

Toward Micro-variation Parameters of Persistentive in Lake Tanganyika Bantu¹

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1. Introduction and aims

The verbal marker **ki*-² in early Bantu most probably encoded a ‘persistentive’, usually in the pre-stem TA slot in (1), referring to ‘a situation that held continuously since an implicit or explicit point in the past up to the time of speaking’ (Nurse 2008:145). However, reflexes of the persistentive **ki*- develop its meaning in individual languages into ‘inceptive’, ‘negative inceptive / persistentive approximative’ in main clauses, ‘situative / simultaneous’, ‘general imperfective’, or ‘conditionals’ in subordinate clauses (Güldemann 2003:192).

(1) Verb structure (Nurse 2003: 90)

Initial- Subject- Negative- TA- Object≠ root -Extension(s) -Final -Suffix
 (stem)

Reflexes of the persistentive **ki*- occur in a vast area (56%) of the Savanna Bantu languages in (at least) zones (J)D, E, F, K, L, M, N, R, and S (Nurse 2008: 145-146). **ki*- is common among languages along the Lake Tanganyika (here I call them ‘the Lake Tanganyika Bantu’). Target languages of investigation in this presentation are Holoholo (D28), Bembe (D54), Bende (F12), Rundi (JD62), Fuliiru (JD63), Ha (JD66), Fipa (M13), Lungu (M14), and Taabwa (M41). All of them have the reflexes of the persistentive **ki*-.



Target languages of investigation (9 lgs. around the Lake Tanganyika)

(2) Reflexes of the persistentive **ki*- forms of Tanganyika Bantu

D28	D54	F12	JD62	JD63	JD66	M13	M14	M41
Holoholo	Bembe	Bende	Rundi	Fuliiru	Ha	Fipa	Lungu	Taabwa
<i>ké- / kǰ-</i>	<i>ʔi-</i>	<i>syá- / sí-</i>	<i>ki- / cáa-</i>	<i>kì-</i>	<i>ki- / cháa-</i>	<i>ci-</i>	<i>cí-</i>	<i>ki-</i>

(3) Typical persistentive in Bende (F12)

tu-syá-kol-a *mú-límó*
 IPL-PES-do-F CL3-work
 ‘We are still working.’

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² The reconstructed forms are quoted from Meeussen (1967: 109).

Backgrounds;

- The persistive aspect seems to be a specific characteristic of Bantu (Nurse 2003: 96). **ki-* seems to retain the trace of historical changes in many Bantu, and a high traceability of its changes is observed (Güldemann 1998, 2003, Nurse 2008, Abe 2015).
- Since all Tanganyika Bantu investigated in this study retain reflexes of the persistive **ki-*, it will allow us to understand the micro-variation of the persistive aspect.

Goals;

- Based on the data of Bende and other Lake Tanganyika Bantu, we will make a list of variations of **ki-* and the persistive aspect.
- To discuss where (to what features) we should/could cover to make micro-variation of **ki-*.

2. A case study: Bende Persistive *syá-* and its variations

- Bende reflex of the persistive *syá-*³ is used in five constructions (C1-5).
- In C1-2 the persistive *syá-* is used in a single verb, while C3-5 is used in the compound (V1=PES-copula as an auxiliary verb, V2=main verb).
- The persistive from C1-5 is differentiated by the type of verbs (Active/Achievement/Stative).

(4) Five types of constructions and their meanings with the respective verb types in Bende

Construction type	Meaning	Verb type ⁴
C1 [S-PES-VB-a]	‘S is still VBing’ (Persistive)	Act
	‘Let S VB first’. (Inceptive)	Act, Ach, S
C2 [S-PES-VB-ilé]	‘S is still VBing’ (Persistive)	S
	‘S has just finished VBing’ (Immediate past)	Act, Ach
C3 [S-PES-li + ku-VB-a (Gerund)]	‘S has not VBed yet’ (Persistive proximative)	Act, Ach, S
C4 [S-PES-li + SM-li#ku-VB-a (Present Simple)]	‘S is still VBing’ (Persistive)	Act
C5 [S-PES-li + SM-VB-ilé (Resultative)]	‘S is still VBing’ (Persistive)	(Ach), S
	‘S has just finished VBing’ (Immediate past)	Act

