

Do We Need Underlying Representations in Bantu Phonology?

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Bantu languages have long provided evidence of robust morphophonemic alternations of the sort captured by underlying representations (URs) in generative phonology. However, this has not been without complications. In this paper I take a new look at some familiar consonant alternations to ask whether URs are doing the effective job we have assumed. I first look at alternations between [l] and [d], where [d] occurs after [n], [l] elsewhere. While we generally expect these consonants to be in complementary distribution, one Bantu language after another contrasts a smaller group of words with [d] not preceded by a nasal, e.g. Luganda *kù-loop-a* 'to denounce' vs. *ku-dóòb-a* 'be destitute'. Such contrasts, as well as alternations such as *a-láb-à* 's/he sees' vs. *n-dáb-à* 'I see', suggest a rule /l/ → [d] after [n]. However, derivations such as *n-dóòbe* 'loin cloth' → *ka-dóòbe* (not **ka-lóòbe*) 'small loin cloth' (cf. the base verb -*dóob-* be destitute) suggest that [nd] can have two sources /nl/ and /nd/, thereby raising the question of how to analyze tautomorphemic [nd] which does not alternate, e.g. *kù-tuund-a* 'to sell'. After documenting such analytic problems regarding [l] and [d] in a number of Bantu languages, I turn to the alternations created when non-post-nasal Proto-Bantu *p lenites to [h], [w] ~ [y], or [ɣ] in closely related Interlacustrine languages (Haya, Luganda, Lusoga etc.). I will document in detail the [mp] ~ [ɣ] (orthographic *gh*) alternation which is quite robust in Lusoga:

(1)	m̄-p-à	'I give'	vs.	á-gh-à	's/he gives'
	m̄-pét-á	'I bend'	vs.	à-ghét-á	's/he bends'
	m̄-pùlìr-á	'I hear'	vs.	á-ghùlìr-á	's/he hears'
(2)	é-m̄-pùbé	'rat'	→	à-ká-ghùbé	'small rat'
	é-m̄-pàghá	'wing'	→	à-ká-ghàghá	'small wing'
	é-m̄-pèghó	'wind'	→	à-ká-ghèghó	'small wind'
(3)	é-m̄-pàghá	'feathers'	→	é-m̄-pàghá + ghàghá	'lousy feathers'
	è-m̄-pááǰó	'pieces, slices'	→	è-m̄-pááǰó + ghááǰó	'lousy pieces, slices'
	è-m̄-púúmbú	'banana leaves'	→	è-m̄-púúmbú + ghúúmbú	'lousy banana leaves'

However, at the same time there is a smaller group of words (many borrowed) that have [p] when not preceded by [m], e.g. *è-cí-kópò* 'cup', *ò-kú-pápál-á* 'to flutter', as well as exceptions where [p] is maintained in diminutivization and reduplication:

(4)	é-m̄-pítí	'hyena'	→	à-ká-pítí	'small hyena'
			→	é-m̄-pítí+pítí	'lousy hyena'
(5)	è-m̄-páálá	'leopard'	→	à-ká-páálá	'small leopard'
			→	è-m̄-páálá + páálá	'lousy leopard'

While this suggests a contrast between /p/ and /ɣ/, such an analysis runs into similar problems as with /l/ and /d/. An alternative which is being increasingly explored in general phonology is that we should give up on URs and instead posit allomorphs, as in (6).

(6)	'hear'	:	/-pùlìr-/ _n /-ghùlìr-/ (elsewhere)	á-ghùlìr-á, m̄-pùlìr-á	'he/I hear'
	'rat'	:	/-pùbé/ _n /-ghùbé/ (elsewhere)	é-m̄-pùbé, à-ká-ghùbé	'rat/small rat'
(7)	'cup'	:	/-kópò/	è-cí-kópò	'cup'
	'flutter'	:	/-papala/	ò-kú-pápálá	'to flutter'

As seen, non-alternating /p/ would have only one allomorph, including words that have tautomorphemic [mp], e.g. *è-cí-ghùmpú* 'clod'. The rest of my talk will be devoted to showing that URs are a useful tool in the sense of Grev Corbett's canonical approach to typology: They provide an ideal (set of canons) for capturing the relationship between underlying and surface forms from which we can calibrate what actually occurs. The Lusoga case does not meet the canons of an /X/ → Y / Z phonological rule in the sense that the p/ɣ alternation is not (i) phonetically natural; (ii) analytically determinant; (iii) regular. A canonical approach to URs is therefore useful both in capturing generalizations, as well as characterizing the diachronic conditions of their undoing.

Verb Doubling vs. the Conjoint/Disjoint Alternation

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A subset of Bantu languages (e.g., languages of zones A, B, E, F, H & K) display ‘verb doubling’ – [infinitive verb + identical finite verb] with or without a focus marker (e.g., de Kind et. al 2014). Another subset of Bantu languages (e.g., languages of zones J, M, N, P & S) display the conjoint/disjoint morphology, widely studied in recent Bantu research (van der Wal & Hyman 2015). In the present work, I argue that these seemingly unrelated grammatical forms appearing in different Bantu zones are, in fact, interrelated on the information-structural basis.

Verb doubling is often used to express predicate-centered focus – focus on the lexical content of the verb (‘state-of-affairs focus’) or the verb’s operators such as polarity and tense/aspect/modality (‘operator focus’) (e.g., Morimoto 2015). In the conjoint/disjoint alternation, the disjoint form is generally used to express predicate-centered focus, while the conjoint form is the out-of-focus form (e.g., Güldemann 2003, Morimoto 2015). Interestingly, my preliminary investigation suggests that verb doubling and the conjoint/disjoint alternation are in complementary distribution: in the languages of zones A, B, E, F, H & K that display verb doubling, the conjoint/disjoint alternation is not attested; conversely, in the languages of zones J, M, N, P & S, for example, that display the conjoint/disjoint alternation, verb doubling is not observed. This is not surprising if they indeed fulfill a similar discourse function.

Another potentially related phenomenon is inversion. While those languages that display the conjoint/disjoint alternation certainly vary in terms of what type of inversion is allowed in the language (cf. Marten et. al. 2007), Kikuyu (E51), for example, does not allow even the most wide-spread type of inversion with locative. In the languages of zone A as well, inversion is apparently not attested, suggesting a potential correlation between verb doubling and apparent absence of inversion constructions.

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A linguistic cycle for quotatives in eastern Bantu languages

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In the absence of historical records for most Bantu languages, grammaticalization paths must be hypothesized on the basis of comparisons between existing languages and cross-linguistic generalizations concerning language change. However, language change is strongly influenced by frequency, and for many Bantu languages there is no corpus of material of sufficient size to allow frequency effects to be measured.

In this paper, I use narrative text corpora in ten eastern Bantu languages totalling 10,232 clauses to reconstruct a grammaticalization path for quotatives (Güldemann 2002). Quotatives may be obligatory lexical verbs (1), ‘reduced’ verbs (verbs which take limited derivational morphology and may be phonologically reduced) (2), or invariable particles (3). Some quotatives have also developed into complementizers with non-speech verbs (4).

- (100) *yuya mlume wa-amb-a* “...” (Digo)
1.DEM 1.man 3SG.PST-say-FV
‘that man said, “...”’
- (2) *Abhalindu bha-kha-ti*, “...” (Malila)
2.girls 3PL-NARR-say
‘The girls said, “...”’
- (3) *Abhaanu bhayo a-bha-aik-a ati*, “...” (Kwaya)
2.person 2.DEM PRES-3PL-say-FV QUOT
‘Those people say that, “...”’
- (4) *^n-o-ongw-ag-a ati* ... (Kwaya)
NARR-3-hear-HAB-FV COMP
‘... hearing that ...’

The corpus data reveal how quotatives function in context as part of wider ‘speech orienters’ (clauses that identify the speaker and/or addressee, and optionally describe the manner of speech). This reveals cross-linguistic variation in relation to:

- the variety of speech verbs that may occur in speech orienters
- whether a speech verb is obligatory or optional in a speech orienter when a quotative is present
- the number of quotatives in each language (ranging from zero to five)
- the morphological characteristics of the quotatives
- whether quotatives (if they exist) are obligatory or optional in speech orienters
- whether or not the (default) quotative in a given language also functions as a general complementizer.

I conclude that the grammaticalization path for quotatives is in fact cyclical (Hodge 1970), and that the eastern Bantu languages in question are undergoing a form of Jespersen’s Cycle.

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Ikizu Nominal Tones

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In this paper we will present the nominal tone system of Ikizu (JE402 [ikz]), an understudied Great Lakes Bantu language spoken in the Mara Region, western Tanzania.

The Mara Bantu languages show a lot of variation in their prosodic systems. In some, the Tone Bearing Unit (TBU) is the syllable and in others it is the mora. In some, H tones interact with syllable weight and the system is mostly culminative, in that only one syllable with the highest prominence is allowed per word. In others, long stretches of H toned syllables are common, and toneless words are allowed. The functional load of tone is greatly reduced in some varieties, but others have fairly complex tonal systems on both lexical and grammatical levels. Furthermore, it is intriguing that these different tonal systems occur in a fairly restricted geographical area.

Ikizu has lost the lexical verbal tones, but nominal and grammatical tones are still functional. Although Ikizu has distinctive vowel length, the TBU is the syllable, not the mora. In assigning nominal tones, Ikizu counts syllables from the end of the nominal stem. There are three main types of nominal tones: toneless stems (which receive a default H tone in isolation), stems in which the H tone is assigned to the penult, and stems in which the H tone is assigned to the antepenult. In non-final position, the lexical H tones undergo an unbounded spread up to the final syllable.

The Ikizu nominal tone system is of interest, since the tone assignment rules are very different from the surrounding languages, i.e. the neighboring languages count syllables or moras from the beginning of the stem. In this paper, the details of Ikizu nominal tone system will be presented and compared to the other languages in the area, as well as Bantu languages more generally.

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New research on Tivoid and its place within Bantoid
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The Tivoid languages represent one of the least-known and most poorly characterised of the larger Bantoid groups. Indeed no argument for the unity of this group has ever been presented in print and for some putative Tivoid languages there appears to be no published information. Meek (1931) may well be the earliest author to record languages other than Tiv itself; he provides vocabularies of Bitare, Abõ and Batu. Greenberg (1963) included Tiv, Bitare and Batu, languages now considered to be Tivoid, as three of the seven co-ordinate branches of Bantu. The recognition that there is a whole group of languages related to Tiv may first appear in Dieu & Renaud (1983) reprised in Watters & Leroy (1989).

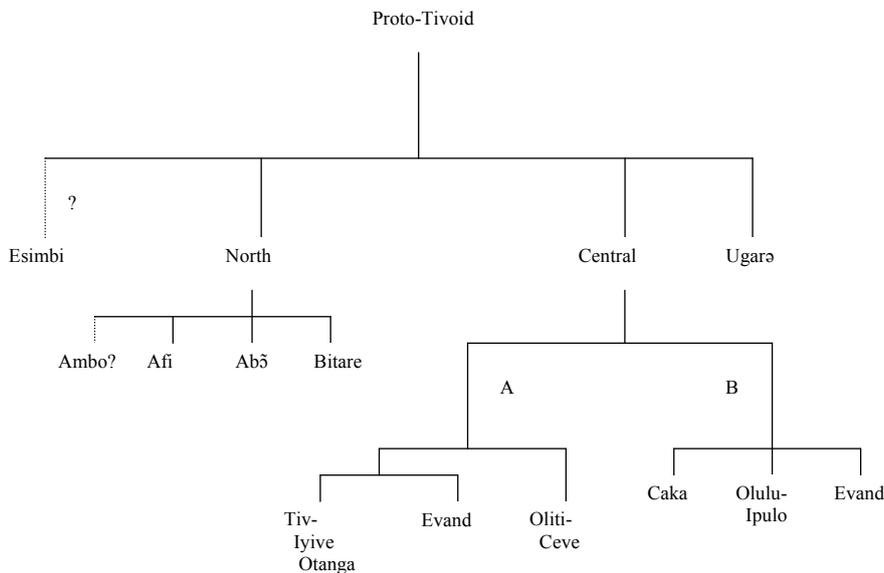
The paper makes use of new field data collected both in Nigeria and Cameroun to try and establish;

- a. Which languages fit together in a Tivoid group
- b. Whether the Esimbi or Buru languages are part of Tivoid
- c. Whether the group as a whole is characterised by the double affixing typical of Tiv and some of the other languages
- d. And how Tivoid relates to Bantoid in a broader perspective

The paper makes the following proposal for the consonants of proto-Tivoid;

	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Alve-olar	Alveo-palatal	Palatal	Velar	Labial-velar	Glottal
Plosive	p b		t d		[tʃ] dʒ	k g	kp gb	
Implosive	ɓ							
Nasal	m		n		ɲ	ŋ		
Trill			[r]					
Fricative		f v	s z	ʃ ʒ		ɣ		h
Approximant					y		w	
Lateral			l					

Figure 1 presents a structure for Tivoid;



Parts of Central Tivoid are characterised by the relatively unusual typological feature of double-affixing in nominals, and cognacy between lexical items suggests that this has evolved once, and cannot be reconstructed to proto-Tivoid. Rapid affix renewal makes it problematic to relate the system to proto-Bantu in more than a general way, but some proposals are made in this direction.

