Chapter 14
Non-verbal and semi-verbal clauses

14.1 Introduction

There are several types of non-verbal clauses, or clauses in which the only verbal element present, if any, is referential, rather than predicative. Amongst the clause types discussed here there are a number that can occur with verbal rather than nominal predicates. These clause types are more commonly encountered with non-verbal predicates, however, and so are discussed in this chapter rather than in chapter 19. If a particular clause type has verbal as well as non-verbal uses, these verbal uses are exemplified here as well.

The different clause types that are the subject of this chapter are:

° Equative clauses
° Oblique predicate clauses
° Presentative clauses
° Numerical clauses
° Comparative clauses
° Exclamatory clauses
° Existential clauses
° Negative existential clauses

These are discussed in turn in the sections that follow.

14.2 Equative clauses

\( Te \ X \ te \ Y \) ‘X is Y’
\( Te \ Y \ na \ X \) ‘It’s Y that X is.’

The equative clause type is used to assert information about the identity of a referent, presenting either an identificational characteristic of that referent, or additional information about it. An equative clause is formed by presenting two nominals one after the other, with the predicative nominal in the second position. Unless the subject is fronted, both NPs are marked with the general core article \( te \). There is no pause possible between the two parts of the clause, which would be characteristic of a topic-comment construction (see chapter 3.7.1). The ordering possibilities found with equative clauses have already been discussed in chapter 3. Some further examples of the use of these clause types can be found in the examples below:

(1) \( [Te \ mia \ [m]aga-[m]a-ganda \ iso]_{KP} \ [te \ guru]_{KP} \)
  CORE person RED-OCC.SI-chat yon CORE teacher
  ‘That person who’s chatting is a teacher.’
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(2) \[ Te \ ngaa-no|_{KP} [te \ Wa\ Sabusaburengki]|_{KP}. \]
CORE name-3POSS CORE Wa Sabusaburengki
‘Her name is Wa Sabusaburengki.’ (Sab:1)

(3) \[ Te \ mia \ di \ Mola \ iso|_{KP} [te \ amai \ Wajo]|_{KP}. \]
CORE person OBL Mola yon CORE 3PL Bajau
‘The people in Mola there are Bajau.’ (D:13)

(4) \[ Te \ wurai \ meha \ iso|_{KP} [te \ i-’aso \ nu \ mia \ la’a-mo \ mai \ min(a) \ i \ Kapota \ i \ rearea]|_{KP}. \]
CORE sarong red yon CORE OP-sell GEN person
just-PF come from OBL Kapota OBL morning
‘That red sarong is being sold by the person who just came from Kapota this morning.’

(5) \[ Te \ soami\]|_{KP} [te \ i-manga-no \ i-harai \ i-po-ilu-su]|_{KP}. \]
CORE soami CORE OP-eat-3POSS OP-most OP-REC-lust-1SG.POSS
‘Soami is the food that I like the best.’

The negation of equative clauses is expressed with the predicative negator \textit{mbeaka} preceding the predicate KP. A negated version of (2) would be (2)’:

(2)’ \[ Te \ ngaa-no|_{KP} mbeaka [te \ Wa\ Sabusaburengki]|_{KP}. \]
CORE name-3POSS not CORE Wa Sabusaburengki
‘Her name is not Wa Sabusaburengki.’

More details on negation can be found in chapter 18. A similar sort of clause can occur with a clause as the predicate:

(6) \[ Te \ sida\]|_{KP} [no-wila \ i \ rearea \ ai]|_{Clause}. \]
CORE truth 3R-go OBL morning ANA
‘Actually he left this morning.’

14.2.1 Fronted predicates

If the predicate is focussed, the predicate KP is moved to clause initial position preceding the subject of the clause, and the subject KP is marked with \textit{na}. The same marking strategy is found with some topic-comment constructions

(7) \[ Mbeaka \ [te \ guru]|_{KP}, \ [te \ mia \ [m]o-daga]|_{KP} \]
not CORE teacher but CORE person REC.SI-trade
[na \ iaku]|_{KP}
NOM 1SG
‘I’m not a teacher, but rather a trader.’

