

54
2020

STUDIES IN AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND CULTURES



Department of African Languages and Cultures
Faculty of Oriental Studies

**STUDIES
IN AFRICAN
LANGUAGES
AND CULTURES**

Vol. 54 (2020)

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Vol. 54 (2020)



University of Warsaw 2020
Department of African Languages and Cultures
Faculty of Oriental Studies

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ISSN 2545-2134; e-ISSN 2657-4187

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Publication co-financed from the Ministry of Science and Higher Education grant and funds provided
by the University of Warsaw authorities
On-line version is available at <http://www.salc.uw.edu.pl>

University of Warsaw Press
Prosta 69. PL 00-838 Warsaw
wuw@uw.edu.pl
Sales Department: phone (+48 22) 55-31-333
E-mail: dz.handlowy@uw.edu.pl
Internet Bookshop: www.edu.pl

Layout

Anna Gogolewska

Printed by

Totem.com.pl

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FROM THE EDITORS

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Submission guidelines are available at the Journal's website www.salc.uw.edu.pl. For further information please write to the Editor at salc@uw.edu.pl.

The printed version of the journal is distributed through subscriptions on the basis of exchange with academic centres. Please address the offers of journal exchange to:

Uniwersytet Warszawski
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ARTICLES

Joseph McIntyre
Hamburg

Transitive L-verbs (grade 2) and transitive H-verbs (grades 1, 4, 5, and 6) in Hausa verbal compounds*

Abstract

This paper examines Hausa verbal compounds in terms of the division of regular verbs (verbs in the “grade system”) into verbs which have a High or Low tone first syllable. The focus of the paper is the surprisingly small number of transitive L-verbs (verbs beginning with a Low tone – “grade 2”) and their limited use of compound markers which contrasts strongly with the frequency of transitive H-verbs (verbs beginning with a High tone) and their markers. I also describe several devices (e.g. grade-switching and covert subjects) which “allow” the formation of verbal compounds with transitive L-verbs.

Keywords: Hausa, verbal compounds, (modified) grade system

* I would like to thank Bernard Caron and Phil Jaggar for their comments on earlier versions of this paper. Any remaining errors are my own.

1. Introduction

Hausa verbal compounds are many and varied. Their first member is generally a verb, although a few verbal compounds have either a person-aspect-complex or a /*ma-*/ prefix preceding the verb (see subsection 2.1). A wide variety of verbs are found in these compounds, both regular (those found in the “grade system” – see subsection 2.2) and irregular. In this paper I focus on the regular transitive verbs in compounds and describe a stark contrast between compounds which have a H[igh] or L[ow] tone first syllable (“H-verbs” versus “L-verbs”, defined in subsection 2.2.2). In a word, the number of transitive L-verbs found in Hausa verbal compounds is surprisingly small.

Before explaining this contrast I describe verbal compounds and the verbal “grade system”, as well as various modifications to that system, concluding with my own definition of regular H- and L-verbs.

2. Hausa verbal compounds and Parsons’s “grade system”

Here I describe verbal compounds in terms of the types of verb and marker found in these compounds (subsection 2.1). In subsection 2.2 I describe Parsons’s “grade system” (originally proposed in 1960) and the modifications which have been suggested since that date.

2.1. Hausa verbal compounds

Most Hausa verbal compounds have an imperative form (see 1a); a further form – the tone-lowered form – is only found in compounds (1b); in a number of compounds the finite form of the verb is found (1c):

(1a) The verb with an imperative form:

<i>rùfa-baaya</i> ¹	(cover back)	‘support’
<i>nèemi-naakà</i>	(look.for yours)	‘a name’
<i>sàkoo-tumaaki</i>	(loosen sheep)	‘simpleton’

¹ Hausa examples and words in the text are written in *italics*; when the vowel is long it is written double, when short it is written with a single vowel. High (H) tone vowels are unmarked, e.g. *-uwaa* is HH and the vowels are short-long; low (L) tone vowels are marked with a grave accent, e.g., *gyàaru* is LH and the vowels are long-short. The ‘trilled’ /r/ is marked *ř*, the ‘flapped’ /r/ is unmarked (*r*).

(1b) The verb with a tone-lowered form (not found in normal verbal morphology):

<i>dāfāa-dukà</i>	(cook all)	'jollof rice'
<i>kàarèe-dangi</i>	(finish family)	'type of arrow poison'
<i>bii-bango</i>	(follow wall)	'leakage along a wall'

(1c) The verb with the finite form:

<i>mootsà-jikii</i>	(move body)	'sport, physical exercise'
<i>tunà-haifūwaa</i>	(remember birth)	in: <i>ran</i> ~ 'birthday'
<i>kashè(e)-wāndoo</i>	(kill trousers)	'unemployment'

In many compounds with a noun direct object the final vowel of the direct object is shortened. In the examples below the nouns *baayaa* 'back', *dangii* 'family' and *bangoo* 'wall' have a short final vowel, marking the compound (along with the verb):

(1d) Final vowel shortening:

<i>rùfa-baaya</i>	(cover back)	'support'
<i>kàarèe-dangi</i>	(finish family)	'type of arrow poison'
<i>bii-bango</i>	(follow wall)	'leakage along wall'

Compounds with a noun direct object are the main focus of this paper; however, other syntax is found; in the examples below the first example has two transitive verbs but their direct object is assumed; the second has a pronoun direct object; the third has a pronoun indirect object and a noun direct object:

(1e) Varied syntax:

<i>dàki-bàri</i>	(beat stop)	'strong, reliable thing'
<i>maīmaītoo-nì</i>	(desire me)	'small plant used in love potions'
<i>ciree-mìn-Kayàa</i>	(pull.out for.me thorn)	'children's game'

There are compounds where a person-aspect-complex (expressing person, number and aspect) precedes the verb; in the example below the person-aspect pronoun is fourth person subjunctive (= 'one should'). In a few compounds a *ma-* prefix precedes the verb which is tone lowered and phonologically reduced (*ràs* ← *rasàa* 'lack'):

(1f) Person-aspect-complex or *ma-* prefix preceding the verb:

<i>à-kòori-buuzuu</i>	(4pl.SBJ chase-Tuareg)	'police-like house guard'
<i>maràs-hankàlii</i>	(ma:lack sense)	'senseless person'

The above examples exemplify the kinds of compound markers and syntax found in these compounds.

2.2. Parsons’s “grade system” and modifications

The term “grade system” was introduced by Parsons (1960, 1962, 1971-72). He proposes seven grades in which morphology (tone pattern and final vowel or consonant) and syntax operate in different forms of the verb (A-, B-, C- and D-form²).

TABLE 1. A résumé of disyllabic verb grades (Parsons 1960, 1962, 1971/72)

Form Grade	A-form ØDO	B-form PDO	C-form NDO	D-form IO
1	HL-àa	HL-àa	HL-à	HL-àa
2	LH-aa	LH-ee	LH-i	Gr1, 4, pds
3	LH-a	–	–	Gr1, 4, pds
4	HL-èe	HL-èe	HL-è(e)	HL-èe
5	HH-aĩ	HH-aĩ dà	HH-aĩ dà	HH-aĩ (dà)
6	HH-oo	HH-oo	HH-oo	HH-oo
7	LH-u	–	–	Gr1, 4, pds

The abbreviation ‘pds’ (Table 1, D-form/IO) means “pre-datative suffix” (see Newman 2000: 283-284). The pds is suffixed to a verb with a H tone first syllable (i.e. it is an H-verb) and ends with a consonant, *-m* or *-ř*. The pds is only used with verbs in grades 2, 3 and 7. These facts dovetail nicely with my description of L-verbs and indirect objects (subsection 2.2.2.1).

Grades 1, 4 and 6 have both transitive and intransitive verbs, verbs in grades 2 and 5 are only transitive, and in grades 3 and 7 only intransitive. Grades also have a semantic component: the basic form and semantics of a verb are found in grades 1, 2 or 3, while grades 4, 5, 6 and 7 change the semantics of the basic verb, adding an extra meaning³.

² The A-form refers either to a transitive verb where the direct object does not immediately follow the verb (ØDO) or to the sole form of an intransitive verb; the B-form is immediately followed by a pronoun direct object (PDO), and the C-form by a noun direct object (NDO); the D-form is associated with the indirect object which may be either a noun or a pronoun (PIO/NIO).

³ Grade 4 has a “totality” meaning, grade 5 is “causative”, grade 6 is “ventive”, and grade 7 “sustentative”.

Parsons defines all verbs whose basic form does not match those of the seven grades as “irregular”. Irregular verbs have a basic (non-grade) form but may also add/change meaning by taking the form of a grade, e.g. the irregular verb *faadī* ‘fall’ may take the grade 6 form *faadōo* ‘fall (down here)”; the irregular verb *sanii* ‘know’ may take the grade 5 form *sanaā* ‘inform (cause someone to know)’.

2.2.1. Modifications to the grade system

Over the years various modifications have been suggested (Lukas 1963, Pilszczikowa 1969, Furniss 1981, 1983). Significantly, Newman (1973) suggests both a radical modification to the grade system as well as a historical basis from which the system developed; he replaces Parsons’s idea of secondary grades with the idea that semantic “extensions” were available both to verbs in the grades and to irregular verbs⁴. Nevertheless, Parsons’s system has survived and has even been extended by the addition of grades 0 and grades 3a and 3b (Newman 2000 & Jaggat 2001) – verbs which Parsons defined as irregular.

2.2.2. Further modifications. McIntyre: regular H and L-verbs

McIntyre (2005/2008, 2006) retains Parsons’s definition of irregular verbs and suggests that the verbs in the grades be called “regular” verbs, a term not previously used. More radically, I suggest that there are two kinds of regular verb: those whose first syllable has a [H]igh tone (“H-verbs”) and those whose first syllable has a [L]ow tone (“L-verbs”). Thus grades 1, 4, 5 and 6 are H-verbs while grades 2, 3 and 7 are L-verbs. Tonal opposition is not the only difference between H- and L-verbs⁵; further contrasts are found in the form of the verb preceding an indirect object (2.2.2.1), in the morphology of the respective verbal nouns and in the related syntax (2.2.2.2).

2.2.2.1. Regular H and L-verbs: Indirect objects

When followed by an indirect object H-verbs (grades 1, 4, 5 and 6) have their own form – starting with a H tone – preceding the dative object; L-verbs (grades 2, 3 and 7) either “borrow” the form of an H-verb (Parsons’s “D-Form”) or use the pds (see subsection 2.2 above). The following examples contrast the forms of

⁴ Newman (1973) identifies extensions in verbs of grades 1 and 2 – alongside basic verbs; he identifies basic verbs in grade 4 – alongside extensions.

⁵ A radical interpretation of this difference holds that syntactic relations and the associated semantics are coded by this tonal difference, even if such tonal opposition is no longer productive. Various authors have made suggestions which seem to relate to semantic differences between H- and L-verbs: Gouffé (1988), Caron (1991), Abdoulaye (1992, 1996), De Campos (1998), Frajzyngier & Munkaila (2004), and McIntyre (2006).

the verb with a noun direct object (NDO) and a pronoun indirect object (PIO) using the H-verb *nuunà* 'show' and the L-verb *sàyi* 'buy':

(2a) NDO forms, H- and L-verbs:

<i>Sun nuunà tausàyi</i>	'They showed sympathy'
<i>Audù yaa sàyi littafii</i>	'Audu bought a book'
<i>Sun girbi daawàa</i>	'They reaped corn'

(2b) PIO forms, H- (and L-)verbs:

<i>Yaa nuunàa mini shii</i>	'He showed me it'
<i>Audù yaa sayàa mini littafii</i>	'Audu bought me a book'
<i>Sun girbam mini daawàa</i>	'They reaped corn for me'

In 2a we have the respective H- or L-verb form preceding a direct object: grade 1 *nuunà* and grade 2 *sàyi* and *girbi*. In 2b both verbs – preceding the indirect object *mini* '(for) me' – have the HL form of an H-verb: *nuunàa*, *sayàa* and the pds *girbam*.

2.2.2.2. Regular H- and L-verbs: Verbal nouns

A clear difference between H- and L-verbs is also found in the morphology and syntax of verbal nouns (used with the imperfective aspects and in other nominalised contexts).

The verbal noun (henceforth VN) of an H-verb has a /-`waa/ suffix (with a low tone preceding the *-waa*); thus, the VN of *kařàntaa* 'read' is *kařàntàawaa* 'reading', in which the falling tone *-tâa-* is caused by the low tone preceding *-waa*; H-verbs use this VN only when no object follows the verb; thus, in the first sentence in 3a the form of the verb (the VN following *yanàa*, the imperfective person-aspect-complex) contrasts with that of the finite verb in the second sentence following *yaa*, the perfective person-aspect-complex (henceforth PAC):

(3a) Verbal noun of H-verbs:

<i>Audù yanàa kařàntàawaa</i>	'Audu (he) is reading (something)'
<i>Audù yaa kařàntaa</i>	'Audu (he) reads (something)'

The nominalisation of the VP – with an H-verb – in the imperfective aspect also obtains when an object is present. Newman (2000: 288) names such a VP an "infinitive phrase" which he defines as a "non-finite phrase containing a finite verb stem". Thus, in 3b, the phrases *kařàntà littafii* and *kařàntaa mini littafii* are nominalised following the imperfective PAC *yanàa*. (The same phrases found in sentences following e.g. the perfective PAC *yaa* would not be nominalised):

(3b) Transitive H-verbs with direct (*littaafii*) and indirect (*mini*) object(s):

<i>Audù yanàa kařàntà littaafii</i>	'Audu is reading a book'
<i>Audù yanàa kařàntaa mini littaafii</i>	'Audu is reading me a book'

In contrast to H-verbs the VNs of transitive L-verbs (grade 2) do not take the /-`waa/ suffix⁶; their morphology is variable. Many such verbs have the same shape as the (finite) A-form, but many have a tone pattern and a final vowel which are not predictable. The VN – with or without a direct object – is always used with the imperfective and in other nominalised contexts; when no object follows the VN, it stands alone; when a direct object follows the VN a so-called linker (-*n/-ř* for masculine/feminine VNs) is suffixed to the VN. In 4a we have *yanàa* (imperfective PAC) preceding the VN *sàyee* with no direct object, and the VN with linker *-n* preceding the NDO:

(4a) Transitive L-verbs with and without an NDO:

<i>Audù yanàa sàyee</i>	'Audu is buying (something)'
<i>Audù yanàa sàyen littaafii</i>	'Audu is buying a book'

In 4b – with the indirect object *mini* – the transitive L-verb *sàyaa* (LH) “borrows” the H-verb form *sayàa* (HL). As an H-verb following an imperfective PAC this is an infinitive phrase:

(4b) Transitive L-verb with an indirect (*mini*) and a direct object (*littaafii*):

<i>Audù yanàa sayàa mini littaafii</i>	'Audu is buying me a book'
--	----------------------------

Thus, the contrast between H- and L-verbs is found both in the morphology of their VNs and in the fact that infinitive phrases are only found with H-verbs (H-verb forms).

My definition of regular verbs as H- and L-verbs implicitly accepts Parsons's definition of irregular verbs. I refer to these verbs as “I-verbs”. Like H-verbs, I-verbs begin with a H tone but their morphosyntax (dative forms and verbal nouns) is

⁶ The *-waa* of the VNs of intransitive L-verbs in grade 7, e.g. *gyàaruwaa* (← *gyàaru* ‘be repaired’), are disputed. Newman (2000: 705) is of the opinion that such VNs include the /-`waa/ suffix, but that – unlike *kařàntàawaa* (see 3a above) – the L tone preceding /waa/ does not trigger a falling tone on the *-u-* because the latter is a short vowel. Gouffé (1982) argues that the final vowel is /aa/ as in grade 3 (e.g. VN *řitaa* ← *řita* ‘go out’) and that the /-*w-/* is epenthetic. McIntyre (forthcoming) suggests that, in gr7 VNs, the feminine suffix /-*uwaa/* replaces the final *-u* of the verb (*gyàaruwaa* ← **gyàar-* ← *gyàaru*) – analogous to the feminine suffix /aa/ found in the VNs of the other L-verbs (grades 2 and 3).

hybrid: many, like H-verbs, have their own dative forms with an initial high tone; others, like L-verbs, “borrow” the form of an H-verb. Similarly, like H-verbs, some I-verbs use the /-`waa/ suffix on the VN and can form an infinitive phrase, while others, like L-verbs, have their own VN form – including some which, like L-verbs, have a VN which has the same form as the A-form. However, these parallels are unsystematic, and do not allow a division of I-verbs into two (H- vs. L-) groups.

In a further change of perspective and terminology I use the term “frame” alongside Parsons’s “form”⁷. Frame is the verb (with its syntactically appropriate form) together with its object. When describing the frames, I separate the pronoun and noun indirect objects into D- and E-frames, respectively – in contrast to Parsons, who uses the term “D-form” to describe the verb preceding an indirect object, noun or pronoun. (This usage parallels Parsons’s separation of B- and C-forms used with pronoun and noun direct objects). I use the term “frame” in the description of verbal compounds below.

The following Table 2 summarises the morphosyntactic differences between H-, L-, and I-verbs: the initial tone, the use of the D-form, the use of the -`waa VN and infinitive (Inf.) phrase.

TABLE 2. The morphosyntax of H-, L-, and I-verbs

Verb type	Initial tone	Dform	-`waa VN	Inf. phrase
H-verbs	H	yes	yes	yes
L-verbs	L	“borrowed”	no	no
I-verbs	H	varied	varied	varied

2.3. The small number of transitive L-verbs in compounds

The scarcity of transitive L-verbs (grade 2) in compounds was first pointed out by McIntyre (1998). Newman (2000: 117) describes this detail very succinctly: “Grade 2 verbs are surprisingly, and inexplicably, rare [in verbal compounds]” (my emphasis). In McIntyre (2006) I offered a possible explanation for the “inexplicable” which has neither been disputed nor confirmed. This explanation is phrased in terms of my modified grade system (see subsection 2.2.2 above),

⁷ The term “form” is ambiguous at least pedagogically: to say that *kaamàa* is the A-form of the verb ‘to catch’ is correct, but the B- and D-forms have the same morphology. With “frame” there is no ambiguity because the object is part of the frame; thus, the A-frame has no object (*kaamàa* ‘catch (something)'), the B-frame has a PDO (*kaamàa shi* ‘catch it/him’) and the D-frame has an indirect object pronoun (*kaamàa masà* ‘catch (something) for him’); I introduce the E-frame when the indirect object is a noun (*kaamàa wà Audù* ‘catch (something) for Audù’).

i.e. a systematic difference between transitive H- and L-verbs in compounds. This difference in quantity is complemented by the fact that the compound markers “tone-lowering” and “final vowel shortening” are not found with L-verbs; nor are these verbs found in unmarked compounds.

In section 3 I describe the syntax of Hausa verbal compounds (3.1), and the ways in which verbal compounds are marked for compounding (3.2). In section 4 I describe verbal compounds with a transitive L-verb, detailing the features which make these compounds unusual: frequency, morphology, and syntax. In section 5 compounds which start with a person-aspect-complex or with the prefix /*ma-*/ are described. In section 6 I summarize what has been seen in the previous sections and offer a hypothesis concerning the low frequency of transitive L-verbs in compounds.

3. The syntax and morphology of H-verbs and L-verbs in verbal compounds

In McIntyre (2006) I described 700 verbal compounds which vary in terms of both their syntax and the form of the verb found in the compound. There are both transitive and intransitive verbs, but this paper focuses on the 535 compounds with a transitive verb⁸. Subsection 3.1 gives an overview of compounds with a transitive verb and object(s) and/or adjunct (henceforth V+X compounds), whereby the chief focus is on compounds with a noun direct object (NDO). In subsection 2.2 the morphology of the verb in the compound is described: the imperative form and tone lowering (the latter found only in compounds), and compounds with a finite verb; a further theme is “final vowel shortening” – of the NDO in V+NDO compounds⁹.

3.1. The syntax of V+X compounds

The syntax of V+X compounds is quite varied: they may have two to five members: verb(s) plus object(s) and/or adjunct. Hausa transitive verbs may appear in five frames: a) the “zero direct object” frame (V+∅DO) in which the DO does not immediately follow the verb (in normal syntax it may precede the verb – when e.g. in focus – or may simply be understood in the context); b) the pronoun or noun DO frames (V+PDO and V+NDO), in which the DO immediately follows

⁸ If PAC and *ma-* compounds (discussed in section 5) are included, there are 626 compounds with a transitive verb and 74 with an intransitive verb.

⁹ Final vowel shortening is also found in names, a context in which, perhaps, the short final vowel may be the Old Hausa final vowel (see e.g. Jaggard 2001: 37–39).

the verb; and c) the pronoun or noun indirect object frames (V+PIO and V+NIO)¹⁰.

Table 3 shows the distribution of syntactic frames among transitive H-, L-, and I- verbs and gives an idea of the relative paucity of the latter, especially in the V+NDO frame:

TABLE 3. Transitive H-, I- and L- (gr2) verbs in V+X compounds

Frames	H-verbs	L-verbs (gr2)	I-verbs	Totals
V+∅DO	24	36	20	80
V+PDO	15	3	22	40
V+NDO	239	19	101	359
V+PIO	3	–	40	43
V+NIO	6	–	7	13
Totals	287	58	190	535

V+NDO compounds are the largest group of compounds (359 from 535), with 239 H-verbs (141 grade 1, 30 grade 4, 62 grade 5 and 6 grade 6 verbs); there are 101 V+NDO compounds with an I-verb. There are only 19 V+NDO compounds with a transitive L-verb (grade 2); this paucity will be described in section 3. The fact that almost half of the V+∅DO compounds have a transitive L-verb is discussed in subsection 5.2.

3.2. Verbal morphology and “final vowel shortening” in V+NDO compounds

In this section the 359 compounds in the NDO frame are commented on; they have either an imperative form (IMP), a tone lowered form (TL) or a finite form (henceforth UM: “unmarked”). The IMP, TL and UM forms of the verb are described in subsections 3.2.1 – 3.2.3. In 3.2.4 I describe final vowel shortening.

TABLE 4. Verb markers in V+NDO compounds

Verb type	IMP	TL	UM	Total
H-verbs	123	72	44	239
L-verbs	19	-	-	19
I-verbs	7	94	-	101
Total	149	166	44	359

¹⁰ In these frames the PIO or NIO generally follows the finite verb immediately; however, in focus, etc. the IO is fronted leaving either the pre-noun IO marker *wà* or an IO pronoun to follow the verb.

As we see in the Table 4, only 19 transitive L-verbs are found in the V+NDO frame; in these 19 compounds the verb has the IMP form; transitive L-verbs in compounds (including V+ØDO and V+PDO frames) are not marked with TL or FVS, nor are they found in the UM compounds.

3.2.1. Imperative forms in V+NDO compounds

Table 5 lists the imperative forms (IMP) found in V+NDO compounds. H-verbs generally have their usual IMP forms: grades 1 and 4 have their LL form, with occasional LH forms – Jaggard (2001: 446) says the latter are “sporadically reported” in normal speech; grade 6 verbs have LH tones; grade 5 verbs are generally found with a phonologically reduced (monosyllabic) form and a H tone (see Jaggard 2001: 449-450)¹¹. The transitive L-verbs (grade 2) are found with the IMP form which has the same LH morphology as the finite form. Two examples of I-verbs with the IMP form are given: LH and H.

TABLE 5. IMP forms on verb of V+NDO compounds

H-verbs	V+NDO	Interlinear	Meaning
gr1 (LH)	<i>rùfa-baaya</i>	(cover back)	‘support’
gr1 (LL)	<i>kàamà-kâi</i>	(hold head)	‘an assistant’
gr4 (LH)	<i>bùude-littaafi</i>	(open book)	‘butterfly’
gr4 (LL)	<i>wàashè-gàri</i>	(clear town)	‘next day’ (adv.)
gr5 (H)	<i>kaa-dà-giivaa</i>	(fell elephant)	in: <i>karmaamii</i> ~
gr6 (LH)	<i>sàkoo-tumaaki</i>	(loosen sheep)	‘simpleton’
L-verb			
gr2 (LH)	<i>nèemi-naakà</i>	(look.for yours)	‘a name’
I-verbs			
(LH)	<i>bàri-shakkà</i>	(leave doubt)	‘beads worn just below the knee by loose women’
(H)	<i>shaa-kutuu</i> ¹²	(drink male.lizard)	‘fool’

The variations in the tone patterns of these IMP forms – whether of H-, L- or I-verbs – are not significant. However, the fact that the LH form of the grade 2 L-verb in *nèemi-naakà* could be either the IMP or the finite form requires a comment. If *nèemi* in the compound is a finite form, then we have an unmarked

¹¹ I have a single example of a disyllabic gr5 verb in a V+NDO compound: *àuràf-dà-kâi*; the verb has LL tones.

¹² The compound *shaa-kutuu* is also found lexicalised, appearing as a single word: *shaakutuu*.

compound. However, I assume that the form in the compound is IMP because transitive L-verbs are found in 36 compounds with a V+ØDO-frame as well as in 3 compounds with a V+PDO frame, all of which clearly have IMP forms¹³.