Morphological decomposers for Zulu – a critical comparison

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Morphological decomposition for Bantu languages, particularly for those with a conjunctive orthography such as Zulu, is crucial not only for purposes of accurate corpus searches crucial for Bantu linguists, but also as a basic enabling application that facilitates the development of more advanced tools and practical language processing applications, e.g. tokenising, part-of-speech tagging, parsing and machine translation. In this paper a critical comparison will be made between three freely available morphological decomposers for Zulu, namely isiZulu.net (<https://isizulu.net/>), a Zulu-English online dictionary that also offers morphological decomposition; an open source morphological decomposer (available as modules and data) offered by the Resource Management Agency (<http://www.nwu.ac.za/rma>) and reported on by Eiselen and Puttkammer (2014); as well as ZulMorph, currently available as a Finite state morphology demo (<http://gama.unisa.ac.za/demo/demo/zulmorph>) and reported on in detail in several publications, e.g. Bosch and Pretorius (2011) and Pretorius and Bosch (2008).

Criteria that are considered for this comparison are the degree of granularity of morphological analysis, and also standardisation and documentation of tagsets used for decomposition purposes. An example such as *kwakungumuntu* (“it was a person”) illustrates the varying results with respect to the granularity of analysis and tagging practices as produced by the three decomposers:

- 1) **kwakungumuntu** kwaku-ng-umuntu
- 2) **kwakungumuntu** ... *kwaku + ngu + umuntu*
Noun with identifying prefix (Remote Past Continuous) [←umuntu (n.)]
SC: kwaku- (cl. 15, cl. 17)
- 3) **kwakungumuntu**
kwa[PTSC15]be[AuxVStem]ku[SC15]ngu[CopPre]u[NPrePre1]mu[BPre1]ntu.1-2[NStem]

Different users may require different degrees of granularity of analysis according to Faaß et al. (2010) in their description of guidelines for evaluation methodology in terms of the design and creation of a Gold Standard for morphology systems. Against this background, this first critical comparison of three available Zulu morphological decomposers will be presented, based on output examples of a broad range of parts of speech with varying morphological complexity. A demonstration of the morphological decomposers will be available.

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On the organization of tense/aspect systems:
A comparative analysis of Kitalinga (JE.102) and Ngangela (K.12b)

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Kitalinga (JE.102) and Ngangela (K.12b) are geographically and genetically quite distant within the Bantu domain. Nevertheless, they share a very similar set of tense/aspect forms, as can be observed in Table 1. Two varieties of Ngangela are illustrated: the Kuvango variety (Ntondo 2006) and the Mpengo variety (Maniacky 2003). In each language, there are two sets of forms. One set consists of four forms (only two in the Mpengo variety), the other three. Set 1 in Kitalinga is labeled Perfectif, set 2 Parfait (Paluku 1998); Set 1 in the Kuvango variety of Ngangela is Perfeito, Set 2 Pr terito, but Ant rieur/Pass  Pr -hodiernal and Pass  in the Mpengo variety.

Table 1. Kitalinga and Ngangela T/A forms

	Kitalinga	Ngangela			
		Kuvango variety		Mpengo variety	
Set 1					
PFV0	`-Ø-Ø-B-à	-na-Ø-B-a/-e/-Ø	PF1	Ant�rieur	-n�a-B ^H -V
PFV1	`-Ø-k�-B-�	-na-ka-B-a	PF2	P r�cent	-na-B-ile
PFV0	`-�-Ø-B-�	-a-Ø-B-a	PF3	Pre-Hod.	-na-ka-B ^H -a -na-ka-B-ile
PFV3	`-�-k�-B-�	-a-ka-B-a	PF4	P lointain	-a ^{H2} B-ile
Set 2					
PF1	`-Ø-B-i�	-na-B-il�	Pr�1		
PF2	`-�-B-i�	-a-B-il�	Pr�2		
PF3	`-k�-B-i�	-a-ka-B-il�	Pr�3		

Although Kitalinga and the Kuvango variety of Ngangela are nearly identical morphologically, several issues arise from these data: (1) why two Perfectif Actuel (PFV0) forms in Kitalinga and what is the difference between them?; (2) why two P2 constructions in Ngangela (Mpengo) and, again, what is the difference between them?; (3) how can we account for the conceptual difference in the Set 1 and Set 2 constructions that appear to be the reverse of each other in the two languages?; (4) given the preceding, what can we conclude about the cognitive organization of these systems?

Evidence—negative forms in Kitalinga, for example, and morphological relationships in Ngangela—suggests that the tense/aspect systems are organized quite differently. Analysis of these systems in the multi-level Domains and Regions (DaR) cognitive model (Botne & Kershner 2008, Botne 2012), in which tense/aspect constructions situate events in different cognitive domains, and differentiate time regions and time scales within domains, provides a motivated explanation for the observed differences and the apparent “double” constructions.

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Drifting towards Swahili: The loss of linguistic diversity in East Africa

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For centuries spoken as first or second language along the East African coast, Swahili is more recently expanding inland – also as first and home language. This spread of one of the most prominent African lingua franca as first language results in the abandoning of Bantu languages in Tanzania and other East African countries. While in by far most case studies of language shifts the replacing and replaced languages are genetically unrelated, these contact scenarios in East Africa differ in that Bantu languages are replaced by a dominant language – Swahili – which is a closely related Bantu language.

These language contact settings which involve genetically related languages differ in many respects from what has been previously described of other language shift situations. For that reason we introduce the term “language drift” to refer to these specific contact settings. The process has been described in several individual case studies (e.g. Batibo 1992, 2005; Kiango 2013; Legère 1992; Mekacha 1993; Mous 2003; Yoneda 1996, 2010), but has not been discussed in a wider comparative and theoretical perspective.

The paper investigates language endangerment through this process of intra-Bantu convergence and drift rather than through explicit language shift, focussing on structural aspects (e.g. vocabulary, demonstrative systems, copulas, noun class morphology, double object constructions) as well as on providing a preliminary overview of languages that seem to undergo such drifts. We aim to come to a better understanding of drift phenomena and their implications for our understanding of loss of linguistic diversity in East Africa, as well as for the study of language contact and convergence effects.

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On adverbial *kuphela* ('only') in Xhosa and Zulu

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In the Nguni languages Xhosa and Zulu, the exclusive focus marker *kuphela*, 'only', is typically used adnominally and follows the DP it modifies. However, *kuphela* can also be used as a sentence adverb. Zulu and Xhosa differ with respect to the available interpretations of adverbial *kuphela*. In Xhosa, an initial *kuphela* can be associated with any clause-internal constituent, (1), but in Zulu, initial *kuphela* is interpreted only with association to the whole clause or, less saliently, to the subject, (2). Final *kuphela* in Xhosa can scope over vP-internal material, including the subject in a transitive expletive construction (TEC), but it cannot modify the subject in an SVO clause, (3), (4). In contrast, final *kuphela* in Zulu is construed with the object-DP or the whole VP, but never with the subject (not even in TECs), (5), (6).

To explain these data, we argue that initial *kuphela* is left-adjoined to TP and that final *kuphela* in Xhosa is right-adjoined to vP. Since subjects in SVO clauses move to SpecTP, they raise out of the c-command domain of final *kuphela*. We propose the felicity condition in (I), and we argue that movement of X out of the c-command domain of 'only' prevents the construal 'only X' (cf. Erlewine 2014 a.o.):

(I) All and only expressions in *kuphela*'s c-command domain can be associated with it.

For Zulu, we propose that *kuphela* is subject to an additional *closeness* constraint:

(II) *Kuphela* in Zulu is construed with the closest constituent that it c-commands.

As there is indeterminacy as to whether the subject is as close to initial *kuphela* as TP, some Zulu speakers can construe initial *kuphela* as modifying the subject. Furthermore, we assume that Zulu adverbial *kuphela* cannot right-adjoin to vP or higher, so that final adverbial *kuphela* can only be construed as a VP-adjunct.

- (1) **Kuphela** u-Sindiswa u-phek-e i-mi-funo. [Xhosa]
 only AUG-1a.Sindiswa 1.SM-cook-PST.CJ AUG-4-vegetables
 a. 'All that happened was *Sindiswa* cooked vegetables'
 b. 'Sindiswa only cooked vegetables.' (i.e. she didn't eat them)
 c. 'Only *Sindiswa* cooked vegetables.' (nobody else)
 d. 'Sindiswa cooked only vegetables.' (nothing else)
 e. 'Sindiswa only cooked vegetables.' (she didn't get anything else done)
- (2) **Kuphela** u-Sindiswa u-phek-e i-mi-fino. [Zulu]
 only AUG-1a.Sindiswa 1.SM-cook-PST.CJ AUG-4-vegetables
Only construals (1)a and (1)c (less saliently) available
- (3) U-Sindiswa u-phek-e i-mi-funo **kuphela** [Xhosa]
 AUG-1a.Sindiswa 1.SM-cook-PST.CJ AUG-4-vegetables only
 a. 'Sindiswa cooked only vegetables.' *all speakers allow* a.
 b. 'The only thing Sindiswa did was to cook vegetables.' *some speakers allow* b.
 c. 'Sindiswa only cooked vegetables.' (she didn't eat them) *some speakers allow* c.
 d. *'Only *Sindiswa* cooked vegetables.' *no speakers allow* d.
- (4) Ku-phek-e u-Sindiswa i-mi-funo **kuphela.** [Xhosa]
 17.SM-cook-PST.CJ AUG-1a.Sindiswa AUG-4-vegetables only
Construals (3)a-d available
- (5) U-Sindiswa u-phek-e i-mi-fino **kuphela** [Zulu]
 AUG-1a.Sindiswa 1.SM-cooked-PST.CJ AUG-4-vegetables only
Only construals (3)a and (3)b available
- (6) Ku-theng-e u-Mbali i-zin-gubo zokugqoka **kuphela.** [Zulu]
 17.SM-buy-PST.CJ AUG-1a.Mbali AUG-10-clothes for-wearing only
Only: 'All that happened was Mbali bought clothes.'

Event type lexicalization across language boundaries: verbs in South African Ndebele varieties

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The interplay between the structure of events in the real world, in the minds of speakers, and in their linguistic representations is complex, and makes “event types” notoriously difficult to categorize. Bantu languages, with their typically large number of “change-of-state” or “inchoative” verbs (see e.g. Botne & Kershner 2000; Seidel 2008; Nurse 2008), present an additional challenge for researchers attempting to classify event types and understand their construals in discourse. At the same time, the richness of Bantu systems, with regard both to lexical aspect and to the morphological expression of tense and aspect, means that they have much to contribute to the cross-linguistic understanding of aspectual reference. Unfortunately, there have been relatively few careful investigations of the expression of event structure in Bantu languages (but see, among others, Fleisch 2000, Kershner 2002, Seidel 2008, Lusekelo 2016). Furthermore, tools for cross-language comparison of event structure within Bantu are lacking.

Croft (2012) presents what he claims should be an exhaustive set of event types, based on a two-dimensional model that represents how an event unfolds over time (the *t*-dimension) and qualitatively (the *q*-dimension). We are currently testing this model in Southern Ndebele (Nguni, S.407, South Africa), asking whether Croft’s typology is indeed sufficient to account for the possible construals of event types in Ndebele, and whether all of Croft’s categories correlate with meaningful distinctions within Ndebele grammar. To that end, we have developed a battery of tests designed to tease out significant differences in event type construal.

In this talk, we present our tests and the resulting preliminary categorization of Ndebele verbs. We also discuss the results of our adaptation of these tests to a related but different variety, Northern Transvaal Ndebele. Both Southern and Northern Ndebele are minority languages within the highly multilingual environment of South Africa, and both exist in heavy contact situations. The study therefore sheds light not only on a language-internal classification of event types, but also on the potential effects of language contact and language change on linguistic possibilities for event construal.

In addition, we hope that our tests (which draw on and expand tests discussed in Croft 2012, Seidel 2008, and Bar-el 2015, among others) will be adaptable to other languages and therefore of use in deepening our understanding of aspectual structure across Bantu.

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Cuwabo relativization: accessibility hierarchy and the typology of Bantu inversion constructions.

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Cuwabo (P34) illustrates a relativization strategy, also attested in some North-Western Bantu languages (Nsuka Nkutsi 1982), whose most salient characteristics are that, when an NP other than the subject is relativized:

- (a) the verbal prefix expressing subject agreement in independent clauses expresses agreement with the antecedent of the relative clause. Thus in the examples below, the SMs *dhi-* in (1) and *va-* in (2) agree in class with their antecedent *míri* ‘trees’ and *vátákúlu* ‘to the house’, respectively;
- (b) the subject NP occurs in post-verbal position and does not control any agreement mechanism, as seen with the subject NP *múlóbwana* ‘man’ in (1) and the cliticised personal pronoun =*ani* in (2).