(8) \[ Te \ watu \ torusu\]|_{KP}, \ [na \ kampo-no]|_{KP}. \]
TOP stone continuous NOM village-3POSS
‘It’s stones all the way (in) their villages.’ (TB:30)
(ie., there’s no topsoil)
Fronting the predicate is compulsory for questions using equational clauses:

(9) a. \* [Te \[atu\]KP \(te\ \[paira\]KP]
CORE that CORE what
‘What is that?’

b. [Te \[paira\]KP \(na\ \[atu\]KP]
CORE what NOM that
‘What is that?’

14.3 Oblique predicate clauses

Te X \(di\ Y\) ‘X is in Y.’
Di Y \(na\ X\) ‘It’s in Y, that X is.’

An oblique predicate is used to present information about the spatial location or direction of the subject. The ability of the different prepositions to act predicatively has been discussed in chapter 12. Clauses with an oblique phrase as the predicate are similar in structure and restrictions to equative clauses. A locative clause uses the article \(di\) on the predicative phrase in order to describe the location of the subject:

(10) \[Te ‘ido-’a-su\]KP \(di\ \[Inggilisi\]KP
CORE live-NL-1SG.POSS OBL England
‘I was born in England.’ / ‘My birthplace is England.’

Focussing the predicate can be achieved by placing it at the beginning of the clause and marking the subject with the nominative \(na\), as for equative clauses:

(11) \[I \[Irián\]PP \(na\ \[‘ido-’(a) u mia biru iso\]KP.
OBL Irian Jaya NOM live-NL GEN person black yon
‘It’s in Irian Jaya that the black people live.’

Examples of the other local prepositions \(kua\) and \(mina\) functioning as predicates were presented in chapter 12. The use of \(kua\) as a predicative prepositional phrase is rather unusual, most speakers preferring to make an equative clause, with the prepositional phrase embedded in a KP:

(12) \# [Te \[amai\]KP \(kua\ \[‘One melangka\]PP.
CORE 3PL ALL ‘One melangka
‘They are going to ‘One melangka.’

(13) [Te \[amai\]KP \(na\ \[kua\ \[‘One melangka\]PP ]KP
CORE 3PL NOM ALL ‘One melangka
‘They are going to ‘One melangka.’
(Lit., ‘It’s they who are (the ones going) to ‘One melangka.’)

This process of embedding the prepositional phrase in a KP is also commonly found with \(mina\), though speakers are happier with \(mina\) appearing as a predicative PP than with \(kua\).
in the same function. This might reflect the fact that *mina* has verbal origins, and is being regrammaticalised as a preposition.

(14) # [Te amai]KP [mina i 'One melangka']PP.
    CORE 3PL from OBL 'One melangka
    'They are from 'One melangka.'
    (more likely to be interpreted as a single KP: [Te amai [mina i 'One melangka']PP ]KP…, 'Those people from 'One melangka …')

(15) [Te amai]KP [na [mina i 'One melangka']PP ]KP.
    CORE 3PL NOM from OBL 'One melangka
    'They are from 'One melangka.'
    (Lit., ‘It’s they who are from ‘One melangka.’)

Notice that the equivalent sentence with *mina* functioning as a verb, and prefixed to indicate the subject (as is usual for verbs) has a different interpretation:

(16) [Te amai]KP [no-mina]VP [i 'One melangka']KP.
    CORE 3PL 3R-ever OBL 'One melangka
    'They have been to 'One melangka.'

When the PP is fronted, the preferences for embedding it within a KP vanish:

(17) [Kua 'One melangka']PP [na amai]KP.
    ALL 'One melangka NOM 3PL
    'They are (going) to 'One melangka.'
    (Lit., ‘It’s to ‘One melangka that they are (going).’)

