

NAIROBI EVANGELICAL GRADUATE  
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

CAUSATIVE CONSTRUCTIONS IN KAMBAATA

BY

TESSEMA WACHEMO

A Linguistic Project submitted to the Graduate  
School in partial fulfilment of the requirements for  
the degree of Master of Arts in Translation Studies

MARCH, 2003

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SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

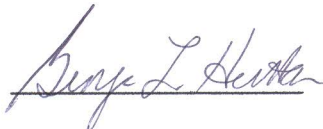
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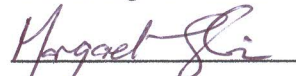
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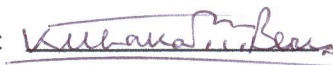
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STUDENT'S DECLARATION

**CAUSATIVE CONSTRUCTIONS IN KAMBAATA**

I declare that this is my original work and has not been submitted to any other  
College or University for academic credit.

The views presented herein are not necessarily those of the Nairobi Evangelical  
Graduate School of Theology or the Examiners.

(Signed)  \_\_\_\_\_  
Tessema Wachemo

March, 2003

## **ABSTRACT**

In this work my concern is to describe some linguistic expressions of causation and a useful starting point of the causative construction situation or event as a whole in Kambaata. This description is being thought as it has its own place in Bible Translation.

In order to accomplish this study I have come up with four main chapters, the fifth chapter is the conclusion. Chapter one mainly deals with the general background of the Kambaata people group and overall information on the language described and the methodology used in this work. The second chapter has to do with the general information of the verbal categorization in relation to suffixation. The third chapter deals with the actual causative constructions in Kambaata. Chapter four describes how causatives can be applied in discourse.

The findings reveal that Kambaata makes use of quite a number of causative constructions that occur even in the discourse. The evidence is given by the Kambaata text in the appendix.

TO

My parents for their deep love for me and  
for my wife Amarech Ayele whose  
support has enabled me to finish this work

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am very grateful to the Almighty God for enabling me to complete this work. I have no words to express His sufficient grace in every aspect of my life and my family's life during our study time. Glory be to Him.

I was planning to work on a different topic, however, by the advice of Margaret Sim I have decided to describe causative constructions in Kambaata. I am therefore, grateful to Mrs. Sim for having enabled me to explore this new area and for her continual assessment and correction as far as the description of my language (Kambaata) is concerned. My advisor, Dr. George L. Huttar, whose encouragement, comment and time made it possible for me to complete this work, I thank him from deep down my heart for his concern and love. My appreciation goes to Dr. Ronnie Sim, for his special contribution in this work.

I also want to express heartfelt gratitude to the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) for having sponsored my studies at NEGST. I also extend my appreciation to the Ethiopian Kale Heywot Church central office to the joint effort that has been made with SIL and their continual prayer and encouragement until the completion of my studies at NEGST.

My appreciation is so great for my wife, Amarech Ayele, who has played a very significant role in each and every aspect of the course and the success of my studies.

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Finally, I am indebted to many friends and relatives here at Nairobi and at a distance (Ethiopia), and whom I cannot name individually.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

1sg	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular
1pl	1 <sup>st</sup> person plural
2sg	2 <sup>nd</sup> person singular
2pl	2 <sup>nd</sup> person plural
3sgfem/pl	3 <sup>rd</sup> person singular feminine/plural
3sgmasc	3 <sup>rd</sup> person singular masculine
Abs	Absolutive
Cs	Causative
Dat	Dative
HEC	Highland East Cushitic
Imprf	Imperfect
Inf	Infinitive
Neg	Negative
Nom	Nominative
NP	Noun phrase
Poss	possessive
Prsprf	Present perfect
Ps	Passive
QM	Question marker

Smprf      Simple perfect

SOV        Subject-object-verb

## INTRODUCTION

One of the reasons for this linguistic project is to portray the morphological as well as semantic features of causative constructions in Kambaata. As far as I know this area has not yet been explored in detail by any of the people who have carried out previous work on the language. So there is no doubt of its importance in relation to other linguistic works on the language.

In describing these major grammatical categories one of the things which I describe is the verbal categories in regard to person, gender and number markers and as a whole suffixation on the given verb. In Chapter One the general background of the Kambaata people and their language are described. Chapter Two deals with the description of verbs in Kambaata. Then Chapter Three describes the processes of causatives. Finally, I will describe how causatives can be applied in discourse.

In writing this work I use some signals for marking glottal and ejectives. For glottal stop I use /ʔ/ and I use apostrophe to signal the ejective sounds.

## *Chapter One*

### **1. The Description of the Kambaata People**

#### **1.1 Location and the population**

The Kambaata community lives in the southeastern part of Ethiopia about 330 kilometers from Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia. The area is found between the River Omo in the west and the River Bilate in the east (see map p.45). With the new administration policy of the country the area is known as Kambaata, Alaba, Tambaaro (KAATA) zone. Durame is the main town.

Originally the Kambaata peoples, in a general sense were and are, peasants. They are well known for their skilled techniques of farming. Besides all kinds of crops and grains growing the *ensete* plant is of special interest of the people. Because of this the Kambaata people have been able to survive in times of need and famine.

Before the missionaries came into the area there was very little literacy done. This little teaching was done by the Ethiopian Orthodox church in Amharic and its emphasis was to enable people to read the Scripture. However, nowadays in this densely populated area education is extensive and this has led many young people to seek employment elsewhere in the country. As a result today many educated and non-educated Kambaata people are widespread in some parts of the country, for example to the northeast on the Mathahara (one of the government's) sugar plantation. Today Kambaata farmers are producing oranges and sugar for the Ethiopian market.

According to Grimes (2000, 114) the number of mother-tongue speakers is about 606,241 including 487,655 Kambaatas. Tambaro is a dialect of Kambaata while Alaba most closely, Sidamo, Libido, and Haddiyya are related languages.

Grenstedt (2000, 41) pointed out that the name Kambaata is first referred to in a song of praise in honour of Emperor Yeshak (1414-29). He annexed Kambaata, which as a province of the Christian Ethiopian Empire then designated an area between the Rivers Omo and Bilate (see map p.45)

## **1.2 Language**

The Kambaata language belongs to the Afro-Asiatic language family, and is a Cushitic language of Ethiopia. Linguists refer to these languages as Highland East Cushitic (HEC) languages (see map p 46). Typologically, it is SOV; it has passive, benefactive and causative verbs and subject and object are marked on the verbs, with suffixes distinguishing person, number and gender.

### **1.2.1 Phonology**

From my own and M. Sim's (1988, 58-65) analysis of phonology there are 23 consonants and a system of five long vowels and five short vowels. Kambaata allows vowels to occur word initially before a consonant, word medially between consonants and word finally after a consonant. It also allows consonants to occur word initially before a vowel, and word medially between vowels. As is stated by M. Sim all consonants except glottal can occur geminate. Word final *i*, *a*, *u*, when unstressed, are extremely short, almost voiceless, and will be written as superscripts. Kambaata also allows a restricted group of consonants /l/, /r/, /m/, /n/ to occur word medially (syllable finally) before another consonant, and very rarely, word finally.