(5) C1 [S-PES-VB-a]

a. [Active-Inceptive / Persistive]

tu-syá-teék-a

1PL-PES-cook-F

‘Let us cook first’ / ‘We are still cooking’

b. [Stative-Inceptive]

tu-syá-teh-ǎ

1PL-PES-like-F

‘Let us love first.’

Primarily interpreted as Inceptive for all types of verbs, but only Active verbs are interpretable as Persistive.

³ C1 and C2 have free variants *si-* / *syá-*. The reflex of originally persistive, *si-* / *syá-* is glossed as PES, although PES does not necessarily refer to the persistive aspect.

⁴ Act(ive), Ach(ievement), S(tative).

(6) C2 [S-PES-VB-ílé]

a. [Stative-Persistentive]

tu-syá-nyúnk-ílé

1PL-PES-stink-ANT

‘We still stink’

b. [Active-Immediate past]

tu-syá-teék-ílé

1PL-PES-cook-ANT

‘We have just cooked’

Persistentive for Stative verbs. Immediate past (but no Persistentive) for Active and Achievement verbs.

(7) C3 [S-PES-li + ku-VB-a (Gerund)]

[Active-Persistentive proximative]

tu-syá-lí

1PL-PES-be

kú-teék-a

GER-cook-F

‘We have not cooked yet (We are still about to cook)’

All the verb types have the same interpretation, ‘S has not VBed yet’, i.e. Persistentive proximative / unrealized event.

(8) C4 [S-PES-li + SM-li#ku-VB-a (V2=Present Simple)]

[Active-Persistentive]

tu-syá-lí

1PL-PES-be

tu-li#kú-teék-a

1PL-be#GER-cook-F

‘We are still cooking’

This construction is applied only to Active verbs in Persistentive. (5a) and (8) are interpreted identically.

(9) C5 [S-PES-li + SM-VB-ílé (Resultative)]

a. [Stative-Persistentive]

tu-syá-lí

1PL-PES-be

‘We are still sleeping’

b. [Achievement-Persistentive]

tu-syá-lí

1PL-PES-be

‘We still keep winning’

c. [Active-Immediate past]

tu-syá-lí

1PL-PES-be

‘We have just bathed’

tu-ghón-ílé

1PL-sleep-ANT

tu-ghos-ílé

1PL-win-ANT

tu-nyaágh-ílé

1PL-bathe-ANT

Persistentive for Stative and some of Achievement verbs. Immediate past for Active verbs (NA for Achievement).

In Bende we can observe a vast variety of *syá-* in both morphology and semantics. We could propose a scenario of the historical changes of the Persistentive aspect that C1/C2 became C4/C5 respectively. Morphologically the simple construction (*syá-* in TA slot) became complex (compound verb), while semantically the Persistentive meaning shifts from C1/C2 to C4/C5 (but still in transition).

(10) Scenario of historical changes in Bende Persistentive

	C1 > C4	C2 > C5
Morphology	Single verb > Compound	Single verb > Compound
Semantics	Inceptive / Persistentive > Persistentive	Persistentive / Immediate past > Persistentive / Immediate past

3. Persistent micro-variation at work; Lake Tanganyika Bantu languages

Other target languages than Bende have not been fully investigated for semantic changes and distinction based on the type of verbs; however, their reflexes of the persistent **ki-* have more variety than those in Bende as in (11). The features are given in binary (yes/no/unknown?). 1-3 are morphological, 4 is syntactic, and 5-8 are semantic.