(18) [Mina i 'One melangka']PP [na amai]KP.
    from OBL 'One melangka NOM 3PL
    'They are from 'One melangka.'
    (Lit., ‘It’s from ‘One melangka that they are.’)

As noted in chapter 12, *apa i* and *kene* (functioning as a preposition) may not appear in predicative positions (see the discussion in chapter 12). Thus, for example, (19) is ungrammatical:

(19) * [Te amai]KP [apa i Wa Sorou'u]PP.
    CORE 3PL ENDPOINT OBL Wasorou'u
    'They are (going) as far as Wasorou'u.'

Similar to this prepositional function, the serial verb *ako* is used without subject prefixes to introduce benefactive or purpose phrases:

(20) [Te aroloji ana]KP [[ako [te ana]KP ]VP ]SVC i.
    CORE watch this BEN CORE this FAMILIAR
    'This watch is for me, isn't it….'

(21) [Te gora'u i-gule ana]KP [ako te karia'a]SVC.
    CORE egg OP-sweet.curry this PURP CORE festival
    'These eggs that have been curried are for the festival…'
Even though the predicate contains a full KP, this KP is embedded in a reduced VP (reduced because it is not prefixed to indicate the subject). Notice that if ako is prefixed in a verbal manner, the sentence is ungrammatical, even with an initial predicate, since ako is only a two-place verb, and only allows one (dative) object. If the theme object, tearolojii ana, is omitted, the sentence is grammatical:

\[(22) \ast [\text{No-ako} \ [\text{te ana}]_{\text{KP}} ]_{\text{VP}} (\ast \ [\text{te} \ arolojii \ ana]_{\text{KP}}).\]

Note also that in this predicative function ako can only introduce benefactive or purpose arguments. When serving in adjuncts instrumental and purpose phrases could also be introduced by ako, but this is not possible in a predicative position. Sentences (23) and (24) provide examples of the ungrammaticality of these other semantic roles introduced by ako predicatively:

**Instrumental:**

\[(23) \ast [\text{Te ika dawu ana}]_{\text{KP}} [\text{ako} \ [\text{te poda}]_{\text{SVC}}].\]

\text{‘This fish portion (was cut up) by means of a knife’}

**Cause:**

\[(24) \ast [\text{Te mia mate meana'e}]_{\text{KP}} [\text{ako} \ [\text{te buti}]_{\text{SVC}}].\]

\text{‘This dead guy (died) from a fall.’}

The grammaticality of these sentences can be rescued by inserting a verb in the sentence, as in (23)’:

\[(23)’ \ [\text{Te ika dawu ana}]_{\text{KP}} \text{no-hugu-'e} [\text{ako} \ [\text{te poda}]_{\text{SVC}}].\]

\text{‘This fish portion was cut up by means of a knife’}

### 14.4 Presentative clauses

\text{\textbf{Ka-DEM}}_{1}^{-'e} \ \text{na} \ X \ ‘\text{T/here’s an X’}

Presentative clauses are used to present new things to the listener, and are accompanied by the display of the object indicated or a gesture (with the fingers or the chin) to point out the object. Note that the KP presented appears with the nominative article \textit{na}, as would the subject in a prepositional clause with the predicate fronted. The nominative marking on the subject is the main structural difference between this clause type and an equative clause.

\[(25) \text{Kaana'e na loka.} \]

\text{PRES-this NOM banana ‘Here’s a banana.’}

Compare (26) with similar equative and prepositional clauses:
In (26), the emphasis is on the identity of the object. Sentence (26) emphasises that the object is in fact a BANANA, and not some other kind of thing. In (27), the emphasis is on the contrast of locations. This sentence would be uttered to stop someone looking for a banana in another locale, presenting a new location as a better option than the location that is currently being searched in:

The presentative clause in (25) is neutral with respect to both these criteria, simply offering information (and a banana).

