercise B

11. We went to America, (and) visited Disney World, (and) we were not happy.
12. They invited me to the house, (and) they did not cook cassava and kidney beans, (and) we did not eat.
13. The owner contracted the engineer to manufacture a boat, the engineer designed it, (and) bought the materials from Russia, (and) did not complete the project in two months.
14. The river flooded, (and) it destroyed our crops, (and) we did not incur a loss?
15. The stock market did not collapse, (and) many people did not lose their jobs, (and) decided not to cut down on their spending.
16. The pilot warned the passengers, (and) changed his speed and altitude, (and) did not continue o travel during the storm.
17. The bird flew, (and) landed on top of a tree, (and) built a nest, (and) sang, (and) did not sleep.
18. The investor planted maize to use it as a crop, (and) kept his/her intention, (and) did not get a lot of money.
19. The albino got a job to drive the train, (and) then he/she worked for a period of twenty years, (and) then did not retire.
20. The truck spilled its cargo, (and) went into the ditch, (and) did not catch fire.

Answers to Practice Exercise C

21. Let me go (and) finish reading the poem.
22. Would you (pl.) go and give the Kenyan citizens these medicinal drugs.
23. Let him/her go and tell them that we have returned from the trip.

24. You (pl.) go and pay the fees for the parking infraction.
25. Let me go and unwrap the Christmas gifts.
26. Would you (pl.) go and extinguish the fire right now.
27. Would you (pl.) go and help him/her make bricks.
28. Let them go and whisper the whole night.
29. Let us go and visit our grandmother.
30. Let him/her go and feed that crocodile.

Answers to Practice Exercise D

31. Let me not finish reading the poem.
32. Would you (pl.) not give the Kenyan citizens these medicinal drugs.
33. Let him/her not tell them that we have returned from the trip.
34. Would you (pl.) not pay the fees for the parking infraction.
35. Let me not unwrap the Christmas gifts.
36. Would you (pl.) not extinguish the fire right now.
37. Would you (pl.) not help him/her make bricks.
38. Let them not whisper the whole night.
39. Let us not visit our grandmother.
40. Let him/her not feed that crocodile.

Answers to Practice Exercise E

41. The incumbent parliament member was elected again.
42. Cat kills seven mice in ten minutes.
43. Male peacock stolen from zoo.
44. Window cleaner falls thirty floors.
45. Tour guide escapes avalanche.