(11) Features of the persistent **ki-* among Tanganyika Bantu⁵

	D28 Holoholo	D54 Bembe	F12 Bende	JD62 Rundi	JD63 Fuliiru	JD66 Ha	M13 Fipa	M14 Lungu	M41 Taabwa
1. COP <i>*-li</i>	?	yes	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
2. with <i>*-ilé</i>	yes	no	yes	no	no	no	no	yes?	no
3. Negative	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no
4. Compound	?	?	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
5. Inceptive	yes	?	yes	no	no	no	?	no	no
6. Pers. prox.	?	no	yes	?	no	no	yes	no	no
7. Conditional	no	?	no	no	yes	no	?	no	no
8. Situative	no	no	no	no	no	no	?	no	no

Features; 1. **ki-* take the copula verb **-li* or not.

2. **ki-* co-occur with the final **-ilé* or not.

3. **ki-* co-occur with the negative marker or not.

4. **ki-* used in both the simple (single) verb and the compound/dependent clause or not.

5. **ki-* has Inceptive use or not.

6. **ki-* has Persistent proximative use, ‘S has not VBed yet’ or not.

7. **ki-* has Conditional use or not.

8. **ki-* has Situative / Simultaneous use or not.⁶

Remarks;

- The copula verb **-li* (1. above) makes an auxiliary, i.e. will make 4 ‘yes’ (a compound).

	D28 Holoholo	D54 Bembe	F12 Bende	JD62 Rundi	JD63 Fuliiru	JD66 Ha	M13 Fipa	M14 Lungu	M41 Taabwa
1. COP <i>*-li</i>	?	<i>-ʔilɪ</i>	<i>-syálí</i>	no	<i>-kiri</i>	no	<i>-cɪɪ</i>	<i>-cílí</i>	<i>-kili</i>
4. Compound	?	?	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes	yes

⁵ Data sources; Holoholo (Coupez 1955, Nurse 2008a), (Tanzanian) Bembe, Bende, Fipa, (Tanzanian) Taabwa (Abe fieldnote), Rundi (Stevic & Setukuru 1965), Fuliiru (Van Otterloo 2011), Ha (Harjula 2004), Lungu (Nurse 2008a, Bickmore 2007).

⁶ There is no Situative / Simultaneous among Tanganyika Bantu, although the use is also common in other Bantu, the example is from Swahili (G43). (Nurse 2008: 148-149).

Tu-li-wa-ona *wa-toto* *wa-ki-cheza*.
 1PL-PST-3PL-see CL2-child 3PL-SIM-play ‘We saw the children playing’ Ashton (1944: 138)

- Bende persistent *syá-* with final *-ilé* (C2 or C5 in Section 2) expresses not only the Persistent, but also the Immediate past with Active and Achievement verbs. Lungu ‘Recent past’ *cí-* with *-ilé* seem similar to each other; although Bickmore (2007: 215) does not treat the *cí-* as cognate to that of persistent. Holoholo also seems to allow *ké-* *-ilé*, although it was limitedly observed with a copula verb *-ba* as Persistent Past tense (2. above).

(12) The co-occurrence of **kí-* and **-ilé* in Bende, Lungu, and Holoholo

a. Bende	b. Lungu	c. Holoholo	
<i>tu-syá-teék-ilé</i>	<i>tw-áá-cí-lás-í'l-é</i>	<i>n-ké-b-ééé</i>	<i>ko-kaasi</i>
1PL-PES-cook-ANT	1PL-PST-PES?-hit-ANT-F	1SG-PES-be-ANT	17-work
‘We have just cooked’	‘We recently hit’	‘I was still at work’	
	(Bickmore 2007: 215)	(Nurse 2008a)	

- If the persistent **kí-* takes a negative marker, it refers to ‘S will never/no longer VB’ (3. above).
- Inceptive is limitedly observed across Lake Tanganyika Bantu, although is reported more in some languages of zones S and J (Abe 2015: 37-38).
- 7 (Conditional) are usually used in the dependent clause. (if 7 is ‘yes’, then 4 is ‘yes’).

(13) Reflexes of **kí-* in the meanings of Conditional are used only in the Dependent clause as in Fuliiru.