3.2.2. Tone lowered forms

The tone lowered form – with L(L) tone pattern and a long final vowel – marks many verbal (and, occasionally, noun) compounds; it is not found in the normal morphosyntax of Hausa verbs. The form is found in 166 of 359 compounds with a transitive verb and a NDO (32%); of these, 94 have an I-verb (most I-verbs in compounds have a TL form), 72 have an H-verb (see Table 4). It is not found as a marker of transitive L-verbs in compounds¹⁴. Table 6 gives examples of tone-lowered forms:

TABLE 6. TL forms in V+NDO compounds

H-verbs	V+NDO	Interlinear	Meaning
gr1	<i>dàfàa-dukà</i>	(cook all)	'jollof rice'
gr4	<i>kàarèe-dangi</i>	(finish family)	'type of arrow poison'
I-verbs	<i>bii-bango</i>	(follow wall)	'leakage along wall'
	<i>rigàa-kafi</i>	(precede stockade)	'prevention'

In normal syntax, the verbs in 6 (*dàfàa*, *kàarèe*, *bii* and *rigàa*) would have the following forms in the V+NDO frame: *dafà* (HL), *kaarèe* (HL), *bi* (H) and *rigaa* (HH).

3.2.3. Unmarked compounds (V+NDO)

Unmarked (UM) compounds are a relatively small group of compounds but seem to be in frequent use. Only H-verbs are found in these compounds; they

¹³ The finite transitive L-verb (grade 2) A-form ends in /-aa/, but the IMP form ends in either /-aa/ or /-i/. Of the 36 compounds with a V+ØDO frame and a transitive L verb, 33 end in -i, two in -aa; and one is a "pseudo-IMP" form (see note 14).

¹⁴ A further form – LL with final -à(a) – is found in compounds with both H-, L-, and I-verbs. I do not include this form in the above description as it is a purely surface form in which ØDO or NIO frames are phonologically and syntactically reduced. The form resembles a LL IMP and I call it the 'pseudo-imperative' form.

Here are three examples: the I-verb *bari* 'leave', the H-verb *kwàntaa* 'lie down' and the L-verb *daukàa* 'carry':

<i>bàrà-gurbi</i>	(leave.for/in nest)	1) 'eggs left unhatched or addled'
(← <i>bàf-wà-</i> or <i>bàri-à-gurbi</i>)		2) 'p. or th. left after others have gone'
<i>kwàntà-kùrii</i> (← <i>kwàntaa à-kùrii</i>)	(lie.down open.eyed)	'chaperone'
<i>dàukàa-wuyà</i> (← <i>dàuki-à- wuyà</i>)	(carry on neck)	'child carried on shoulders'

are simply infinitive phrases (see subsection 2.2.2.2) which have established themselves as compounds. 37 of these compounds have an NDO-frame; one has a PDO-frame. L-verbs cannot form infinitive phrases and are not found in UM compounds; theoretically, some I-verbs could form UM compounds but none are found¹⁵:

TABLE 7. Unmarked compounds

H-verbs	V+NDO	Interlinear	Meaning
gr1	<i>iyà-lauyàa</i>	(be.able lawyer)	in: <i>gàa</i> ~ 'there's a clever (wily) lawyer for you!'
	<i>mootsà-jikii</i>	(move body)	'sport, physical exercise'
	<i>tunà-haifûwaa</i>	(remember birth)	in: <i>ran</i> ~ 'birthday'
	<i>waasà kwakwalwaa</i>	(sharpen brain)	'riddle'
gr4	<i>kashè(è)-wàndoo</i>	(kill trousers)	'unemployment'
	V+PDO	Interlinear	Meaning
gr6	<i>mařmařtoo ni</i>	(desire me)	'small plant used in love potions'

3.2.4. Final vowel shortening

Final vowel shortening (FVS) as a marker of names and compounds was first identified by Gouffé (1965: 207). Ahmad (1994: 61-2) offered further insights into its use in verbal compounds. It is found in 2-member V+NDO compounds in which the final vowel of the NDO is shortened. The examples given in 1d (above) are repeated here (Table 8):

TABLE 8. Final vowel shortening of the NDO

H-verb (gr1)	<i>rùfa-baaya</i>	(cover back)	'support'
H-verb (gr4)	<i>kàarèe-dangi</i>	(finish family)	'type of arrow poison'
I-verb	<i>bii-bango</i>	(follow wall)	'leakage along wall'

As mentioned above (subsection 2.1) the final vowels of the nouns *baayaa* 'back', *dangii* 'family', and *bango* 'wall', are shortened in the compound. It should

¹⁵ In some cases, the IMP form of monosyllabic I-verbs has a H tone rather than the expected L tone, e.g. *ci-dà-mòotsin-wani* (lit.: eat with motion.of other) '1. epithet of cattle egret, 2. scrounger'. At first glance, such compounds could be classified as UM; however, Jagger (1982) has shown that monoverbs often have IMP with a H tone.

be pointed out that, while FVS is widely used¹⁶, it is not used by all speakers in this context.

The compound markers TL and FVS are only found in compounds with H- and I-verbs; only H-verbs are found in UM compounds. L-verbs are not found with these markers.

4. Transitive L-verbs in verbal compounds

In this section compounds with a transitive L-verb (grade 2) are examined: V+NDO, V+PDO, and V+∅DO frames – with special mention of the lack of FVS on the NDO in V+NDO compounds. In subsection 4.2 a number of compounds are listed in which the verb is a transitive L-verb (with the appropriate semantics) but it takes the form of an H-verb (grade 1).

4.1. Compounds with transitive L-verbs in the NDO, PDO and ∅DO frames

In this section I describe the various frames found in compounds with a transitive L-verb: V+NDO, V+PDO, and V+∅DO (subsections 4.1.1 – 4.1.3, respectively); in 4.1.1 the focus is on the “non-appearance” of FVS (see 3.2.4) in the few examples (19) of V+NDO compounds that are found.

4.1.1. The “nonappearance” of FVS in V+NDO compounds with a transitive L-verb

Transitive L-verbs are “[...] the largest class of basic transitive verbs in the language” (Newman 2000: 642): the fact that only 19 compounds (5,3% of 359 V+NDO frames; see Table 8 above) are found with a transitive L-verb in an NDO frame is unexpected, to say the least. The further fact that FVS is not used in marking these compounds (see McIntyre 2006: 97f) adds to the need for an explanation. The 19 V+NDO compounds are listed here in five sub-groups (5a–e) which are organised according to the lexical and/or morphosyntactic reason for the “non-appearance” of FVS.

In the first group (5a) the NDOs cannot be shortened: *gùrzuu* ‘invulnerable man’ ends in a diphthong; the final vowel of *dukà* ‘all’ is lexically short; *Baidù*, is a name – and, like many names, has a short final vowel:

¹⁶ It is also used in a few Noun+Noun compounds, e.g. *jàn-bàaki* (red.of mouth) ‘lipstick’ where the noun *bàakii* shortens the final vowel.

(5a)

<i>dàagùri-gùrzau</i>	(gnaw.at invulnerable.man)	'charm for invulnerability'
<i>dâu-dukà</i>	(take all)	'fine person'
<i>hòori-Baidù</i>	(train <i>Baidu</i>)	'a large leather bag'

In 5b the NDO in most examples has a bound possessive pronoun *-nkà/-nki* ('yours' m./f.). In two compounds (*nèemi-naakà* and *sàaminaakà*) we find an independent possessive pronoun ('yours' m.). These pronouns end with a short final vowel and cannot undergo FVS:

(5b)

<i>dàuki-kwàrìnkà</i>	(take quiver.of.you)	'matrilocal marriage'
<i>dàuki-sàndankà</i>	(take stick.of.you)	'matrilocal marriage'
<i>dàuki-faifanki</i>	(take small.mat.of.you)	'food for casual guest'
<i>màari-bàakinkà</i>	(slap mouth.of.you)	'beans cooked alone'
<i>nèemi-naakà</i>	(look.for yours)	'name'
<i>sàaminaakà</i>	(get yours)	'town (S.E. of Kano)'
(<i>< sàami-naakà</i>)		
<i>zàabi-sônkà</i>	(choose wish.of.you)	'greetings on radio'

I shall comment on these possessives below (5.3).

The four compounds in 5c are the only compounds with an NDO and a transitive L-verb where FVS might apply; it does not:

5c.

<i>cìri-cookàlii</i>	(pull.out spoon)	'a dancing game'
<i>gwàagwiyi-gòorubàa</i>	(gnaw deleb-fruit)	'children's game'
<i>shàaki-bùkii</i>	(smell feast)	'p. habitually going to celebrations without invitation to cadge'
<i>zàabùri-kàryaa</i>	(cause.leap.forward bitch)	'type of sleeveless shirt'

None of the Hausa speakers I asked applied FVS in these four compounds¹⁷.

The following compound is similar to those in 5c; however, it seems to have been lexicalised and is found in the dictionaries as a single word; it does not shorten the final vowel:

¹⁷ Ahmad mentions *gwàagwiyi-gòorubàa* several times. He does not mark a short final vowel; nor does he remark on this exception to his rule (1994: 61-2).

(5d)

<i>d̥ibgibaṙàa</i>	(drive.away begging)	'1) showing concern at sth. which is not one's business
(< <i>d̥ibgi-baṙàa</i>)		2) talking at random'

Lexicalised compounds either lengthen a short final vowel or retain its original length. (The compound *sàaminaakà* in 5b is lexicalised, but retains the short final vowel of the independent possessive).

In the following group we have compounds with a transitive L-verb and either a complex NDO (first two examples) or the syntax V+NDO+V+NDO (last two examples):

(5e)

<i>sàari-màataṙ-</i> <i>rùmaanaa</i>	(chop wife.of gladioli)	'woman who lets herself be bullied'
<i>d̥auki-kanwaṙ-bàakii-</i> <i>bàa-awaakin-bàakii</i>	(take potash.of guests give.to goats.of guests)	'paying debt by borrowing from other person'
<i>fàḍi-banzaa-</i> <i>fàḍi-wòofii</i>	(say uselessness say emptiness)	'talking about any thing and everything'
<i>sàki-reeshèe-</i> <i>kàamà-ganye</i>	(release branch catch leaf)	'leaving the reliable for the unreliable'

FVS does not apply in complex compounds, neither in the above (L-verbs), nor in complex compounds with H- and I-verbs.

4.1.2. Transitive L-verbs in V+PDO compounds

Here (6), are the three examples of transitive L-verbs in a ØDO frame:

(6) (Transitive L-verb) V+PDO:

<i>d̥au-ni</i>	(take me)	in: <i>taa yi musù ~</i> 'she issued their rations'
<i>sàu-ta-gà-waawaa</i>	(release her to fool)	'girl whose marriage comes to swift end'
<i>cùudèe-ni-in-cùudèe-kà</i>	(massage me 1s.SBJ massage you)	in: <i>zaman duuniyàa</i> <i>bikii nèe, ~</i> 'life is a celebration "you help me I help you"'

These three compounds are the only compounds with a transitive L-verb in a V+PDO frame. This contrasts with 15 compounds with transitive H-verbs

(11 gr1 verbs, 1 gr4 verb, 1 gr5 verb and 2 gr6 verbs) and 22 with an I-verb. Given the relatively small number of compounds in this frame (40, of which 3 – 7,5% – have an L-verb), the contrast is perhaps less significant than in the V+NDO compounds (4.1.1). On the other hand, given that the largest number of transitive verbs in the language are L-verbs, one might also have expected more in this frame.

4.1.3. Transitive L-verb in V+ØDO compounds

Here a few examples of transitive L-verbs in a ØDO frame:

(7) (Transitive L-verb) V+ØDO:

<i>dàki-bàri</i>	(beat stop)	'strong, reliable thing'
<i>dāuki-sàkaa</i>	(take put)	'type of quilted saddle-cover'
<i>shàaci-fàđi</i>	(comb say)	in: <i>yi</i> ~ 'invent stories'
<i>zàri-rùugaa</i>	(grab run)	'rugby'

The fact that 36 of 80 compounds (45%) in a ØDO frame have a transitive L-verb, while only 24 H and 20 I-verbs appear in this frame seems to weaken the claim that transitive L-verbs are unexpectedly scarce in compounds. I shall address this question in subsection 6.3.

4.2. Grade switching in compounds: Transitive L-verbs with a gr1 form

Here I present a further feature – grade switching¹⁸ – which affects the form of the transitive L-verb in V+NDO compounds. In the following 11 compounds the transitive L-verbs (their identity as transitive L-verbs (grade 2) is clear from their meaning) take the form of a grade 1 (H-) verb with the IMP form:

(8) Grade-switching: Transitive L-verbs with the form of a transitive H-verb:

<i>dàngwàrà-dàbe</i>	(hit floor)	'overgrown clitoris'
<i>fàskàrà-tòoyi</i>	(defy burning)	'a herb'
<i>gàagàrà-baami</i>	(defy foreigner)	'tongue twister'
<i>gàagàrà-bin</i>	(defy monkey)	'plaited leather dog collar'

¹⁸ Jagger (2001: 272f.) uses the term "grade-switching" to describe L-verbs using an H-verb form when preceding an indirect object (see section 2.2.2.2). The same term is used by Newman (2000: 708) to describe verbs in grades 1 and 4 H-verbs whose VNs have the shape of a gr2 VN L-verb. Although neither author uses my H- and L-verb terminology, both are describing how an L-verb "switches" to the form of an H-verb – as I do in the present section.

<i>gàagàrà-gàasa</i>	(defy competition)	'outstanding person'
<i>gàagàrà-kòoyo</i>	(defy learning)	'mysterious thing'
<i>gàagàrà-kwànta</i>	(defy untying)	'knotted hobbling rope'
<i>hàràrà-garkè</i>	(glare.at flock)	'an eye syndrome'
<i>Kàrbà-gàri</i>	(take town)	'conqueror of the town'
<i>màarà(a)-bàakinkà</i>	(slap mouth.of.2m)	'beans cooked alone'
<i>zàabùrà-dawaaki</i>	(make.leap.forward horses)	'epithet' ¹⁹

I suggest that the transitive L-verbs in these compounds have taken a grade 1 form because the latter are normal in compounds whereas the former are rare, at least in V+NDO compounds. Given the fact that the form is that of an H-verb, it is not surprising that FVS is found. In section 5 I describe compounds beginning with a person-aspect-pronoun (PAC) and with a *ma-* suffix, respectively.

5. PAC- and *ma-*compounds

In this section I describe two kinds of compounds, firstly, PAC-compounds – whose first member is a person-aspect-complex (5.1) and, secondly, compounds with a /*ma-*/ prefix – both singular and plural (5.2). The syntax of these compounds is similar to that of the V+X compounds but not quite as varied. Some features of these compounds seem to challenge the central thesis of this paper, namely the status of compounds with transitive L-verbs.

5.1. PAC+V+X compounds

Some 51 VCs with a transitive verb start with a PAC (Table 9):

TABLE 9. Distribution of transitive frames in PAC+V+X VCs

Frame	H-verbs			L-verbs	I-verbs	Total
	gr1	gr4	gr5	gr2		
V+NDO	–	–	–	7	20	27
V+PDO	1	–	1	1	1	4
V+∅DO	5	2	–	1	11	19
V+PIO	–	–	–	–	1	1
Total	6	2	1	9	33	51

¹⁹ The compound *zàabùrà-dawaaki* is an epithet used by professional beggars for any person named Amadu ([A959 ; B1119]). *Kàrbà-gàri* seems to refer to the son of *Bawo*, the ancient Hausa ancestor.

The distribution of frames and verb types in this table differs significantly from those seen in the previous sections: of the 27 NDO-frames, 7 have a transitive L-verb and 20 have an I-verb; there are no H-verbs. Here are the seven V+NDO compounds with a transitive L-verb:

(9) The seven PAC+V2+NDO compounds:

<i>à-kòori-buuzuu</i>	(4pl.SBJ chase-Tuareg)	'police-like house guard'
<i>à-kòori-kuuraa</i>	(4pl.SBJ chase-cart)	'delivery truck'
<i>à-wàawùri-kàryaa</i>	(4pl.SBJ grab bitch)	'type of sleeveless shirt'
<i>à-zàabùri-kàryaa</i>	(4pl.SBJ grab bitch)	'type of sleeveless shirt'
<i>à-zùngùri-duuniyàa</i>	(4pl.SBJ poke world)	'type of pointed boots'
<i>wàa-ya zàagi-bàaba</i>	(who 2mREL.CMP insult father)	'type of club'
<i>wàa-ya zàagi-dòogarii</i>	(who 2mREL.CMP insult king's guard)	'type of fabric'

As well as NDO-frames we find 4 PDO-frames, 19 ØDO-frames, a single PIO-frame (no NIO-frame). The fact that there are no H-verbs with an NDO-frame seems to contradict the central point of this paper. In subsection 6.3 I argue that this is not the case.

5.2. Singular and plural *ma*- compounds with a transitive verb

A further 40 compounds have a /*ma*-/ prefix and a transitive verb; there are both singular (5.2.1) and plural *ma*-compounds (5.2.2). (There is no direct correspondence between singular and plural *ma*-compounds, although in a few cases singular compounds have a plural *ma*- equivalent).

5.2.1. Singular *ma*- compounds with a transitive verb

There are 25 singular *ma*- compounds with a transitive, tone lowered, phonologically reduced verb following the prefix. Some 17 of these compounds have an I-verb, 16 of which have an NDO-frame; 1 has a PIO-frame. Eight have an H-verb and an NDO-frame; there are no transitive L-verbs (Table 10):

TABLE 10. Distribution of transitive frames in singular *ma*-V+X VCs

Frame	H-verbs			L-verbs	I-verbs	Total
	gr1	gr4	gr5	gr2		
V+NDO	3	1	4	–	16	24
V+PIO	–	–	–	–	1	1
Total	3	1	4	–	17	25

The fact that there are no transitive L-verbs may be accidental, but perhaps the tone-lowered, phonologically reduced verb plays a role: transitive L-verbs are not found with TL in V+X compounds (see subsection 3.2.2). The following examples are all NDO-frames: two H-verbs with phonologically reduced forms (*ras* ← gr1 *rasâa* 'lack'; *kas* ← gr4 *kashêe* 'kill'); and two monosyllabic I-verbs (*fi* 'exceed' and *soo* 'like'):

(10) *ma*-CVC/CVV compounds:

<i>marâs-hankâlii</i>	(<i>ma</i> :lack sense)	'senseless person'
<i>makâs-dubuu</i>	(<i>ma</i> :kill thousand)	'killer of thousands'
<i>mafii-kyâu</i>	(<i>ma</i> :exceed beauty)	'the most beautiful'
<i>masòo-fadâa</i>	(<i>ma</i> :like quarrel)	'quarrelsome person'

5.2.2. Plural *ma*- compounds with a transitive verb

There are 15 plural *ma*- compounds with a transitive verb; these compounds have a plural meaning. The syntax is limited to the NDO frame; we find 7 H-verbs (all grade 1), 5 L-verbs and 3 I-verbs.

TABLE 11. Distribution of transitive frames in plural *ma*-V+NDOs

Frame	H-verbs	L-verbs	I-verbs	Total
	gr1	gr2		
V+NDO	7	5	3	15
Total	7	5	3	15

The /*ma*-/ prefix is followed by a verb stem and a suffix /-*aa*/. Together these three components have the same morphology as a plural noun of agent (/ma-/, verb stem with L tone, and the plural suffix /-*aa*/). However, in the latter, while the verb stem and the verb's meaning are retained, the verb stem does not keep its verbal function; in contrast, the verb stem in the plural *ma*- compound retains its verbal function and may take a direct object, etc. In the examples below (11) we find the verb stems (with L tone) of two transitive H-verbs (*kèer-* ← *kèerâa* 'smith', *shèek-* ← *shèekâa* 'winnow', both grade 1) and of two transitive L-verbs (*hàlàĩt-* ← *hàlàĩtàa* 'attend' and *hàrb-* ← *hàrbâa* 'hunt, shoot') as well as one I-verb (*sân-* ← *sânii* 'know'):

(11)

<i>makèeraa-farfaruu</i>	(<i>ma</i> :smith white[pl.])	'white-metal smiths'
<i>marshèekaa-ayaa</i>	(<i>ma</i> :winnow tigernut.grass)	in: <i>ganin</i> ~ 'looking at p. contemptuously'

<i>mahàlàftaa tàarôn</i>	(<i>ma</i> :attend meeting.DET)	'those attending the meeting'
<i>mahàrbaa-baunaa</i>	(<i>ma</i> :hunt bushcow)	'bushcow hunters'
<i>masànaa-taafiihii</i>	(<i>ma</i> :know history)	'historians'

The fact that there is no significant difference between the numbers of transitive H-, L-, and I-verbs (7, 5, and 3, respectively) again seems to put the argument of this paper in question. In fact, both PAC and plural *ma*- compounds seem to offer a different picture to the one seen in section 2 where we saw a very small number of V+NDO compounds with a transitive L-verb. In PAC and plural *ma*- compounds the number of transitive L-verbs is normal – indeed, in PAC+V+NDO compounds there are no H-verbs.

I shall discuss the significance of the distribution of these compounds in subsection 6.2.

In subsection 6.3 I outline a hypothesis which shows that the presence of transitive L-verbs in PAC and plural *ma*- compounds does not change the fact that transitive L-verbs have an anomalous status in verbal compounds.

6. The descriptions, the problems, and a hypothesis

The above description of Hausa verbal compounds indicates that transitive L-verbs are rare, at least in compounds with a V+NDO frame. This description – both the syntax of the compounds and their markers – is summarised in subsection 6.1 (where V+PDO frames are also mentioned). In 6.2 the apparent inconsistency of transitive L-verbs being well represented in compounds with a V+ØDO frame as well as in PAC- and plural *ma*-compounds is discussed. In 6.3 I offer a hypothesis which resolves these apparent inconsistencies.

6.1. The V+NDO (and PDO) compounds

In section 2 we saw that transitive L-verbs in compounds with an NDO are few. Table 12 summarises this information:

TABLE 12. Distribution of NDO-frames of H-, L-, and I-verbs in compounds

	L-verbs	H-verbs	I-verbs	Total
V+NDO	19	239	101	359
PAC+V+NDO	7	–	20	27
sg.- <i>ma</i>	–	8	16	24
pl.- <i>ma</i>	5	7	3	15
Total	31	254	140	425

The table shows the distribution of compounds with an NDO frame. In the simple V+NDO compounds we find 19 transitive L- as against 239 transitive H-verbs and 101 transitive I-verbs (5.3%). If the PAC and *ma*- compounds with an NDO are included, the figures are 31 transitive L-verbs as against 254 H-verbs and 140 I-verbs (subsection 3.1). It is clear that transitive L-verbs in compounds with an NDO are surprisingly few (7.3%)²⁰.

Furthermore, transitive L-verbs are only found with the imperative form in compounds; these verbs are not found with tone lowering or in unmarked compounds; nor are they found with final vowel shortening (see subsections 3.2.2, 3.2.3 and 3.2.4, respectively). Furthermore, a small group of these verbs “switch” grades (to grade 1 H-verb forms) in V+NDO compounds (see subsection 4.2).

Looking at the V+PDO compounds we find 3 with a transitive L-verb, 15 with an H-verb and 22 with an I-verb (see Table 3). Statistically, the three compounds with a transitive L-verb and a PDO frame may not be significant. On the other hand, given that transitive L-verbs (grade 2) have the largest number of transitive verbs in the language, one might justifiably expect more in this frame.

6.2. Compounds with a V+∅DO frame, and PAC- and plural *ma*-compounds

The numbers of compounds with a transitive L-verb in a V+∅DO frame as well as those in PAC- and plural *ma*- compounds seem to challenge the argument made in this paper. Some 36 of 80 compounds (45%) in a ∅DO frame have a transitive L-verb, while only 24 H and 20 I-verbs appear in this frame.

Similarly, the PAC- and plural *ma*- compounds show no imbalance in the distribution of H-, L-, and I-verbs. Indeed, in PAC+V+NDO compounds, not a single H-verb is found, while there are 7 with L-verbs (3.1); this seems to challenge the argument made in this paper²¹. As for the plural *ma*-V+NDO compounds (4.1.1), there are 5 plural *ma*-V+NDO compounds with a gr2 verb compared with 7 with H-verbs and 3 with I-verbs.

²⁰ If the 11 transitive L-verbs which “switch” to the grade 1 (H-verb) form were added to those in Table 12, we would have 42 such compounds (just under 10%). This addition is, however, ambiguous, for while these verbs are, semantically, transitive L-verbs, their morphology in the compound is that of an H-verb.

²¹ However, PAC-compounds with H-verbs are found in ∅DO- and PDO-frames (seven ∅DO-, two PDO-frames) and there are 13 intransitive frames with an H-verb.

The existence of these possibilities (V+ØDO frame, PAC- and plural *ma-* compounds) for transitive L-verbs in compounds seems to challenge the central argument of this paper. I address this inconsistency in subsection 6.3.

6.3. A hypothesis about subject and object; “covert subjects”

In McIntyre (2006) I developed a hypothesis to explain the facts described above. The hypothesis is based on Abdoulaye (1996: 5) where he suggests that “the overall function of gr[ade] 2 [i.e. transitive L-verbs] is to select a unique argument for the verb *beside the subject*” (my emphasis). In V+NDO compounds the “unique argument” is the NDO, but it is not “beside the subject” because, quite simply, there is no subject in a V+NDO compound. I suggest that the “missing” subject explains the paucity of such compounds.

This hypothesis also offers an explanation of the problem posed by the fact that 36 of 80 compounds (45%) in the ØDO frame have a transitive L-verb as against 24 H- and 20 I-verbs (30% and 25%, respectively) found in this frame. This statistic seems to contradict the central thesis of this paper, however, since V+ØDO compounds have neither a subject nor an object, “the overall function of [transitive L-verbs] to select a unique argument for the verb beside the subject” is unproblematic in this frame.

