



# Forms and functions of noun modifying clauses in Bantu languages

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**Bantu 6**

Workshop1: Approaches to morphosyntactic  
micro-variation in Bantu

**YONEDA Nobuko** (Osaka University)

# Outline

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# Teramura's binary classification of noun modifying clauses

According to Matsumoto (1997), the main difference between inner and outer relations is characterized as follows: The inner relation is one in which the head noun can be inserted into the modifying clause to compose a sentence, whereas the outer relation is one in which the clause supplements the content of the meaning designated by the head noun.

- **Inner relation:** The head noun can be inserted as part of the modifying clause.
- **Outer relation:** The head noun cannot be inserted as part of the modifying clause.

# Inner relation in Japanese

(1) a. **kuruma-wo ut-ta otoko**  
car-ACC sell-PST man  
'the man who sold a car'

b. **otoko-ga ut-ta kuruma**  
man-NOM sell-PST car  
'the car that the man sold'



**Otoko-ga kuruma-wo ut-ta.**  
man-NOM car-ACC sell-PST  
'A man sold a car.'

# Outer relation in Japanese 1

(2) **otoko-ga kuruma-wo ut-ta uwasa**

man-NOM car-ACC sell-PST rumor

Lit.: 'the rumor that the man sold a car'

(the rumor which is that someone sold a car.)

The head noun *uwasa* 'the rumor' cannot be inserted as part of the modifying clause 'the man sold a car'.

'the man sold a car' is the concrete **contents** of 'the rumor'.

= **appositive relation**

(“noun complement” (Horie & Pardeshi 2009))

# Outer relation in Japanese 2

(3) **kuruma-wo ut-ta okane**

car-ACC                      sell-PST      money

Lit.: '**the money** that (someone) sold a car'  
(the money that someone got by selling a car)

The head noun *okane* 'the money' cannot be inserted as part of the modifying clause 'he sold a car'.

'he sold a car' is the **cause/reason** of 'the money'.

= **causal relation**

# Relation between the head noun & modifying clause

## ■ Inner relation:

The head noun can be inserted as part of the modifying clause.

- **Subject:** subject relativization
- **Object :** object relativization

## ■ Outer relation:

The head noun cannot be inserted as part of the modifying clause.

- **Appositive relation:** The modifying clause expresses the content of the head noun.
- **Causal relation:** There is a logical relation of causality between the head noun and the modifying clause.

# Noun modifying clause in Bantu languages

In many Bantu languages, noun-modifying clauses are marked with a relative marker (RM) that agrees with the head noun.