Other examples of the use of the different deictic locations with the presentative affix are seen in (29) - (32):

(29) *Kaatu'e na bangka nu Tobelo Mangindanao.*
PRES-that NOM ship GEN generic.nothern.pirates
‘There’s a pirate ship (come to take you away).’
(said to children to make them behave)

(30) *Kaaso'e na wunua-no.*
PRES-yon NOM house-3POSS
‘There is her house over there.’

(31) *Kaito'e na Tindoi.*
PRES-that:higher NOM Tindoi
‘Up there is Tindoi.’
(Tindoi is the highest point of the island, a hill and village district)

(32) *Kaiwo'e na Wuta Wolio.*
PRES-there:lower NOM land Wolio
‘There’s Buton off to the west.’
(Buton is sometimes referred to as Wuta Wolio, the land belonging to Wolio, the name of the Sultanate. See chapter 6 for information in the use of *ito* and *iwo* to refer to east and west (amongst other) directions)

Presentative clauses have not been observed in focussed constructions. This would accord with their use as presenters of new information into the discourse, which cannot be focussed information at the same time as being topicalised.
14.5 Numerical clauses

\textit{Te X} \ NUMBER \ ‘X is NUMBER.’ \ / \ ‘There are NUMBER Xs.’

In the numerical clause type a numeral functions as the predicate to the subject of the clause, which is obligatorily topicalised. The numeral clause functions to indicate the quantity in which the subject occurs. This clause type cannot be treated as a verbal clause because there are no subject prefixes on the numeral, even when in the reduplicated form characteristic of numeral verbs. Additionally, numeral + classifier combinations are often found as the predicate of this clause type (such as seen in (34)), and these are definitely not eligible to be treated verbally.

\begin{centering}
\begin{tabular}{l}
(33) [\textit{Te mia} \ i \ \textit{iso}]_{KP} [\textit{dodua}]_{\text{NUM}}. \\
\text{CORE} \ \text{person} \ \text{OBL} \ \text{yon} \ 2 \\
\text{‘There are two people over there.’} \\
\text{(Lit., ‘The people over there are two.’)}
\end{tabular}
\end{centering}

\begin{centering}
\begin{tabular}{l}
(34) [\textit{Te kaubarasa-su}]_{KP} [\textit{tolu-hu’u} \ \textit{labi}]_{\text{NUM}}. \\
\text{CORE} \ \text{custard.apple-1SG.POSS} \ 3-\text{CLASS} \ \text{more} \\
\text{‘I have three or more trees of custard apples.’} \\
\text{(Lit., ‘My custard apples are three or more.’)}
\end{tabular}
\end{centering}

Almost identical in meaning, but without the overtones of topicality, is the following existential clause (see below, 14.5):

\begin{centering}
\begin{tabular}{l}
(35) \ \textit{Ane ke kaubarasa-su} \ \textit{tolu-hu’u} \ \textit{labi}. \\
\text{exist and custard.apple-1SG.POSS} \ 3-\text{CLASS} \ \text{more} \\
\text{‘I have three or more trees of custard apples.’}
\end{tabular}
\end{centering}

14.5.1 Distributive possessive clauses

\textit{Te X, \ NUMBER}_1\text{-Class} \ \ \text{NUMBER}_2\text{-Class} \\
‘As for X, there are \text{NUMBER}_1 per \text{NUMBER}_2.’

The distributive clause is used to indicate a distribution of a particular countable item amongst another group of count nouns. A distributive clause is a variant of the numerical clause, in which both the subject and the predicate are numeral-plus-classifier phrases. There is usually a topicalised referent that precedes both phrases, providing information in which to place the information presented in the clause.