Again, if this hypothesis is correct, the fact that PAC+V+NDO compounds are found with transitive L-verbs is not surprising: the PAC is a subject, and the formation of compounds with a transitive L-verb is straightforward. I also suggest that there are other – covert – subjects: firstly, the agentive prefix /*ma-*/ in the plural *ma-* compounds²², and secondly, possessive pronouns in compounds with a transitive L-verb and an NDO.

The /*ma-*/ is a widely used prefix in the formation of agentives; agents are subjects and thus the /*ma-*/ can be seen as a “covert” subject. This interpretation is supported by the fact that the verbal complex of the plural *ma-* compounds have the same morphology as plural nouns of agent (see 5.2.2).

A further covert subject is found in compounds with a transitive L-verb in the NDO frame, namely, the possessive pronouns: *-nkà/-naakà* ‘yours’ m.sg.; *-nkì, naaki* ‘yours’ f.sg. These pronouns are found in 7 of the 19 V+NDO compounds

²² The small number of singular *ma-* compounds makes it difficult to assess whether the “non-appearance” of gr2 verbs in singular *ma-*V+NDO compounds (as against 3 with a gr1 verb, 1 with a gr4 verb, 4 with a gr5 verb, and 16 I-verbs) is significant.

with a transitive L-verb; they refer to the subject (normally expressed in the “missing” person-aspect complex (PAC); see examples 5b repeated here):

(5b)

<i>dāuki-kwàrìnkà</i>	(take quiver.of.you)	‘matrilocal marriage’
<i>dāuki-sàndankà</i>	(take stick.of.you)	‘matrilocal marriage’
<i>dāuki-faifankì</i>	(take small.mat.of.you)	‘food for casual guest’
<i>màari-bàakìnkà</i>	(slap mouth.of.you)	‘beans cooked alone’
<i>nèemi-naakà</i>	(look.for yours)	‘name’
<i>sàaminaakà</i>	(get yours)	‘town (S.E. of Kano)’
(< <i>sàami-naakà</i>)		
<i>zàabi-sônkà</i>	(choose wish.of.you)	‘greetings on radio’

7. Conclusion

In this paper I have described Hausa verbal compounds in terms of my modified grade system in which regular verbs are divided into H- and L-verbs (see 2.2.2.2). A particular focus was the regular verbs in V+NDO compounds, showing that transitive L-verbs are not usually found in such compounds. We saw that compounds with these verbs are not only restricted in number, but also in the kinds of verb form/marker found in the compound, a restriction which is underlined by the fact that in a few compounds, transitive L-verbs use the form of an H-verb (grade-switching; see subsection 4.2). A hypothesis was offered which suggests an explanation for apparent inconsistencies, i.e. where the number of compounds with transitive L-verbs compares easily with those of H- and I-verbs: in the ØDO frame, with a PAC or with a /*ma-*/ prefix. I proposed the idea of “covert subjects”, the /*ma-*/ prefix, and the possessive pronoun in a number of compounds with a transitive L-verb and an NDO frame.

The wider question is whether the differences between H- and L-verbs – which seem so clear in verbal compounds – are found in the Hausa verbal system as a whole. This picture should be completed with a closer look at I-verbs and at intransitive verbs.

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The numeral system(s) in Western Serengeti: Formal, functional, and historical inferences

Abstract

In this study we offer a detailed synchronic and diachronic account of the hitherto un(der)-documented numeral systems of the four closely related (Eastern) Bantu language varieties: Ikoma, Nata, Ishenyi, and Ngoreme – together forming the Western Serengeti subgroup. We describe the essentially identical formation and organization of numerals in these language varieties while also noting the morphosyntactic behaviour of numeral expressions and their extended uses. Based on an extensive quantity of comparative data, we furthermore disentangle the historical background to the numerals and their systematization in Western Serengeti, connecting this specific linguistic domain with the wider genealogical profile of this subgroup.

Keywords: Bantu, Mara, numerals, numeral system, reconstruction

1. Introduction

In this article¹ we focus on four closely related and poorly described (Eastern) Bantu language varieties acknowledged as forming a genealogical subgroup, i.e. the Western Serengeti (WS) branch of the Mara subgroup of Great Lakes languages (Gibson & Roth 2019, Schoenbrun 1990). Three of the four language varieties constituting the WS group are Ikoma (ca. 15 000 speakers), Nata (ca. 11 500 speakers), and Ishenyi (ca. 9 500 speakers), jointly classified with the iso-code *ntk* and Guthrie code JE45²; the final language variety is Ngoreme (ca. 55 000 speakers), classified as *nqk* and JE401, respectively (see Aunio et al. 2019). They are all spoken in the Serengeti district of the Mara region, North-Western Tanzania, an area situated between Lake Victoria to the west and the Serengeti National Park to the east. The Mara region is dense and diversified from a linguistic perspective. Including the members of the WS group, it consists altogether of roughly 20 Bantu language varieties, along with other languages of Nilotic descent.

This study accounts for the numeral system(s) of the WS group languages. Numeral systems have clear semantic delimitations and morphosyntactic behaviour (Rischel 1997, Hammarström 2010), and even in more rudimentary descriptions of Bantu languages, numbers are typically still included. Numerals in Bantu are a formally distinctive class with a separate type of agreement marking (Stappers 1965). Consequently, there is plenty of early historical-comparative works in Bantuistics which pay attention to the origin of numerals and the developments within numeral systems in Bantu languages (see *inter alia* Werner 1919: 133-143, Schmidl 1915, Meinhof 1948: 117-124, Meeussen 1967: 96-98, 105, 117, Meeussen 1969, Hoffmann 1953, Polak-Bynon 1965, Stappers 1965). However, numerals are seldom a topic in modern comparative Bantu studies (an exception is Pozdniakov 2018, which, however, is a broader study encompassing the whole (putative) Niger-Congo macro family)³. This is surprising, given the fact that the “domain of numerals presents a prime case of using structured groups of lexemes for assessing historical-comparative questions” (Güldemann 2018: 74). Similarly, descriptive works on single Bantu languages or on small subsets of languages usually do not offer reconstructions of the origins of numerals and their further evolution within the numeral system.

¹ This research has been funded by the Kone Foundation. We wish to gratefully acknowledge their support. We also wish to thank our Western Serengeti language consultants, the Mara branch of SIL International and Tim Roth. We also thank Mary Chambers for polishing our English.

² See subsection 3.1 for more information about this Bantu specific referential system.

³ See also Grimm (2019) for a critical review of this work.

Following the appeal by Rankin (2006), this study sets out to show how a historical-comparative approach is a particularly useful tool for the analysis and description of previously un(der)described varieties. Placing the WS numerals in a historical-comparative framework, this study brings further light to the diachronic forces behind the system, consequently offering a more robust description of it. At the same time, describing the numeral systems of WS also provides extra data for further comparative (and typological) work, facilitating the drawing of more fine-grained generalizations and conclusions about this linguistic notion. To this we may add that the documentation of numeral systems in these Tanzanian language varieties is a particularly pressing matter, insofar as they are increasingly being replaced by numerals borrowed from Swahili – that is, the prominent language which is both the national and co-official medium of communication (see e.g. Legère 2006) – and thus are at imminent risk of disappearing. This loss is a situation they share with many numeral systems of the world. Thus, Comrie (2005a) considers numeral systems of the world and their socio-cultural particularities a specifically endangered domain of languages.

In a fashion congenial to the bifocal descriptive-*cum*-comparative aim of this study – and in accordance with Blažek’s (1999) three steps of numeral analysis – the article is organized in the following manner. In section 2 we present the overall numeral system with regard to the organization of ordinal and cardinal numerals, their agreement marking, and other formal and functional traits. In section 3 we focus on the historical-comparative background to this numeral system. In section 4 we offer a summary and some final conclusions.

2. Presenting the numeral system

In this study we define numerals, following Hammarström (2010: 11, see also Schapper & Klamer 2014), as “spoken normed expressions that are used to denote the exact number of objects for an open class of objects in an open class of social situations with the whole speech community in question”⁴. We furthermore treat these numeral expressions as being systematically arranged into a numeral system. As pointed out by Rischel (1997), numeral systems form a closed and relatively limited functional-semantic domain. That is to say, although an enormous number of different digits may indeed be formed in

⁴ Notice that by following this definition we exclude “inexact” numerals for this study, like the reflexes of the common Bantu quantifiers (see Zerbian & Krifka 2008) or different fractions (‘half’, ‘quarter’ etc.).

a language, there is only a limited and closed set of primitive (mostly low-valued) numerals, of which all other digits are merely complex derivatives. The numeral system is typically further subdivided into cardinals and ordinals and we follow that convention here when describing the numeral systems of WS. However, as will be further evidenced in this section, there are also several other functional traits associated with numerals in these language varieties.

2.1. Cardinals

The simplex or basic cardinal numbers, as they occur in the WS language varieties, are presented in Table 1⁵. Note that there is no dedicated expression for ‘zero’, nor does any such expression occur in the formation of higher digits either. This is in line with the typical case in natural languages (see Greenberg 1978, 2000, Hurford 1987: 95).

TABLE 1. Cardinal numerals in WS

	Ikoma	Nata	Ishenyi	Ngoreme
1	-mu	-mwe	-mwe	-mwe
2	-βere	-βere	-βere	-βere
3	-tato	-tato	-tato	-tato
4	-ne	-ne	-ne	-ne
5	-taano	-taano	-taano	-taano
6	-saasaβe	-saasaβe	-saasaβe	-saansaβa
7	mohungáte	mohungáte	muhungáte	mohúngate
8	-naane	-naane	-naane	-naane

⁵ The WS examples cited in this paper are from a corpus of transcribed and analyzed recordings made during extensive fieldwork in the Mara region from 2008 to 2019. Some of the data used has been collected by SIL members. Bible quotations referred to also come from the work by SIL. As Ikoma is the only WS language with an approved orthography, the writing system in the WS examples here is phonological (IPA), with the exception of contrastive long vowels, which are written with double consonants. The Ishenyi vowel system appears to be going through a loss of phonemic ATR contrasts, and there is a lot of inter- and intra-speaker variation. To keep the data comparable across the WS varieties, Ishenyi is also transcribed with 7 vowels despite occasional inconsistencies (see Laine 2016). Only surface tones are marked (with an accent), and numeral stems are not marked for tone as tones can also be realized on the numeral prefix and not the stem. It should be noted that tone analysis for these languages is work in progress.

	Ikoma	Nata	Ishenyi	Ngoreme
9	kénde	kénde	kénde	kénda
10	ikómi	ikómi	ikomi	ikómi
100	eriyána	ríiyana	riiyana	riiyána
1000	eɣekú	eɣekwé	eɣekwe	eɣekwé
100 000	ekirára	ekirára	ekiráre	ekirára

As seen in Table 1, the various numeral systems are more or less identical. The exceptions are, apart from some minor differences in vowel quality associated with more general differences in phonological structure, the extra word-medial nasal in '6' in Ngoreme. Additionally, word-final syllables in Ikoma may not be labialized, which induces the differing shapes of the numerals '1' and '1000' in this variety. The similarity between the varieties is not surprising, given the fact that they are closely related, with an estimated lexical overlap of up to 85% between Ikoma, Nata, and Ishenyi and 77% between Ngoreme and Ikoma (Roth 2018: 12).

As further indicated in this table, the cardinal numeral system consists of both variable and invariable numerals. Compare example (1), where the numeral '3' agrees with the head noun, with (2), where the numeral '9' remains unaffected.

(1) Ngoreme

<i>ni-sɔ́m-ire</i>	<i>e-Bɔ́i-táβo</i>	<i>βi-táto</i>
SP1SG-read-PFV	AUG-8-book	8-three

'I have read three books.'

(2) Ikoma

<i>a-βá-áto</i>	<i>kénde</i>	<i>m-ba-aré</i>	<i>βá-raru</i>	<i>a-mo-yóndo</i>
AUG-2-person	nine	FOC-SP2-COP.PST	SP2-leave	25-3-farm

'Nine people were leaving the farm.'

Bantu languages are characterized by having an extensive gender-like system, consisting of up to 20 noun classes, of which most are paired based on number (singular/plural). The WS language varieties form no exceptions to this characteristic trait. The variable numerals may take agreement with most of these different noun classes as they occur among the WS members. We use data from Nata to illustrate this fact in Table 2. (See also Table 3 in subsection 3.2).

TABLE 2. The enumerative agreement prefixes in Nata

Num. NC pair	1/2 u-/βa-	3/4 u-/e-	5/6 ri-/a-	7/8 ki-/βi-	9/10 i-/i-	12/13 ka-/tu-	14 βu-
'1' -mwe	ú-mwe	ú-mwe	ri-mwe	ki-mwe	i-mwe	ká-mwe	βú-mwe
'2' -βere	βá-βere	é-βere	á-βere	βí-βere	í-βere	tú-βere	βó-βere
'3' -tato	βá-tato	é-tato	á-tato	βí-tato	í-sato	tú-tato	βó-tato
'4' -ne	βá-ne	é-ne	á-ne	βí-ne	í-ne	tú-ne	βú-ne
'5' -taano	βá-taano	é-taano	á-taano	βí-taano	í-saano	tú-taano	βú-taano
'6' -saasaβe	βa- saasaβe	e- saasaβe	a- saasaβe	βi- saasaβe	i- saasaβe	tu- saasaβe	βu- saasaβe
'8' -naanε	βa-naané	e-naané	a-naané	βi-naané	i-naané	tu-naané	βu-naané

All the other WS members behave in essentially the same way as Nata when it comes to numeral agreement. The Ikoma and Nata enumerative prefixes have the close back vowel /u/ for the numeral '1', and Ishenyi and Ngoreme the close mid back vowel /o/. Underlyingly, the vowel in Ikoma and Nata may also be the close mid vowel which is dissimilated from the –ATR stem vowel /ε/. In Nata, the –ATR vowel is still present in the stem *-mwe*, whereas Ikoma (as mentioned above) has lost the final vowel due to a later rule that prohibits labialization from occurring word-finally.

One exceptional feature of Nata is the regular singular-plural shift of the diminutive noun class 12 *ka-* to class 13 *tu-*, as in (3). The other WS members derive plurals of class 12 *ka-* with the prefix of class 19 *hi-* (another noun class dedicated to diminutives), as in (4).

(3) Nata

<i>a-ka-té</i>	<i>ké-mwe,</i>	<i>o-tu-té</i>	<i>tú-taano</i>
AUG-12-tree	12-one	AUG-13-tree	13-five
'one small tree, five small trees'			

(4) Ikoma

<i>a-ka-té</i>	<i>ká-mu,</i>	<i>e-hi-té</i>	<i>hí-taano</i>
AUG-12-tree	12-one	AUG-19-tree	19-five

'one small tree, five small trees'

The enumerative class prefixes for classes 11 *ru-*, 15 *ku-*, 16 *ha-*, and 20 *yu-* are not included in this table as they only agree with the numeral '1'. Curiously, class 14 is also a singular class. However, head nouns in this class can still be modified with plural numerals, as evident in (5).

(5) Ishenyi

<i>oβó-óngo</i>	<i>m-bu-tato</i>	<i>áá-na</i>
14-brain	FOC-14-three	SP1-com

'S/he is not very intelligent.' (Lit: 'S/he has three brains.')

Similarly, all WS members lack enumerative prefixes for the locative noun classes 17 and 18 (as well as for the almost completely obsolete locative noun class 25, cf. Grégoire 1975: 170-175). Consequently, they are not included in the table either. In fact, locative class agreement on numerals is generally rare given two conspiring facts. Firstly, the locative noun classes are overwhelmingly devoid of any inherent nouns. Instead, they are applied onto nouns of other noun classes to mark notions of location. Secondly, there is a general restriction in the WS which stipulates that any modifiers of such a noun derived with an additive locative class prefix do not agree with the locative but with the lexical noun class (Aunio et al. 2019). The only exception to this pattern, with locative enumerative agreement marking, occurs when the class 16 enumerative prefix is employed for marking agreement with either of the two nouns inherently belonging to class 16, that is, *ahasé* and *ahayíro*, both meaning 'place'. This is illustrated in (6).

(6) Ishenyi

<i>a-ha-sé</i>	<i>ha-mwe</i>	<i>há-no</i>	<i>ha=há-no</i>	<i>ha=há-áne</i>
AUG-16-place	16-one	16-DEM.DIST	SP16=16-DEM.PROX	SP16=16-POSS.1SG

'The one place which is there is mine.'

As is typical for Bantu languages (see e.g. Schadeberg 2003: 150), the enumerative agreement prefixes form a distinct paradigm of agreement markers. These prefixes, as represented in Table 2, are largely identical to the set of pronominal prefixes used for other nominal modifiers. The main differences are found in classes 4 (*e-*), 6 (*a-*), and 10 (*i-*), which lack an initial consonant in the enumerative form, unlike in the pronominal forms (which are *ye-*, *ya-*, and *īe-*, respectively).

We can illustrate this fact with example (7) from Ishenyi, where the same head noun, derived in noun class 10, triggers agreement in the noun phrase which is realized differently on the possessive pronoun than on the numeral. In (8) from Ikoma, it is the demonstrative and connective which agree differently from the numeral, all agreeing with the noun *amañémbe* ‘mangoes’ of noun class 6.

(7) Ishenyi

<i>βo-γ-íkar-a</i>	<i>t̥je-síku</i>	<i>t̥j-et̥je</i>	<i>i-fáto</i>
14-IPFV-stay-FV	10-day	10-POSS.3SG	10-three

‘It will stay for three days’ (lit. It will stay its three days).’

(8) Ikoma

<i>a-ra-mú-saβ-a</i>	<i>a-mu-h-é</i>	<i>a-ma-ñémbe</i>	<i>γá-jo</i>	<i>γa</i>	<i>ma-γúta,</i>
1-PROG-OP1-pray-FV	SP1-OP1-give-SBJV	AUG-6-mango	6-DEM.REF	CONN6	6-oil
<i>o-mo-βúréní</i>	<i>a-ra-mú-h-a</i>	<i>a-ma-ñémbe</i>	<i>a-tato</i>		
AUG-1-young_man	SP1-PROG-OP1-give-FV	AUG-6-mango	6-three		

‘He asked him to give him those oily mangoes, the young man gave him three mangoes.’

As also illustrated in this example and as further seen in Table 2, the enumerative prefix of class 10, constituted by a single high /l/, affects the phonological make-up of some of the numerals. The initial /t/ in ‘3’ and ‘5’ is fricativized to either /s/ (Ngoreme and Nata) or /ʃ/ (Ikoma and Ishenyi). The initial /s/ of ‘6’ also shifts to /ʃ/ in Ikoma and Ishenyi. The initial nasal of ‘4’ shifts to a palatalized /ɲ/. Interestingly, both nasals occurring in ‘8’ are palatalized in this manner. As further discussed in section 4, these morphophonological alternations come with historical implications.

Regarding the invariable numerals, they are formed as nouns and are assigned to different noun classes. Only ‘7’ belongs to noun class 3; ‘9’, ‘10’, and ‘100’ instead belong to class 5/6. The highest basic digits of the system, ‘1000’ and ‘100 000’, belong to class 7/8. The noun class prefix of class 5 behaves irregularly with numerals associated with this class, unlike other nominal stems which regularly take a full CV shaped prefix *ri(i)-*. The numeral *rii-γána* ‘100’ keeps this form, but for *i-kómi* ‘10’ this prefix is reduced to *i-* and for *kénde* ‘9’ the prefix is further reduced to zero. (But see subsection 2.2 where it is shown that the full prefix re-appears in ordinal constructions in Ishenyi.)

Bantu languages are generally considered as having decimal-based numeral systems, given the fact that the base – that is, the numerical value used recursively to form other numerals – is a stem meaning ‘ten’. Hence, the numerals 11-19, as well as the decades, are typically synchronically transparent complex con-

structions derived with 'ten'⁶. This system adheres to the pattern which is also by far the most common from a cross-linguistic perspective. As Comrie (2005b) notes: "We live in a decimal world". Thus, not surprisingly, the members of the WS group also have decimal-based numeral systems. Notice that, with the exception of the decimal-based system, there is also a recurrent pattern across the Bantu speaking area indicative of a quinary or base-five system (for digits below 10). However, although some close relatives/neighbours have such a quinary system (mixed with a decimal system), this is not the case in the WS language varieties (see subsection 3.4 for a more elaborate account).

Greenberg (1978, 2000, see also Comrie 2005a, 2005b, Schapper & Klamer 2014) distinguishes between "additive" and "multiplicature" complex numeral constructions, describing the most common arithmetic operations applied to the base and other numeral components in the formation of numerals. The WS language varieties form their numerals 11-19 through an additive strategy. As apparent in Table 1, the word for the (cardinal) numeral '10' in all the WS languages is *ikómi*, which also forms the augend (i.e. the count base) in these case(s), the addend being any number in the series from 1-9. The comitative preposition/conjunction *na* 'and/with' functions as the "link", that is, the additive operator between the augend *ikómi* and the serialized addend. The full set of these numerals are illustrated in (9) from Ikoma, with class 1 and 2 agreement.

(9) Ikoma

ikómi na ú-mu '11'

ikómi na bá-βere '12'

ikómi na bá-tato '13'

ikómi na bá-ne '14'

ikómi na bá-taano '15'

ikómi na βa-saasáβe '16'

ikómi na mohungáte '17'

ikómi na βa-naané '18'

ikómi na kéndé '19'

Notice that the final numeral in these examples agrees with the head noun and not with the base, as evidenced in (10). Example (11) from Ngoreme furthermore illustrates the analysability of the building blocks of these numerals. As seen at the end of this sentence, the augend base is used only once to cover a series of

⁶ However, Hammarström (2010) mentions some interesting deviations from this pattern, particularly in North-Western Bantu.

numerals and the comitative has been changed to a disjunctive coordinator ‘or’ (*au*, borrowed from Swahili) to signal the possible range of variation.

(10) Ishenyi

e-βi-γέσɔ *i-kómi na* *βi-βere*
 AUG-8-knife 5-ten COM 8-two
 ‘12 knives’

(11) Ngoreme

o-mó-óna *we* *ye-súβe* *a-hík-i* *i-kómi na* *e-nááne*
 AUG-1-child CONN1 7-male SP1-arrive-CAUS 5-ten COM 7-eight
we *ki-yáikoro* *a-híki* *e-mé-ka* *e-kómi na* *e-táto* *au e-né* *au e-tááno*
 CONN1 7-female SP1-arrive-CAUS AUG-4-year 4-ten COM 4-three or 4-four or 4-five
 ‘A male child reaches 18 [years] and a female [child] reaches 13, 14, or 15 years.’

Decades, that is, the numerals ‘20’-‘90’, are also decimal-based. However, they are formed differently in two aspects. Firstly, and crucially, they are not formed with *ikómi* but with the alternative word *miróγγɔ* (*mu-róγγɔ* in the singular, hence belonging to noun classes 3/4). Furthermore, they are formed through multiplication, that is, constructions where the decimal base (in this case *miróγγɔ*) serves as a multiplicand and any number from 2-9 may serve as a multiplier. The relationship between the two components is marked via noun class agreement governed by the multiplier. Example (12) illustrates this with data from Ishenyi.

(12) Ishenyi

miróγγɔ eβere ‘20’
miróγγɔ etáto ‘30’
miróγγɔ eene ‘40’
miróγγɔ etaanó ‘50’
miróγγɔ esaasáβe ‘60’
miróγγɔ muhúγγáte ‘70’
miróγγɔ enaané ‘80’
miróγγɔ kénde ‘90’

Numerals within these decades are formed with the combination of the multiplicative strategy and the additive strategy described for numerals 11-19. This is illustrated in (13) and (14) below. Notice again that the final numeral in these examples agrees with the head noun and not with the base.

(13) Ikoma

<i>a-βá-áto</i>	<i>mi-róngɔ</i>	<i>e-βere na</i>	<i>βá-taano</i>
AUG-2-person	4-ten	4-two COM	2-five
'25 people'			

(14) Ikoma

<i>n-t̪e-epi-ho</i>	<i>t̪a-ŋómbɛ</i>	<i>i-rengé?</i>	<i>t̪e-epi-hó</i>	<i>mi-róngɔ</i>	<i>e-βere</i>	<i>n-i-faasáβe.</i>
FOC-SP10-COP-LOC	10-cow	5-how_many	SP10-COP-LOC	4-ten	4-two COM-10-six	
'How many cows are there? There are 26.'						

Schadeberg (2003: 150) subdivides the Bantu cardinals into two further subtypes, that is, “referential” and “absolute” numerals, respectively. Whereas referential numerals – constituted by all examples provided up to now – are used for counting individuals or entities (‘one/two/three X’), absolute numerals are dedicated to calculations (‘one, two, three...’). Absolute numerals are always inflected in class 9/10 in all four varieties, for example, Ngoreme *emwé* ‘1’, *iβére* ‘2’, *isáto* ‘3’. In contrast with a common trait in other Bantu languages (Vanhoudt 1994), there is no difference in the formal realization of the word stem ‘1’ when used as an absolute relative to its use as a referential. One potential exception is found in Ikoma, where the final vowel in the stem for ‘1’ fluctuates between /u/ and /a/ in the formation of ‘11’ and other additive numeral constructions with ‘1’ as the addend. Compare (9) above with *aβáána βaat̪e ikómi na úmwa* ‘his eleven sons’ (Genesis 32:22).