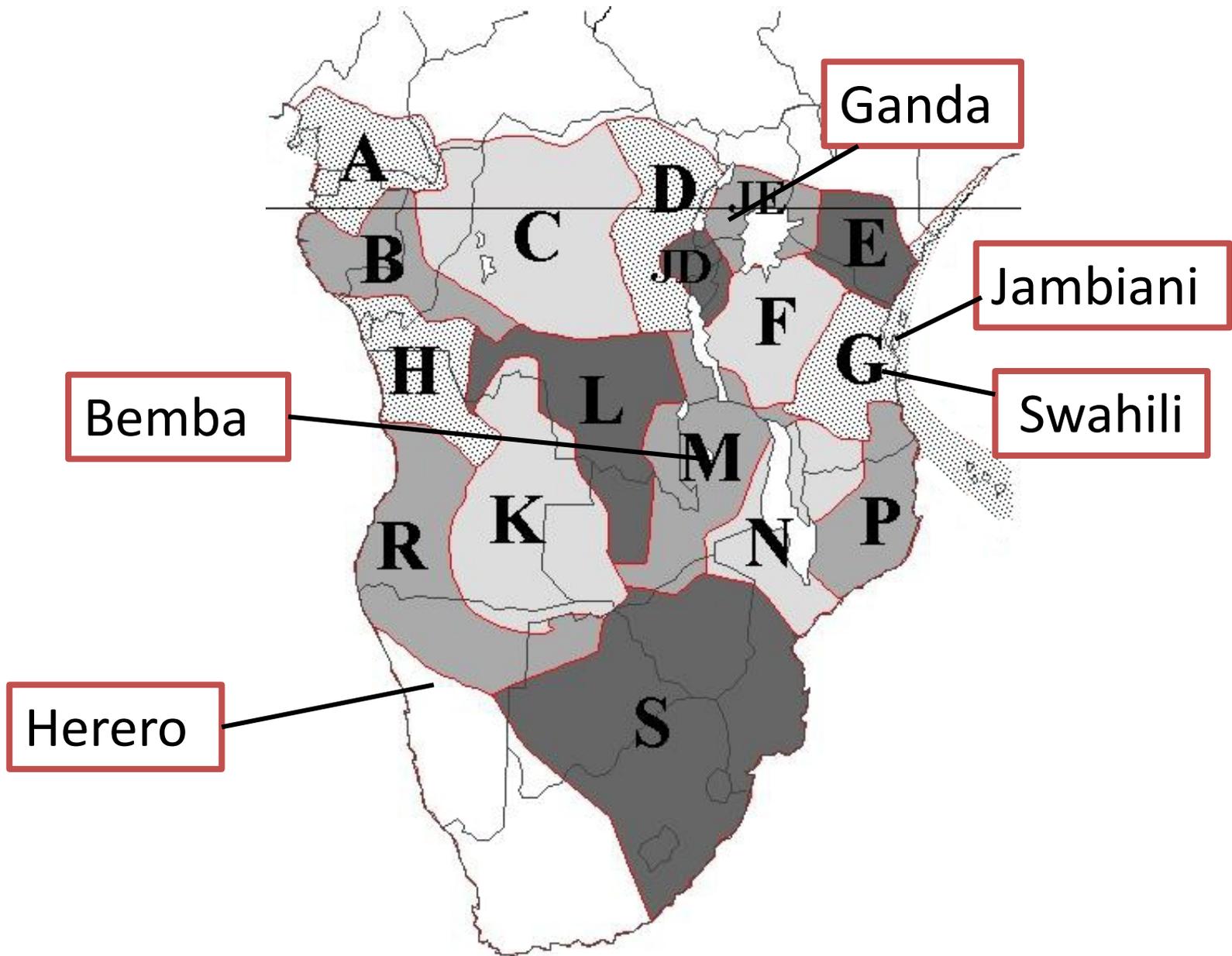
ex. Swahili

= "relative clause"

(4)a. **kitabu** ni-li-**cho**-nunua jana  
7.book SM1S-PST-RM7-buy yesterday  
'the book which I bought yesterday'

b. **malimu** a-li-**ye**-nunua kitabu jana  
1.teacher SM1-PST-RM1-buy 7.book yesterday  
'the teacher who bought a book yesterday'

Relative clauses display similar structures across a number of Bantu languages. However, which nouns can be modified by these relative clauses is not uniform across the relevant languages, when we apply the binary classification of “inner relations” and “outer relations”.



# Relative clauses in Bantu languages

- Herero: **Head N** + (subject) + **RM** + Verb
- Swahili: **Head N** + SM-TAM-**RM**-V.Stem + (subject)  
(*amba-less*)
- Swahili: **Head N** + *amba*-**RM** + (subject) + Verb  
(*amba*)
- Jambiani: **Head N** + SM-TAM-**RM**-V.Stem + (subject)
- Ganda: **Head N** + (subject) + **RM** + Verb
- Bemba: **Head N** + **RM** + (subject) + Verb

# Herero: Inner relation

## (5) Subject

**omítiri ndjí** má-í tjindír-é koKákarára

9.teacher RM9 PRG-SM9 move.to-NPF to.Okakarara

'**the teacher** who will move to Okakarara'

## (6) Object

**embo** omítiri **ndá** rand-ere eréro

5.book 9.teacher RM5.SM3S.PST buy-PF yesterday

'**the book** that the teacher bought yesterday'

# Herero: Outer relation

## (7) Appositive relation

a. ?? **óngwízíkiró** **ndjí** má-tú-hakáén-é pondátú  
9.promise RM9 PRG-SM1P-meet-NPF at.3. o'clock

b. **óngwízíkiró** **kutja** má-tú-hakáén-é pondátú  
9.promise COMP PRG-SM1P-meet-NPF at.3. o'clock

c. **óngwízíkiró** **yokútja** má-tú-hakáén-é pondátú  
9.promise GEN9:okutja PRG-SM1P-meet-NPF at.3.o'clock

'the promise that we are meeting at 3 o'clock'

concrete contents of "promise" = "we are meeting at 3"

# Herero: Outer relation

## (8) Causal relation

- a. \***ómúnúko** onyáma **mbi** ma-i-tét-á  
3.smell 9.meat RM3 PRG-SM9-be.grilled-NPF
- b. ?**ómúnúko** **kutja** onyáma ma-i-tét-á  
3.smell COMP 9.meat PRG-SM9-be.grilled-NPF
- c. **ómúnúko** **wokutja** onyáma ma-i-tét-á  
3.smell GEN3:okutja 9.meat PRG-SM9-be.grilled-NPF

Lit.: 'the smell that meat is being grilled'  
(the smell caused by meat being grilled)