\begin{centering}
\begin{tabular}{l}
(36) [\textit{Te gaji-no}]_{TOP} [\textit{lima hulu}]_{\text{N-C}} [\textit{sa-’oloo}]_{\text{N-C}}. \\
\text{TOP} \ \text{wage-3POSS} \ 50 \ \text{1-day} \\
\text{‘His wages are 50,000 rupiah per day.’}
\end{tabular}
\end{centering}

\begin{centering}
\begin{tabular}{l}
(37) [\textit{Te lemba-no}]_{TOP} [\textit{tolu hulu-kilo}]_{\text{N-C}} [\textit{sa-mia}]_{\text{N-C}}. \\
\text{TOP} \ \text{carry.on.shoulder-3POSS} \ 30-\text{CLASS} \ 1-\text{CLASS} \\
\text{how.many-times-PF} \\
\text{‘They carried 30 kilos each, time after time.’}
\end{tabular}
\end{centering}
(Lit., ‘Their carried amount, it was thirty kilograms per person…’)

(38)  \[ \text{Te } \text{mi(a)} \text{ u } \text{kampo } \text{iso} \text{TOP } \text{ane ke kadola} \]
\[ \text{TOP person GEN village yon exist and chicken} \]
\[ [\text{dua-'ulu}] \text{N-C [sa-tuha]} \text{N-C}. \]
2-CLASS 1-family

‘The people in that village have two chickens per family.’

(39)  \[ \text{Ane ke kadola dua-'ulu sa-tuha} \text{exist and chicken 2-CLASS 1-family} \]
\[ \text{na mi(a) u kampo iso.} \]
NOM person GEN village yon

‘There are two chickens per family for the people in that village.’

14.6 Comparative clauses

\textit{Labi di X (ngga) te Y}  \quad \text{‘X is better than Y’}

A comparative clause is used to compare some characteristic of one of the arguments present with those of another argument. The comparative construction is used either non-verbally, using the word \textit{labi} ‘better than’, or a noun, but equally may be used with a non-dynamic verbal predicate as the feature that is compared. In this verbal case, the dummy third person subject prefixes are used, rather than agreeing with one or the other of the nominals in the clause. Either the standard or the comparison may be left out of the sentence, and this is more usual than both appearing. The standard of comparison is marked by the general core article \textit{te}. The object of comparison is marked by the oblique article \textit{i/di}. For instance:

(40)  \[ \text{Labi te iko'o wa!} \]
\[ \text{better CORE 2SG ILL.FORCE} \]
‘Better than you!’

(41)  \[ \text{No-motika di ia.} \]
\[ 3R-old OBL 3SG \]
‘She’s older.’

(42)  \[ \text{No-metuku di iaku te iko'o.} \]
\[ 3R-strong OBL 1SG CORE 2SG \]
‘I’m stronger than you are.’

Compare with a similar sentence simply stating that the referent is old, which marks the nominal with a nominative article

(41)’  \[ \text{No-motika na ia.} \]
\[ 3R-old NOM 3SG \]
‘She’s old.’

The failure of the subject prefix in (42) to agree with either the standard (\textit{iaku}) or the comparison (\textit{iko’o}) shows that it is truly a non-referential dummy subject marker, indicating that the sentence is not truly verbal.
Non-verbal and semi-verbal clauses

(43) *No-to'oge di kumbou i wor(u) u po'o ngga te t[um]inti.*

3R-strong OBL goanna OBL underneath GEN mango than CORE run.SI

‘The goanna underneath the mango tree is bigger than the one that’s running.’

14.6.1 Similative clauses

_Te X_ sa-Verb GEN Y ‘X is as Verb-y as Y’
_Sa-Verb GEN Y, na X_

This sort of clause shows that the properties of the subject are identical with those of the predicate. In the absence of a verb meaning ‘like’ (there is a verb, _pokana_, meaning ‘the same as’, from the root _kana_ ‘be appropriate’), this construction is quite frequently used. When an adjective formed with _me- _or _mo- _is the verb in the equation, the _me- _or _mo- _prefix is usually dropped unless that would cause lexical confusion, or cause a prenasalised stop to be at the beginning of the morpheme. This is relevant because certain prenasalised stops have their source in the interaction between the prefix and the root. For instance, from proto-Austronesian *Dalem, Tukang Besi reflects both _laro_ ‘inside’, showing no prenasalisation, and _me-ndaro_ ‘deep’, with prenasalisation. See van den Berg (1991c) for a discussion of this process in Muna. In (45), _melangka_ drops the _me- _without complications. In (46), on the other hand, _menti'i_ is preserved because of the existence of the lexical root _ti'i_ ‘scratch a cat’s bottom’.