(1) **mí-rí** [**dhi**-ni-gwádd-a *mú-lóbwana*]_{REL} (Guérois 2015)

4-tree SM4-IPFV.CJ-cut-FV 1-man

‘the trees that the man is cutting’ (lit.: ‘trees_i; they_i.are.cutting.REL man’)

(2) o-dhow-á **vá**-tákúlu apálé [**va**-ttíy-ílé = *ani* kómída ésíle]_{REL}

NAR-go-FV 16-9a.house 16.DEM.III SM16-leave-PFV.REL=3PL.PRO 9a.food 9.DEM.III

‘He went back to that house where they left that food.’ (lit. ‘... at.house_i; there_i.left.REL=they food’)

Our proposal is that this instance of quirky agreement is only apparent, and that in Cuwabo relative clauses, the subject index has in fact its normal function of expressing agreement with the subject of the verb. The idea is that Cuwabo is among the languages in which the subject is the only NP accessible to relativization: other NPs can only be relativized after being promoted to subject, which requires the demotion of the argument normally encoded as the subject. In Cuwabo morphosyntax, this demotion is manifested by inversion and loss of verb agreement control.

The crucial point is that the promoted NP (within the relative clause), being co-indexed with the antecedent, cannot surface as a full NP, and can only be represented by a subject index. Consequently, the apparent agreement between the verb of the relative clause and the antecedent is just regular subject agreement, but with a subject co-indexed with the antecedent, for example in (1):

mí-rí; [Ø_i **dhi**_i-ni-gwádd-a *mú-lóbwana*]

According to this analysis, in addition to the seven types of inversion constructions identified in independent clauses by Marten & Van der Wal (2014), Cuwabo relative clauses attest a type of inversion construction in which the selection of the NP taking over the control of verb agreement is not limited to a specific semantic role.

In a broader typological perspective, according to this analysis, as regards NP accessibility to relativization, the relativization strategy found in Cuwabo is basically identical to that found for example in Malagasy, with the subject as the only NP accessible to relativization (Keenan 1972: 171). The only difference is that Malagasy uses valency-changing morphology to promote non-subject NPs in order to make them accessible to relativization, whereas in Cuwabo, agreement is the only evidence that the relativized NP has been promoted to subject.

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On the origins of a preverbal focus position in Kikongo (Bantu, H16)

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Kikongo exhibits a preverbal focus position, resulting in a mono-clausal SOV order in the expression of object focus. This is atypical for Bantu, especially compared to the postverbal focus position in eastern and southern Bantu languages (cf. van der Wal 2009, among others). A preverbal focus position has been described extensively for Mbuun (B87) by Bostoen and Mundeke (2012), but its origin remains unclear. The aim of this paper is to account for this preverbal focus position in Kikongo. Based on field data and corpus research, it is argued that the preverbal focus position as in (1) originates from a (headless) inverted pseudo-cleft as in (2). Clefts often develop into focus constructions, both inside Bantu (Takizala 1974, Hamlaoui and Makasso 2015), and outside Bantu (Harris and Campbell 1995).

- (1) O mwaána **kanda** katángidi.
o mu-ana Ø-kanda ka-a-tang-idi
AUG₁ NP₁-child NP₃-book SC₁-REM-read-PRF
'The child read a book.'
- (2) **Kanda** i katángidi o mwáána.
Ø-kanda i ka-a-tang-idi o mu-ana
NP₃-book COP SC₁.REL-REM-read-PRF AUG₁ NP₁-child
'A book is what the child read.'

This hypothesis is corroborated by four main arguments. First, several possible intermediate stages between (1) and (2) have been attested, involving copula loss and leftward subject-movement. Secondly, both the SOV order and the cleft-construction have the same 3rd singular subject concord marker **kà-** (examples (1) and (2)) as opposed to other SCs in SVO order, such as **ù-** in example (3).

- (3) Múntu wamwéne **ngo**.
mu-ntu u-a-mon-idi N-go
NP₁-man SC₁-REM-see-PRF NP₉-leopard
'The man saw a leopard.'

A third argument relates to the tonal pattern of the clefted and focused constituents. Kikongo belongs to those Bantu languages having 'tone cases', which means that the surface tone pattern of constituents in Kikongo vary according to their position in the sentence (Carter 1973). Clefted and inverted objects display the same tonal pattern, different from postverbal objects. A final argument concerns the marking of the relative clause, which has been formally weakened and is not (obligatory) marked morphologically or tonally (e.g. by a relative head or a high tone SC). It is argued that this formal weakening of the relative clause facilitated the movement of the subject to clause-initial position.

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Evaluatives in Bantu
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Bantu noun class prefixes lead a double life: in addition to their canonical use as grammatical markers of noun-class, they are also used in a non-canonical fashion, in which case they acquire an evaluative meaning; this is what Fortune (1970) calls their secondary function. For example, in Swahili, the canonical noun class of the nominal root *-toto* ‘child’ is class 1/2, as in (1a). In addition, the same root can combine with non-canonical noun-class prefixes to derive augmentatives (1b) or diminutives, with the latter contrast neutral (1c-i) versus pejorative (1c-ii) affect. Note that the Swahili evaluatives are substitutive (Maho 1999), with the evaluative class-prefix substituting for the canonical one. Although individual Bantu languages differ in which class-prefix they recruit as evaluative, all Bantu languages exploit this possibility. For example, as shown in (2), though Nata (Guthrie E45) recruits a wider range of evaluative prefixes than does Swahili, the same semantic contrasts are found, namely size (augmentative vs. diminutive) and affect (neutral vs. pejorative). Extending Déchaine et al’s (2015) analysis of Shona evaluatives, we show that the evaluatives have the following properties. **First**, in terms of position, they are either substitutive (e.g. Swahili, Nata) or additive (e.g. Shona). **Second**, in terms of inflection, they behave like regular agreement morphology and so trigger concordial N-class agreement. **Third**, in terms of derivation, evaluatives also combine with both underived and derived nouns (the latter have not been much discussed in the literature). Fourth, **semantically**, they introduce a speaker-oriented perspective on the referent. As such, their meanings are predictably fluid and highly context-sensitive, consistent with Fortin’s (2005) proposal that evaluatives exploit a different dimension of meaning.

(1) CANONICAL & EVALUATIVE USES OF NOUN-CLASS PREFIXES: Swahili

	SG		PL		
	CL	FORM	CL	FORM	
a.	1	<i>m-toto</i>	2	<i>wa-toto</i>	child/children
b.	5	<i>Ø-toto</i>	6	<i>ma-toto</i>	big child/children
c-i	12	<i>ka-toto</i>	8	<i>vi-toto</i>	small child/children
c-ii	7	<i>ki-toto</i>	8	<i>vi-toto</i>	small pejorative child/children
		CM-child		CM-child	

(2) CANONICAL & EVALUATIVE USES OF NOUN-CLASS PREFIXES: Nata

	SG		PL		
	CL	FORM	CL	FORM	
a.	1	<i>u-mw-aana</i>	2	<i>a-bha-ana</i>	child/children
b-i	5	<i>i-ry-aana</i>	6	<i>a-ma-ana</i>	big child/children, neutral
b-ii	20	<i>i-ghw-aana</i>	6	<i>a-ma-ana</i>	big child/children, pejorative
c-i	12	<i>a-ka-ana</i>	21	<i>i-hy-aana</i>	small child/children, neutral
	—	—	13	<i>u-tw-aana</i>	small child, pejorative
c-ii	7	<i>i-ky-aana</i>	8	<i>i-bhy-aana</i>	small pejorative child/children
d	11	<i>u-rw-aaana</i>	—	—	long sickly child
		CM-child		CM-child	

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Setswana-based *tsotsitaal* in South Africa and Botswana

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According to Mesthrie & Hurst (2013), *tsotsitaal* is the name commonly used to refer to the phenomenon of African Urban Youth Language found in South Africa. It has been described as a ‘stylect’; it involves variation in lexicon, and is a stylised register now found in all of South Africa’s official languages. *Tsotsitaal* is understood to act as a form of peer communication, predominantly used by young men in South Africa’s townships (i.e. peri-urban residential areas close to towns and cities). A lot of research has been done in South Africa’s three biggest cities in terms of population and economy, namely: Johannesburg; Cape Town; and Durban, and on *tsotsitaals* whose Matrix Languages (MLs) are: Afrikaans; isiZulu; Southern Sotho; and isiXhosa. While *tsotsitaals* are spoken throughout South Africa, very little research has been done those whose MLs are the other seven official languages, including Setswana, a language with official status in South Africa, Botswana and Zimbabwe. South Africa is Africa’s second biggest economy (after Nigeria) and attracts jobseekers from outside its borders including Botswana; they return home to influence their countries’ linguistic landscapes beginning with non-standard varieties. This paper analyses the lexicon of *tsotsitaal* whose ML is Setswana in South Africa and Botswana. The paper also answers the following questions: (a) in what ways does *tsotsitaal* transform when it crosses South Africa into Botswana; (b) who uses *tsotsitaal* in both countries; (c) and what is *tsotsitaal*’s role in terms of identity performance in both countries. Answers to these questions are helpful to the study of *tsotsitaals* whose MLs are other cross-border languages in southern Africa, such as siSwati (South Africa & Swaziland); and Southern Sotho (South Africa & Lesotho).

Event line structure in Vwanji narratives

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Narrative texts can be analysed as having a main event line (MEL) which presents events that “advance the action of the narrative along a chronological time line” (Payne 1992: 379). Languages may make use of tense and aspect distinctions to indicate whether information should be interpreted as part of the MEL or not (e.g. Swahili, Hopper 1979; Longacre 1996).

Vwanji (G66, southwestern Tanzania) likewise uses tense and aspect to structure the MEL. Five main verb forms in particular are investigated: Narrative (SBJ-*ka*-VB-*a*), Far Past (SBJ-*l'a*-VB-*ile*), Narrative Imperfective (SBJ-*ka*-VB-*ay-a*), Present (SBJ-*i*-VB-*a*) and Anterior (SBJ-VB-*ile*). The functions of these verb forms in relation to the temporal organisation of the MEL are not always predictable from their meaning in isolation.

Data from a corpus of written Vwanji texts show that the Narrative is the verb form most associated with advancing the MEL in Vwanji:

- (1) a-ka-*je'*lemuk-a a-ka-ki'^mbil-il-a mU = 'm^wi:na
1.SP-NAR-slip.away.SEP.INTR-FV 1.SP-NAR-run-DAT-FV 18.LOC = 3.hole
'he slipped away, he ran into a hole'

The narrator may highlight an event in the MEL by using the Present or Anterior. This typically occurs during the climax of the story:

- (2) hi:^mbe U-m^wa:na lu-m^way-ile U-I^wa ku-papamuk-a
INTERJ AUG-1.child 11.SP-1.OP.get-ANT AUG-11.PP.ASS 15-be.restless-FV
'oh, the child has become restless (*lit.* a state of restlessness has got the child)'

Non-MEL material may include scene-setting information, out-of-sequence events and reiterations. It is usually conveyed in independent clauses by the Far Past or Narrative Imperfective, or in semantically dependent clauses by the Anterior (for reiterated completed events) or the Present (for events occurring simultaneously with a MEL event):

- (3) a-ka-βu:k-a pa = βU-yono i-hum-a ku:ⁿji
1.SP-NAR-leave-FV 16.LOC = 14-sleeping place 1.SP.PRS-go.out-FV outside
'he left the sleeping place, going outside'

The options for structuring the event line in Vwanji narratives can be categorised formally according to their TAM properties and clause type as well as functionally according to the factors determining their use, such as the author's desire to highlight or downplay events. This approach creates a typological framework which can be applied to other Bantu languages and contributes to the understanding of Vwanji TAM by taking into consideration a larger discourse context.

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Language contact in East African Bantu: Insights from word order

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The East African Bantu languages Rangi, Kuria, Simbiti and Ngoreme are united by the presence of a shared word order in which the auxiliary appears after the verb. This position of the auxiliary relative to the verb is unusual since auxiliary-verb order dominates in East African Bantu and SVO languages. The languages vary as to the form of the auxiliary employed, the relationship between the word order and other syntactic conditions, and the tenses in which this unusual order is found. In Rangi, for example, it is found in the general future tense (1), in Kuria it is found in the present progressive (2), whilst in Simbiti it is found in the present habitual (3).