<i>Tù-tá-kì-kèèrèz-è</i>	<i>ngá= kéèrà</i>	<i>tw-à-gálùk-à</i>	<i>=yô</i>	<i>ú=bù-gìrì kà-bìrì</i>
1PL-NEG-CND.CF.PES-be.late-Fe then.CF.= already		1PL-PST1-return	= 23	AU=14-times 12-two
‘If we had not been late, then we could have (gone and) returned (from) there twice.’				(Van Otterloo 2011: 371)

- Semantic changes of 6-8 and 7, 8 uses in the dependent clause were led by the Grammaticalization of **-kí* (14), as its final stages [2b] and [3].

(14) Suggested grammaticalisation path of **kí-* (Abe 2015: 34, based on Güldemann 1998: 162-166)

[0]----->	[1]----->	[2a]----->	[2b]----->	[3]
(pre-Bantu)	(Bantu internal development)			
Independent or Aux. verb >	Verb prefix			
	Main clause (MC)	> Main clause (MC)	>	Dependent clause (DC)
	Dependent clause (DC)			
(e.g.) Tika (kɛ),	Mwenyi (K30)	Rwanda (JE61)	Bemba (M42)	Swahili (G42) (kí-)
Yoruba (sì)	Masaaba (JE31)		Shona (S10)	Venda (S21)

[0],[1] exclusively in main clauses, [2] in main and dependent clauses, [2a] without a semantic alternation, [2b] with a semantic alternation, [3] exclusively in dependent clauses.

4. Looking ahead; remaining problems

- Among the languages of investigation, the L Tanganyika Bantu, **kí-* -*ílé* co-occurrence is observed at least in Bende and probably Lungu and Holoholo. Both Bende and Lungu underwent the semantic change, referring to Immediate (/Recent) Past. How about the other Final morphemes **-a(n)ga*, although no pattern of **kí-* -*a(n)ga* across Lake Tanganyika Bantu. Both **kí-* -*ílé* and **kí-* -*a(n)ga* are plausible, since the aspect is most often encoded at F(inal) or Pre-stem slots (Nurse 2008: 43).
- What more features need to be considered to make comprehensive micro-variation parameters on the Persistent aspect?
- To what extent are supposed to cover in the micro-variation typology on the persistent? Especially semantics as in the features 5-8 in (11).
- How to treat (only) the relics of the persistent? E.g. *ngití* of Matengo is originally analyzed as 1SG-PES-ANT (η -gV-ití), now refers to a ‘near future marker’ followed by the subjunctive/optative as an adverbial particle.

(15) Adverbial particle *ngití* of Matengo (N13)

<i>ngití</i>	<i>dzu-hemel-adzé</i>	<i>ɲɔmbi pa</i>	<i>dzu-ba na</i>	<i>silingi</i>
ADV	3SG-buy-OPT	CL9.cattle when	s/he has	money

‘S/he will buy cattle when s/he has money’ (Yoneda 2006: 131; glosses revised by the author)

- How to treat other persistent than **kí-*? (e.g. *-taali* in Sukuma, *-tali* in Pimbwe, *bado-* in Lubumbashi Swahili)

(16) *bado-* as a persistent prefix in Lubumbashi Swahili (G40F)

<i>Mpishi</i>	<i>ha-ya-bado-ku-pik-a</i>	<i>chakula.</i>
CL1.cook	NEG.3SG-NEG.ANT-PES-GER-cook-F	CL7.food

‘The cook has not yet prepared the meal’

(Schicho 1992: 82-83)

Abbreviations

ADV (Adverb), ANT (Anterior), AUG (Augment), CL (Noun class), CF (Contrary-to-fact), (CND (Conditional), F (Final vowel, indicative), Fe (Final vowel -e), GER (Gerund), OPT (Optative), NEG (Negative), PES (Persistive), PL (Plural), PRS (Present), PST (Past), SG (Singular), TAM (Tense-aspect-mood), VB (Verb base), SIM (Simultaneous), SUB (Subjunctive)

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