The forms used for expressing ‘100’, ‘1000’, and ‘100 000’ are also included in Table 1 as they are simplex numerals which also serve as bases for other complex numeral derivatives⁷. The use of both ‘100’ and ‘1000’ is illustrated in (15) below.

(15) Ikoma

<i>a-β-ikwaβé</i>	<i>βa-ra-réu</i>	<i>βa-ra-mísi,</i>	<i>βa-ra-β-ít-a,</i>
AUG-2-MAASAI	SP2-PROG-get_drunk	SP2-PROG-sleep	SP2-PROG-OP2-kill-FV
<i>βa-y-iit-a</i>	<i>a-ma-yána,</i>	<i>a-ma-yána</i>	<i>mpaká akuβá e-ye-kú</i>
SP2-NAR-kill-FV	AUG-6-hundred	AUG-6-hundred	until maybe AUG-7-thousand
7-one			
‘The Maasai got drunk and slept, then they killed them, they killed hundreds, hundreds up to maybe a thousand.’			

⁷ We follow the criteria by Schapper & Klamer (2014) that the lowest recursively occurring base designates the system. Hence, as this is ‘10’ in the WS group, the numeral systems of these languages are to be treated as decimal-based.

Notice that the disparate formal realization of ‘1000’ in Ikoma, as seen in this example, is due to the same phonological phenomenon as discussed for ‘1’ above (intrinsically illustrated in this example as well). Thus, what in the other varieties is pronounced with a glide, *ʎe-kwé*, is pronounced without word-final labialization in Ikoma.

These higher digits may also be multiplied and serialized as bases using a strategy parallel to that described for forming decades.

(16) Ishenyi

ama-ɣána a-táto ‘300’

e-βe-kwé βii-ne ‘4000’

e-βi-ráre βi-taanó e-βe-kwé miróŋgɔ e-saasáβe na muhɔŋgáte na ama-ɣána a-naané na miróŋgɔ kénde na i-βere ‘567 892’

2.2. Ordinals

As is common across the Bantu speaking area (see Van de Velde 2013, 2019), ordinals are formed as “numeral possessives” (Schadeberg 2003: 150), that is, in a complex construction consisting of a head noun and the connective followed by the numeral⁸. This construction is illustrated in (17) to (19) below.

(17) Ishenyi

o-mó-ónto *o* *rii-kómi*

AUG-1-person CONN1 5-ten

‘the tenth person’

(18) Ngoreme

neŋʃu a-kw-inɔk-a *o-ro-síko* *ro* *ya-táto,* *ro* *ká-ne,* *ro* *ya-táno*

thus SP1-SIT-depart-FV AUG-11-day CONN11 12-three CONN11 12-four CONN11 12-five

‘Thus, while s/he left [to go to the farm], on the third day, the fourth [day], the fifth [day]...’

(19) Ikoma

a-rá-áŋ-a *o-mo-βúréní* *o-wó-nde* *ó* *ka-βere [...]*

SP1-PROG-come-FV AUG-1-young_man AUG-1-other CONN1 12-two

⁸ The connective marker is commonly used in Bantu languages to connect a head noun with another modifying nominal constituent. The connective is formally different in the WS group from the canonical Bantu reflex *-a* (see Aunio et al. 2019: 517-518 for further details).

<i>a-rá-áíŋ-a</i>	<i>o-mo-βúréni</i>	<i>o-wó-nde</i>	ó	<i>ya-tato [...]</i>
SP1-PROG-come-FV	AUG-1-young_man	AUG-1-other	CONN1	12-three
<i>a-rá-áíŋ-a</i>	<i>o-mo-βúréni</i>	<i>o-wó-nde</i>	ó	<i>ka-ne</i>
SP1-PROG-come-FV	AUG-1-young_man	AUG-1-other	CONN1	12-four

'Then came another (second) young man [...] Then came another (third) young man [...] Then came another (fourth) young man.'

Several facts regarding the ordinal construction may be deduced from these examples. Firstly, we may note from example (19) that other modifiers may interfere between the head noun and the connective construction containing the ordinal within the noun phrase. Secondly, in (17), we see that the full CV-shaped noun prefix of class 5, which is otherwise reduced to /i-/ in *ikómi* '10', re-occurs within ordinal connective constructions in Ishenyi. Thirdly, in examples (18) and (19) we see that, in addition to the connective, the numeral is inflected with a prefix *ka-/ya-*, the variation in consonant realization being conditioned by Dahl's Law⁹. However, if the numeral is the invariable '7', '9', or '10', this prefix may not surface. Thus, compare the different realizations of '5', '6', and '7' in (20). The omission of *ka-/ya-* with invariable numerals is further illustrated in (20) and (21).

(20) Ikoma

<i>o-ra-már-a</i>	<i>yo-yí-karɔŋ-a, ró</i>	<i>ya-taano, ró</i>	<i>ya-sasááβe, ro</i>	<i>mohungáte</i>
SP2SG-SIT-finish-FV	INF-OP7-fry-FV	CONN11 12-five	CONN11 12-six	CONN11 seven

'When you finish frying it the fifth [day], the sixth or the seventh'

(21) Ishenyi

<i>e-híti</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>muhungáte</i>
9-hyena	CONN9	seven

'the seventh hyena'

Similar to what has been pointed out by, for example, Stappers (1965) for several other (Eastern) Bantu languages, the prefix *ka-/ya-* is also used for deriving multiplicatives of numerals in the WS language varieties. This is illustrated in (22) and (23).

⁹ Dahl's law refers to a type of dissimilation process common in North-Eastern Bantu, where voiceless stops are voiced when the succeeding syllable also consists of a voiceless consonant. See Davy & Nurse (1982) about this feature in general, and Aunio et al. (2019) for the Mara languages in particular.

(22) Ikoma

<i>ni-səm-ire</i>	<i>e-γi-táβu</i>	<i>kí-no</i>	<i>ká-βere</i>
SP1SG-read-PFV	AUG-7-book	7-DEM.PROX	12-two
'I have read this book twice.'			

(23) Ishenyi

<i>ne-e-mu-kúmbat-ire</i>	<i>γa-táto</i>
SP1SG-PST-OP1-embrace-PFV	12-three
'I embraced him three times.'	

The ordinal 'first' constitutes the only exception to the pattern in the WS group where ordinals are directly derived from cardinals. As is common cross-linguistically and in Africa in general (Stolz & Veselinova 2013), as well as in Bantu in particular (Polak-Bynon 1965), 'first' is instead formed through suppletives, that is, derivationally independent forms. Whereas Ikoma, Ishenyi, and Nata form the ordinal 'first' exclusively with the adjective *-mberε*, as evidenced in (24) to (26), Ngoroeme forms it with either *-mberε* (27) or *kwánsa* (28). Whereas *-mberε* acts as an adjective and takes regular nominal agreement, *kwánsa* is formed with the use of the connective marker.

(24) Ikoma

<i>a-βá-átjokoro</i>	<i>βa-ane</i>	<i>a-βá-mberε</i>
AUG-2-grandchild	2-POSS1SG	AUG-2-first
'my first grandchildren'		

(25) Ishenyi

<i>rii-βáγa</i>	<i>e-ri-mberε</i>
5-time	AUG-5-first
'the first time'	

(26) Nata

<i>rii-βurúnga</i>	<i>e-ri-mberε</i>
5-egg	AUG-5-first
'the first egg'	

(27) Ngoroeme

<i>a-βá-nto</i>	<i>βa-no</i>	<i>βa-núma</i>	<i>βóono,</i>	<i>βa-rá-β-a</i>	<i>βá-mberε,</i>
AUG-2-person	2-DEM.PROX	2-behind	now	SP2-IPFV-be-FV	2-first
<i>na</i>	<i>βá-mberε</i>	<i>βóono,</i>	<i>βa-rá-β-a</i>	<i>βa-núma</i>	
COM	2-first	now	SP2-IPFV-be-FV	2-behind	

'There are those who are last who will be first, and first who will be last.' [Luke 13:30]

(28) Ngoreme

e-tjáni *ja* *kwánsa* *e-ka-hét-a*
 9-animal CONN9 first SP9-NAR-PASS-FV
 'The first animal passed.'

2.3. Functional traits: Morphosyntactic behaviour and extended uses

Insofar as the numerals have a particular set of agreement prefixes, they may be morphologically defined as constituting a word category of their own (cf. Schadeberg 2003, Stappers 1965, see also Greenberg 2000). However, as pointed out in subsection 2.1 above, some numerals do not inflect for agreement. Moreover, their morphosyntactic behaviour is in many ways identical to that of other adnominal modifiers. Cardinals behave identically to adjectives (see Van de Velde 2019) and ordinals may be subsumed within a more general framework of connective constructions (as touched upon already in subsection 2.2). Thus, in accordance with the general head-driven typological structure characterizing Bantu languages, where modifiers tend to follow the head they modify (Van de Velde 2019), the numeral typically follows the noun it modifies in the WS language varieties (as may be deduced from all the previous examples in this article). With that said, however, a numeral seems to be allowed to occur relatively freely in a clause. As evident in the various realizations of the same proposition in (29), a numeral can even precede the head noun.

(29) Ikoma

t̪ʰa-séése t̪ʰé-éne in-kóro i-fato
 10-dog 10-POSS1SG 10-big 10-three
 or *t̪ʰa-séése t̪ʰé-éne i-fato in-kóro*
 10-dog 10-POSS1SG 10-three 10-big
 or *i-fato t̪ʰa-séése t̪ʰé-éne in-kóro*
 10-three 10-dog 10-POSS1SG 10-big
 'three big dogs of mine'

The pragmatic-semantic explanations that might underlie such alternations require further research.

Another feature in need of further investigation is the fact that variable numerals generally do not take the augment in WS. The augment is a functionally elusive nominal pre-prefix whose presence is dependent on a number of factors often connected to notions such as specificity, topicality, and definiteness (at least diachronically, see de Blois 1970, Van de Velde 2019: 249-254). In other Bantu

languages, a numeral automatically carries an augment if the governing noun has one (cf. de Blois 1970). Furthermore, just as with adjectives, it is common to add the augment on numerals to make them nominalized and non-restrictive (Van de Velde 2019: 262-263). However, in neither of these two contexts does an augment occur in the WS language varieties: the former is evident in (1) above, just to mention one of several examples in the paper illustrating this fact; and the latter is illustrated in (30) below. Note that the invariable nominalized numerals do not adhere to these restrictions but take the augment like any other noun, as evident for example with *a-ma-ýána* ‘hundreds’ and *e-ye-kú* ‘thousand’ in (15) above (but where *ki-mu* ‘1’ modifying ‘thousand’ occurs without an augment).

(30) Ikoma

βa-taano m-ba-mar-iri *yo-kú*, *m-ba-saay-iri* *βa-βere*, *u-mu n-a-ayú-kángat-a*
 2-five FOC-2-finish-PFV INF-die FOC-2-remain-PFV 2-two 1-one FOC-3SG-IPFV-lead-FV
 ‘(among these kings) five have fallen, two remain, one is (=reigns)...’ [Revelation 17:10]

Apart from such morphosyntactic processes, numerals may be used in extended ways to express specific functional traits. Distributive numerals, namely numerals marking a multiple set of a specified number (see e.g. Gil 2013, Greenberg 2000) are derived from cardinals through reduplication. This is illustrated in (31), where (31a) indicates that the participants carried two cups in total, whereas (31b), that is, the distributive numeral construction, indicates that the participants brought with them two cups each; hence, in total four cups.

(31) Ishenyi

- | | | | | |
|----|---------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|----------------|
| a) | <i>m-ba-yeγ-ire</i> | <i>e-βi-kómbe</i> | <i>βi-βere</i> | |
| | FOC-SP2-carry-PFV | AUG-8-cup | 8-two | |
| | ‘They carry 2 cups (in total).’ | | | |
| b) | <i>m-ba-yeγ-ire</i> | <i>e-βi-kómbe</i> | <i>βi-βere</i> | <i>βi-βere</i> |
| | FOC-SP2-carry-PFV | AUG-8-cup | 8-two | 8-two |
| | ‘They carry 2 cups (each).’ | | | |

Forming distributive numerals through reduplication is a typologically common strategy, including in the Bantu family, as shown by Gil (2013). According to this author, the motivation behind its ubiquity is iconicity, as the reduplication directly corresponds to the conceptualization of a multiple set of entities.

Another type of numeral derivative, also described for the related language Gusii (Cammenga 2002: 349-351), comes from the use of plural referent agreement with the ordinal ‘1’. As illustrated in (32) with examples from Ngoreme, such constructions have a partitive (“unit of”) reading.

(32) Ngoreme

- a) *t̃fi-ŋómbɛ* *t̃fi-no* *t̃fɛ-mwé*
 10-cow 10-DEM.PROX 10-one
 'this group of cows'
- b) *a-βá-nto* *βa-mwé*
 AUG-2-person 2-one
 'a group of people'
- c) *e-βi-táβo* *βi-no* *m=be-mwé*
 AUG-8-book 8-DEM.PROX COP=8-one
 'These books are of a particular type.'

When the ordinal '1' takes agreement with the locative noun class prefix 16 it functions as a reciprocal adverbial forming the meaning 'together'. This is illustrated with example (33) from Ishenyi.

(33) Ishenyi

- e-yi-súsu* *m-be-réŋge* *βe-ɣw-íkar-a* *ha-mwé* *n=in-ká*
 AUG-7-rabbit FOC-SP8-COP.PST SP8-IPFV-live-FV 16-one COM=9-lion
 'The rabbit lived together with the lion.'

Besides this meaning, however, this form has additional distinctive functions, namely as a modal adverbial expressing epistemic possibility (34) and as a disjunctive coordinator 'or' (35).

(34) Ishenyi

- hamwe* *ha-ká* *a-are,* *ne-ku-rór-a* *i-βásikeli* *e-eṭfɛ*
 perhaps 16-home SP1-COP SP1SG-IPFV-see-FV 9-bicycle 9-POSS3SG
 'Perhaps s/he is at home, I see her/his bicycle.'

(35) Ikoma

- n-o-oɣo-tór-a* *ku-mísi* *há-no* *hamu* *u-ɣarúk-e* *a-ká*
 FOC-SP2SG-IPFV-can-FV INF-sleep 16-DEM.PROX OR SP2SG-return-SBJV 23-home
 'You can sleep here, or you can return home.'

Finally, we may note that numerals are found in lexicalized constructions such as in compounds referring to the names of the day of the week, as illustrated in (36). Notice that the counting of days starts from Sunday (unlike in the co-official and national language Swahili, where the first day of the week is Saturday).

(36) Ishenyi

orusíku orumberε 'Sunday'

orusíku roo kaβere 'Monday'

orusíku roo yatáto 'Tuesday'

orusíku roo kane 'Wednesday'

orusíku roo yataanó 'Thursday'

orusíku roo yasaasáβe 'Friday'

orusíku roo muhungáte 'Saturday'

3. Historical-comparative implications

After having described the formal and distributional characteristics of the numerals in the WS language varieties, in this section we attempt to unravel the semasiological background of these forms and to account for the further historical implications that this gives rise to¹⁰. To facilitate this task, we first have to explain the classificatory and genealogical particularities of the WS group.

3.1. Classificatory profile and genealogical background of the WS group

The Bantu languages are most commonly classified through an alpha-numeric referential system first developed by Guthrie (1948, 1967-1971) and later updated by Maho (2003, 2009). In this system, consisting of zones (letters), further divided into groups (decimals) and individual languages (numbers), the Mara languages, to which the WS language varieties belong, were initially classified within zone E40, but were later reclassified together with several other languages spoken around Lake Victoria, previously belonging to zone D and E, into a zone J. *Pace* Maho (2003, cf. Philippson & Grollemund 2019), these languages are typically referred to with J as their first letter followed by their original classification, hence Mara = JE40.

The Guthrie classification system is primarily a geographical and not a genealogically based system. However, with the exception of JE41 Rogoori (which was re-assigned to the Luhya cluster), the Mara group or JE40 is often treated as a valid subgroup on genealogical grounds as well (see e.g. Nurse 1999). From a gene-

¹⁰ Readers are referred to a table in the Appendix for references to sources on specific languages discussed in this part. The formal representation of the reconstructed forms presented in this section has been adapted in accordance with the orthographic conventions developed by the Tervuren group (see Schadeberg 2003: 147).

alogical standpoint, primarily based on lexico-statistics (see Nurse & Philippson 1980, Schoenbrun 1990, 1994, see also Hill et al. 2007)¹¹, the Mara branch has been categorized as belonging to the East Nyanza group, which is in turn a sub-group of the Great Lakes (GL) languages. For a visual representation of the genealogical relationship see Roth (2018: 111) (which is a slightly adapted version of that of Schoenbrun 1997: 12-13). The GL (also known as the (Inter)Lacustrine) group corresponds with zone J.

Two facts need to be highlighted that are of importance for the following discussion. Firstly, Nurse (1999: 27-28) points out that the GL languages on the eastern side of Lake Victoria, that is, the East Nyanza and (Greater) Luhya groups, are linguistically similar in a manner which is at the same time different from the other GL languages. This is surprising, as these groups are typically treated as being relatively distantly related. On the other hand, geographically they occupy contiguous areas, renowned for extended contacts. Secondly, as touched upon already in section 1, the area where the Mara languages, including the WS language varieties, are spoken is also characterized by contact with other non-Bantu linguistic communities (Ehret 1971, Shetler 2003: 11-14, 288, Dimmendaal 1995, Nurse 1999). In the present day this contact situation is primarily with South and West Nilotic languages (Datooga and Luo, respectively), but historically there has also been contact between ancestors of the WS group and Cushitic and earlier Nilotic linguistic communities (e.g. East Nilotic Maa).

The GL languages are, in turn, part of an Eastern Bantu group whose ancestors separated from their Western counterpart(s) somewhere in the Congo region roughly 2000 years ago (Grollemund et al. 2015). When referring to Eastern Bantu, we follow the latest phylogenetic classification of such a group, as provided by Grollemund et al. (2015), which, nonetheless, corresponds “fairly well” (Phillipson & Grollemund 2019: 346) with previous attempts at such a classification. We will differentiate between reconstructible shared material and patterns within Eastern Bantu and what is reconstructible, or has indeed been reconstructed, for Proto-Bantu, that is, the earliest ancestor of all Bantu languages.

Zooming in from the macro- to the micro-level, the Mara branch itself is divided into a South and North Mara (see Schoenbrun 1990). Gibson & Roth (2019) and Roth (2018: 110-111) argue for a further split of South Mara into a SW Mara sub-group – containing Ikizu and Zanaki – and the Western Serengeti, that is, the group of language varieties under consideration in this study.

¹¹ See also Nurse (1999) for a critique of Schoenbrun's selective methodology.

3.2. On the enumerative prefixes

Before any discussion of the actual numeral forms, a brief comment on the history of the enumerative agreement prefixes should be given. Schadeberg (2003: 150) notes that the reconstructions for these prefixes to Proto-Bantu are “somewhat shaky” and that there is typically interference with the set of pronominal and nominal prefixes. With that said, the WS members chiefly adhere to the reconstructed set of enumerative prefixes (Meeussen 1967: 97, see also Stappers 1965), as is made further evident in Table 3. The shakier reconstructions are indicated by question marks, in analogy with how they are represented in Meeussen’s (1967: 97) reconstructions. Classes 17 and 18 are not included in this table as the WS language varieties have lost the reflexes of these enumerative prefixes (see also subsection 2.1). Conversely, the enumerative prefix of class 20, which exists throughout the Mara group – and is thus doubtlessly a shared retention in the WS subgroup – is not included in this table as it is not reconstructible for Proto-Bantu (see Maho 1999: 253).

An interesting exception, however, is the class 3 marker in Ngoreme, which has the velar onset (characteristic of the pronominal prefix) for numerals as well. As Schadeberg (2003: 150) considers the reconstruction of the class 3 enumerative prefix *ú- as “less certain” (compared to that of class 10 for example), the question should be raised whether this is due to “interference” or whether it should be taken as counterevidence against the suggested reconstruction.

3.3. Numerals 1-5

For the reconstruction of the numerals, we start with the numerals 1-5, which are all simplex (monomorphemic) and variable stems in the WS language varieties. These numerals can all be straightforwardly connected with the forms reconstructed for Proto-Bantu (see Meeussen 1967: 105, Schadeberg 2003: 150), that is, **moi* ‘1’, **bili* ‘2’, **tátv* ‘3’, **nai* ‘4’, and **táano* ‘5’.

In fact, all forms for the numerals 1-5, with the exception of 2, are further reconstructible for an assumed Proto-Niger Congo (see Pozdniakov 2018: 293, 313). Regarding the expression of the numeral ‘2’, which is split between a western and an eastern form in Bantu, the WS languages pattern with the Eastern Bantu languages (see for example Guthrie 1961-1971, vol. III: 23) in having a reflex of **bili* and not **bali*. Furthermore, we may note that the WS varieties seem to have levelled out the formally distinctive absolute number **m̄v-oti* reconstructed for Proto-Bantu by Vanhoudt (1994), using the reflex of the referential numeral also for calculations.

TABLE 3. Enumerative prefixes in Proto-Bantu compared to the WS language varieties

Variety	1/2	3/4	5/6	7/8	9/10	11	12/13	14	15	16	19
1 Noun class pair											
Proto-Bantu	*o? / *ba u- / βa-	*o-? / *ɪ-? u- / e-	*di- / *a-? ri- / a-	*kɪ- / *βi- ki- / βi-	*ɪ-? / *i- i- / i-	*dɔ- ru-	*ka- / *tɔ- ka-	*bɔ- βu-	*kɔ- ku-	*pa- ha-	*pi- hi-
Ikoma	u- / βa-	u- / e-	ri- / a-	ki- / βi-	i- / i-	ru-	ka-	βu-	ku-	ha-	hi-
Nata	u- / βa-	u- / e-	ri- / a-	ki- / βi-	i- / i-	ru-	ka- / tu-	βu-	ku-	ha-	-
Ishenyi	o- / βa-	o- / e-	re- / a-	ke- / βi-	e- / i-	ro-	ka-	βo-	ko-	ha-	hi-
Ngoreme	o- / βa-	yo- / e-	re / a-	ke- / βi-	e- / i-	ro-	ka-	βo-	ko-	ha-	hi-

Interestingly, it would seem that the conditioned lenition of the initial consonant of the numerals '3', '4', and '5', when occurring with the high fronted class 10 enumerative prefix in the WS varieties, is also a retention from Proto-Bantu. Thus, Meeussen (1967: 105) notes for Proto-Bantu (orthography slightly altered, see f.n. 9): "In class 10 the prefix has to be set up as *i-* [...] with a peculiar representation in at least two stems: *icátu* 'three', *icáano* 'five' (and *inyai* 'four?')". From a micro-comparative perspective, it is interesting to note the formal variation of the morphophonological realization of this specific feature as found across the East Nyanza languages, namely Mara and Suguti. In the Suguti languages (including Kwaya, which otherwise tends to pattern with the WS group, see e.g. subsection 3.4), the reflexes of '4' and '5' do not alter their basic form when inflected with a class 10 prefix. On the other hand, the form for '3' has been reanalyzed as *satu*, that is, with a fricativized stem-initial consonant regardless of which agreement class prefix is in use (cf. Stappers 1965, Dimmendaal 2011: 57-58). Interestingly, there are two North Mara varieties that also pattern differently from the other Mara language varieties (see Aunio et al. 2019). Kabwa behaves similarly to Suguti, whereas in Simbiti, the class 10 fricativization is only optional with '3', i.e. *i-tatɔ* ~ *i-satɔ*.

3.4. Numerals 6-9

Compared with the numerals 1-5, which can be linked to Proto-Bantu reconstructions, the semasiological background of the numerals 6-9 is more opaque. Greenberg (1978: 291) suggests, with specific reference to Bantu, that such a "penumbra of the system" has to do with the lower frequency in use of these numerals compared to their lower counterparts. With this said, reflexes of these numerals exist far beyond the limits of the WS group, or even the GL branch. Arguably, some are reconstructible up to a putative Eastern Bantu ancestor (although arguing for such a proto-language is far beyond the scope of this article). At the same time, however, the different stems constituting this set of numerals in the WS language varieties also pattern differently in relation to genealogical and/or geographical parameters. One major feature which differentiates the WS members from some of their closest relatives/neighbours is the overall organization of this set of numerals. Thus, Jita (a Suguti language) and Gusii (classified within the North Mara group) make use of an additive quinary-based system of the form *augend-link-addend*, using the numerals 1-5 with 5 as a base, namely "5 and/with 1, 2, 3, 4..." (a structure similar to that used for forming 11-19 with a base-ten in WS, see subsection 2.1 above). The synchronic transparency of this system would suggest that it is a relatively more recent innovation (see

Schapper & Klamer 2014) which has possibly replaced cognates of the numerals found in the WS group. The fact that another Suguti language variety, Kwaya, has a system for forming 6-9 which is identical to that of WS would point towards such a conclusion. Furthermore, Gusii, unlike Jita, does not use the base-five approach to form '9'. Instead *kianda* is employed, that is, a reflex of the same form found in the WS group.

Another difference between the WS languages and their GL relatives, particularly outside the confines of the Mara branch, has simply to do with the lack of cognancy. This specifically concerns the words for '6' and '7', which are also the most problematic numerals to account for in terms of etymology. No obvious candidates emerge and the references that do discuss these forms do so in quite speculative, and occasionally contradictory manners.