- (1) Weéwe rín-a ú-rí i-hi mi-ríínga. *Rangi*
2sg.PP open-FV SM2ndsg-AUX 4-DEM 4-beehive
'You will open this beehive.' (Gibson 2012)
- (2) Ne-ko-som-a bá-re. *Kuria*
FOC-INF-read-FV SM2-AUX
'They are reading.' (Cammenga 2004: 248)
- (3) N-ku-bhin-anga tö-rë. *Simbiti*
FOC-INF-dance-HAB SM1stpl- AUX
'We are (usually) dancing.' (Walker p.c. 2015)

It has long been acknowledged that languages can change as a result of both external and internal factor .This talk takes this non-canonical word order as a starting point to examine processes of grammatical change in these four East African Bantu languages and asks:

- i) To what extent can language-internal accounts be forwarded for the genesis of these constructions?
- ii) To what extent does this marked word order have its origins in contact with non-Bantu languages?
- iii) What evidence is there for other (possible) contact features in the languages under examination?

Whilst the languages share this typologically and comparatively unusual word order, the extent to which possible pathways of language-internal change and contact-induced change accounts can be provided for the languages varies. The current talk explores these routes, alongside a number of other (potential) contact features in this subset with a view to shedding further light on the historical development of these structures and grammatical change in Bantu more broadly.

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Maho (1999:57) notes that ‘most commonly, there is only one noun class affix on any given word. However, it is not unusual for more than one prefix to appear on a noun.’ He presents plurals and secondary nouns as potential examples of what he calls additive prefixing - the attachment of a noun class prefix onto an existing prefix.

Kisi (G.67) and Manda (N.11), underdocumented languages spoken in southwestern Tanzania, are rich in examples of additive prefixation. Additive prefixation in these languages falls into two types:

1. Reaffiliation of noun class.

a. Idiosyncratic historic reaffiliation of a noun and lexicalisation of its original prefix.

li ^ɲ gaka	li- ^ɲ gaka	5-pangolin	‘pangolin’	(Kisi/Manda)
	cf. Proto-Bantu * <i>kákà</i> (Bastin et al. 2003))			

b. Augmentative and diminutive formation

ka ^ɲ ʒutʃi	ka- ^ɲ ʒutʃi	12-9.bee	‘small bee’	(Manda)
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c. Non-standard plural formation

luhoʒolo	lu-hoʒolo	11-type_fish	‘type of fish’ (sg)	
maluhoʒolo	ma-lu-hoʒolo	6-11-type_fish	‘type of fish’ (pl)	(Kisi)

In these cases, the added prefix is (almost always) an obligatory part of the noun. These examples of additive prefixation are not productive and only affect a limited subset of nouns. Further, it can be claimed that (a) and (b) occur almost exclusively with a class 3 or class 9 underlying noun.

2. Conveying information secondary to noun class affiliation

a. Person marking

t ^w e:ɲga	t ^w e-βa-tali	t ^w e-βa-datu	t ^w i-ji ^m b-a	
1PL.PRO	1PL-2.NP-tall	1PL-2.EP-three	1PL.SP.PROG-sing-FV	
‘We three tall people are singing’				(Kisi)

b. Emphasis (Kisi only)

a-hog ^w i:le	ju-ɲhr ^ɲ ja			
1.SP-give.birth.ANT	1EMPH-1.girl			
‘she has only given birth to a girl’				
(implication: there are no more children, contrary to expectations)				(Kisi)

These additional prefixes are not from the series of nominal prefixes and are optional in the sense that the noun exists without them. They are productive in the sense that any noun is a viable target, but they are also more limited in use.

Aside from augments, which have received a certain degree of attention in Bantu linguistics, little research has been done on the types and uses of other prefixes which may precede the nominal prefix. This presentation aims to encourage further study into these forms by analysing the examples of such prefixes provided by Kisi and Manda, neighbouring languages from two separate branches of Central Narrow Bantu.

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Reconstructing Proto-Bantu using a statistical model of phoneme evolution

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Linguists use the comparative method to study the relatedness among languages and also to reconstruct proto-languages. The method works by applying principles of sound change to identify words that derive from a common ancestral word (cognates), then uses the patterns of cognate relationships to reconstruct proto-words.

Here we present an automated likelihood-based statistical model (Hruschka *et al.*, 2015) that when applied to aligned phonetically encoded data, captures phonological aspects of language change while simultaneously inferring the family tree or phylogeny of the languages. The model can detect the nature and timing of regular sound changes characterizing language evolution and reconstruct the most probable proto-phoneme for each site in the alignment, enabling the inference of proto-words.

We applied our model to a sample of 260 Bantu languages, widely sampled from among the ~500 extant Bantu languages. We prepared a dataset of the words used in these 260 languages for 100 common meanings, largely drawn from the basic vocabulary. Words were grouped into cognate classes (Grollemund *et al.*, 2015) and then each cognate set was aligned phonemically, yielding an alignment of 8377 sites.

We applied our statistical model to this alignment using a Bayesian Markov chain Monte Carlo approach to estimate the parameters of the sound change model, and to infer the phylogenetic tree. We then used this model to reconstruct the ancestral words at various point in the phylogenetic tree, and to infer the Proto-Bantu words and the proto-Bantu phonological system. We will compare our results with the Proto-Bantu reconstructed by Guthrie (1967-1971) and Meeussen (1969).

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The fronted-infinitive construction in Fwe (Bantu, K402)

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This paper discusses the fronted-infinitive construction (FIC) in Fwe, a Bantu language of Zambia and Namibia. This construction consists of an inflected verb preceded by an infinitive with the same stem.

- (1) **kù-yènd-à** **ndí-yènd-à**
INF-walk-FV SC_{1SG}.REL-walk-FV
'I am walking.'

The FIC is found in various Bantu languages, for instance of zones B and H (Hadermann 1996), including Kikongo (De Kind et al. 2015), and has been proposed as a possible Proto-Bantu reconstruction by Meeussen (1967: 21). This paper aims at describing the form, function and possible origin of the FIC in Fwe.

A difference between the FIC in Fwe and the FIC in other Bantu languages is that inflectional affixes of the inflected verb can be repeated on the infinitive. This is the case for suffixes, such as the stative *-ite*, but not for prefixes, such as the imperfective past *ka-*.

- (2) **kù-zík-itè** **ndí-kì-zík-îtè** (3) **kù-rw-à** **ká-tù-rw-à**
INF-hide-STAT SC_{1SG}.REL-REFL-hide-STAT INF-fight-FV PST.IPFV-SC_{1PL}-fight-FV
'I am hiding.' 'We were fighting.'

The FIC in Fwe expresses progressive aspect (4) or focus on the verb (5), a polysemy also found in other languages using the FIC (De Kind et al. 2015, Güldemann 2003). As a marker of verb focus, the FIC is obligatory in Fwe when no other element in the clause is in focus. This resembles the function of disjoint verbs in certain (Eastern) Bantu languages. A proper conjoint/disjoint alternation does not play any role in the Fwe verbal system.

- (4) **kù-kór-à** **ndí-kór-à** (5) **kù-kékèr-à** **kà-ndí-kékèr-à**
INF-cough-FV SC_{1SG}.REL-cough-FV INF-plough PST.IPFV-SC_{1SG}-plough
'I am coughing.' 'I was ploughing.' (answer to: 'What were you doing yesterday?')

The FIC in Fwe resembles a cleft construction. Clefts are frequently used focus-marking devices in Fwe, consisting of a clefted element, marked with a copulative prefix, and a relative clause. Similarities between the FIC and a cleft are their focus interpretation, the use of the high-toned subject concord in the FIC, which is only found in relative clauses, the homophony between the infinitive prefix *kù-* and the class 15 copulative *kù-*, and the lack of augment in the FIC, which is also seen in nouns with a copulative.

- (6) **kù-zàn-à** **ndí-zân-à**
[clefted element] [relative clause]
COP₁₅-play-FV SC_{1SG}.REL-play-FV
'I am playing.' (Lit.: 'It is playing that I play.')

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Umbundu unique items in the translation of narrative texts

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In this paper, I analyze certain target-language-specific items in the translation of New Testament narrative texts from Portuguese into Umbundu (R.11). I use the ongoing Umbundu translation and published translations (the Bible of 1963 and the Gospel of Matthew of 2002) in order to compare what unique items appear and how they are used. In these translations, Umbundu unique items include the applicative verbal derivation, locative enclitics, pronominal connexives, and ideophones.

In her empirical research based on corpora of both translated and original texts in Finnish, Sari Eskola (2004) shows that linguistic features unique to the target language tend to be under-represented in translations, whereas the linguistic features that have straightforward translation equivalents in the source language are over-represented in translations. Sonja Tirkkonen-Condit (2004:183) suggests that the reason for this is that there are no stimuli in the source text that would trigger unique items as the translator picks out lexical items, syntactic patterns and idiomatic expressions from her or his bilingual mental dictionary.

One example from my study is the applicative derivative extension which is very common in Umbundu but can be missed in translation because it does not have a straightforward equivalent in Portuguese. Although Umbundu speakers would naturally use the applicative extension when saying somebody was born in some place, the expression in the old Umbundu translation (1) lacked the applicative extension. A more natural expression was achieved in the ongoing translation by using the applicative extension in the verb (2).

(1) *Yesu w-a-cit-iw-a* *vo- Mbeteleme*
Jesus 1-PST-be.born-PASS-FV 18- Bethlehem
'Jesus was born in Bethlehem.'

(2) *Yesu w-a-cit-iw-il-a* *vo- Mbeteleme*
Jesus 1-PST-be.born-PASS-APPL-FV 18- Bethlehem
'Jesus was born in Bethlehem.'

In the second example, no new information is given. What has increased, however, is the naturalness of the language, which is one of the concerns of translation studies. This interdisciplinary study will explore how linguistic analysis of a language can be applied to translation studies and to what extent translation studies can contribute to linguistic research.

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The external argument in Zulu passives

Claire Halpert & Jochen Zeller

In the Bantu language Zulu (S42), the external argument (EA) in passive constructions is realised by means of a (segmental or tonal) copulative prefix (Cop) (Ziervogel et al 1985; Fleisch 2010), (1). Building on Collins' (2005) analysis of English passives, we argue that the EA in a Zulu passive is in [Spec, ν], the same position in which the EA of an active sentence originates, and that Cop is the overt realisation of a functional head F that selects the ν P and assigns case to the EA, (2). This analysis is supported by a number of facts about the distribution of EAs in Zulu passives. First, the EA in a passivized ditransitive construction preferably appears before the second, VP-internal, object-DP, (3). Furthermore, the EA in a passive cannot follow a disjoint verb form, like in situ arguments—but unlike typical adjuncts in Zulu, which can follow the disjoint form, (4b) vs. (5). Finally, the EA in a passive can lose the augment in the scope of negation, (6b), evidence that it is located inside ν P (cf. Halpert 2015).

We depart from Collins (2005) in treating the head F which selects ν P in Zulu passives not as a Voice-head but rather as Predication (*Pr*; Bowers 1993), with Voice realised by *-w-*, as Collins suggests for Swahili. *Pr* is realised by the same Cop prefix in nominal predication constructions in Zulu where it selects a DP-predicate, (7) (Buell & de Dreu 2013; Zeller 2013) and has been argued to select ν P in Zulu instrument and locative inversion constructions (cf. Zeller 2012, 2013). Moreover, we show that the properties of *Pr* that we observe for the passive also align with those of the ν P-selecting functional head L proposed in Halpert (2015), which is implicated in the conjoint/disjoint alternation and case assignment in Zulu.

- (1) Lélí wíndi l-ǎ-bulá-w-a [!](y)-ǎ-zí-ngane.
 5.DEM 5.window 5.SM-PST-kill-PASS-FV (COP)-AUG-10-child
 'This window was broken by the children.'
- (2) [_{TP} [_{DP} lélí wíndi]_i lǎbuláwa [_{FP} y- [_P [_{DP} ǎzín-gane] [_ν ν [_{VP} \forall DP_i]]]]]
- (3) Í-nyúvési y-ǎ-níkéz-w-a [!]w-ǎ-Rhodes lesí sí-chûse.
 AUG-9.university 9.SM-PST-give-PASS-FV (COP)-AUG-1a.Rhodes 7.DEM 7-statue
 'The university was given this statue by Rhodes.'
- (4) a. Í-mí-khóvu i-sáj-w-a [!](y)-ǎ-zí-ngane.
 AUG-4-zombie 4.SM-fear-PASS-FV (COP)-AUG-10-child
 'Zombies are feared by children.'
 b. *I-mi-khovu i-ya-saj-w-a (y)-i-zi-ngane.
 AUG-4-zombie 4.SM-DIS-fear-PASS-FV (COP)-AUG-10-child
- (5) Í-mí-khóvu i-ya-sáj-w-a lána.
 AUG-4-zombie 4.SM-DIS-fear-PASS-FV here
 'Zombies are feared here.'
- (6) a. Lé ndawo y-a-ǎkhí-w-a [!](ng)-ǎ-má-Xhosa.
 9.DEM 9.place 9.SM-PST-build-PASS-FV (COP)-AUG-6-Xhosa
 'This place was built by the Xhosas.'
 b. Cha, a-y-a-akhi-w-ánga ma-Xhosa lé ndawo.
 No NEG-9.SM-PST-build-PASS-NEG.PST 6-Xhosa 9.DEM 9.place
 'No, it wasn't built by the Xhosa, this place.'
- (7) Ú-Thém-ba ú-y-ǎ-mpímpi.
 AUG-1a.Themba 1.SM-COP-AUG-9.snitch
 'Themba is a snitch.'