(44) _Te mia min(a) i Tomia iso sa-ba'a-(')u._

CORE person from OBL Tomea yon same-size-2SG.POSS

‘That guy from Tomea is the same size as you are.’

(45) _Mbeaka sa-langka-'u, na ngo'o-no._

not same-long-2SG.POSS NOM nose-3POSS

‘It isn’t as long as yours, his nose.’

(46) _Te tinti-'a-no sa-menti'i nu ikaka-su._

CORE run-NL-3POSS same-fast GEN elder.sibling-1SG.POSS

‘His running is as fast as my big brother(‘s).’

(47) _Te hu'u i sawengka mohii sa-basa nu i atu._

CORE tree OBL side left same-big GEN OBL that

‘The tree on the left is as big as that one by you.’

In (47), the genitive phrase contains a headless NP modified by an oblique phrase:
14.7 Exclamatory clauses

Ke Adjective-POSS! ‘Poss is really Adjective!’

This sort of exclamatory clause is commonly found in casual conversation, in which it appears with a sharply falling intonation contour that is distinctive of this speech act. It has similar effects on the initial me- or mo- of many adjectives as does sa- (see 14.6.1). Additionally, however, several roots with ma- drop this prefix in the ke- environment, as seen in (48), in which ma’e’ka loses the ma-. Additional modification by further genitive phrases is very common.

(48) Ke ’eka-su no atu!
and fear-1SG.POSS GEN that ‘Boy was I scared!’

(49) Ke to’oge-no garaa!
and big-3POSS surprise ‘Goodness, isn’t she big!’

14.8 Existential clauses

Ane ke X ‘There is an X.’

Ane’e na X

An existential clause asserts the existence of the predicate, and is formed with the semi-verb ane. This is not a true verb in that it does not take subject prefixes (it is also used in serial verb constructions as described in chapter 8). One example of this ambient serial verb usage is seen in (50):

(50) Te ia measo’e ai ane-ho no-saori-melai.
CORE 3SG REF-yon ANA be-still 3R-extreme-far
‘Oh, that guy, he’s still very far away.’

Without a second verb in the sentence, ane serves as the predicate of a non-verbal clause. The 'existant' is introduced by the conjunct kene in a conjunct phrase, unless topicalised and fronted:

if exist and friend-1SG.POSS 3R-good just
‘If I’m with a friend, it’s great.’
Non-verbal and semi-verbal clauses

(52)  \[\text{Ane} \ [\text{ke} \ [\text{po' o} \ \text{koruo}]_{\text{NP}} \text{CONF} \ i \ \text{Tindoi.}]\]

‘There are many mangoes in Tindoi.’

(53)  \[\text{[Te} \ [\text{po' o} \ i \ \text{Walanda}]_{\text{NP}} \text{KP} \ \text{ane?}]\]

‘Mangoes in Holland, are there any?’

(54)  \[\text{Sapaira sapaira ana, ane} \ [\text{ke} \ [\text{mia} \ \text{sa-mia}]_{\text{NP}} \text{CONF} \ldots }\]

‘There was once a person…’

The existential is marked by the nominative article \(\text{na}\) if \(\text{ane}\) takes object suffixes, or if a floating quantifier appears between \(\text{ane}\) and the existential, and is marked by \(\text{te}\) if fronted, as seen in (53).

(55)  \[\text{Ane} \ [\text{sa-mia}]_{\text{N-C}} \ \text{na} \ \text{kene, no-pogau "Mai to-moturu-ako."} \]

‘One of the friends, he said “Let’s go to sleep”.’ (Pod:8)

(56)  \[\text{Te} \ \text{wemba monda i-tihi? Ane-'e na melangka…} \]

‘Smooth bamboo pieces? There’re some long ones….’