Starting with the word for '6', *-saansaβa* ~ *-saasaβe*: similar to the formal division between Ngoreme and the rest of the WS members, reflexes of this form may be expressed with or without an additional word-medial /n/, e.g. Kuria *-sansaβa*, but Shashi *-sasaβa*. The WS language varieties pattern with most varieties of the Mara group in having this form of the numeral, with the exception of Gusii, which uses the five-based system mentioned above and hence lacks the form. However, except in the Mara language varieties, the spread of this form is limited, its cognates being confined to the very northern borders of (Eastern) Bantu and the varieties of the Greater Luhya (JE30) subgroup, such as (the clusters of varieties constituting) Masaba (JE31)¹² and Luhya (JE32). As these varieties neighbour the Mara group to the north without being considered to be directly related (cf. subsection 3.1), this shared numeral cognate is suggestive of an areal trait. In fact, Ehret (1971: 130) claims *sa(n)saβa* to be a loanword from Proto/Pre-South Nilotic **tɪsap* '7' (which he (1971: 111) ultimately links to a stem borrowed from Eastern Cushitic). However, although a plausible account of the phonological adaption involved is given (Proto-South Nilotic **t > s*; **ɪ > a*), the semantic motivation of meaning shift from '7' to '6' is not clear.

Johnston (1919-1922 vol. II: 469) instead suggests no less than three Bantu-inherent etymologies of *-sa(n)saβa*, of which none seems to work very well with the WS data. Two of these etymologies entertain the idea that *-sansaβa* is in

¹² Note that the sources cited for JE31 in a table in the Appendix both give (a reflex of) a Swahili borrowing for '7'. The deduction that JE31 languages have (had) forms cognate with *sa(n)saba* to express '7' is based on Johnston (1919-1922, vol. 1: 82) but also on the (unchecked!) data found in Chan's (1998-2019) online database on Numeral Systems of the World's Languages <https://mpi-lingweb.shh.mpg.de/numeral/> [20.08.20].

some way derived from '3', in a fashion similar to °-*tanda(tu)*, a common word for '6' in several Eastern Bantu languages (see Schmidl 1915, Meinhof 1948: 118, Hoffman 1953, Meeussen 1969). Although it is tempting to reconstruct *sa(n)saβa* in this way there are problems with such an endeavour. Specifically, one would have to explain why /t/ spirantized here and not elsewhere. Of course, as we saw in subsection 3.3, it may happen for (lexicalizing) numerals that phonemic change occurs sporadically without adherence to regular sound laws (see also Schapper & Klamer 2014) and the weakening of an already weak /t/ to a fricative would in that case not be a big leap. However, we have failed to find any evidence for this scenario. Moreover, we still would not know how to explain the ending /βa/.

The stem for '7', *-hungate*, has a different semasiological background from that of '6'. It is also attested for the whole of Mara (minus Gusii, plus Kwaya), and has a much wider distribution in the Eastern Bantu region. What is more, the most northern attestation of a reflex of this form in the GL group comes from Kuria (JE43), that is, a North Mara language and the closest neighbour to the WS members in the north. The Mara languages also seem to constitute the westernmost outpost for this particular numeral, with cognate forms attested only further to the east and the south-east, across much of Southern Kenya and Northern and Central Tanzania (see e.g. Werner 1919: 138, Hoffmann 1953: 171). It does not occur in the rest of the GL group, however, which makes it difficult to account for how this form entered the Mara branch. That is, is *-hungate* a retention from an early Eastern Bantu stem which disappeared in the rest of the GL or is it the result of diffusion from the east? As it surfaces in most of the Mara varieties, however, it is still fairly safe to conclude that it was inherited into WS branch.

Despite the relatively wide distribution of cognates of *-hungate* '7', the etymology is still opaque. Meeussen (1969: 17), citing Hoffmann (1953: 71-72), rejects Meinhof's (1948: 119) reconstruction (see also Schmidl 1915), which links the form to **-túng-* 'tie' + *tatu* three. Instead, the (more fine-grained) comparative data demonstrate that the stem-initial consonant of the proto-form must have been **p* and not **t*. Such a reconstruction also makes perfect sense for the realization of the stem-initial consonant in WS, as **p* has regularly been debuccalized to /h/ in these language varieties. Meeussen's (1969: 19) own suggested etymon for this numeral is a verb °-*punk-* 'point, demonstrate' (and derivatives thereof), along the line of reasoning that the index finger would form the seventh finger when counting on the hands. However, as he points out himself, this is a very fragile reconstruction. Apart from some morphophonological problems

involved in connecting this verb stem with the numeral, a major difficulty is the fact that this verb stem is only attested in some Luba varieties (L30), and does not seem to occur in any Eastern Bantu languages, including in the WS group.

The word for '8' has often been suggested in the Bantu literature as being derived from the doubling of '4', from counting with four fingers on one hand and four fingers on the other (see, *inter alia*, Werner 1919: 134, Schmidl 1915, Meinhof 1948: 118, Greenberg 1978, Schadeberg 2003). Such a proposal also holds for *-naane* '8' in the WS language varieties. In fact, the WS data add valuable strength to such a proposal, as both of the nasals in this word form are palatalized when inflected with the agreement prefix of class 10, that is, *-injaane* (see subsection 2.1). This would indicate that '8' to some extent is still analyzed as a composition of '4' and '4'.

The word for '9', *kénda*, can be linked to a stem **-këndá* which is widespread across the East African part of Eastern Bantu, and particularly the Guthrie zones E, F, G, and J (= the GL), see Struck (1911: 991), Hoffmann (1953: 75), Guthrie (1967-1971 Vol III: 160, 275), and Bastin et al. (2002)¹³. Reflexes of this stem occur across the entire Mara group, including in the otherwise differing Gusii. Hence, it can be safely assumed that this numeral exists in the WS group through inheritance.

3.5. '10' and the decimal base(s)

The word *ikómi* used for '10' can be directly linked to a Proto-Bantu reconstruction, namely the stem *-kómi* 'ten' (noun class 5/6)¹⁴ (e.g. Bastin et al 2002). Pozdniakov (2018: 133) traces this stem to an innovation **kum/kam/gham* in Bantoid, that is, a higher node in the (putative) Niger-Congo phylum of which the Bantu family is a part. Hence, it is probably even older than Proto-Bantu. The word used for forming multiple of tens, *muróngo / miróngo*, has a long history as well. This lexeme is a reflex of the form **-dòngò* 'ten (decade)' (noun class 3/4), which is attested

¹³ Reflexes of **-këndá* are also attested in zone L (Bastin et al. 2002), belonging to (South-)Western Bantu (see Grollemund et al. 2015). There are also attestations of this numeral in Zone M of the "osculant pair" **yenda*, which additionally surfaces in some parts of the GL/zone J languages; see Guthrie (1967-1971, vol. III: 275; Bastin et al. 2002).

¹⁴ The original noun class membership is most obvious in Ishenyi, which retains a reflex of the full prefix **d/-* in ordinal connective constructions (see example (15) in subsection 2.2 above).

with a wide distribution within Eastern Bantu (see Guthrie 1967-1971 vol. III: 180 (=CS 663); Bastin et al. 2002)¹⁵.

According to Guthrie, *miróngò* arose to form numerals for multiples of '10' in Eastern Bantu, a role previously fulfilled by **-kómì*. This division of labour is in accordance with a general cross-linguistic tendency to have a "suppletive alternant" for the actual word for '10' to form decimals (Greenberg 1978). Accordingly, this pattern stretches through a large part of the Eastern Bantu area, including all Mara language varieties. However, it does not seem to be very widespread in the rest of the GL languages, which seem to prefer the use of pluralized reflexes of *-kómì* or other strategies where the base is not transparent¹⁶. Thus, the situation is similar to that described for the numeral '7' in subsection 3.4.

Notice that the additive link, used to form numerals within decades, is also reconstructed for Proto-Bantu as **nà* 'with, and' (Bastin et al. 2002). Meinhof (1948: 121) already notes its extended use across the Bantu family as a link when forming additive numerals. Forming additive numerals with a "comitative link" like this is also typologically common, as pointed out by Greenberg (1978). The ubiquitous spread of **na* with this function across the Bantu family strongly suggests that it was inherited into the ancestor of the WS language varieties.

In conclusion, it is safe to assume that both decimal stems were inherited into the WS. It is also likely that the division of labour between them was inherited, namely with *-kómì* being used for the actual numeral 'ten' and as the base for forming additive numerals (in a construction with a comitative link) and with *-rongo* as a dedicated base for multiplication.

3.6. The higher base numbers (100, 1000, 100 000)

The word for '100', *riiyána*, in the WS language varieties can be linked straightforwardly with a stem **-gàná* (noun class 5/6), which, according to Guthrie (1967-71, vol. III: 206 (=CS 774)) is "probably" a Proto-Eastern Bantu item given its distribution throughout zones D to zone S (see also Dempwolff 1916-1917: 137; Bastin et al. 2002). Indeed, many other GL languages surveyed for this

¹⁵ Bastin et al. (2002) further associates **dòngò* with the nominal stem **-dòngò* 'line, row' and, ultimately, the verb **-dóng-* 'heap up', both with a wide distribution throughout the Bantu speaking area, thus arguably being reconstructible even for Proto-Bantu.

¹⁶ One exception is Ha (JD66), a Western Lakes language remotely related to Mara, where forming decimals up to 50 can be done freely with either a reflex of *kómì* or of **dòngò* (Harjula 2004: 78-79).

study, including all Mara languages, have a reflex of this stem, even Gusii¹⁷. Thus, it is definitely a shared retention among the WS language varieties.

Reflexes for the word for '1000', *eʎe-kwé* (Ikoma *eʎe-kú* due to the restriction on labialization on the final syllable), is not attested in any general Bantu reconstruction work. However, there are scattered attestations across the Eastern Bantu area. It has been reconstructed for Proto-Sabaki (~G40, E70) by Nurse & Hinnebusch (1993: 292, 663), see also Nicolle (2013: 39-40) on Digo (E73) specifically. It is further attested in Chewa-Nyanja (N31; Werner 1919: 140) and Cuwabo (P34; Guérois 2019). Except for Gusii (which only has a Swahili borrowing attested), all members of the Mara branch – and some of the Suguti – use a cognate of this stem for '1000'. Otherwise, *eʎe-kwé*, and reflexes thereof, is once again a numeral that does not seem to be used in other parts of the GL area.

Any source meaning of the stem is not clear. No further meanings were provided by the consultants. Is it somehow connected to the proto-GL stem **-kwé* (noun class 14) 'bride price' (see Schoenbrun 1997: 94-95) and/or the stem *-kwe* ~ *-ku* in the WS language varieties, meaning 'firewood' (as in a heap or a pile, a common type of metaphorical extension for large numerals in Bantu, see Schmid 1915)?

Similarly, *-rara* (noun class 7/8) for '100 000' remains an enigma from an etymological point of view, not least because it is seldom the case that a digit of such high value is mentioned in the comparative literature. However, as this numeral surfaces in all the WS language varieties it is at least a shared retention or innovation within this group.

3.7. Ordinals

As already mentioned in subsection 2.2, the connective construction for forming ordinals is common across the Bantu speaking area and thus is also undoubtedly an inherited pattern in the WS group. To that we may add Polak-Bynon's (1965:

¹⁷ However, the case of Gusii is not as clear-cut as for the other members of the Mara group. Whiteley (1965: 18, also Cammenga 2002: 356) gives *e-mia* for '100', treating *ri-gana* as an alternative form. Whiteley (1965: 18) additionally suggests *ri-gana* as a borrowing from Luo (= Dholou, Western Nilotic). Luo does seem to have a stem *gana* for '1000' (see Tucker 1994: 265). However, given the abundance of reflexes of this stem in the Bantu languages, both within and outside the geographical reach of contact with Luo, it would be more reasonable to believe that the diffusion has gone the other way around. The word *mia*, however, was most likely borrowed into Gusii from Swahili (which in turn copied it from Arabic *mi²a(t)* 'hundred'; see Schadeberg 2009).

136) statement that connective ordinals accompanied by the preceding element *ka-* are particularly common in (North)Eastern Bantu in general and particularly around Lake Victoria (i.e. GL). Polak-Bynon (1965: 136) links this element to the noun class 12 prefix, which has the same form, and which is also commonly used for deriving adverbials from nominal stems (e.g. Meinhof 1948: 124).

Regarding the deviant derivatives of ‘first’, we may note the following. To begin with, *-mberε*, used exclusively for ‘first’ in Ikoma, Nata and Ishenyi, and variably used in Ngoreme, originates from a form meaning ‘(in) front (of)’, as seen in (37) below. (Similarly, *numa* ‘back’ is exclusively used to denote ‘last’ in Ikoma, Nata and Ishenyi, as well as in Ngoreme.)

(37) Ikoma

<i>a-njómbe n-e-ejní</i>	<i>á-mberε</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>mé-te</i>	
9-cow	FOC-SP9-COP	9-front	CONN9	3-tree
‘The cow is in front of the tree.’				

To derive the ordinal numeral ‘first’ from ‘front’ is an extremely common pattern across Eastern Bantu, and languages using this strategy include members from most subgroups of GL, although its adjectival use with nominal prefixes rather than within a connective construction is innovative (see Polak-Bynon 1965: 150-151, see also Grégoire 1975: 212-215). Taken together with the fact that *mberε* for ‘first’ is attested for all WS language varieties it is most likely a shared retention.

The irregular ordinal *kwánsa* in Ngoreme is probably a borrowing from Swahili, partly given the variation from *mberε* but also because a reflex of the source verb **-yând-* ‘begin’ (Nurse & Hinnebusch 1993: 650) does not seem to exist in the language. Polak-Bynon (1965: 149) finds related forms in other Eastern Bantu varieties such as Pogoro and Sukuma, but mentions that these are likely to be borrowings from Swahili as well. See also Greenberg (1978), who notes that unlike the ordinal ‘1’, the borrowing of the equivalent cardinal ‘first’ is not uncommon cross-linguistically.

4. Summary and conclusions

In this study we have accounted for the synchronic and diachronic aspects of the numeral system in four closely related Bantu varieties of the Western Serengeti subgroup, that is, Ikoma, Nata, Ishenyi, and Ngoreme. The study has shown that the systems are more or less identical. Except for the borrowed ordinal *kwánsa* in Ngoreme, the numerals only differ in terms of the more overarching

phonological disparities characterizing the different members of this group.

We can furthermore conclude that the WS language varieties are conservative with regard to this specific linguistic domain, particularly the fact that they have kept the conditioned weakening of the numerals '3'-'5' with the agreement prefix of class 10 suggested for Proto-Bantu. It is possible that this maintenance is connected to the fact that "Bantu spirantization" (Bostoen 2008) has generally not affected these language varieties. However, most other simplex numerals and strategies of forming complex numerals can also be linked to cognates with a further distribution across the (Eastern) Bantu family. This stability in itself can be taken to stand out, not least as other parts of these language varieties are remarkably different from canonical Bantu patterns (such as a highly complex vowel harmony system, inverted auxiliary constructions, and *non*-inverted existentials).

The fact that the numeral systems of the WS language varieties (and the Mara language varieties more generally) appear to pattern more closely with other Eastern Bantu languages than with their supposedly closest relatives of the GL group is problematic from a genealogical perspective and would bring support to Nurse's (1999) scepticism with regard to this grouping. In addition to this, the etymologies of some of the numerals are still left unresolved. These two facts, taken together, serve as an impetus for further comparative work on this subject and in this region.

Finally, we note that the only clearly attested Swahili borrowing in the language varieties is (most likely) *kwánsa* 'first' in Ngoreme. This is in contrast with other Tanzanian Bantu languages where especially the higher numerals are claimed to have shifted to Swahili to a more or lesser degree (see e.g. Morrison 2011: 216, Bernander 2017: 32, 79, Wilhelmsen 2019). Hence, it would seem that the WS numeral systems are not in danger of extinction, or at least not at the moment.

5. Abbreviations and symbols

* = Reconstructed form

◦ = Tentatively reconstructed form

Numbers refer to noun classes

AUG	augment
CAUS	causative
CONN	connective

COP	copula
DEM	demonstrative
DIST	distal
FOC	focus
FV	final vowel
IPFV	imperfective
LOC	locative
OP	object prefix
PFV	perfective
POSS	possessive
PROG	progressive
PROX	proximal
PST	past
REF	referential
SBJV	subjunctive
SG	singular
SP	subject prefix

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Appendix

Great Lakes. Sources surveyed for comparative data

Guthrie code	Language	References
JD42	Nande	Valinande (1984: 653-708)
JD53	Shi	Polak-Bynon (1975: 414-421)
JD66	Ha	Harjula (2004: 77-81)
JE15	Ganda	Crabtree (1923: 165)
JE22	Haya	Kaji (2000: 101-111)
JE24	Kerebe	Thornell (2004: 237-238)
JE25	Jita	Kagaya (2005: 454-455), Odom & Robinson (2016: 9-10)
JE251	Kwaya	Odom (2016: 9-10), Sillery (1932: 276-277)
JE31c	Bukusu (Masaba)	Austen (1974: 131-135), Mutonyi (2000: 105-109)
JE32	Lu(h)yia	Appleby (1961: 19-21)
MARA SUBGROUP		
JE402	Ikizu	Robinson & Sandeen (2015: 10-11)
JE404	Shashi/Sizaki	Johnston (1920: 212)
JE405	Kabwa	Overton & Walker (2017: 11)
JE42	Gusii	Whiteley (1965: 17), Cammenga (2002: 348-367)
JE43	Kuria	Sillery (1936: 14-15), Dempwolff (1914-1915: 122)
JE431	Simbiti	Mreta (2008: passim), Walker & Overton (2018: 11-12)
JE432	Hacha	Kihore (2000: 68)
JE44	Zanaki	Futakamba et al. (2013: 4), Hill et al. (2007)

A large number of numeral systems of other (Eastern) Bantu and Nilotic languages have also been checked, as they occur in the comparative literature. The data from Chan's (1998-2019) online database of Numeral Systems of the World's Languages <https://mpi-lingweb.shh.mpg.de/numeral/> has also been considered; however, no data is cited from this website as it is explicitly made clear that the data need further checking for typos and errors (also E. Chan pers. comm. 18 Feb. 2020).

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Reflections on a community-based approach to writing grammars of endangered African languages

Abstract

Increasingly, there have been proposals for grammar writers to take into account the realities and needs of the community in order to produce grammars that can serve the interests of the native speakers (e.g. Kadanya 2006, Rehg 2014). Obviously, a grammar of an endangered language should, among other things, lead to the maintenance and/or revitalization of the language. However, grammars that are comprehensive and clear (Noonan 2007, Payne 2014, Rice 2006), and yet focus on and meet the needs of the target community, are still rare. This paper provides a reflection, from a community linguist's perspective, on how a community-based grammar could be conceived and written in the African context. It is based on an exploration of grammars written by native and non-native speakers, as well as on the feedback from native speakers. The paper points out some practical challenges involved (e.g. with data collection, and actual use of the grammars), and upholds that a grammar that is based on community mobilization, sensitization, and training requires a greater involvement and follow-up by the grammar writer, especially after publication.

Keywords: grammars, endangered languages, community-based, reflections

1. Introduction

As I have said elsewhere, "if linguistic research on endangered languages does not arouse interest in maintenance and/or revitalization, or if research outputs

do not actually reach the target language community, then the research has only been completed partially” (Akumbu 2018: 266). This is exactly what happens when publications end up in book-shelves and, at best, stimulate further investigations and promote knowledge in the scientific world. Many proposals for grammar writers to take into account the realities and needs of the community in order to produce grammars that can serve the interest of the native speakers have been made (e.g. Kadanya 2006, Rehg 2014). Ideally, the goal of a grammar writer should be to produce a grammar that is maximally useful to both linguists and speakers, now and in the future. In other words, a grammar of an endangered language should be accessible to speakers of the target language. Rehg (2014: 61) points out that a “community grammar, as described by Michael Noonan (n.d.), is a kind of reference grammar created for, and sometimes by, members of a linguistic community as an aid to establishing [or reestablishing] a language in the schools, for teaching the language to adults, [etc.]”.

Efforts to slow down and counter language endangerment have increased tremendously over the last two to three decades with intensified funding for language documentation and an expansion of language description. More grammars have emerged as products of language documentation efforts and many have revitalization as their ultimate goal. However, grammars that are comprehensive and clear (Noonan 2007, Payne 2014, Rice 2006), and yet focus on and meet the needs of the target community, are still rare. This paper provides a reflection, from a community linguist’s perspective, on how a community-based grammar could be conceived and written in the African context. I do not focus on why we should write such grammars because this has been properly discussed by others (e.g. Kadanya 2007). The issue I wish to consider is how we can work on grammar in such a way that it might be useful to the community of native speakers about which we write. I do not dwell on the standards of the grammars but focus on the method and activities that could lead to a grammar that is accepted and taken for their own by the community of speakers with whom and for whom the grammar is conceived and written. Some questions I hope to answer are the following: How can such a grammar promote the maintenance or revitalization of the language? How can it do more than just preservation? Is there a way to plan and write the grammar to achieve this goal? Is there something that can be included in the process intended to meet this objective?

This study is based on an exploration of stated goals of the existing grammars written by native and non-native speakers presented in section 2, as well as on feedback from native speakers given in section 3. I go further in section 4 to point out that a grammar that is based on community mobilization, sensitization,

and training requires a greater involvement and follow-up by the grammar writer, especially after publication. Finally, I provide some concluding remarks in section 5.

2. Review of the existing grammars

Several proposals (Black & Black 2012, Kadanya 2006, Mithun 2006, Noonan 2007, Rehg 2014, etc.) have been made for grammar writers to consider the community of speakers and to design grammars that can serve the needs of the language users in one of several ways such as promoting the maintenance or revitalization of the language, facilitating the development of literacy materials, etc. I set out to verify whether such grammars exist and whether they are meeting the needs of their respective communities. I begin in this part by looking through grammars of some endangered Cameroonian languages to understand what their stated goals were at the time of writing. First, I consider grammars written by native speaker linguists, and then those written by non-native speakers. I draw mostly on grammars of Grassfields Bantu languages with which I am most familiar.

Tamanji (2009: 5) announces that the descriptive apparatus he uses in the grammar of Bafut, a Ngemba language of Northwest Cameroon, stays clear of any formal model of linguistic analysis and only provides a very simple straightforward description of the facts as they appear to him. His intention “is to make the description as simple as possible in order to make the book accessible to all categories of language practitioners who are interested in the Bafut language and in related Grassfields Bantu languages”.

On their part, Akumbu & Chibaka (2012: 9)¹ point out that “without using any specific formal model, they provide a description of the grammar of Babanki, a Central Ring Grassfields Bantu language of Northwest Cameroon, in a way that it will be useful to the learners and teachers of the language, as well as to others interested in this and other Grassfields Bantu languages”.

In their grammar of Oku, a Central Ring Grassfields Bantu language of Northwest Cameroon, Nforbi & Ngum (2009: 19)² express the desire that their work will “contribute to implementing government policy in the domain of mother-tongue education as it facilitates the teaching of Oku grammar. Though dedicated to

¹ Pius Akumbu is a native speaker of Babanki.

² Peter Ngum is a native speaker of Oku.

the linguists and the Oku people, we hope that everybody will find pleasure in discovering the richness of African languages through the Oku language”.

In his preface to the grammar of Bangwa, a Grassfields language of West Cameroon, Nguendjio (2014: IV) states that “as I was writing this book, I was worried by the fact that it would not serve the community because it is full of linguistic jargon which makes it inaccessible to a layman”.

Lacking in these brief statements by linguists writing grammars of their mother tongues is a clear indication of the usefulness of the grammar to the community of speakers. Of particular interest is the fact that these authors are also members of their respective communities. In some cases, attempts are made to stay clear of theoretical complexities in order to make the grammar accessible, but at the bottom of it all the researchers are out to satisfy the requirements of their respective universities that expect them to publish high quality work (abroad) and also in some cases to satisfy their funding agencies. Some grammars are written just to fulfil the requirements of the educational system and earn a degree. This strategy leads the community members to work on the language for their individual benefit rather than for the benefit of the community. This probably explains why there is no commitment on the part of the authors to follow up the consumption of their grammar nor the general development and use of the language. After publication, the authors consider their task complete and move on to a different issue of inquiry or simply continue with their job at the university and rarely have anything to do with the development of the language. In the places where language development committees exist, a linguist is sometimes seen as a threat and there is hardly any cooperation between the committee members and the linguist.

Also, worth mentioning is the fact that in most cases, the data is the author’s idiolect that is verified by one or two other speakers, and may not be considered as a proper representation of the entire community. Tamanji (2009: 6) in his acknowledgements appreciates a single community member who “was very instrumental in crosschecking my Bafut data especially as concerns the transcription of tones”. Akumbu & Chibaka (2012: XIII) declare that “most of the data used in this book was gathered by the first author [...]”. Nforbi & Ngum acknowledge the Oku Language Committee and the Cameroon Association for Bible Translation and Literacy (CABTAL)³ team in Oku for their collaboration. They equally list

³ CABTAL was officially established in 1987 to work with local Cameroonian communities to translate the Bible into their languages and to run literacy classes to prepare the people to read and write those languages in order to make use of the Holy Scripture.

three other consultants who helped in providing the data for them to analyze, and emphasize that “these informants are just a representation of the many Oku speakers who assisted” (Nforbi & Ngum 2009: 9). Nguendjio (2014), on his part, is mute on the sources of the data he uses in the grammar of Bangwa.