The head noun is the **RESULT**

# Swahili: Inner relation

## (9) Subject

a. *amba*-less relative

**mwalimu** a-li-**ye**-ni-pa kitabu

1.teacher SM1-PST-RM1-OM1S-give 7.book

b. *amba* relative

**mwalimu** amba-**ye** a-li-ni-pa kitabu

1.teacher amba-RM1 SM1-PST-OM1S-give 7.book

'**the teacher** who gave me a book'

# Swahili: Inner relation

## (10) Object

### a. *amba*-less relative

**kitabu** a-li-**cho**-ni-pa mwalimu

7.book SM1-PST-RM7-OM1S-give 1.teacher

### b. *amba* relative

**kitabu** amba-**cho** mwalimu a-li-ni-pa

7.book amba-RM7 1.teacheer SM1-PST-OM1S-give

'**the book** that the teacher gave me'

# Swahili: Outer relation

## (11) Appositive relation

### a. *amba*-less relative

<b>matokeo</b>	wa-li- <b>yo</b> -shindwa	katika	mchezo
6.result	SM3P-PST-RM6-lose	in	3.game

### b. *amba* relative

<b>matokeo</b>	<b>amba-yo</b>	wa-li-shindwa	katika	mchezo
6.result	<i>amba</i> -RM6	SM3pl-PST-lose	in	3.game

Lit.: 'the result that they lost the game'  
(the result, being that they lost the game)

concrete contents of "result" = "they lost the game"

# Swahili: Outer relation

## (12) Appositive relation

### a. *amba*-less relative

\* **hadithi** a-na-**yo**-wa-danganya tembo na mamba sungura.

9.story SM1-PRS-RM9-OM2-cheat 1.elephant and 1.crocodile 1.hare

➡ **Grammatical relation must be unambiguous**

### b. *amba* relative

**hadithi** amba-**yo** sungura a-na-wa-danganya tembo na

9.story *amba*-RM9 1.hare SM1-PRS-OM2-cheat 1.elephant and

mamba.

1.crocodile

Lit.: 'This is **a story** which a hare cheats a crocodile and an elephant'  
(This is a story about a hare cheating a crocodile and an elephant)

# Swahili: Outer relation

## (13) Causal relation

### a. *amba*-less relative

\***ugonjwa** wa-li-**o**-kufa watu wengi  
11.disease SM2-PST-RM11-die 2.people 2.many

### b. *amba* relative

**ugonjwa** amba-**o** watu wengi wa-li-kufa  
11.disease *amba*-RM11 2.people 2.many SM2-PST-die

Lit.: 'a **disease** which many people died'  
(a disease which caused many people to die)

The head noun is the **CAUSE/REASON**

# Swahili: Outer relation

## (14) Causal relation

### a. *amba*-less relative

\***pesa**      ni-li-**zo**-uza      gari  
10.money    SM1S-PST-RM10-sell    9.car

### b. *amba* relative

**pesa**      **amba-zo**      ni-li-uza      gari  
10.money    *amba*-RM10    SM1SS-PST-sell    9.car

Lit.: '**the money** which I sold a car'  
(the money I got for selling a car)

The head noun is the **RESULT**

# Jambiani: Inner relations

## (15) Subject

a. \***mtu** a-**ye**-na-kuza matunda  
1.man SM1-RM1-PRS-sell 6.fruits

b. **mtu** **m**-na-kuza matunda  
1.man R.SM1-OM1S-give 6.fruits

'**the man** who is selling fruits'

## (16) Object

**kitabu** a-**cho**-nunua Maria  
7.book SM1-RM7-buy 1.Maria

'**the book** that Maria bought'

# Jambiani: Outer relations

## (17) Appositive relation

**hadithi** a-**yo**-shindwa sungura kunako mashindano  
9.story SM1-RM9-lose 1.hare inside 6.race

lit.: '**the story** that the hare lost the race'  
(the story, in which the hare lost the race)

## (18) Causal relation

**pesa** n-**zo**-kuza gari  
10.money SM1SG-RM10-sell 9.car

lit.: '**the money** I sold the car'  
(the money I got for selling the car)

(Miyazaki 2012)

# Ganda: Inner relation

## (19) Subject

a. \***abasajja** **be** ba-a-tund-a emmotoka

2.men RM2 SM2-PST-sell-FV 9.car

b. **abasajja** **a**-ba-a-tund-a emmotoka

2.men RPreP-SM2-PST-sell-FV 9.car

'**the men** who sold car'

## (20) Object

**emmotoka** basajja **gye** ba-a-tund-a

9.car 2.men RM9 SM2-PST-sell-FV

'**the book** that Maria bought'