Further discussion of the syntax of the existential clause is given in chapter 20.

14.8.1 Ownership

\[\text{Ane ke X-POSS} \quad \text{‘Poss has an X.’}\]

The possessive existential clause represents a subclass of the existential clause type, and differs only in the use of possessive suffixes on the nominal predicate. The meaning is nearly identical to a verbal clause using the verb \(\text{hoto}\) ‘to have’, but unlike \(\text{hoto}\)-, an ownership construction with \(\text{ane}\) is more likely to be used with co-sanguinal kin terms and with body parts. This construction has been dealt with in chapter 13, and only a few illustrative examples will be given here:

(57)  \[\text{Te} \ \text{ia, ane ke kabali leama.} \]

‘As for him, he has a good machete.’

(58)  \[\text{Ane ke ana-su hato-mia.} \]

‘I have four children.’

(59)  \[\text{Ane ke wumua to'oge-su.} \]

‘I have a big house.’
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(60) Ane ke tuha nu mia measo’e ai?
exist and family GEN person REF-that ANA
‘Does that person have any family?’

For details on the mixed status of the arguments of existential clauses with respect to the divisions observed in pivot properties, see chapter 20.

14.9 Negative existential clauses

Mbea’e na X ‘There is no X’

Just as an existential clause uses the semi-verb *ane* to show the existence of a argument, so is the semi-verb *mbea’e* used to negate the proposition. The negated proposition must obligatorily take the nominative article *na*, there is not, as was the case with *ane*, an alternative with *ke(ne)*. Examples of the use of *mbea’e* are given in (61) and (62):

(61) "Maka mbea’e na rengka woleke-nto?"
then not.exist NOM dry mouse(k.o. fish)-1PL.POSS
‘But don’t we have a rengka woleke?’ (Ind2:12)

(62) Mbea’e na doe ako ku-b[um]alu te kuikui.
not NOM money PURP 1SG-buy.SI CORE sweets
‘I don’t have any money to buy cakes.’
(Lit. ‘There is not the money that I buy the cakes.’)

If the negation is not of the existence of an item, but of its identity, then the regular predicate negator *mbeaka* is used, rather than the existential negator *mbea’e*. (63) shows that this is the preferred pattern when a contrast is offered, and the focus of the discourse is not just about the existence or not of something.

(63) [Te ia ana]KP mbeaka [te tando]KP
CORE 3SG this not CORE tando
toka [te humbu]KP
but CORE humbu
‘Now this one is not a tando, but rather a humbu.’
(Tando and Humbu are names for two different types of woven baskets)

The proposition of a negative existential clause may be topicalised, and it follows the normal procedure of being marked by *te*, and appearing at the beginning of the sentence:

(64) Te doe ako ku-b[um]alu te kuikui, mbea’e.
CORE money for 1SG-buy.SI CORE sweets not
‘As for the money to buy cakes, there isn’t any.’

14.9.1 Non-ownership

Mbea’e na X-POSS ‘Poss doesn’t have an X.’

Just as there is a subclass of the existential clause type that is used to indicate possession,
so too a subclass of the negative existential clause type is used to show the absence of possession. This sub-type has already been dealt with in chapter 13, and is not discussed in depth here.

(65) *Mbea’e-mo na ama-su, te iaku ku-jari*
    not.exist-PF NOM father-1SG.POSS CORE 1SG 1SG-become
    te ana kilua-mo.
    CORE child half.orphan-PF
    ‘I don’t have a father any more, I’ve become a half orphan.’

(That is, a child who has only one living parent; a completely orphaned child is an *ana misikini* (< Malay *miskin* ‘poor, wretched’))

(66) *Mbea’e na tukatutu di kampo ana, o-mura ane di Wanse.*
    not.exist NOM blacksmith OBL village this 3R-maybe exist OBL Wanse
    ‘There isn’t a blacksmith in this village, maybe there’s one in Wanse.’