Next, I consider grammars written by the non-native speakers. Talking about Obang, a Ngemba language of Northwest Cameroon, Asohisi (2015: 10) states her “passion to describe and document a tongue that can someday serve educational purposes in schools and also in the local churches within the community”. She further mentions that her aim is “to provide reliable data by letting the language tell its story with simple linguistic descriptions from a structural and typological perspective that can be useful for descriptive or documentary, comparative, theoretical linguists as well as to a wider audience”.

Atindogbe (2013) hopes that the absence of a sophisticated linguistic jargon will make his short version of the Mokpe (a Coastal Bantu language of Southwest Cameroon) grammar also accessible to non-linguist readers. “I am thinking, first and foremost, about the Bakweri children who are no longer speaking their language due to the exclusive reign of Cameroon Pidgin English as an unavoidable Lingua Franca of the Southwest Region, as well as English and French as the two official languages of Cameroon”. Furthermore, he expresses the desire that Mokpe students studying linguistics “can now see how their language functions and accommodates phonological processes such as assimilation, deletion, tone copying, etc. notions that look so unfamiliar and so abstract to them although they practice them in their everyday use of their mother tongue”. He also wishes that the authors who have attempted to provide an alphabet and orthographic rules to read and write Mokpe will find the grammar useful and an inspiration to solve the problem of harmonization of the alphabets. Considering that many alphabets will not ease the reading and learning process he expects that one writing system will be adopted even if it will undergo adjustment in the future. He finally wishes that the Bakweri people who are “struggling” to have their language and culture known by the children and the general public will find the grammar a useful tool.

This category of grammars seems to involve the community although it can be seen that only a few individuals are involved in the data collection process. Atindogbe (2013: 4), for example, acknowledges “my ‘many-in-one’ consultant who understood at the early stage of this work my intention and gave me all the linguistic support. His role did not only consist of kindly providing data for the book but also to explain and research on the areas or questions he could not answer immediately during our elicitation sessions”.

The grammar of Mundabli, a Lower Fungom language of Northwest Cameroon (Voll 2017) is based on recordings made during three field trips to Cameroon totalling a period of 9 months. During these trips, the author made recordings in Mundabli village as well as in the neighbouring towns and worked with several consultants. She explains that “recordings of spontaneous speech were transcribed and glossed with the help of consultants”. Unfortunately, she doesn’t say how this grammar will serve the needs of the Mundabli people. This is similar to Lovegren (2013: 7-13) who presents the setting of data collection for the grammar of Mungbam, a Lower Fungom language of Northwest Cameroon, and acknowledges all the consultants who helped in various ways but doesn’t say how the grammar might be useful to the people. The grammar of Kuteb, a Jukunoid language of East-Central Nigeria “is intended to make a contribution towards closing the breach by presenting a sketch of basic phonological, morphological, and syntactic patterns in Kuteb, one of the 150 or so languages of the Central Nigerian group within the (East) Benue-Congo family” (Koops 2009: 1). The author further states that the sentences are, in most cases, taken from the tape-recorded texts produced by some consultants and that the tape-recorded examples were used to elicit other sentences. Finally, he says that “Mr. Obadiial Abomei has been very helpful in checking the naturalness of all the sentences in this work” (Koops 2009: 14). This shows that nothing is explicitly said about the usefulness of the grammar to the native speakers.

Again, it is evident that the writers of these grammars are primarily concerned with their academic pursuits rather than focused on language development for the interest of the community. Like in the case of native speaker linguists, their engagement ends once the grammar is published, unless there are more linguistic intricacies to explore. This is certainly the case for most grammars written by academic linguists who, at best, express a wish for the community to benefit from their grammar but do not design and implement any measures for further exploitation of their work. Talking about the limitations of their grammar, Crane, Hyman & Tukumu (2011: 6) point out that “as indicated in §1.1, it is our sincere hope that this Nzadi (a Bantu language of the Democratic Republic of the Congo) grammar will be of use to scholars of different sorts, and ultimately to the Nzadi community as well (although this might better have necessitated a version of the grammar in French)”. To make the point clearer, they provide a list of limitations and the steps they took to mitigate their effect on the study:

- (i) We have been able to work with only one speaker. Ideally, we would have liked to work with several, particularly as we found variation in a number of places in the grammar (e.g. in the tone of the past tense proclitic /ó/, realized

variously as H, HL and L). Because of this limitation we cannot tell if the inconsistencies we observed derive from systematic differences between dialects or age groups, or if they represent free or idiolectal variation. Where we have detected variation, we have noted this in the relevant section of the grammar.

- (ii) Most of our information has come from elicitation rather than from direct observation of speakers using the language. We have tried to overcome this in part by collecting narratives, but this does not show how speakers exploit Nzadi in interactional situations.
- (iii) Related to this, we have done the study in Berkeley, not in Nzadi country, and we have worked in translation rather than through the first language (Crane, Hyman & Tukumu 2011: 6).

Many linguists are most likely to encounter most or all of these problems and their grammars might not be able to meet the needs of the community.

Another set of grammars I wish to explore is that written by missionaries affiliated to either SIL International Cameroon⁴ or to CABTAL. The leading principle at the two organizations is that literacy and Bible translation must be locally owned and locally driven because such an approach fosters sustainable community development. Work by missionary linguists has come under criticism (Dobrin & Good 2009, Grenoble & Whaley 2005, Handman 2009, Keane 2002, Pennycook & Makoni 2005, Rehg 2004), but my interest is on how they aspire to serve the community of speakers.

Hedinger (2008: 1) indicates that his description of the grammar of Akoose, Bakossi, Bantu A.15b, Southwest Cameroon, "is intended for a wide audience, both linguists and non-linguists, speakers and non-speakers alike. I have therefore tried to use non-technical language as much as possible while at the same time giving a linguistically sound description of the facts of the language".

Writing about the grammar of Buwal, a Chadic language of Far North Cameroon, Viljeon (2013: 21) states that:

⁴ Formerly called the Summer Institute of Linguistics, SIL International is a non-profit, scientific educational organization of Christian volunteers that specializes in serving the lesser-known language communities of the world. They further focus on the application of linguistic research to the literacy and translation needs of the minority language communities. SIL Cameroon (www.silcam.org) came into existence in 1967 and since then has worked on more than 130 Cameroonian languages.

The aim of the project has been to train and equip local people as far as possible in the skills that they need to manage the development of their own language, with the SIL members moving more and more into an advisory role. With this view in mind, the community was encouraged early on to form a language committee to oversee the work. Major decisions on the orthography were made by this group and this committee currently organizes the literacy efforts and the sale of books in the Buwal language. Later, a committee of church leaders was formed to oversee the work of Bible translation.

She affirms that this first detailed description of the language would “prove of great interest to academic linguists. Furthermore, my hope is that this work will assist the Buwal people in their efforts in developing and preserving their language and culture and that the recognition of their unique identity will give them confidence in finding their place in an increasingly globalized world” (Viljeon 2013: 1).

These statements suggest that the linguistic work, including the writing of grammars, that the SIL missionaries undertake is intended to serve the community of speakers in some ways. This is reflected in the way the data is collected and in the extent to which community members are engaged in the process.

Viljeon (2013) reveals that the language data on which her study is based was collected over a period of roughly five years between 2004 and 2011. The author lived in the community for most of those years and worked with several people there. She writes:

Different types of language data were collected such as (i) lexical items (from natural texts, participant observation and language sessions), (ii) elicited examples (Often an example of a particular structure based on natural texts or observation was given to the informant and he or she was asked to provide similar examples. Direct translation was avoided as much as possible. Informants were questioned at times concerning their intuitions about the language, what can or cannot be said and in which types of situations certain utterances may be said), and (iii) natural texts (Ninety-nine natural texts of varying lengths and genres have been collected. The majority of these were recorded and then transcribed. However, six of the texts were written by native speakers to put in a book for those learning to read the language. Although many of the texts came from regular language informants, a significant number were provided by other members of the community, the majority being from Gadala Centre) (Viljeon 2013: 22-23).

In order to write the grammar of Akoose (2008), Hedinger (spent more than 25 years collecting data from the community⁵. Many of those years were spent

⁵ Personal communication.

learning the language and culture of the Bakossi people and training several members of the community on several aspects of linguistics, including basic literacy skills, text collection methods, etc.

To write the grammar of Nchane, Northwest Cameroon, Boutwell (2010) collected a number of texts of various genres. He also used elicited sentences and words collected over a period of four years, from 2006 to 2009, while living in the village of Nfume, with the help of several language consultants.

In 2014 Boutwell wrote A sketch grammar of Mungong language of Northwest Cameroon, with data derived primarily from a number of Mungong narrative texts, as well as from elicited sentences and words collected over a period of seven years, from 2007 to 2014. He further specifies that "significant data collection and analysis was accomplished as a result of a series of grammar workshops held in Misaje in late 2012. The texts and other language data were collected with the help of several language consultants, most notably Kemcha Gabriel, Nganti Joseph, Ngong Augustine, Sofa Cletus, Ferdinand Muchuo and San Linus Gabushi" (Boutwell 2014: 2).

In a similar manner, McLean (2014) used data from a number of Central Mfumte texts from a range of genres and elicited utterances to write the grammar of Mfumte, another language of Northwest Cameroon. According to him, "these texts and utterances have been gathered over a period of five years, from 2008 to 2013. The texts and other language data were collected with the help of several Central Mfumte speakers, especially Mr. Detoh Frederick and Pastor Nwufa William".

The next fundamental issue to consider is the extent to which the hopes and wishes of the authors presented in this section have actually been materialized.

3. Realization of the goals of the existing grammars

As illustrated in the preceding section, most writers of grammars would like to see their work contribute to a better understanding of the language, ensure its maintenance or preservation, lead to the revitalization of the language, act as a resource for its further development, etc. To know whether these goals are being attained, it was necessary to verify it with community members. Four main issues that were considered are 1) awareness of the existence of the grammar, 2) availability of the grammar, 3) ability to read the grammar, and 4) necessity of the grammar. Questionnaires were administered and interviews were conducted with speakers of languages known to have grammars. For each grammar

evaluated, an effort was made, using my social networks, to get responses from people with formal education, living out of the community (50 per language) and those living in the community (25 per language), as well as those without formal education, living out of the community (25 per language) and those living in the community (50 per language). Five languages were targeted, including three Grassfields Bantu languages of Northwest Cameroon (Babanki, Bafut and Oku) and two Coastal Bantu languages of Southwest Cameroon (Mokpe and Akoose). The total population of these five communities is 346,000 (Eberhard, Simons & Fennig 2019) but responses were obtained only from 750 respondents. This was partly due to time constraints as well as the political crisis in Cameroon that started in 2016 and was still going on in 2018 when the data were collected.

3.1. Awareness of the existence of the grammar

Responses from the questionnaires and interviews reveal that even though the grammars of the languages were published several years ago (Akoose – Hedinger (2008); Babanki – Akumbu & Chibaka (2012); Bafut – Tamanji (2009); Mokpe – Atindogbe (2013); and Oku – Nforbi & Ngum (2009)), most native speakers are unaware of their existence. Only Akoose had up to 44% (66) of 150 people who said they knew that a grammar of their language has been written. It should be noted that either SIL Cameroon or CABTAL is involved in literacy development and/or Bible translation work in these five communities. However, the involvement in Akoose has been greater and has been going on for more than three decades. Another reason for this awareness is probably the fact that like with the Zapotec grammar (Black & Black 2012: 106) there was a large celebration of Akoose grammar but not that of the other languages. This probably explains why the Akoose community members are aware of the linguistic work on the language. The number of respondents who knew that a grammar of their language exists was 28% (42) in Bafut where SIL Cameroon and CABTAL have also been involved for more than three decades. The responses are presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1. Awareness of the existence of the grammar

	Oku	Babanki	Mokpe	Bafut	Akoose	Total	%
No grammar	122	120	74	80	48	444	59.3
Unaware	22	24	68	28	36	178	23.7
Aware	6	6	8	42	66	128	17
Total	150	150	150	150	150	750	100

Out of the 150 Oku respondents, 81.40% (122) said there is no grammar written on the language, 14.60% (22) said they were not aware, and only 4% (6) said there is one. The responses about Babanki were as follows: 80% (120) said there is no grammar book on the language, 16% (24) said they didn't know, and only 4% (6) said there is one. 49.30% (74) Mokpe respondents said there is no grammar written on the language, 45.30% (68) said they did not know, and 5.40% (8) said there is a grammar. Bafut speakers responded as follows: 53.40% (80) said there is no grammar, 18.60% (28) did not know, and 28% (42) said there is a grammar. The results on Akoose were as follows: 32% (48) said there is no grammar on the language, 24% (36) said they were not aware, and 44% (66) said they were aware that a grammar of the language has been written. The chart presented in Fig. 1 gives a graphical view of the degree of awareness of the existence of the grammar among native speakers.

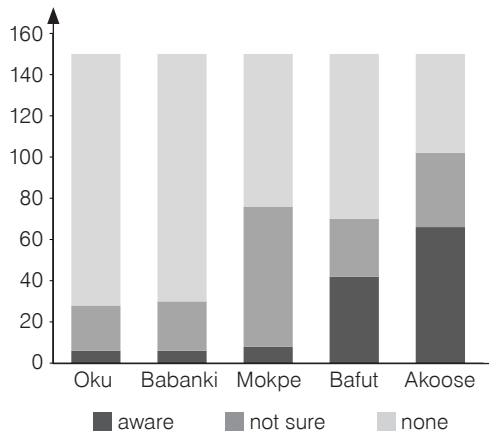


Fig. 1. Awareness of the existence of the grammar

The results equally point to the fact that in most cases, academic linguists write grammars for their professional interest, not for the benefit of the community. Due to the academic and professional responsibilities of the academic linguist, their engagement generally ends as soon as the grammar is completed or published. A suggestion that can be made here is that while researchers conduct research, publish, and archive their findings, they should figure out ways to disseminate the results, i.e., take them back to the people of the study area. In section 4, it is shown that this is best done by involving community members in the process of writing a grammar. The community members can then ensure the continuity and sustainability of work on the language.

3.2. Availability of the grammar

The other issue that was considered was the availability of the grammars. If a grammar is to serve the community of speakers, it should be available to them. Those who said they were aware of its existence were asked whether they own a copy. Unfortunately, a majority of the respondents in the five communities did not have a copy of the grammar. During interview sessions, a few people said they had seen such a book but didn't have it. Table 2 shows the number of respondents who have copies of the grammar of each language.

TABLE 2. Availability of the grammar

	Oku	Babanki	Mokpe	Bafut	Akoose	Total	%
Have	2	1	2	2	6	13	10.2
Do not have	4	5	6	40	60	115	89.8
Total	6	6	8	42	66	128	100

In Oku, 33% (2) out of 6 respondents had a copy of the grammar. Only 16% (1) of 6 Babanki respondents had a copy of the Babanki grammar (given to them by the author) and 25% (2) of the 8 Mokpe respondents owned copies of the grammar (also given to them by the author). Meanwhile only 4% (2) out of 42 Bafut respondents said they owned a copy and 9% (6) out of 66 Akoose respondents who knew about the grammar said they owned a copy. These facts are illustrated by the graph in Fig. 2.

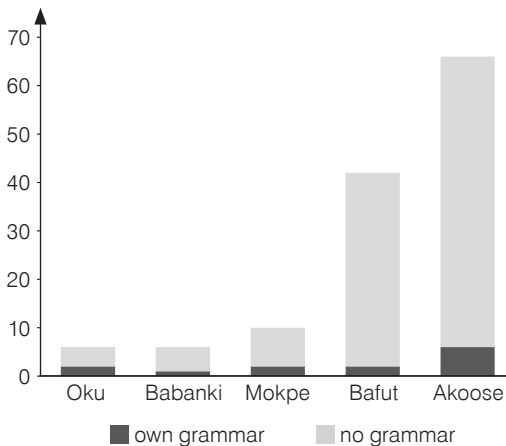


Fig. 2. Availability of the grammar

There can be several reasons for the unavailability of the grammars, the main one being that most publications, especially those printed on the other continents, hardly reach Africa. Those that reach there are usually too costly for the local people. Talking about the Babanki grammar, Akumbu (2018: 271) says: "Even the grammar book published in Germany has not reached the Babanki community due to lack of information on its existence and the high cost. The thirty copies I received as an author from the publisher were insufficient for myself and my colleagues".

For the linguist, it is important to publish with a renowned publisher and most African universities require scholars to publish their work abroad. The Babanki (Akumbu & Chibaka 2012) and Bafut (Tamanji 2009) grammars were published in Germany, the Mokpe grammar (Atindogbe 2013) in Japan, etc. This again reinforces the idea that in most cases, the academic linguists conduct research and publish mainly for their personal interest and to satisfy the needs of other linguists. The grammars are used by those who study languages but not by those who speak the languages. Furthermore, it should be mentioned that the cost of the grammar is relatively high for an African who has to depend on their private resources to buy a copy. Even if they had the money and were willing to spend it for a grammar book, they will have to deal with the challenge of ordering it online or getting someone to bring it along when they travel.

These challenges might be overcome if the community were involved in the grammar writing process. Even if the grammars were published abroad, the community could arrange printing and sale locally at lower, affordable prices.

3.3. Ability to read the grammar

Owning a grammar book is one thing, and using it is another. I sought to find out whether those who owned a copy of the grammar were able to read it or not. All the 13 respondents in the five communities who had copies of the grammar said they could read them but specified during the interviews that they needed a lot of training and practice with the symbols (alphabet) to be able to read. They complained mostly about the sounds, e.g. η , ϕ , β , $\ddot{\iota}$, $\ddot{\eta}$, that are used in writing the Cameroonian languages but are not found in the English language they are familiar with. Another area of great difficulty is the use of tone marks on vowels. Most of the people find it extremely difficult to read these unfamiliar marks and would rather not have them there (cf. Bird (1999) for a similar report among the Yemba of Dschang in Cameroon). Kafeteh (2018) reports that Kom people of Northwest Cameroon do not often use mother tongue literature because

they are not familiar with the materials. He argues that despite all the efforts made to advance literacy training in Kom, the literature reading rate remains surprisingly low.

The second reason for the inability to read the grammars which came out clearly during interviews is the fact that the people do not have a culture of reading. Most people with oral traditions would rather listen or watch instead of read. Sometimes, a linguist can think of giving to the community some copies of the grammar – but of what use would it be to people who in most cases are illiterate in the foreign language in which the grammar was written, and are also unable to read and write in their own language? Weighing the potential downside of introducing a grammar to a community with strong oral traditions, Guérin (2008: 62) suggests that it is most ethical for the linguist to follow the desires of the community. All the five communities presented in this analysis cultivate a living oral tradition and their motivation to read (either in English or in their community's language) is low. When a few people attempted to read, when they found out that the alphabet is complex, they easily gave up. One respondent said: "I really like to read and write my language but what is this and this? (pointing to a schwa and a velar nasal) [...] Why is this 'e' upside down?"

At least two things can be done to overcome this difficulty. First, it might be necessary to simplify the orthography as much as possible. The use of tone marks should be minimal and only where it is absolutely necessary. The unfamiliar symbols could also be avoided. However, if the community is involved from the initial stages of the grammar writing process and the symbols to be used agreed upon by the linguist and the community members, the chances of accepting them are higher. Secondly, since learning to read and write a language requires a lot of training, literacy classes could be organized during the grammar writing process or at a moment that is convenient to both parties. Even when this is done, the people have to be educated on why they need that knowledge. They need to be convinced that development is started and cultivated through literacy. When a person learns to read, their eyes are opened to a whole new world of possibilities and positive change can begin to take root. They gain the ability to facilitate change, rather than implement and be responsible for change. Mother tongue literacy transforms a culture, leading to the development of new skills and knowledge, fresh confidence, and the ability to function as full members of society (Chuo & Walter 2011, UNESCO 2010). When a community catches the vision and its own dream, its development can remain long-term.

3.4. Necessity of the grammar

One issue that people talked about during the interviews was the necessity to develop their languages. Many respondents wondered why it is necessary to have a grammar of an indigenous language, arguing that their language is not as useful as English, French or Cameroonian Pidgin English⁶. In reality, most families want their children to learn these global languages so as to be successful in future, ignoring the fact that children are more successful, even in English, when taught in their mother tongue (Chiatoh & Akumbu 2014). Some people prefer the foreign languages for prestige and parents even take pride in having their children speaking Cameroonian Pidgin English, English, and some French. Even in the academic milieu in Cameroon the idea of developing and using indigenous languages for education and development has not gone unchallenged. Some argue that mother tongue education is a wild dream because it has no future in an age of rapid globalization, where world languages have a clear advantage over minority mother tongues. Attitudes towards national languages⁷ have been shaped by opinions which have given the false impression that national unity is only achievable through foreign languages. In this respect, Mono Ndjana (1981: 184) submits:

Les politiciens demandent le développement des langues nationales et l'alphabétisation dans ces langues [...] Je pense dans l'intérêt de la nation, il faut mieux ne pas souligner ce problème de langue nationale. L'anglais et le français ne nous aident pas mal à nous entendre déjà. C'est l'essentiel⁸.

In Mono Ndjana's view, the protection of national interest is best guaranteed through the use of English and French. Admittedly, it is not beneficial to bother about national languages since English and French already help Cameroonians to understand one another. Here the insinuation is that while English and French

⁶ English and French are the two official languages of Cameroon inherited from the colonial experience. English is the language of education and administration in the two Anglophone Regions of Cameroon, while French is used in the eight Francophone Regions of the country. Cameroon Pidgin is the language of wider communication in the entire Anglophone Cameroon as well as in some parts of Francophone Cameroon. It is also the language of trade and is commonly used in workplaces across Anglophone Cameroon.

⁷ I use national languages here to refer to the indigenous languages of Cameroon.

⁸ Politicians are requesting the development and use of national languages in education. [...] I think, in the interest of the nation, that this issue of national languages shouldn't be raised. English and French are already sufficient for us to understand each other. That's the essential thing.

are integrators or unifiers, national languages are rather disintegrators and so should be avoided. A similar opinion is expressed by Bouba (1995) who is of the opinion that national languages are irrelevant in the Cameroonian context since even in the most remote areas, people speak and understand English and French, and that advocating for national languages means taking the country backwards to the moment when Cameroonians were starting to understand one another. Misleading as these views are, though, they have come to represent an ideal position within educated and non-educated circles and many people think that going straight for English or French is the best option.

Many interviewees recognized and agreed that their indigenous languages are important and useful in keeping them connected to their culture and, above all, in passing their cultural elements to future generations but did not quickly agree that through their own languages their children could have opportunities to learn better and faster and eventually have or create jobs, as well as excel in business. For these reasons the motivation to support the writing of grammars of indigenous languages is actually low in many parts of Cameroon.

As discussed in greater detail in the next section a grammar can be useful to the community only if there is sufficient sensitization. Community members need to understand the place and role of their language in the face of global languages. Only education and sensitization can induce interest and motivate many community members to initiate and run language development activities, including the writing of a grammar. Black & Black (2012: 103) argue that indigenous people want to be involved as they are becoming more educated and more interested in working on their own languages.

4. Community-based grammar

In the previous section, a number of challenges that current grammars of some endangered indigenous languages face have been presented. It seems that part of the solution is to embark on writing community-based grammars. In this section, an attempt is made to describe what a community-based grammar is and how it can resolve the problems. It must be stated that “good” grammars are those that are comprehensive and clear, providing a proper coverage of structures of the language (Noonan 2007, Payne 2014, Rice 2006), yet focused on meeting the needs of the target community. The audience for a grammatical description should be taken into consideration by the writer. At the top of the list of users of a grammar should be members of the community in which the language is spoken. The success of any written communication is usually based

on its reception and so writers always have their audiences in mind. Writers always want to know who will read what they write, as well as what their needs and expectations are. In the case of grammar, the audience can vary tremendously ranging from linguists to the community of speakers of the language concerned. The point is that a grammar should serve not only the linguists but also the target community audience. As Black & Black (2012: 103) point out, a different type of grammar is needed: one that serves the language community, describes the language in general terms, and is also useful to linguists for extracting data for analysis. This type of grammar has the potential to revitalize the use of a language as the people realize their language is a “real” language worth of use because it has a grammar. Mosel (2006: 45) adds:

[...] grammarians should not only think about the design of grammars for linguists, but also develop strategies of how such grammars can be transformed into grammars for non-specialists. One of the problems to solve is, for instance, that the prospective users are not familiar with linguistic terminology, so the grammarian should keep scientific terminology to a minimum and explain every term he or she uses in simple words.

This places a burden on grammar writers who should have linguistics as a driving force, as well as the interests of the people at heart. The linguist is invited to make extra effort to help the community appreciate their own language and work to develop it. This effort is required to avoid ‘mining’ a local community for the grammar writers’ benefit, “leaving the community of speakers with nothing” (Kadanya 2006: 253). There may be justification for the way linguists operate, but my position is that it is unfair for anyone to go to any given community, collect data, write a grammar, receive an academic or professional qualification, become a successful and renowned linguist, with all kinds of benefits, while the community gets nothing of this⁹.