# Ganda: Outer relation

## (21) Appositive relation

a.?? **olugero** akamyu **lwe** ka-a-limbir-a empisi  
11. story 12.hare RM11 SM12-PST-lie.to-FV hyena

b. **olugero** akamyu **mwe** ka-a-limbir-a empisi  
11. story 12.hare RM18 SM12-PST-lie.to-FV hyena

c. **olugero** akamyu **lwe** ka-a-limbir-a-mu empisi  
11. story 12.hare RM11 SM12-PST-lie.to-FV-LOC18 hyena

Lit.: 'story which a hare cheated a hyena'  
(story in which a hare cheated a hyena)

# Ganda: Outer relation

## (22) Causal relation

a. ?? **essente** omusajja **ze** ya-tund-a emmotoka  
10.money 1.man RM10 SM1.PST-sell-FV 5.car

b. **essente** omusajja **mwe** ya-tund-a emmotoka  
10.money 1.man RM18 SM1.PST-sell-FV 5.car

c. **essente** omusajja **ze** ya-tund-a-**mu** emmotoka  
10.money 1.man RM10 SM1.PST-sell-FV-LOC18 5.car

Lit.: 'money which I sold a car'  
(money which he got for selling a car)

# Bemba: Inner relation

## (23) Subject

a. \***umwaume** **uo** a-fum-ile  
1.man RM1 SM1-come-PERF

b. **umwaume** **u**-a-fum-ile  
1.man RPreP1-SM1-come-PERF

'the man who has arrived'

## (24) Object

a. **umwaume** (**uo**) na-a-temweenwe  
1.man RM1 SM1SG-PST4-like.PERF

b. \***umwaume** **u**-na-a-temweenwe  
1.man RPreP1-SM1SG-PST4-like.PERF

'the man who I liked'

# Bemba: Outer relation

## (25) Appositive relation

**ilyashi** (**iryoy**) kalulu a-bepele fulunyemba  
9.story RM9 1.hare SM1-cheat.PERF chameleon

Lit.: '**a story** which a hare cheated a chameleon'  
(a story in which a hare cheated a chameleon)

## (26) Causal relation

? **impiya** (**isho**) umwaume a-shitiishe motokaa  
10.money RM10 1.man SM1.PST-sell.PERF car

Lit.: '**the money** which the man sold a car'  
(the money the man got for selling a car)

# Nyanja

The relative clause cannot be used in the case of relativisation of the subject. The same construction as normal clause is used.

(27) 'the man who sold the/a car.'

a. \*bamuna yamene ba-na-gulisa motoka  
man which SM3S-PST-sell car

b. bamuna ba-na-gulisa motoka  
man SM3S-PST-sell car

cf. (28) bamuna ba-na-gulisa motoka  
man SM3S-PST-sell car

'The man sold the/a car.'

# Nyanja

(29) **motoka** yamene bamuna ba-na-gulisa.  
car which man SM1-PST-sell  
'the car that the man sold'

(30) **kani** yamene kalulu a-na-nama mkango  
9.story which 1.hare SM1-PST-cheat 3.lion  
lit.: 'the story that the hare cheated lion'  
(the story, in which the hare cheated lion)

(31) **dalama** yamene bamuna ba-na-gulisa motoka  
money which 1.man SM1-PST-sell car  
Lit.: 'the money that the man sold'  
(the money I got by selling the car)

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# Relative clauses and semantic relation

	Inner relation		Outer relation	
	Subject	others	appositive	causal
Swahili ( <i>amba</i> )	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Swahili ( <i>amba</i> -less)	Yes	Yes	Yes / No	No
Herero	Yes	Yes	No	No
Ganda	No	Yes	No	No
Jambiani	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bemba	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nyanja	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

# Forms of noun modifying clauses

	Inner relation		Outer relation	
	Subject	others	appositive	causal
Swahili ( <i>amba</i> )	relative clause			
Swahili ( <i>amba</i> -less)	relative clause		<i>amba</i> relative	
Herero	relative clause		COMP	GEN+COMP
Ganda	rel. preprefix	relative clause	(relative +) locative	
Jambiani	rel. SM	relative clause		
Bemba	rel. preprefix	relative clause		
Nyanja	no mark	relative clause		

# Conclusions: Suggested parameters

Although relative clauses have similar structures across many Bantu languages, they show a wider range of variation in their behavior.

## **Suggested parameters of Noun modifying constructions**

1. Is the relative clause used for the subject relativization?
2. Is the relative clause used for the relativization of augments other than subjects?
3. Is the relative clause used for modifying the noun in the appositive relation?
4. Is the relative clause used for modifying the noun in the causal relation?
5. Is the same noun modifying construction used for “no”s?

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