Phonetic Downstep in Bàsàá
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In the present paper, we discuss ‘non-automatic’ or ‘phonetic’ downstep in Bàsàá (A43), i.e. cases in which identical adjacent autosegments appear to be prohibited (see e.g. Hyman 2003 for ‘phonological’ downstep, i.e. under the influence of delinked L tones). Building upon the evidence for phonological phrasing provided by High Tone Spread (Author 2014), we propose that non-automatic downstep is here an indicator of phonological recursion, and more specifically that it correlates with the left-edge of an embedded phonological phrase.

Like the vast majority of Bantu languages, Bàsàá underlyingly distinguishes High (H) and Low (L) tones (a.o. Dimmendaal 1988, Bitjaa Kody 1993, Hyman 2003). On the surface, Bàsàá also has Falling (HL) and Rising (LH) tones, and distinctive register-lowering between H tones, i.e. Downstep (⁺H).

Typically, and in what seems to be a violation of the Obligatory Contour Principle, successive H tones are often licit and are realized on the same register, as in the sentence (1), whose H tones form a plateau and which only displays a slight declination in F₀ (Author, in prep).

- (1) híndá í kóp í-ń-lámá jéŋ ɲwér.
 7.black 7.CONN hen 7.AGR-PST1-may search owner
 ‘The black hen may look for its owner.’

There are however a number of contexts in which consecutive H tones are distinguished, as in the noun phrases of the types illustrated in (2) and (3) (but not in [NP1 connective NP2], [Noun Demonstrative] or [Possessive Noun] or [Noun Possessive]).

- (2) ínì ⁺kwémbé
 7.DEM 7.box
 ‘this box’
- (3) nɕé ⁺sóyól
 which 1.grandfather
 ‘which grandfather’

On the clausal level, H tones in two objects are also distinguished, as in (4) to (7).

- (4) fá-ń-tí sóyól ⁺kwémbé.
 2.AGR-PST1-give 1.grandfather 7.box
 ‘They gave the grandfather the box.’
- (5) mè ñ-tí í-⁺sóyól núnú ⁺ndáp
 I PST1-give AUG-1.grandfather 1.DEM 9.house
 jôŋ.
 9.your
 ‘I gave this grandfather your house.’
- (6) mè ñ-tí málêr ɲkéŋí ⁺ndáp ikéŋí.
 I PST1-give 1.teacher 1.big 9.house 9.big
 ‘I gave the big teacher the big house.’
- (7) mè ñ-tí nɕé mááŋgé ⁺nɕé múràá?
 I PST1-give which 1.child which 1.woman
 ‘Which child did I give to which woman?’

In a number of cases, though, two objects are realized on the same register, i.e. there is no downstep between the two objects. See (8) to (11).

- (8) mè ñ-tí núnú ⁺sóyól ínì
 I PST1-give 1.DEM 1.grandfather 7.DEM
⁺kwémbé.
 7.box
 ‘I gave this grandfather this box.’
- (9) mè ñ-tí sóyól wé⁺é ndáp jôŋ.
 I PST1-give 1.grandfather 1.her 9.house 9.her
 ‘I gave her grandfather your house.’
- (10) mè ñ-tí núnú ínì ⁺kwémbé.
 I PST1-give 1.DEM 7.DEM 7.box
 ‘I gave this one this box.’
- (11) mè ñ-tí íwèm sóyól í-⁺ndáp
 I PST1-give 1.my 1.grandfather AUG-9.house
 ínì.
 9.DEM
 ‘I gave my grandfather this house.’

We will discuss these various configurations (and others) and argue that this type of downstep speaks for a recursive prosodic organization in Bàsàá, i.e. that some phonological phrases contain smaller phonological phrases. If we are on the right track, Bàsàá thus adds to the evidence that prosody is, at least in part, as recursive as syntax (a.o. Ladd 1996, Wagner 2005, Ito & Mester 2010).

Sustainable language technology of Bantu languages

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Abstract

Two approaches currently compete in developing text-based language technology. Particularly in machine translation statistical approaches dominate and they use the largest part of resources available for research in this field. The alternative approach is based on grammatical rules and lexicon. Statistical approaches make use of the capability of the computer to calculate the most likely translation of text between source and target languages, and very little human interference is needed. Especially EU has invested in statistical approaches in its aim to develop translation systems between all EU languages. The large masses of human-translated official texts of EU provide large parallel corpora, necessary for statistical machine translation. It is generally understood that statistical translation suits between morphologically and syntactically similar languages. In case one language of the language pair has complex morphology, translation quality drops radically.

All Bantu languages have complex morphology. The noun class system and verb structure with prefixes and suffixes have proved to be a major problem for statistical machine translation. Therefore, it is obvious that the text-based language technology of Bantu languages should use rule-based approaches. Rule-based approaches have also other advantages. The precise linguistic analysis makes it possible to develop a host of applications, such as spelling checkers, corpus taggers, language-learning systems, dictionary compilation systems, vocabulary compilers, and full machine translation.

The properties of rule-based approaches will be demonstrated using examples from SALAMA (Swahili Language Manager).

Is Lusoga is a /L/ vs. Ø Language

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As is well known, most Bantu languages contrast two tones, H(igh) and L(ow). Beyond this commonality, traceable to Proto-Bantu (Greenberg 1948), the different two-height tone systems exhibit considerable variation in two senses: First, there is the question concerning which of the two tones is “phonologically active” among the three possible underlying contrasts: /H/ vs. /L/, /H/ vs. Ø, and /L/ vs. Ø. Second, there is the variation in the phonological rules that the one or two tones undergo. Chief among these are tone spreading, tone shifting, tone anticipation, tone insertion and deletion, contour tone simplification, boundary tone phenomena, and OCP effects that prohibit sequences of the same tone, e.g. /H-H/ H-L or H-Ø. It is these latter processes which provide the evidence for whether a system should be interpreted as equipotent /H/ vs. /L/ or as privative /H/ vs. Ø, or privative /L/ vs. Ø (cf. Stevick 1969, Odden 1995, Hyman 2001, 2007, Kisseberth & Odden 2003, and Marlo 2013).

In this paper I present the first in depth analysis of tone in Lusoga (JE16), the most closely related language to Luganda, on which considerably more tonal research has been done (see Hyman & Katamba 2010 and references cited therein). A comparison with Luganda (and Proto-Bantu) immediately reveals that inherited *H tones are anticipated onto the preceding tone-bearing unit (TBU): Luganda *kù-tùm-à*, Lusoga *kú-tùm-à* ‘to send’. Setting L tone *ku-* and *-a* aside, there still are several possibilities for representing the tone of verb roots like *-tum-* ‘send’:

- (1) a. -tum- b. -tum- c. -tum- d. -tum-
 | | | |
 H H L H L L

The historical analysis in (1a) starts with /H/ which will be anticipated onto the preceding TBU, as proposed for Tembo (Kaji 1996) and Totela (Crane 2014). The representation in (1b) is similar to Hyman & Katamba’s (1993) analysis of Luganda: each /H/ is followed by a L which will link to the following TBU, but also be anticipated to replace the H. The analysis in (1c) mirrors Goldsmith’s (1984) approach to Tonga (but without asterisk notation): The historical *H TBUs are analyzed as /L/ with a preceding H. Finally, inverted tone analysis (1d), recognizes /L/ with H as the default tone.

While Lusoga appears at first to be a privative /L/ vs. Ø system, it doesn’t quite make it. In this talk I will show that (1a) provides the most general and revealing account of the tone system of Lusoga. While (1b) presents only small inconveniences avoided by (1a), several arguments will be presented to show that neither of the inverted representations in (1c,d) adequately accounts for the tonal alternations in the language. In accepting the historical representation in (1a) I will argue more generally that underlying representations can vary considerably from the corresponding surface outputs, and more specifically against extending Archangeli & Pulleyblank’s (2015) more surface-oriented allomorphy account of H tone anticipation in Kinande (cf. Mutaka 1994).

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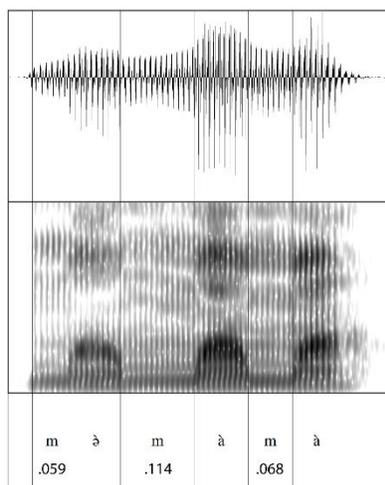
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Stem-initial accent and C-emphasis prosody in north-western Bantu

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Stem-initial accent has been identified in a number of NW Bantu languages (Hyman 1989). In Eton (A70; Van de Velde 2008), stem-initial accent is manifested phonotactically (half of the consonant phonemes restricted to the stem-initial position C_1), phonetically (C_1 consonants are longer than consonants in other positions), phonologically (C_1 not subject to lenition rules that occur elsewhere), as well as tonologically (only accented syllables can host two underlying tones). Consonant lengthening as a significant stress correlate is typologically rare and even rarer as the primary phonetic parameter in the realization of stress. In order to evaluate the hypothesis that the stem-initial accent in NW Bantu is realised only or mainly through consonant length, we recorded questionnaires for seven NW Bantu languages (Bapuku, Basaa, Eton, Fang, Kota, Kwasio, Bagyeli), with a particular focus on different regional varieties of A70 languages. The

Figure 1. Consonant length in the nonsense word *mə-màmə* in Eton (A70).



acoustic analysis of the data confirms the role of consonant lengthening as a major phonetic correlate of stem-initial accent, as illustrated in Fig. 1 for Eton, where the second [m] is stem-initial and is almost twice as long as the other two [m].

The only language in our sample that lacks stem-initial accent is Bapuku, which has penultimate vowel length and which lacks the typical NW Bantu morphosyntactic characteristics. Interestingly, within A70, relative length of C_1 appears to decline as one moves further south. Furthermore, the analysis of the data suggests that the exaggeration of the duration of consonants rather than vowels in a certain position in a word, such as the stem-initial position C_1 , is in origin an utterance-level prosodic/intonational phenomenon marking a particular emphasis on a given element within the utterance, which we

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{mu-} reduction in Bantu: A typological perspective

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This paper seeks to contribute to typology by presenting a comparative formal analysis of the effects of {mu-} reduction in chiNambya, isiZulu and siSwati, using Optimality Theory. The focus is on the prosody of nasals in nasal-obstruent clusters derived from the deletion of /u/ following [m] in noun classes 1 & 3. In isiZulu, the resultant nasal is syllabic and does not assimilate to the place of articulation of the following consonant as in (1):

(1) /~~u~~màt^hé ì/ -> [ú t^hé. ì]
AUG-CL1.-buyer

In siSwati, the nasal is nonsyllabic, functions as the coda of the immediately preceding augment (Harford & Malambe, 2011) and does not assimilate to the place of articulation of the following consonant as in (2):

(2) /~~u~~màt^hím^hbà/ -> [úm.ts^hí.m^hbà]
AUG-CL3.-body

In isiZulu and siSwati, {mu-} reduction does not result in postnasal hardening as in (3) and (4):

(3) /~~u~~mòp^hàn ù/ -> [ú ú. ù] (isiZulu)
AUG-CL1.-European

(4) /~~u~~mòp^hàmbì/ -> [úm.lú.^mbì] (siSwati)
AUG-CL1.-European

In isiZulu and siSwati, {mu-} reduction is blocked if the stem is monosyllabic as shown in (5) and (6):

(5) /~~u~~mòp^hànⁿtù/ -> [ú.mù.ⁿtù] (isiZulu)
AUG-CL1.-person

(6) /~~u~~mòp^hàt^hì/ -> [ú.mù.ts^hì] (siSwati)
AUG-CL3.-herb

In isiZulu and siSwati, the augment does not count for syllables; it lies outside the ProsodicWord. In chiNambya, the nasal is neither syllabic nor a coda. The resultant NC is monosegmental; the nasal is realised as part of the onset of the following vowel as in (7):

(7) /~~u~~màf^hmà/ -> [ù.ⁿdì.mì]
AUG-CL1.-farm

Unlike, in isiZulu and siSwati, in chiNambya the nasal assimilates the place of articulation of the following consonant and if the stem-initial consonant is a lateral approximant, postnasal hardening (strengthening) is triggered. In Nambya, if the stem is monosyllabic, {mu} reduction is triggered and the augment is retained for minimality and morphosyntactic reasons.

Réduplications partielle et totale en kanyòk (bantu L32)

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La reduplication, qu'elle soit partielle (RP) ou totale (RT), s'inscrit généralement dans la dérivation en tant que mécanisme de création lexicale. En kanyòk, langue bantu (L32) de la RDC son usage s'étend à la flexion verbale.