4.1. What is a community-based grammar?

The answer to this question requires a proper review and understanding of what Community-Based Research (CBR) is. This research model that emphasizes collaboration between linguists and language communities encourages research

⁹ While I make this critique, I recognize the fact that academic grammar writers who support the development of grammatical descriptions and also work with communities are doing hard work that many other linguists are not bothered to do. Many of them could become “famous” by abandoning all the efforts they make to secure grants and focus on theoretical work.

on a language, conducted for, with, and by the language-speaking community within which the research takes place and which it affects. This kind of research involves a collaborative relationship between researchers and members of the community (Bischoff & Janý 2018, Cameron et al. 1992, Czaykowska-Higgins 2009). It is community-based because a researcher joins his efforts with community members to carry out activities in that community for the benefit of both parties. CBR has become a valued model in linguistic research during recent years, particularly in the areas of language documentation and revitalization. According to Rice (2018: 15):

Community-based research begins with a research topic of practical relevance to the community and is carried out in community settings. Second, community members and researchers equitably share control of the research agenda through active and reciprocal involvement in the design, implementation, and dissemination. Finally, the process and results can transform and mobilize diverse ideas, resources, and experiences to generate positive action for communities.

According to Ochocka & Janzen (2014), community-based research is *community-driven* (i.e., it begins with a research topic of practical relevance to the community and promotes community self-determination, *participatory* (i.e., community members and researchers equitably share control of the research agenda through active and reciprocal involvement in the research design, implementation and dissemination), and *action-oriented*. The goals of the researcher and community members must be clearly defined in order to establish a productive long-term collaboration in which both parties benefit from the interaction. Leonard & Haynes (2010) stress the importance of collaborative consultation in defining research roles and goals. Ameka (2006: 70) insists that “unless the records of the languages being documented are the product of collaboration between trained native speaker and non-native speaker (anthropological) linguists, they will not be real, or optimal descriptions representing the realities of the languages”.

A community-based grammar is, therefore, one that is written with community support or at the behest of the target language community (Lükpe 2011, Rehğ 2004) but also appropriate for the linguistic community. One of the most important consequences of the community-driven approach is that participants (and the community at large) are more likely to embrace and take responsibility for the product that emerges.

Although writing such a grammar can face a number of challenges (cf. Rice 2018: 28-31), it remains a model for writers of grammars of endangered languages to adopt. What exactly is involved in this model is discussed next.

4.2. Writing community-based grammars: Reflections

As I mentioned in section 2, several proposals have been made for grammar writers to consider the community of speakers and to design grammars that can serve the needs of the language users in one of several ways (Black & Black 2012, Kadanya 2006, Mithun 2006, Noonan 2007, Rehg 2014, etc.). Some of the proposals encourage community mobilization, training, engagement, and follow up (cf. Dobrin 2008, Dobrin & Berson 2011, Fitzgerald 2017, 2018, Genetti & Siemens 2013, Grenoble & Whitecloud 2014). If implemented in context appropriate ways these lofty measures will ensure that grammars which emerge will actually meet the needs of the language community. Such grammars will not only contribute to preserving the language but may also help in revitalization efforts. They may lead to the production of educational materials and can provoke further interest in the study of the language. However, it is necessary to reflect on how possible it is for a linguist or the grammar writer to engage in all of these activities and processes given the limited time and resources that are at their disposal.

First, it appears that the grammar writer can best appropriate the extensive community mobilization and training only within the context of language documentation projects or such kinds of funded projects that require extensive fieldwork in the community. These include projects that are funded for at least one to three years, e.g. Endangered Languages Documentation Programme grants, National Science Foundation grants, the German Research Foundation (DFG) grants, and The Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research grants. Unfortunately, many grammars of endangered languages are based on the data collected by a researcher from a few individuals during short field trips of several weeks and then analyzed out of the community, probably to fulfil academic requirements and obtain a degree. This is the usual practice, for example in Cameroon, where students typically do not have any funding that could allow field work for extended periods. Many students who write grammar sketches of their mother tongues tend to rely on their idiolects and hardly return to their communities for data collection. Some of the grammars are written by native speaker linguists away from their communities (and countries), far away from other speakers, in the context of fellowships such as those granted by Fulbright, the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, and the Commonwealth. In such circumstances it is hard to think of community mobilization, training, and engagement. What could possibly work would be engaging in sensitization, language development, and training by native speaker linguists, like myself, as often as they have the time and resources to work for their community. This could also include

providing communities with copies of the grammar and any other publications and attempting to inspire people to develop interest in reading these materials and promoting the use of their language.

Another problem is with sensitization. When community members are encouraged to understand the place and usefulness of their native language in the current global village, the reality they see, e.g. the use of the colonial languages like English in education and for official purposes, is clearly a counterargument and it is extremely difficult to be convincing. As a Babanki speaker once said: “You don go learn your whiteman talk get your work, get your money, you don come here for fool me and my pikin dem” or “You have studied English and had a job and riches, and have come here to deceive me and my children”. How can the local people be convinced when even the government policy doesn’t help them to see any economic or educational value in their languages?¹⁰ This problem can be addressed if indigenous languages are recognized and given some official functions. Community linguists should join efforts to accelerate the implementation of policies that empower their languages.

Another issue to consider is the economic and financial benefits that community members who offer their time and skills expect to get. It is always difficult to find people who can be trained and who are willing to sacrifice their regular day-to-day activities (e.g. farming, and hunting) and engage fully in linguistic work. In general, this kind of work is temporary and people are sometimes reluctant because they wonder what the future will be like. Even when they commit themselves, it is usually for a season – the period during which they are not heavily involved in their regular activities. This makes the training and engagement irregular. I believe that while it is hard to provide permanent jobs for community members who engage in language documentation and description (e.g. of a grammar), the grammar writer should try to pay the committed individuals well enough so that they can be better motivated. This is important because people know that anyone who gets to their community to work on their language is doing it for financial or academic benefits. A grammar writer should therefore not expect the people to offer free services or to exchange their services for food and drinks only. However, this suggestion can only be useful within the framework of funded projects, not when a community linguist is using their limited personal resources, as it is often the case in most of Africa.

¹⁰ While most African countries have opted for language policies in favor of indigenous endangered languages, implementation has been timid in most cases. In Cameroon, for example, none of the more than 250 indigenous languages is used as a medium of instruction, as advocated in the country’s language policy statements.

One of the difficulties new teams or individuals face when they arrive in a community in many parts of Africa is the fact that other linguists had been there before¹¹. Community members still cry out about the previous researchers who got to the community, collected data and then disappeared. The people feel cheated and exploited and rightly so because the researcher only tried to satisfy their personal needs, not those of the community. In many such cases, the people want to be paid immediately for their effort. The linguist needs time to rebuild confidence and trust and to get the people to consider them differently. In most cases, giving gifts of various kinds, including financial compensation can re-establish a relationship and eventually build trust but the same feeling will be left when the linguist leaves. This is so because those gifts are given to only a few individuals who may not be available in future. The best thing is to consider leaving something tangible for the entire community if the resources permit. Concrete offers to a community such as the Pig for Pikin initiative of the KPAAM-CAM project in Lower Fungom¹² and the water supply initiative implemented by the Beezen Language Documentation Project¹³ leave open doors for researchers into these communities.

Another thing to reflect on is the lack of electricity in many indigenous communities. This is a major drawback in this era of overwhelming advances in technological development. An extended stay in a community for mobilization and training require electricity supply. In most cases, training involves the use of information and communication technologies which need electricity to function. In many cases the linguist might punctuate their stay in the community with visits to a nearby town where they can have access to electricity supply. This must be factored into planning and executed as time and resources permit.

The final thing to discuss here is the ability to read existing grammars. As said earlier, the audience for which the grammar is written must be taken into consideration. It has also been shown that most African communities have an oral tradition and reading has continued to be a burden even in academic circles. How then does the grammar writer expect the people, most of whom have not had formal education in the foreign language in which the grammar is written, to learn to read (and write) their own language (written with some unusual symbols)?

¹¹ The same challenge is faced even by the community members, like myself, who have followed the academic path and no longer live permanently in the community where the language is spoken.

¹² <https://ubwp.buffalo.edu/kpaamcam/research-communities> [23.08.20]

¹³ <https://www.aai.uni-hamburg.de/afrika/medien/beldop.pdf> [23.08.20]

This partly explains why even the few people who have seen the grammars of their languages are unable to read them. The excitement is reduced to keeping a copy and hoping that someday, after education in the foreign language, their children will come home and read the grammar. One way to overcome this problem is to organize literacy classes and assist those who attend them to learn to read and write their language. The first step would be for the grammar writer to develop basic literacy materials. The orthography should be kept as simple as possible (Bird 1999, Snider 2014). Afterwards, they will have to train a few people who can then become teachers of the language. All that requires time and funding, and must be done progressively according to the availability of resources.

5. Conclusion

The discussion in this paper has been largely about the need to write a grammar that is of value to linguists and other students of the language but especially of use to the community of speakers. This is important because the interest of a grammar writer should serve the people both now and in the future. The benefits of working on a language with the community and for the benefit of that community are enormous. The discussion offered here has shown that there are several issues to deal with in order to render grammars of indigenous languages useful to the community of speakers. Grammars can be put to such practical uses only if the linguists ensure that they are accessible to speakers of the language and that some speakers are trained to use them. Community sensitization, mobilization, training, etc. can be challenging tasks to perform. For an outsider interested in a given language, gaining access to the community and being accepted could take a short while but sensitizing and mobilizing people to join, running training programs and following up require more time and resources. As much as possible, these activities should be factored in during planning. Stenzel (2014: 289) states that community-based projects have “the potential to contribute to linguistic studies in unexpected ways and to produce data that is better in the sense of being richer and more complete”, as well as resulting in outcomes better aligned with community goals.

A model that could work best is similar to that implemented by the SIL. It requires that the grammar writer should engage more with the community, allotting more time and resources to prepare literacy materials, follow up, and provide the community members with the training to read and write in their language. The grammar writers should ensure that the people obtain copies of the grammar and that the languages are introduced in the school system as media of instruction or, at least, as school subjects.

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Nominal suffixes as markers of information structure in Basketo

Abstract

This paper deals with the information function of two nominal suffixes, *-i* appearing in all nouns, and *-n-* in first- and second-person pronouns in Basketo, a North Omotic language predominantly spoken in the Basketo Special Woreda in Ethiopia. The suffix *-i* is often described as nominative. However, object nouns without definite marker can be marked by *-i*, and as a result *-i* can appear in both subject and object in the same sentence. We analyze morpheme *-i* as a marker of specificity. Suffix *-n-* distinguishes short and long forms of the first- and second-person subject pronoun. The short form is the same as the possessive. In general, possessive does not bear any pragmatic information in discourse. Likewise, short pronouns also show no pragmatic function, but show what is subject or agent in a clause. On the other hand, long pronouns are morphologically and pragmatically marked. We analyze morpheme *-n-* as the foregrounded topic in discourse in contrast with zero anaphora.

Keywords: nominal suffix, personal pronoun, specificity, topic, discourse analysis

1. Introduction

This paper¹ deals with the information function of two morphemes, *-i* appearing on all nouns, and *-n-* in first- and second-person subject pronouns in Basketo², a North Omotic language predominantly spoken in the Basketo Special Woreda in Ethiopia. According to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Population Census Commission, the number of native speakers of Basketo is estimated at 78,284 (2007 census). Basketo is one of the least studied languages of Ethiopia. There are some recent studies of the language, which deal mostly with morphology. Amha (1993, 1995) deals with noun morphology including personal pronouns. Schütz (2006) analyzes nominative and accusative marking of common and personal pronouns in the framework of Distributed Morphology. Sottile (2002: 90-105), which is a descriptive grammar of Basketo, deals with personal pronouns. Treis (2014) analyzes the grammatical means of encoding interrogativity in Basketo, based on a corpus of recorded spontaneous speech events. However, none of these deal with the information function of *-i* or long and short forms of first- and second-person pronouns discussed here.

2. Methodological preliminaries

The analysis of Basketo adopts the framework of information structure presented in Lambrecht (1994). According to the proposed theory, the most important categories of information structure are: 1) presupposition and assertion, 2) identifiability and activation, 3) topic and focus.

Presupposition and assertion have to do with the structuring of propositions into portions which a speaker assumes an addressee already knows or does not yet know. According to Lambrecht (1994: 51ff.), pragmatic presupposition is the set of propositions lexicogrammatically evoked in a sentence which the speaker assumes the hearer already knows or is ready to take for granted at the time the sentence is uttered. On the other hand, the pragmatic assertion is the proposition

¹ Data for this paper have been collected during my fieldwork in Arba Minch and Basketo, with a native speaker of Basketo. My special thanks go to Mr. Fiqre Dejene, my foremost informant, whose efforts to help my studies were far beyond the ordinary. My research is supported by a Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research (no. 18KK0009) from the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture in Japan.

² ISO 639-3 code: bst. Basketo has 29 consonants and 10 vowels as follows: p, t, ts, tʃ, k, ʔ, b, d, dz, g, p', ts', tʃ', k', b, d, φ, s, f, h, z, ʒ, h, m, n, l, r, w, j, i, e, a, o, u, ii, ee, aa, oo, uu. Acute accent represents high tone.

expressed by a sentence which the hearer is expected to know or take for granted as a result of hearing the sentence uttered. For example, in using a restrictive relative clause as in *I finally met the woman who moved in downstairs*³, the proposition expressed by the relative clause becomes part of the pragmatic presupposition, namely “old information”. The main clause bears a (pragmatic) assertion, namely “new information”⁴.

The second category concerns referents. Identifiability and activation have to do with a speaker’s assumptions about the statuses of the mental representations of discourse referents in the addressee’s mind at the time of an utterance. According to Lambrecht (1994: 77ff.), identifiable referent is one for which a shared representation already exists in the speaker’s and the hearer’s mind at the time of utterance, while an unidentifiable referent is one for which a representation exists only in the speaker’s mind. Identifiability has to do with the grammatical categories of definiteness and specificity. Definiteness is a formal feature associated with nominal expressions which signals whether or not the referent of a phrase is assumed by the speaker to be identifiable to the hearer. Specificity has to do with the referent of indefinite noun phrases. A specific indefinite NP is one whose referent is identifiable to the speaker but not to the hearer, while a non-specific indefinite NP is one whose referent neither the speaker nor the hearer can identify at the time of utterance. We will use this framework to discuss the nominal suffix *-i* in subsection 5.1.

On the other hand, activation has to do with consciousness. According to Lambrecht (1994: 93ff.), the psychological factors determining the activation states⁵ of discourse referents are thus consciousness and the difference between

³ According to Lambrecht (1994: 55-56), the pragmatic presuppositions lexicogrammatically evoked with the utterance in this sentence can be loosely stated as the following set of propositions: 1) the addressee can identify the female individual designated by the definite noun phrase (by a grammatical morpheme, the definite article *the*), 2) someone moved in downstairs from the speaker (by a grammatical construction, the relative clause *who moved in downstairs*), 3) one would have expected the speaker to have met that individual at some earlier point in time (by a lexical item, the adverb *finally*).

⁴ Lambrecht restricts the use of the terms “old information” and “new information” to aspects of information associated with proposition here.

⁵ Chafe (1987: 25ff.) defines three different activation states. An active concept (“given information”) is one that is currently lit up, a concept in a person’s focus of consciousness. A semi-active concept (“accessible information”) is one that is in a person’s peripheral consciousness, a concept of which a person has a background awareness, but which is not being directly focused on. An inactive concept (“new information”) is one that is currently in a person’s long-term memory, neither focally nor peripherally active. Lambrecht (1994: 94) refers to what Chafe calls “concept” as “(mental representation of) referent”.

short-term memory and long-term memory. An item is active if it is “currently lit up” in our consciousness, and activation normally ceases as soon as some other item is lit up instead. The active state of a referent is formally expressed typically via pronominal coding of the corresponding linguistic expression. The pronominal coding applies to free and bound pronouns, inflectional affixes, and null instantiation (zero coding) of an argument.

The final category concerns relations. Topic and focus have to do with a speaker’s assessment of the relative predictability vs. unpredictability of the relations between propositions and their elements in a given discourse situation. Topic is the predictable element in an utterance. Therefore, topic is included in the pragmatic presupposition without being identical to it. On the other hand, focus is that portion of a proposition which cannot be taken for granted at the time of speech. It is the unpredictable or pragmatically non-recoverable element in an utterance. The focus of a sentence is generally seen as an element of information which is added to the pragmatic presupposition. Therefore, focus is part of an assertion without coinciding with it.

Topic referents have a degree of pragmatic accessibility. For postulating a general correlation between the activation and identifiability states of topic referents and the pragmatic acceptability of sentences, we can adopt Givón’s scale for the coding of topic accessibility (Fig. 1). The phonological scale runs from zero anaphora to stressed/independent pronouns, and the word-order scale from R(ight) dislocated DEF-NP’s to L(ef) dislocated DEF-NP’s. As for continuity or accessibility, the left-most element codes more continuous topics, while the right-most less continuous ones⁶. Both Y-movement⁷ (contrastive topicalization) and cleft-focus can be considered instances of more discontinuous/surprising topic constructions where the topic is placed to the left of the comment. We will mainly use the phonological scale to discuss nominal suffix *-n-* in subsection 5.2. Zero anaphora is most obvious and picks up the most continuous and accessible topic for the speaker and hearer. We will regard it as a backgrounded topic, in contrast with independent long personal pronouns in Basketo as a foregrounded

⁶ According to Givón (1983: 19ff.), the topic-comment orders show higher average numeral values for referential distance than comment-topic orders in some data of several languages.

⁷ The term Y-movement (or: Yiddish movement) was used to describe the fronting of a noun phrase, which was felt to be reminiscent of Yiddish-influenced American English. Givón defines Y-movement as an object-topicalizing construction, where the more topical patient/object is fronted and the less topical agent/subject is postponed (yielding OSV in SVO languages). The question will be further illustrated in examples (30c) and (31c). See also Pekarek, De Stefani & Horlacher (2015: 51).

topic for emphasis. The short personal pronouns are in neutral position relative to backgrounded or foregrounded topic.

Particular elements of this scale are positioned as follows:

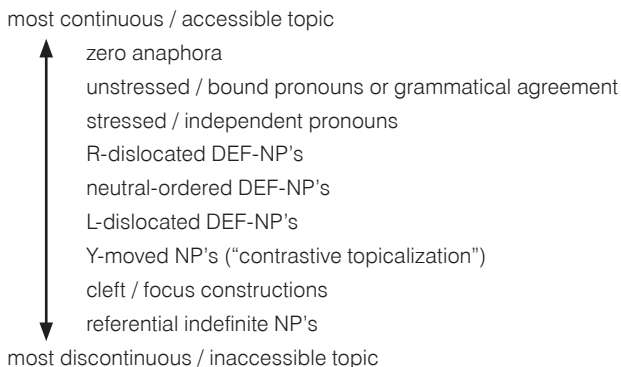


Fig. 1. Scales in the coding of topic accessibility (Givón 1983: 17)

In addition, we will define the linguistic behaviour of the possessive forms of personal pronouns here. Herslund & Baron (2001: 2-3) defines "possession as the linguistic expression of the relation between two entities, a Possessor and a Possessum, such that one, the Possessor, is seen as being in some way related to the other, the Possessum, as having it near or controlling it". Possession can be classified into two main types of linguistic constructions: attributive (e.g. *my credit card*) and predicative (e.g. *I have a credit card*). The former attribute possession is highly general in meaning while the latter predicate possession is more specific⁸. For example, compare *I come home with they always prepared for my coming home*, the former's subject *I* bears the topic automatically in a sentence⁹, and the latter's possessive *my* modifies the verbal noun only and does not bear

⁸ According to Heine (1997: 28-29), a phrase like *my house* may derive from a large number of underlying sentences such as *I own the house, I live in the house, I rented the house, I built the house*, etc.

⁹ The notion of topic or theme as the first element in the sentence is extensively discussed in Prague School research (Functional Sentence Perspective). See Firbas (1979) about the idea of the communicative dynamism (CD). However, from a viewpoint of typological studies, sentence-initial element can be not only topics but foci from the strategy of left-movement (pre-verbal ordering) of V-initial languages. In any case, sentence-initial element has some pragmatic functions in a sentence.

any pragmatic (namely, topic or focus) information in a sentence unless the possessive has strong (marked) accent in English. Therefore, the possessive forms of personal pronouns discussed here show only grammatical or semantic function at phrase level, and bear no pragmatic information in discourse. We will use this idea for explaining the function of short pronouns of Basketo later.

3. Grammatical outline of Basketo

This section gives a grammatical outline of Basketo focusing on aspects which are relevant for the topic under discussion.

3.1. Terminal vowels

Terminal vowels are the stem-final vowels found in citation forms (called “absolute forms”) of nominals in North Omotic languages generally. In Basketo the terminal vowels are /a/ for masculine nouns¹⁰ and /o/ for the rare feminine nouns¹¹. According to Hayward (2001), Basketo has both unstable terminal vowel (UTV) type and stable terminal vowel (STV) type. The former is found in core cases; nominative, accusative and genitive, and the latter in oblique cases; dative, ablative, instrumental etc., and with definiteness. Table 1 shows UTV-type and STV-type of Basketo.

TABLE 1. UTV-type and STV-type of Basketo

as-á 'man' (/ kaná 'dog') (ABS)	
UTV-type	STV-type
as-í (NOM)	asá-bo 'for a man' (DAT)
as-í (ACC)	asá-ppo 'from a man' (ABL)
as-í / kaná (GEN) ¹²	asá-bara 'by a man' (INSTR)
	asá-da 'the man' (DEF)

¹⁰ Terminal vowels immediately following alveolar affricates or fricatives are sometimes hard to hear in spontaneous speech, e.g. absolute and nominative forms are *jóóf-a* / *jóóf-i* 'snake', *tʃʉutʃ-á* / *tʃʉutʃ-í* 'louse'. However, terminal vowels must drop in the case of non-specific or generic meaning, e.g. *indí garta jóóf wode*. 'There are snakes in mountains'.

¹¹ Feminine kinship nouns have the terminal vowel /o/ as follows; *indó* 'mother', *aakkó* 'grandmother', *mifó* 'sister', *mátʃó* 'wife', etc.

¹² Genitive constructions are shown by word order (GN) without changing the terminal vowels in non-human nouns. On the other hand, the terminal vowels change to /i/ like nominative in human and personal nouns, e.g. *kaná gólsa* 'dog's tail', *buná sawá* 'smell of coffee', *baabí ojda* 'father's chair', *ts'ooší k'áála* 'God's voice'.

3.2. Case marking

Basketo has both case marking and verb agreement. Both case marking and agreement can express the relation between a main verb and its dependent noun phrases within a clause. In languages in general, morphological marking of grammatical relations may appear in either the head or the dependent member of the constituent, in both or in neither. Nichols (1986) calls these four types of marking head marking, dependent marking, double marking, and neutral marking.

For a verb and its dependent nouns there are the following four possibilities (in all distinguished types, heads are indicated by superscript H, affixal markers by M):

Dependent-marked:

Noun₁ + ^MCase Noun₂ + ^MCase ^HVerb

Head-marked:

Noun₁ Noun₂ ^HVerb + ^MAFF_{N1} + ^MAFF_{N2}

Double-marked:

Noun₁ + ^MCase Noun₂ + ^MCase ^HVerb + ^MAFF_{N1} + ^MAFF_{N2}

Neutral-marked:

Noun₁ Noun₂ ^HVerb

Basketo has a nominative-accusative system like other Omotic languages. But morphological marking is partly determined by definiteness, as in North Omoto languages. Indefinite nouns are morphologically marked only in the nominative with suffix *-i*. Basketo has a marked nominative system¹³ in this case. On the other hand, definite nouns are morphologically marked for both nominative *-di* and accusative *-dani*. However, contrary to other Omoto languages, object nouns without a definite marker can be marked with the suffix *-i* which seems to be

¹³ König (2006: 658) distinguished two subtypes among the marked-nominative languages with regard to the morphological markedness of nominative and accusative. Type 1 (the more common one), in which the accusative is the morphologically unmarked form and the nominative the morphologically marked form, and type 2, in which both case forms, nominative and accusative, are morphologically marked. In type 1 of marked-nominative languages, the accusative is morphologically unmarked, functionally unmarked and used in citation. In type 2, the accusative is morphologically marked, functionally unmarked, and used in citation. According to König (2006: 687), there is a concentration of type-2 languages within Highland East Cushitic and North Omotic, though Basketo is classified as an accusative language with South Omotic (Hamar, Dime and Aari) in König (2008: 89ff.).

a marker of specificity¹⁴. This shows a neutral case-marking system. Therefore, Basketo has a split marked-nominative system. Tables 2 and 3 show nominative / accusative case marking of definiteness and specificity in Basketo. We will discuss the specific function of *-i* in the subsections below¹⁵.

TABLE 2. Nominative case marking in Basketo

	+DEF	-DEF
+SPEC	-di	-i
-SPEC	-da	-a

TABLE 3. Accusative case marking in Basketo

	+DEF	-DEF
+SPEC	-dani	-i
-SPEC	-dana	-∅

As an illustration, examples (1-2) are for non-specific (i.e. generic) nominative and accusative, example (3) for marked nominative, example (4) for both marked with definite marker, and example (5) for both nominative and accusative marked by *-i* as a specific marker.

- (1) kan-á ájɿ múj-íre
 dog-ABS meat(-ACC) eat-IMPF
 'Dogs eat meat.'
- (2) bínn-a gúún ejts-íre
 mosquito-ABS malaria(-ACC) cause-IMPF
 'Mosquitos cause malaria.'
- (3) kan-í ájɿ múj-íne
 dog-NOM meat(-ACC) eat-PF
 'A dog ate meat.'