Au niveau des nominaux, la reduplication permet d'exprimer des contenus sémantiques supplémentaires, péjoratives notamment :

(1) *citâl* 'étalage' → *citâltal* 'un étalage vilain' → *citaâtâl* 'un étalage de fortune'

Au regard de la dérivation verbale, la RT permet d'exprimer notamment l'intensif/péjoration, tandis que la RP marque le fréquentatif, comme dans:

(2) *kufulul* 'devenir noir' → *kufululfulul* 'devenir noirâtre' → *kufuufulul* 'devenir souvent noir'

(3) *kuboy* 'insulter' → *kuboyboy* 'insulter à tort et à travers' → *kubooboy* 'insulter souvent'

Au plan flexionnel, le kanyòk est original en ce sens que la RP du radical permet d'exprimer le présent progressif:

(4) *kuleeb* 'parler' → *naleeleeb* 'je parle (je suis en train de parler)'

RP et RT peuvent coexister dans l'énoncé kanyòk.

(5) *kuleebleeb* 'parler à tort et à travers' → *naleeleebileeb* 'je parle à tort et à travers'.

A noter sur le plan syntaxique l'usage de la RP également pour la focalisation du verbe :

(6) *Naleeleeb, cizààzaab oh bènd* 'je parle, je ne blague pas'

Nos données, analyses (définition de RED en kanyòk) et comparaisons avec d'autres langues et la littérature existante viennent enrichir le débat sur la portée et les fonctions de la reduplication dans les langues en général, dans les langues bantu en particulier, ainsi que sur l'évolution grammaticale des marques de temps / aspect / proéminence.

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All about the Speaker: The syntax of biased questions in Bamileke Medumba

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In this talk, we: (i) establish that there are at least **7 ways to ask** a polar question in Medumba (Grassfields Bamileke Bantu, Western Cameroon) (table 1); (ii) describe the difference in the **context of use** of these questions; (iii) contextualize these differences and (iv) propose a **syntax** for Medumba biased questions. The context of use of these questions shows that 3 variables are being manipulated: *The source, timing and strength* of the bias. Polar questions can be neutral or biased in Medumba. With the latter, the bias can be negative or positive. Positive bias can be based either on a previous conversation with the Addressee or on a situation. With regard to the previous conversation, the Speaker can have a weak or strong bias. As for the situation, the bias can be based either on a past or a present situation. For the present situation, the bias is based on strong or on weak/indirect evidence.

With regard to the syntax of biased questions, we propose that the particles involved are associates with an articulated left periphery dedicated to encoding speech acts (see Haegeman 2014). We assume that this layer contains two projections (Heim et al. 2014): one encodes the Speaker’s attitude towards p (Ground_S) and the other is dedicated to encode the ‘**Call on the addressee**’ (CoA) (1) (Beysade & Marandin 2006). We propose that these particles associate with Ground_S and can modify Ground_S by weakening or strengthening the Speaker’s bias. Exception from these is the question particle á which associates with CoA. The resulting outputs show that the occurrence of particles to the left/right periphery is the result of different linearization processes.

(1) [CoA [Ground_S [CP...]]]

(2) Basic sentence structure in Medumba: SVO

[Nùmi yùú mb^hú]_S
Numi have dog
“Numi has a dog.”

Table 1: The 7 strategies to ask a polar question in Medumba

(a) [...] _S -kí ú yùú mbhú kí 2SG have dog Prt “Do you have a dog?”	(b) [...] _S -áá ú yùú mbhú áá 2SG.S have dog Prt “Do you have a dog?”	(c) kù [...] _S -á kù ú yùú mbhú á Prt 2SG.S have dog Prt “Do you have a dog?”
(d) [...] _S -á ú yùú mbhú á 2SG.S have dog Prt “Do you have a dog?”	(e) kùlá [...] _S -á kùlá ú yùú mbhú á Prt 2SG.S have dog Prt “Do you have a dog?”	(f) kùlá [...] _S kùlá ú yùú mbhú Prt 2SG.S have dog “Do you have a dog?”
(g) [...] _S -kɔ̃ ú yùú mbhú kɔ̃ 2SG.S have dog Prt “Do you have a dog?”		

Selected references: Beysade, C., & Marandin, J. M. 2006. From complex to simple speech acts: a bidimensional analysis of illocutionary forces. *Proceedings of the 10th workshop on the semantics and pragmatics of dialogue*, 42-49. Haegeman, L. 2014. West Flemish verb-based discourse markers and the articulation of the speech act layer. *Studia Linguistica*, 68(1), 116-139. Heim et al. 2014. How to Do Things with Particles. *Proceedings of the 2014 annual conference of the Canadian Linguistic Association*.

Negotiating the development of an orthographic system: The case of Northern Sotho

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This paper aims to answer the question as to whether the development towards an acceptable orthographic system for a language, necessarily always entails progression. The development of the orthography of Northern Sotho, a Bantu language belonging to the South-Eastern Zone of Bantu languages, is taken as a case study.

A historical-comparative approach is used whereby the nature and extent of changes in the orthography are traced from the earliest documentations of the language by missionaries in the 1860's up to the present standard orthography (as outlined in the Northern Sotho Terminology and Orthography Rules No.4 of 1988). The first design proposed by K. Endemann (1876) for all three Sotho languages (Northern Sotho, Southern Sotho and Tswana) was very ambitious, but proved to be too scientific to be of any practical value. Thanks to scientific publications by the missionary C. Hoffmann over a period of almost 50 years, the researcher is offered an ideal window period that reveals how one author negotiated changes (as dictated at intervals by the standardising bodies of the time) over a protracted period. The study shows that various phases can be identified in the development of the Northern Sotho orthography, not necessarily all progressive, for example the velar fricative was first represented as *g*, then as *x*, then again as *g*.

Various internal and external factors that influenced the design of the writing system will be highlighted, including consideration of concurrent developments in the orthographies of other Bantu languages to avoid the situation whereby the same symbol is used for different sounds across the languages. Hence the study also raises the importance of a uniform orthography that will facilitate communication across the linguistic divide and especially between languages which are as closely related as the three Sotho languages.

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T/A in Mozambican Ngoni: Inflections beyond Time

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Compared to other Bantu languages Mozambican Ngoni has relatively few T/A-affixes. Many inflected verb forms appear with just the subject and object concord and the verbal stem. The interpretation of these forms varies between a past tense and a present tense reference. What determines the choice of T/A inflection, and the interpretation of these forms?

Coming from a discourse perspective using narratives this paper shows that there are three main considerations that govern the choice of verb form in Mozambican Ngoni.

First the **temporal world** an event is situated in, hence the difference between an event reported in dialogue and an event narrated in a narrative. Whereas the T/A unmarked verb form constitutes the event-line in a narrative (see below in (4)), the perfective is used as event-line for an event reported in dialogue (1).

(1)

»Amma a-toile mbomba winu, a-hwal-ite,... a-geg-ite,... a-jawi' upandi wa mitegu inu.«
Mama 1/2-took.PFV shorts your 1/2 put on-PFV 1/2-took-PFV 1/2-go.PFV direction of traps your
»Mama took your shorts, put them on, took ..., and went in direction of your traps.«

Second, the **text type** (only narrative and procedural texts are considered for now). This is illustrated for the imperfective: it is clearly background information in a narrative text, as in the relative clause in (2), but it constitutes the main-line in a procedural text about how the Ngoni people used to hunt the cane rat (3).

(2) ...a-li-himana li-himba [li-li-lêndalilaye mi-tegu].

1/2-5-meet 5-lion 5REL-5-guard.IPFV 4-trap

...she met the lion who was guarding the traps.

(3) A-hik-ita' kônokola, a-jing-ila' ku-xoko' ku-haka hi-kungui.

1/2-arrive.IPFV 17.DEM.D 1/2-enter-APL.IPFV INF-start INF-hunt 7-cane rat

They arrived there, they entered [the island], and started to hunt the cane rat.

Third, the **organizational landscape of the text**, the difference between *event-line* (also main-line or foreground) and *background information*. The T/A-unmarked verb form is to be interpreted either as past, or as present in a narrative, depending on whether it constitutes the event-line (4), or appears as background information like the moral (5).

(4) A-kwela, a-jemba yêlayela, ... a-huja, ... a-kita: ...

1/2-climb up 1/2-sing 8.DEM.D 1/2-come back 1/2-sing

She climbed up, she sang the same way, ... she came back, ... she said: ...

(5) Jw-a-taluka, a-leka...

1REL-1/2-regret 1/2-desist

Who regrets, desists...

In this paper I will present evidence for the influence of these three factors, and in addition consider the influence of other factors such as whether the event is seen as a single bounded whole or as durative, as stative or ongoing, as well as the aktionsart of the verb.

Are subjects = topics in Bantu? What does intonation show?

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Pre-verbal NPs in Bantu are treated as subjects, syntactic topics or discourse topics. The controversy is related to subject-verb agreement, pro-drop qualities and relative free word-order. This paper looks at prosodic evidence for distinguishing subjects from topics. If subjects are topics then their intonational structure should not differ from topics. The intonational structure of subjects vs. fronted object, contrastive and clausal topics are investigated. The focus is on Bemba (Bantu, M42) with intonation annotation adapted from ToBI (Pierrehumbert & Beckman, 1988, Beckman et al., 2005).

Findings: Subjects in declaratives show a consistent right edge boundary L% with optional pause. The boundary tone does not replace a lexical final high tone on the subject noun, but results in lower register realization. The same holds for fronted clausal topics with the following main clause showing pitch contraction. By contrast, a fronted non-clausal object shows a continuation boundary H% superimposed onto the low tone of the final syllable of the fronted object. A following optional pause is possible but no contraction of the following clause after pitch reset. Contrastive topics by comparison show pitch register raising attributed to a left edge -H intonational tone with a right edge boundary L% following the topic. Topics (including subjects) contrast with right dislocated constituents, which show pitch contraction indicated by a left-edge -L intonational tone

Explanations: The different marking of non-clausal fronted object topics vs. clausal topics and subjects follows from discourse information, in particular a requirement to more clearly disambiguate the non-clausal object topic from a subject, signalling a following non-agreeing verb. The mapping of intonational tone onto lexical tones reveals both global and local effects and an intonational grammar where both right {L%, H%} and left {-L, -H} edge intonational tones play a role.

A surface constraint at the syllable juncture in Bàsàá

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Bàsàá has an active syncope process. Due to the vowel deletion process (V.C₁V.C₂V - > VC₁.C₂V), two consonants become adjacent across syllable boundaries. This paper presents patterns of the results of syncope and presents a constraint-based analysis (Prince and Smolensky 1993/2004). We argue that this is a case of the Heterogeneity of Process, Homogeneity of Target (HOP-HOT), in which the target is the avoidance of the surface forms that violate the SYLLABLECONTACT constraint.

The data displays two puzzles:

(i) Metathesis after syncope: /... C₁.h ... / -> [... h.C₁ ...]

	<i>Infinitive</i>	→	<i>Indirect causative</i>	<i>Gloss</i>
a.	ám̄b	→	éhmbà	“get s.o. make traps”
	àŋ	→	èhŋà	“get s.o. link”
	ḃènà	→	ḃihnà	“get s.o. get used to...”
	ḃèl	→	ḃèhlà	“get s.o. sow”
b.	dʒé	→	dʒéhâ	“get s.o. eat”
	ɲó	→	ɲuhâ	“get s.o. drink”

(ii) Lengthening and syncope

C₁ = oral, C₂ = nasal

tìinà	"write to"	/tìlà-nà/
kààna	"to tell to e. o."	/kàlà-nà/

C₁ = oral, C₂ = oral

kóóḃà	"to scratch oneself"	/kóḃ - ḃà/
kééḃà	"to blink"	/kéḃ - ḃà/

C₁ = nasal, C₂ = nasal

pòònà	"to resemble"	/pònà - nà/
kòònè	"to add to"	/kò ⁿ dè - nè/

C₁ = pre-nasalized, C₂ = oral

kòò ^m bà	"to pour on oneself"	/kò ^m b - ḃà/
héé ^m bà	"to block oneself"	/hé ^m b - ḃà/

We propose in our analysis that the SYLLABLECONTACT constraint (cf. Gouskova 2004), which bans the last segment in a syllable from being higher in sonority than the first segment of the following onset, outranks the LINEARITY constraint, which results in metathesis; and (ii) the OCP-PLACE constraint, which bans homorganic syllable contacts, ranks above the MAX-IO constraint, which accounts for the deletion shown in the second puzzle.

Bantu loanwords in Southern Nilotic Akiye

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The language of Akiye people (*kúúti ta Akíye*) which belongs to the Kalenjin group of Southern Nilotic has been influenced by neighbouring languages, especially Eastern Nilotic Maa and Bantu languages, such as Ngulu and Zigula. Those Akiye who live close to Ngulu and Zigula people are identified by other Akiye as Kisankare (Il-Kisankara by Maasai) and Kisankasa (Il-Kisankasa by Maasai), according to Maguire 1948:4) In addition, Swahili in its position as the Tanzanian national and co-official language has had and still has, either directly or via Maa, a particular impact on Akiye, with regard to vocabulary expansion.

As a result of the language contacts with Bantu speaking neighbours and the Swahili impact in various domains there are a number of loanwords in Akiye the origin of which can be traced to Bantu. Thus, common names for a couple of cultivated plants or those that grow outside the *miyombo* area (where Akiye are foraging and hunting) in Eastern parts of Tanzania are mainly of Swahili origin, e.g.

kitungúu – A.: *kitungúu* ‘onion’, pl. *kitungúisye*

mabóko ‘bananas’ – A.: *mapókó* ‘banana plant, fruit’, pl. *mapókóísye*

mchúngwa – A. *mchúngwái* ‘orange tree’

As can already be seen from the examples a number of sound changes take place when a borrowing from Bantu class-language is adjusted to the phonological and morphological system of Akiye. Regularities will be discussed in the presentation.

Lexical items, i.e. almost exclusively nouns (one verb has been traced so far, i.e. *síntan* < Sw. *-shinda* ‘spend the day’) that have to do with modern life and social development that also affect a traditional hunter-gatherer community like the Akiye are similarly of Swahili origin, partly borrowed via Maa, such as

pésa – A.: *mpesái* ‘money’ (< Maa *em-písái*)

motokáa – A.: *mutúka* ‘motor car’

rédió – A.: *redíyo* ‘radio’

Other borrowings recorded in texts are e.g. *íífi* (Sw., Ngulu *wífi* ‘sister-in-law, female relative’), *mwáári* (Sw. *mwali/mwari* ‘unmarried girl’), *milima* ‘mountains’ (in a song) or the discourse marker *ási* (Sw. *bási* ‘well, okay’).

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L'expression du temps en Ikota
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Cet article traite de l'expression du temps en ikota, langue bantou du Gabon (Magnana 2015). J'utilise la notion de classe de position remise au goût du jour par Stump (1992-1993) qui permet d'analyser le verbe sur une structure plate. Cette analyse tient compte des paradigmes, mettant de côté la notion de morphème.

Tableau 1. Formes verbales de bòdzákà « manger », 1SG

Indice sujet	Indice temporel	Stem	Voix active	Aspect	Voyelle thématique	Éloignement temporel	Valeurs
m-	à-	dʒ	-	-	-á	-	Présent habituel
m-	à-	dʒ	-	-	-á	-ná	Passé d'hier
m-	à-	dʒ	-	-	-á	-sá	Passé lointain
m-	é-	dʒ	-	-	-à	-	Passé récent
m-	àmò	dʒ	-	-	-á	-	Passé moyen
m-	é-	dʒ	-	-ák	-à	-	Futur récent
m-	é-	dʒ	-	-ák	-à	-ná	Futur de demain
m-	é-	dʒ	-	-ák	-à	-sá	Futur lointain
m-	ábí	dʒ	-	-ák	-à	-	Futur imminent

Contrairement à Nurse (2008 : 81), qui traite le temps en ikota comme la combinaison de deux positions, c'est-à-dire la marque du temps (ici Indice temporel) et la marque de l'éloignement temporel. La perspective proposée dans cette article envisage l'expression du temps comme la combinaison de l'ensemble des classes de positions comme illustré dans le tableau 1 (certaines positions pouvant être vide, c'est-à-dire inoccupée). L'analyse permettra de revenir sur la notion de voyelle thématique (telle qu'envisagée dans les langues indo-européennes) qui permet de répartir les verbes en trois groupes verbaux. Un accent sera également mis sur « l'éloignement temporel » qui sert à fractionner les périodes (passé et futur).

Référence :

Brunelle, Magnana Ekoukou 2015. *Description de l'ikota (B25), langue bantou du Gabon. Implémentation de la morphosyntaxe et de la syntaxe*. Thèse de Doctorat. Université d'Orléans.

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TRANSLANGUAGING IN SWAHILI-BASED YOUTH LANGUAGE PRACTICES

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Swahili-based youth language practices such as Sheng (Nairobi, Kenya) and Lugha ya Mitaani (Dar es Salaam, Tanzania) are well documented and have been analyzed in terms of language contact strategies, identity concepts and manipulations. Various scholars have provided more general overviews of African youth language practices (Kießling & Mous 2004, Nassenstein & Hollington 2015), and other un(der)documented Swahili-based youth languages have more recently been described and taken into consideration, such as Kindubile (Lubumbashi, southeastern DR Congo), Yabacrâne (Goma, eastern DR Congo), and Coasti Slang (spoken by ‘beach boys’ in Mombasa and Malindi at the Kenyan coast).

Concepts such as code-switching and borrowing as deliberate means of modification, variation and contact have been among the core elements in the endeavor to describe youths’ creative communicative practices in Africa. However, they are currently being critically assessed, extended and to some extent also replaced by other sociolinguistic approaches. The concept of ‘translanguaging’ as introduced by García & Wei (2014) addresses many important issues including the focus on meaning making processes and speakers’ agency, , speakers’ language ideologies, the multimodality of communication and the fluidity of linguistic practices. Translanguaging, one conceptual approach among others such as metrolingualism (Otsuji & Pennycook 2010) or polylinguaging (Jørgensen 2008) however, appears to be the most general and most-encompassing of these terms since it helps to deconstruct the idea of language as a fixed and demarcated system and due to the fact that it is not restricted to specific spaces, topics, domains or limited groups of speakers. García & Wei (2014: 2) define ‘translanguaging’ as an approach “that considers the language practices of bilinguals not as two autonomous language systems as has been traditionally the case, but as one linguistic repertoire with features that have been societally constructed as belonging to two separate languages”. In this case, the focus lies on the fluid nature and dynamicity of ‘linguaging’, especially as the case in the present example among young urban language users in African metropolises.

The paper aims to analyze translanguaging practices in the above-mentioned youth language practices that are based on Kiswahili and whose speakers use, embed and play with multilingual resources. The translingual strategies will be primarily discussed by taking recorded conversations among speakers of Yabacrâne (recorded during a field research to Goma in 2014) and also Coasti Slang (recorded during fieldwork in Mombasa in early 2015) into account. Moreover, the paper aims to provide a first general overview of Swahili-based youth language practices and their sociolinguistic background.

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Phonological adaptation of English words to Giriyama language

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This paper explores adaptation of English words to Giriyama language (E72a) as loanwords. It addresses issues such as: (i) the adaptation of diphthongs and triphthongs from English to the simple 5 vowel system in the Giriyama language; (ii) the adaptation of the English consonants to the Giriyama consonant system; and (iii) the repair processes that are involved during the adaptation. The phonological differences between the English language and the Giriyama language makes it necessary for repair processes during borrowing. For example consonant clusters in English words are repaired by vowel insertion process to maintain the CV structure for the Giriyama loans. Other predominant repair processes include consonant and vowel deletion and substitution. Data used in this paper are words from the field of cars, bicycles and motor bikes repair mechanics. It is important to note that noun classes are imposed on the English nouns on the basis of apparent similarity with noun class prefixes.

Crosslinguistically, two approaches have provided influential accounts of how loanwords are adapted, namely, the phonetic theory and the phonological account. According to the phonetic theory or perceptual account, loanword adaptation results from the mapping of the borrowed words to sounds that are phonetic approximations of input to the borrowing language (Peperkamp 2005). The phonological theory, on the other hand, characterizes the adaptation as borrowing from the phonology of the borrowing language (Paradis 2006). This study demonstrates that a combination of the two theories provides a better understanding of the processes involved during borrowing. The mapping onto 5 Giriyama vowels and the normal classification are approximations to the phonetics and morphology of the Giriyama language. The repair of consonant clusters and coda is based on the phonotactics of the language.

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Communicative strategies: the case of Nweh women

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Communicative strategies: The case of Nweh women in Cameroon is a sociolinguistic study which seeks to investigate the address forms used by the nweh women in the South West Region of Cameroon. These women have various ways in which they address their husbands, women more older than them and kinship title holders. This study aims at bringing out how Face Threatening Act (FTA) are being mitigated in address terms in nweh using imperative and subjunctive moods.

The research is conducted on the basis of the following theoretical frame work, functional and interactional communicative theories. The methodology used in this work is qualitative and quantitative approach. The random sampling technique is used in the selection of the population under study, research instrument s are the interview and the observation guides . The observation guide was used in gathering milieus (meeting houses. The total number of women for the investigation were 64, 45 interviewed while 19 were observed.

The frequency distribution technique is used for analyzing the data collected. The analysis of the data reveals that nweh women address their husbands, elderly women and kinship title holders mitigating the FTA in various moods involving attributes as well. On the basis of our findings the investigator made some recommendations such as creating forum for younger women to learn some of these moods and why not all already existed and equally to build up archives such that generations unborn will not loss the track.

KEY WORDS: Communication strategies, Face threatening acts, Subjunctive and Imperative moods.

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Asymmetries in hiatus resolution across morpheme boundaries in Shingazidja

Kathleen O'Connor & Cédric Patin

Our goal is to examine certain interactions of hiatus resolution and tone placement across morpheme boundaries in Shingazidja (G44a). Several strategies for resolving hiatus, including gliding, deletion and coalescence (e.g. Bickmore 2007, Hout 2015, Mudzingwa & Kadenge 2011, Sabao 2012), have been identified for Bantu languages. For Shingazidja, Patin (2008) presents a preliminary account arguing that hiatus interacts with tones such that a tone prevents gliding or deletion of a vowel. Our paper revisits and extends these facts and reveals that the situation is rather more complicated and presents certain asymmetries.

First, we find an asymmetry in rapid speech between back/round vowels and other vowels. A final non-back/round vowel in the subject deletes before a vowel (see (1a); the initial /h/ of the verb is deleted in rapid speech). A back/round vowel undergoes gliding (1b). (Underlying tone-bearing units are underlined.)

- (1) a. /Sití ha-húsu/ → [sitáβ¹úsɔ̃]
Siti 1PER-kiss
'Siti has kissed'
- b. /Ahúdu ha-húsu/ → [aβd̥wáβ¹úsɔ̃]
Abudu 1PER-kiss
'Abudu has kissed'

Additionally, we see that when a vowel in the subject bears a tone, the tone moves rightward to the subject marker. For cases such as (1b), we ask whether the tone moves directly to the subject marker or whether it first stops on the final vowel of the subject before moving to the verb. We will argue for the second for two reasons. First, in normal speech, the tone stops on the final vowel of the subject. Second, the tone on the subject marker in (1a) does not cause the tone on the verb to delete, which would normally be expected under the tone rules of the language (see e.g. Cassimjee & Kisseberth 1989, 1998; Patin 2007, Philippon 2005).

The second asymmetry involves verb roots consisting of a single consonant, where the final vowel of the subject is realized either as a full vowel or a glide for non-low vowels, or as a full vowel in the case of the low vowel /a/. When gliding occurs, the tone on the subject moves to the subject marker and a falling contour emerges on the lengthened [a:]:

- (2) a. /Sití ha-l-á/ → [sitíá¹í] or [sitjá¹í]
Siti 1PER-eat-FV
'Siti has eaten'
- b. /Ahúdu ha-l-á/ → [aβd̥úá¹í] or [aβd̥wâ¹í]
'Abudu has eaten'

First, we will investigate why non-back/round vowels are maintained in these cases and not in those described above. Second, we examine the differing behavior of the tones in the two contexts.

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On conceptual domains of possessives in Bantu

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This work focuses on the debates concerning the relationship between locative/existential constructions and possessive constructions in Bantu and how those constructions are related to comitatives, considering that the main strategy for expressing predicative possession in Bantu languages is the use of a copula and a comitative particle usually in a form of "na, ni" (Stassen, 2009). It will be discussed the theories that have been used to explain how those constructions above are related in the languages of the world and in Bantu in particular. One of the questions are if Bantu languages are considered in the debates on possessives, a non localist account for explaining the relationship of locative, existential and possessive could be successfully reached?

It will be shown that many Bantu languages prefer the strategy (COP + COM) for expressing predicative possession:

(1) Kimbundu (H 21)

ò	mù-hátù	ù- <i>ál-à</i>	<i>nì</i>	kì-tádi
PPF	1-woman	1.PS-COP-FV	COM	7-money

‘the woman has money’

Other strategies of Bantu languages of zones H, K and R will be considered such as bellow in Kikongo:

(2) Kikongo (H16h)

a-ntú	á-kálà	yé	zìnzó.
2-People	2.SM-COP.PAST	COM	10.house

‘People had houses’ (recently) (Lit.: People were with houses, recently)

in which the construction COP + COM is only accepted in the past, in Kizombo, dialect of Kikongo. Finally, a cognitive approach will be offered as a means to distinguish locative from possessive constructions like this in Lingala:

(3) Lingala (C36d)

- | | | | | |
|----|-------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| a. | naja | lì | nà | ndàkò |
| | 1sg | COP | COM | house |
- ‘I have a house’
- | | | | | |
|----|-------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| b. | naja | lì | nà | ndákò |
| | 1sg. | COP | PREP | house |
- ‘I am in the house’

Aspect-prominence in Western Serengeti

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The Western Serengeti (WS) languages (Ikoma, Nata, Isenye and Ngoreme) are Great Lakes Bantu languages (JE40) spoken in the Mara Region of northwest Tanzania. Traditional Bantu TAM systems have a range of T/A combinations, most often with remoteness distinctions. Unlike these more traditional systems, the TAM systems for the WS languages can be analyzed as aspect-prominent. This does not mean that tense is excluded from these systems completely (e.g. Aunio 2013). Rather, the systems are organized with aspect as the defining temporal feature, using lexical and grammatical aspect (primarily perfective/imperfective) to establish time reference, with tense largely being relegated to narrative and periphrastic constructions. Other JE40 languages in the area display traditional Bantu T/A systems (Cammenga 2002, 2004; Walker 2013). Although aspect-prominence is typical for non-Bantu Niger-Congo languages, only a minority are intermediate — “added tense to an original aspectual base” (2007: 164).

Osa-Gómez del Campo (2014) analyzes Nata in a related manner, using insights from Kershner (2002) in conceptualizing Bantu lexical aspect in terms of inchoative versus non-inchoative. However, the WS languages do not follow the same distribution of temporal readings at the intersection of lexical and grammatical aspect. Pseudo-presents, for example, illustrate the ‘variations on a theme’ pattern. Ikoma uses the inceptive *-Vká-* form for inchoatives and imperfective *-Vko-* for non-inchoatives, while Ngoreme uses the perfective for inchoatives, and imperfective *-ra-* or progressive *n-ko-R-a#SBJ-V-ni* for non-inchoatives. Isenye is more like what Osa-Gómez del Campo (2014) describes as Nata— a combination of the Ikoma and Ngoreme patterns.

In this paper I will demonstrate that the WS languages are truly aspect-prominent with a tense accessory. Not only is that conclusion paradigm-shifting for Bantu, but it provides further evidence for Nurse’s (2007) proposal for the emergence of tense in Bantu.

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Regional variation and geographic distribution of Sephuthi in Lesotho
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Donnelly (2007) provides 20,000 as a rough estimate for the number of Sephuthi speakers, but no reliable figures exist. Sephuthi is by far the smallest language spoken in Lesotho, yet at the same time it “has the status of being the only language for which the majority of speakers live in Lesotho” (Ambrose 2009: 2). The majority of speakers of Sesotho, Lesotho’s national language, reside in South Africa.

Doke (1954) classified Sephuthi as belonging to the Tekeza (Tekela) cluster of the Nguni languages. While Sephuthi borrowings from more distantly related Sesotho can be identified more easily, possible borrowings from isiXhosa, also an Nguni language, are far harder to detect. In Lesotho, most Baphuthi speak Sesotho as a second or even first language and in addition, many also speak isiXhosa varieties, especially those Baphuthi who live near the South African border.

The few predominantly Sephuthi speaking communities in Lesotho are scattered in the Quthing and Qacha’s Nek provinces. In the Northern Transkei of South Africa, individual speakers and a few Sephuthi speaking families reside in the vicinity of Sterkspruit. More significant numbers of Baphuthi are in the wider Matatiele and Mount Fletcher area, where a Baphuthi society has been established with an officially recognised Baphuthi chief.

All Baphuthi agree that the Daliwe river valley and adjacent parts of the Seapala river valley form the core area of the Sephuthi language. The “best” Sephuthi speakers are in this area. Sephuthi is in fact the dominant language of daily communication here and even some Basotho families use it as their home language. Another Sephuthi speaking centre is the Sixondo river valley next to the border of South Africa. The third major concentration of Sephuthi speakers in Lesotho is in the vicinity of Matebeng in the Qacha’s Nek province.

In these Sephuthi centres, the language is still acquired by most children and there is a strong loyalty towards the language among all generations. Surprisingly, even many Basotho in Southeastern Lesotho share a positive attitude towards Sephuthi; some speak the language and many support its use in more domains, such as formal education. Apart from these Sephuthi centres, there are also a few isolated villages as well as individual families in which Sephuthi is the primary language of communication.

There is a high degree of certainty among Sephuthi speakers in all core areas of what is regarded as “proper” Sephuthi and also which terms are of Sephuthi origin. Differences in pronunciation and tone patterns might be associated with different regions, however, high mobility among the Baphuthi seems increasingly to dilute regional dialects.

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Using the applicative to organize Ndebele verb semantic classes

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Abstract

Organizing verbs into classes helps structure the lexicon particularly from a semantic perspective, and as Levin (to appear) notes, verb classes “are essential to characterizing regular patterns of verb behavior within and across languages.” In this characterization the cooperation of syntax, semantics and other branches of linguistics is often evident. Various theories have been proposed for the building of verb semantic classes and one of the most influential being Levin’s (1993) proposal which is based on syntactic alternations, her preliminary investigation showing that there are sufficient correlations between some aspects of the semantics of English verbs and their syntactic behavior that makes it possible to organize them into semantic classes. Other approaches to building verb semantic classes include elements of Lexical Conceptual Structure (Gruber (1967), Jackendoff (1983, 1990)) and verb classes formed from semantic criteria such as thematic roles (Chafe 1970, Cook (1979), Longacre (1976), Foley and Van Valin (1984) and Van Valin (1993).

This paper also exploits thematic roles showing that a morphological operation, the suffixing of applicative *-el-*, not only affects the verb’s argument structure, the syntactic realization of the argument and its semantics, but is a useful tool in identifying or building verb semantic classes in Ndebele and possibly in other Bantu languages. The aim of this preliminary study is not to come up with a completely new set of verb semantic classes but to show how Ndebele verbs can be placed unambiguously into some classes that have been proposed in previous studies. It is argued that the variation in thematic roles introduced by the applicative suffix in different verbs is a reflection of the fact that the verbs belong to different semantic classes. As such, the applicative can be used as a tool for organizing Ndebele verbs into semantic classes.

The constructionalisation of a new relative clause type fixed a hole in the accessibility hierarchy in Orungu (Bantu, Gabon)

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This paper takes a construction grammar approach to deal with the complex issue of accessibility to relativisation in Orungu. We show that a new relative clause construction has rendered objects accessible to relativisation, which previously had to be promoted to subject position prior to relativisation. The new construction is diachronically derived from a passive construction in a process of constructionalisation that “fixed” a typologically unusual hole in the accessibility hierarchy.

This paper builds on earlier work presented during Bantu 4 in Berlin, where we established the basics of accessibility to relativisation, to conclude that certain types of objects, obliques and possessors are not accessible to relativisation. Instead, we thought, they have to be first promoted to subject position via passivisation. In that analysis, the accessibility hierarchy shows an unusual gap:

(1) SU > O¹ > O²_[+human] > O²_[-human] > OBL > GEN (accessible = underlined)

However, further analysis has brought up formal and semantic evidence for distinguishing the construction used to relativise primary objects and human secondary objects (the *O-relative*) from relativised passive constructions. Formal differences between O-relatives and passives are that the former allow pronominal agents and indefinite subjects/head NPs, contrary to passive clauses. Moreover, elements of subordinate clauses are accessible to O-relatives, but not to passivisation. Therefore, we must conclude that a new relative clause construction

has emerged out of relativised passive construction and that, synchronically, Orungu shows no gap in the accessibility hierarchy, as shown in (2).

(1) SU > O¹ > O²_[+human] > O²_[-human] > OBL > GEN (accessible = underlined)

If time allows it, we will present the equally interesting case of the accessibility of possessors to relativisation.

Reinterpreting utterance-final consonants in Ntumu (Fang, A75)

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According to previous studies (i.a. Hombert 1990, Medjo Mvé 1997) Fang presents, among other “uncommon” traits, a more complex vowel system (phonemic schwa and, for several dialects, diphthongs), closed syllables (in addition to open syllables), mid-tone and, predominantly, monosyllabic stems. Fang shares these traits with many other A zone languages.

The present study of the utterance-final consonants in the Ntumu dialect is part of a larger project that aims to revisit these statements in a systematic and straightforward way and check their accuracy for this variety. Surprisingly, the phonetic nature of consonants in this position has received relatively little attention so far. Earlier publications (supra) have more or less clearly stated that it is characterized by extensive neutralization, alternations and an unreleased bilabial stop.

Recent phonetic research shows that consonants in utterance-final position present considerable length (obstruents) or length and tone (nasals). Stops are actually released with substantial delay. These striking aspects seem to have escaped the attention of earlier research. However, spectrograms found in Medjo Mvé’s 1997 PhD dissertation clearly display the same phenomena. The recordings on which these spectrograms are based were made more than two decades ago.

In this paper, instrumental evidence of both phenomena will be given. Then, the most adequate way(s) of analyzing them will be discussed. Their controlled, systematic character strongly suggests they are functional. Two types of evidence will be used, in an overall prosodic, syllablebased perspective: language internal evidence (environments, alternations, tone) and language external evidence from talking drum (Mayer & Voltz 1989) and cognitive representations. One of the crucial questions of this talk will be: does Ntumu have phonological closed syllables?

This study once more underlines that one cannot be dispensed with careful phonetic investigation if one wants to arrive at well-founded conclusions in phonology and uncover interesting ongoing phonological change(s).

Examples: [èbàp:] ‘bark’, [tsít:] ‘animal’, [èsó?:] ‘liver’, [kwàs:] ‘fish’, [fám:] ‘male’, [ònuqàn:] ‘bird’, [òk'égí:] ‘leave’, [ñsójí:] ‘worm’.

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Sorting out Proto-Bantu *j

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More than any other Proto-Bantu phoneme, *j has been problematic for a century. There are almost 200 stems which are today reconstructed with *j by Bantu Lexical Reconstructions 3 (BLR3), but it is unlikely that they all have the same origin. Many were variously listed by Meinhof with γ (= *g), γ (= *j), and \emptyset . Schadeberg (2003: 146-7) summarizes the current situation: “Guthrie (1967-71) distinguishes initial *j from *y, but BLR2 recognizes only *j to the exclusion of vowel-initial stems. I regard the two as allophonic but the question needs re-evaluation.”

The goal of this presentation is to “sort out” the evidence for proto-Bantu *j both practically and metaphorically: first, into different phonological and morphological environments, and then into possible scenarios for reconstruction. On the one hand Guthrie’s doublets for the same root are untenable, but on the other hand the rules for allophones are unstated and unclear. The talk examines the reflexes of *j in separate sections based on environments:

- 1) *j / n_ (subject to prenasalization) — both medially and initially in class 9
- 2) *j / i_ (subject to strengthening, especially in class 5)
- 3) the posited *jj- prefix and other *j / _ i (potentially subject to Bantu Spirantization)
- 4) *-jij- as proposed in certain individual roots
- 5) *j unconditioned

The evidence is reviewed by regions across Narrow Bantu (including all of Guthrie’s individual citations) with some comparison with Bantoid languages.

Some conclusions of the study (several of which are not new but can now be supported systematically):

- There are roots with initial *j for which there is no strong support for a Proto-Bantu stop and for which an initial vowel or glide should be reconstructed.
- When *g lenites in many branches of Savanna Bantu, it usually merges with /y/ from *j, so separate reconstructions of *g vs *j in those languages are not justified.
- Leveling and analogy frequently play a role that mask the inherited forms in certain roots.
- The evidence is not persuasive for Bantu spirantization of *j.
- Most modern reflexes in /z/ or /j/ are the result of developments after the Proto-Bantu stage, so the reconstruction of allophones is generally to be done at later rather than earlier stages.

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Experiences and insights from a joint field excursion to the South African Limpopo and Mpumalanga Provinces

Stephan Schulz, Axel Fleisch and HALS-team

HALS (Helsinki Area and Language Studies) is a growing and active group of researchers, teachers and students with a shared interest in linguistic diversity from various language-related disciplines based at the University of Helsinki. In order to support research on language in various cultural contexts, HALS organizes a range of activities, including seminars and workshops, and also joint excursions to different field sites for students and researchers.

This year's HALS field excursion took place in May, when a group of 14 students and 10 researchers from the University of Helsinki and some local participants spent three weeks in the Gauteng, Limpopo and Mpumalanga provinces of South Africa. Our group worked with communities speaking the Sendebele (Northern Transvaal Ndebele) and isiNdebele (Southern Ndebele) languages around Mokopane (Limpopo) and Siyabuswa (Mpumalanga) respectively. Research topics we focused on were: the sociolinguistic situation of the languages; the lexicon of Sendebele; the morphosyntax and phonology of isiNdebele; as well as experimental research using extralinguistic stimuli on two narrower topics, spatial expressions and colour terms. Besides briefly presenting first impressions from our research we will also discuss some challenges and benefits of conducting linguistic fieldwork in a large mixed group such as ours.