¹⁴ The suffix *-i* always seems to bear a high tone in a sentence, irrespective of word accent type. This may have relation to pragmatic function or sentence intonation. We must collect more data for ascertaining the relation between tone and case marking.

¹⁵ Feminine nouns show diminutive or lovable meanings with *-in/*, and are used frequently in a colloquial sentence, e.g. *awá* 'sun' / *awín* 'lovable sun'. However, such feminine nouns are necessarily specific. Therefore, we will deal here with the masculine nouns only for discussing the difference of specificity.

- (4) kaná-**d-i** áijja-**d-ani** múj-íne
 dog-DEF-NOM meat-DEF-ACC eat-PF
 'The dog ate the meat.'
- (5) kan-í baw-í éédđ-íne
 dog-NOM/ACC cat-ACC/NOM catch-PF
 'A dog caught a cat.' or 'A cat caught a dog.'

3.3. Verb agreement

Verb conjugation in Basketo shows both subject agreement and aspect. Subject agreement indicates person, gender, and number. Aspect distinguishes imperfective and perfective. Verb conjugation shows “polyfunctionality”, expressing person, gender, and number by one portmanteau morpheme, and is highly syncretic. Thus, in the imperfective the suffix **-áre** is used for 1SG, 2SG and 3SG.F and **-íre** for 3SG.M and all plural. There are two Perfectives; the recent past with **-áde** / **-ide** and past with **-íne**¹⁶. In the former the suffix **-áde** can be used for 1SG, 2SG and 3SG.F and **-ide** for 3SG.M and all plural. With the latter, the suffix **-íne** can be used for all personal endings of perfective, making the agreement a poor guide to the verb’s subject. Therefore, subject nouns, especially independent personal pronouns, will be overt. See example (6) for **-áde** / **-íne** and (7) for **-ide** / **-íne**. In Table 4 the syncretic paradigm of Basketo is compared to the fully differentiated paradigm of Wolaytta.

- (6) táán-í / néén-í / íz-á lúkk-**áde** / **-íne**
 1SG / 2SG / 3SG.F-NOM go-PF
 'I / You (sg.) / She went.'
- (7) ij-í / núún-í / jínt-í / int-í lúkk-**ide** / **-íne**
 3SG.M / 1PL / 2PL / 3PL-NOM go-PF
 'He / We / You (pl.) / They went.'

In sum, Basketo is formally a double marking language at clause level, but in practice a neutral marking language, because of poor guidance from both case marking and verb agreement, as can be seen from example (5).

¹⁶ The difference between the two is not significant for this study. See Inui (2017) for details of the tense-aspect system of Basketo.

TABLE 4. Basketo / Wolaytta person marking on main verb

	Imperfective		Perfective	
	Basketo	Wolaytta	Basketo	Wolaytta
1SG	-áre	-aísi	-áde/-íne	-aási
2SG	-áre	-aása	-áde/-íne	-ádása
3SG.F	-áre	-aúsu	-áde/-íne	-aásu
3SG.M	-íre	-eési	-íde/-íne	-iisi
1PL	-íre	-oósi	-íde/-íne	-ída
2PL	-íre	-eéta	-íde/-íne	-ídéta
3PL	-íre	-oósóna	-íde/-íne	-idósóna

3.4. Personal pronouns

First- and second-person subject pronouns¹⁷ in Basketo have short and long forms. Similar pronoun paradigms are found in Ometo languages, including Wolaytta, Gamo, Gofa, and Dawro, as well as in Bench (see Amha 2012: 471). The short form is the same as the possessive form, which is morphologically the simplest form. The long form shows the morpheme **-i** parallel to nouns. The object can be marked by **-na** for all personal pronouns, and proper and kinship nouns. This morpheme may be the survival of the old accusative marker (see Hayward & Tsuge 1998: 22-26). Tables 5-7 show paradigm of proper nouns, kinship nouns, and personal pronouns (boldface for the old accusative marker), respectively.

TABLE 5. Paradigm of proper nouns

	ABS	NOM	ACC
Male name	Wólk'á	Wólk'-i	Wólk'á-ná / Wólk'á-ní Wólk'á- náná / Wólk'á- nání
Female name	Wotts'anó	Wotts'an-á Wotts'an-i	Wotts'aná-ná / Wotts'aná-ní Wotts'aná- náná / Wotts'aná- nání

¹⁷ Object personal pronouns, and proper and kinship nouns in Basketo can also have suffix **-n-** as in Tables 5-7. We will discuss the behaviour of object personal pronouns with the suffix **-n-** as a topic marker in 5.4.

TABLE 6. Paradigm of kinship nouns

	ABS	NOM	ACC
Male kinship	baabá 'father'	baab-í	baabá-ná / baabá-ní baabá- náná / baabá- nání
Female kinship	índó 'mother'	índ-á / índ-í	índá-ná / índá-ní índá- náná / índá- nání

TABLE 7. Paradigm of personal pronouns

	POSS	NOM	ACC
1SG	tá	táání / tá	tááná / táání, táánáná / táánání
2SG	né	néení / né	nééná / néení, néénáná / néénání
3SG.M	í	íjí	íjáná / íjání, íjánáná / íjánání
3SG.F	ízí	ízá / ízí	ízáná / ízání, ízánáná / ízánání
1PL	nú	núúní / nú	núúná / núúní, núúnáná / núúnání
2PL	jíntí	jíntí	jíntáná / jíntání, jíntánáná / jíntánání
3PL	íntí	íntí	íntáná / íntání, íntánáná / íntánání

3.5. Adjective predicates

Although Basketo is said to have a nominative-accusative system, in adjective predicates we find an interesting marking by specificity and definiteness. Adjective predicates typically express features or properties of their subject nouns. Therefore, both inanimate and animate nouns, if indefinite, use the citation (absolute) form in **-a**. On the other hand, definite nouns are marked by nominative **-í**. Specific human nouns are also marked by nominative. This shows that morpheme **-í** has to do with specificity and definiteness. See example (8a) and (9a) for non-definite and (8b) and (9b) for definite in inanimate and animal nouns.

(8a) mítts-**a** ɓarínts-e
tree-ABS tall-PRD
'Trees are tall.'

(8b) míttsa-d-**í** ɓarínts-e
tree-DEF-NOM tall-PRD
'The tree is tall.'

- (9a) ϕ ar-**á** béttf-e
horse-ABS big-PRD
'Horses are big.'
- (9b) ϕ ará-d-í béttf-e
horse-DEF-NOM big-PRD
'The horse is big.'

In example (10) human nouns can be marked by either absolutive **-a** or nominative **-i**, but in example (11) divine nouns are always marked by nominative **-i**, irrespective of definite marker **-d**. Likewise, a generic subject in intransitive takes absolutive **-a**, too. See example (12) for generic meaning, and example (13) for specific in intransitive.

- (10) as-**á** / -í béttf-e
man-NOM big-PRD
'Men are big.'
- (11) ts'oos-í kójj-e
god-NOM good-PRD
'God is good.'
- (12) méh-**a** tʃ'ing-ári hájk'-íre
animal-ABS get old-CNV.SS die-IMPF
'Animals die when they get old.'
- (13) génts-i jédđ-íre
ox-NOM walk-IMPF
'The ox walks.'

4. Statistical analysis of corpus

Here we use statistical data from a corpus of spoken Basketo, a conversation between four children in Balt'a village¹⁸. This corpus of recorded spontaneous speech consists of 82 clauses¹⁹. In language description, when we collect tran-

¹⁸ Balt'a village is located about 30 minutes by car from the town of Basketo. The informants of this corpus are children from 8 to 10 years old. Children in the village use Basketo in everyday conversation, but since the lingua franca is Amharic, they also use Amharic to communicate with other communities, especially at school. They know one or two neighbouring languages imperfectly, too.

¹⁹ The breakdown of that is as follows: 58 main clauses, 15 converbs, 3 adverbial clauses, 4 relative clauses, and 1 noun clause. The full text of the corpus is available online at <https://purl.org/JAEL/CEL/lang/bst/r/001> [24.08.20]. Each sentence is numbered and the alphabetic characters (A-D) identify the four children (e.g. 1-A).

sitive sentences, we usually include both subject and object. On the other hand, recorded natural conversation foregrounds another aspect of language: the information structure.

4.1. Subject marking

We found three types of anaphoric subject form: zero, short, and long forms. See example (14) for zero anaphora, (15) for short form, and (16) for long form.

- (14) **ø** timirtáál lúkk-ár-bajá?
 (2SG.NOM) school go-IMPF-INTRO
 'Are you really going to school?' (40-B)
- (15) **hát** **tá** lúkk-ánda
 now 1SG.NOM go-INT
 'I'll go now.' (7-C)
- (16) **tááni** lúkk-ákkaje
 1SG.NOM go-PF.NEG
 'I haven't been.' (2-B)

Table 8 shows the appearance of singular first- and second-person pronouns (there are no plural forms). Singular first- and second-person subject referents account for 84% of the total verbs. It shows that it often happens that either the speaker marked by first-person or the hearer marked by second-person is topicalized in the natural sentences.

TABLE 8. Appearance of subject

	1SG	2SG	3SG	Total
Subject	34	35	13	82
%	41	43	16	100

For first- and second-person subjects, statistical data of null, short, and long forms, are shown in Table 9. Null accounts for about two-thirds of the total. On the other hand, long forms account for less than 10% of the total. Therefore, we realize that the long form may be rather marked in discourse.

TABLE 9. Null, short and long of 1SG / 2SG

	Null	Short	Long	Total
1SG	18	11	5	34
	53%	32%	15%	100%
2SG	26	8	0	34
	76%	24%	0%	100%
Total	44	19	5	68
	65%	28%	7%	100%

With third-person subjects, zero anaphora accounts for less than one-fourth of the total, while specific nouns increase more than 50% in Table 10. Therefore, we realize that specific subject nouns may be unmarked in discourse. Specific nouns show earlier topics resumed and marked for the addressee's identifiability and activation.

TABLE 10. Subject marking

Zero anaphora	DEF	SPEC	INDEF	Total
3	1	7	2	13
23%	8%	54%	15%	100%

4.2. Object marking

The types of object marking are shown in Table 11. In general, indefinite nouns function as new information and become the focus of the sentence. On the other hand, zero anaphora picks up an activated referent and becomes the backgrounded topic in discourse. The transitive clauses are 48 of total 82 clauses in the corpus²⁰. Implicit objects (zero anaphora) account for 60% of the total and refer to the most accessible (activated) referent, typically the current topic. On the other hand, specific objects are very rare. Definite objects account for more

²⁰ In this corpus, all objects were inanimate with one exception, the first person pronoun *táánáná* in 16-B.

than one-fourth of the total and show an overt topic with possessive or demonstrative.

TABLE 11. Object marking

Zero anaphora	DEF	SPEC	INDEF	Total
28	13	1	5	47
60%	28%	2%	11%	100%

See example (17) for zero anaphora, (18) for specific (-*i*), (19) for definite (-*d*), and (20) for indefinite (-*∅*).

- (17) wúú, né á \emptyset erár-dor-a?
 Oh 2SG.NOM why (grade) know-EXCL-INTRO
 'Oh, how do you know (your grade)?' (10-B)
- (18) táání lúkk-á, **daracɕ-i** sísk-i-jéj-íne
 1SG.NOM go-CNV.SS grade-ACC hear-CNV.SS-come-PF
 'I went and got my grade.' (3-A)
- (19) tá tá **daracɕá-da(ni)** hamús sísk-ánda.
 1SG.NOM 1SG.POSS grade-DEF.ACC Thursday hear-INT
 'I'll get my grade on Thursday.' (57-A)
- (20) ats'anna?-íno-ppo haná **óós** oots-ár-bajá?
 study-REL.PF-ABL after work(-ACC) do-IMPF-INTRO
 'Will you work after studying?' (50-B)

4.3. NP deletion

Many Omotic languages morphologically distinguish two types of converbs for switch reference: the same-subject converb and the different-subject converb. The former indicates that the converb's subject is the same as the subject of the main verb. The latter indicates that the converb's subject is different from the subject of the main verb²¹. A converb is defined as a nonfinite verb form whose main function is to mark adverbial subordination. In a nonfinite clause the sub-

²¹ In Basketo there are three converb types: 1) same-subject anterior converb (-*ára* / - *íra*), 2) same-subject simultaneous converb (-*i*), and 3) different-subject anterior converb (-*in*). We often find the shortened form -*á* from -*ára* for 1SG (lúkk-*ára*) in discourse as in ex (18).

ject cross-linguistically tends to be unexpressed and thus depends for its referential interpretation on the overtly expressed subjects of main clauses. However, we found all four patterns of NP deletion (Table 12) in the data. These data show that NP deletion in Basketo is not a matter of syntax but of pragmatics. We must explain the appearance of subject for examples (21) - (24) from information structure.

TABLE 12. NP deletion

Sub-Clause	Main-Clause	
-	+	(21)
+	-	(22)
+	+	(23)
-	-	(24)

(21) \emptyset jebet sirá ekk-í, tá oots-áre
 (1SG.NOM) homework (-ACC) take-CNV.SS 1SG.NOM do-IMPF
 'I'll take homework and do it.' (23-C)

(22) táání lúkk-á, \emptyset daradɔ́-í sísk-í-jéj-íne
 1SG.NOM go-CNV.SS (1SG.NOM) grade-ACC hear-CNV.SS-come-PF
 'I went and got my grade.' (3-A)

(23) árt dabtár sol-í ekk-ín, tá wong-ákkaje
 art exercise book (-ACC) thief-NOM take-CNV.DS 1SG.NOM buy-PF.NEG
 'The thief took the art exercise book, but I haven't bought (a new one) yet.' (63-A)

(24) \emptyset zinááb lúkk-ín, \emptyset
 (1SG.NOM) yesterday go-CNV.DS (someone)
 sanjí jéé-bte géj-íne
 Monday come-IMPER say-PF
 'When I went (to school) yesterday, they said to come on Monday.' (59-A)

5. Discussion

5.1. -i as a specific marker

Within the Afroasiatic phylum, marked nominative is found in Berber, Cushitic, and Omotic languages. Within Omotic, North Omotic languages show a concentration of marked-nominative languages, especially the Omoto languages

are mostly marked nominative (König 2006: 695-698). Tosco (1994: 236) argues that the nominative *-i* of Basketo has been grammaticalized out of a topic marker. He analyzed the suffix *-i* of Basketo as functioning more like a topic than a nominative marker, unlike that of Wolaytta and Gamo. In the previous section we showed that the suffix *-i* of Basketo can appear on both subject and object in the same sentence. Therefore, we can analyze this morpheme neither as nominative marker nor topic marker. Here we propose analyzing this suffix as a marker of specificity. There is no doubt that *-i* has to do with specificity: the evidence from adjective predicate structure in subsection 3.5 shows this.

Inui (2012) has some examples (25-28) of unmarked object without *-a*. As with 'óós (work)' of (20), the object does not refer to a specific individual, but implies simply generic or abstract meaning. In such a case, the suffix *-i* is infelicitous.

- (25) táání **áiĵ** ĵááĵk-íne
 1SG.NOM meat (-ACC) grill-PF
 'I grilled some meat.' (Inui 2012: 178)
- (26) táání hattábo misí **úúϕ** múĵ-íne
 1SG.NOM today lunch injera (-ACC) eat-PF
 'I ate bread for lunch today.' (Inui 2012: 164)
- (27) deĵĵ-í **béts** béts-ín, ĵiĵ-int-ire
 goat-NOM dung (-ACC) defecate-CNV.DS gather-PASS-IMPF
 'Goats defecate and dung is gathered.' (Inui 2012: 70)
- (28) táání **ĵéts** dos-áre
 1SG.NOM song (-ACC) like-IMPF
 'I like songs.' (Inui 2012: 83)

Conversely, the suffix *-i* is obligatory in case of nouns modified by demonstrative, as shown in example (29).

- (29) táání zináábo há **úúϕ-í** múĵ-ára mađ-íne
 1SG.NOM yesterday this injera-ACC eat-CNV.SS become sick-PF
 'I ate this bread yesterday and became sick.'

We can regard the conditions for appearance of the specific marker in question as a hierarchy of individuation or a hierarchy of salience. Salience is not treated as a primitive in itself, but rather as the result of the interaction of a number of factors, such as animacy, specificity, singularity, and concreteness (see Comrie 1989: 199).

In summary, the suffix *-i* suggests that the reference of noun phrase in question is important, relevant for the discourse as a whole. The nouns, either subject or object, are activated by adding *-i* morpheme in discourse. Subject is more frequently marked by this morpheme, because subject is more salient than object in discourse. Here, we propose tentatively that this morpheme functions as specific.

5.2. *-n-* as a topic marker

Here we discuss the information function of the morpheme *-n-* of personal pronouns. It will be useful to utilize Lambrecht's definition of topic and focus (1994) and Givón's scale for the coding of topic accessibility explained in section 2.

The short and long forms of the first- and second-person subject pronouns may be used alternatively in the same context, apparently without any semantic difference in several Ometo languages. So far, no analysis of actual use of the short and long pronouns has been made.

Rapold (2006: 341-363) discussed the various forms of pronoun in Bench, which uses two parameters, long or short, and strong or weak tone²², giving four combinations. Rapold reports that the long strong pronouns are the most discontinuous subject pronouns: they are typically used to code new or resumed topics, while short strong pronouns signal a higher topic continuity and also code subject focus. On the other hand, short weak pronouns are the most continuous (overt) subject pronouns, and long weak pronouns signal higher topic continuity than long strong or short strong pronouns, but are slightly more discontinuous than the short weak pronouns. The correlation between topic continuity and the various forms of pronouns in Bench is shown in Fig. 2.

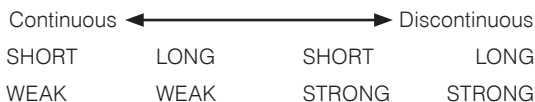


Fig. 2. Topic continuity in Bench

²² Pronouns with the shape CV are termed "short", and those with the shape CVC "long". Pronouns with tone 3 (a neutral mid tone) are termed "weak", those with tone 1 (a salient, extreme low tone), which are pragmatically more marked, "strong".

In this language, focus seems to be determined by stress accent, on the other hand morpheme *-n-* of the Bench long form seems to be characterized as a topic marker. The information structure of four combinations is shown in Table 13.

TABLE 13. The appearance of topic and focus in Bench

	STRONG (+F)	WEAK (-F)
LONG (+T)	T / F	T / Ø
SHORT (-T)	Ø / F	Ø / Ø

T – topic, F – focus

Thinking about what types of nominal are likely to be used as focus and topic, zero marking is used when the referent intended is the most accessible one, generally an activated referent, typically, current topic of conversation. Use of a pronoun guarantees that the referent intended is either activated (especially if unstressed) or at least accessible (if stressed). Use of a definite NP guarantees that the referent intended is identifiable, and generally both inactive and accessible. Use of an indefinite NP generally tells the hearer that the referent is not identifiable in the current context and hence is a new referent being introduced into the context. Thus, zero coding is used for a topic, while realization as an indefinite NP is used for a focal element. Typically, subject has to do with topic, while object has to do with focus. According to Givón (1979: 51-52), in an English text count, 50% of the direct objects were indefinite and 82% of the indefinite NPs were direct objects. We come up with a scale of markedness relations between the form of a referring expression and its function as topic or focus, as shown in Fig. 3.

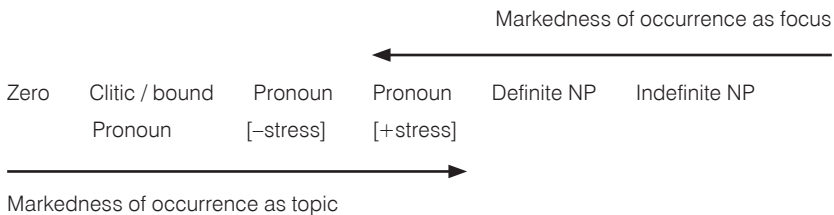


Fig. 3. Coding of referents in terms of possible functions
(Van Valin & Lapolla 1997: 205)

Turning to the data of Basketo, zero anaphora, whether of subject or object, functions as a topic, but is backgrounded in discourse. It is important that the short form is the same as the possessive in Basketo. In general, possessive does not bear any pragmatic information in discourse such as explained in section 2. Therefore, short pronouns also have no pragmatic function, but show what is subject or agent in a clause: this form shows only grammatical or semantic function in the clause. On the other hand, long pronouns are morphologically and pragmatically marked. Therefore, morpheme *-n-* makes a foregrounded discourse topic in contrast with zero anaphora, including such topics as normal topic, resumed topic, contrastive topic, unpredictable topic²³, and even focus-like cleft NPs with high animacy. For example, if someone says *It was John that ate the cake*, the referent of the name *John* must already be known to the hearer, namely this is its identifiability status in the mind of the hearer. In this case *someone ate the cake* is the presupposition, *someone = John* is the assertion, the new information, and *John* is the focus of the utterance. Thus, we can consider the continuum from topic to focus as the remit of morpheme *-n-*.

5.3. The use of nominal suffixes *-i* and *-n-* in discourse

Here we will discuss the appearance of both nominal suffixes (*-i* and *-n-*) in the corpus. It may be difficult to find applicable examples from spontaneous speech, but we try to provide evidence for these functions. The following text is the first part of the corpus. We found three types of anaphoric subject form: zero, short, and long forms. Zero anaphora (3-A and 4-B) shows the most activated topic as a backgrounded topic, while long forms (2-B and 3-A) foreground to express the meaning of contrastive topic. On the other hand, short forms (1-A and 4-B) may show the neutral position relative to backgrounded or foregrounded topic.

1-A:	tá	timirtáál		lúkk-í-jéj-íne	
	1SG.NOM	school		go-CNV.SS-come-PF	
		'I've been to school.'			
2-B:	táání	lúkk-ákkaje			
	1SG.NOM	go-PF.NEG			
		'I haven't.'			
3-A:	táání	lúkk-á,	∅	daradz-í	sísk-í-jéj-íne
	1SG.NOM	go-CNV.SS	(1SG.NOM)	grade-ACC	hear-CNV.SS-come-PF
		'I went and got my grade.'			

²³ The unpredictable topic nouns are either indefinites entering into the discourse for the first time or definites reentering the discourse after much has intervened.

4-B: **tá** **giáb** **ø** **sísk-ánda** **ø** **lúkk-ára**
 1SG.NOM tomorrow (grade-ACC) hear-INT (1SG.NOM) go-CNV.SS
 'I'll go and get mine tomorrow.'

Turning to specificity, **-i** marks *darad̥ṣ-i* as specific in 3-A, while zero anaphora is used in 4-B. Likewise, in the following text, the specific suffix **-i** with possessive is used in 8-B, the specific suffix **-i** in 9-C and zero anaphora in 10-B. In both cases, specific nouns²⁴ may be marked by the suffix **-i**, and if they are activated in discourse, they may become zero anaphora as a backgrounded topic.

8-B: **né** **darad̥ṣ-i** **sínt** **késk-ína?**
 2SG.POSS grade-NOM how much go up-PF.INTRO
 'How much has your grade improved?'

9-C: **darad̥ṣ-i** **ánd** **késk-íne**
 grade-NOM one go up-PF
 'My grade has improved by one.'

10-B: **wúú,** **né** **á** **ø** **erár-dor-a?**
 Oh 2SG.NOM why (grade-ACC) know.IMPV-EXCL-INTRO
 'Oh, how do you know (your grade)?'

On the other hand, the specific suffix **-i** does not appear in the non-specific (i.e. generic) meaning as in 50-B.

50-B: **ats'anna?-íno-ppo** **haná** **óós** **oots-ár-bája?**
 study-REL.PF-ABL after work(-ACC) do-IMPV-INTRO
 'Will you work after studying?'

51-A: **ø** **oots-ár**
 work(-ACC) do-IMPV
 'Yes, I will.'

5.4. Further evidence from word order

We discussed the information function of two nominal suffixes, and analyzed **-i** as a specific and **-n-** as a topic marker. Finally, we can show some evidence from word order supporting these analyses. The following examples show the simple transitive (a), the corresponding passive voice (b) and the OSV word order (c). In general, the passive construction is a strategy foregrounding the

²⁴ A definite noun such as *darad̥ṣ-ádi* (NOM) / *darad̥ṣ-ádani* (ACC) might be expected because the referent of a phrase is assumed by the speaker to be identifiable to the hearer.

patient, while backgrounding the agent. The patient is promoted from accusative to nominative while the agent is demoted from nominative to oblique case or often deleted. Basketo does not prefer the passive construction but the OSV word order²⁵. Moreover, a subject with low animacy (such as 'bedbugs') tends to be avoided. Examples (30c) and (31c) show sentence initial accusative nouns with the suffix **-n-** as a topic marker, on the other hand, the nominative nouns have the suffix **-i** as a specific marker for salience.

(30a)	íjǐ 3SG.M.NOM 'He hit you.'	néénání 2SG.ACC	bukk-íne hit-PF
(30b)	?néení 2SG.NOM 'You were hit by him.'	í-bara 3SG.M.ABL	bukk-int-íne hit-PASS-PF
(30c)	néénána 2SG.ACC.TOP 'You, he hit.'	íjǐ 3SG.M.NOM	bukk-íne hit-PF
(31a)	??isí bedbug.NOM 'A bedbug has bitten me.'	táánání 1SG.ACC	ǵak'-íne bite-PF
(31b)	?táání 1SG.NOM 'I has been bitten by a bedbug.'	isí-bara bedbug.ABL	ǵak'-int-íne bite-PASS-PF
(31c)	táánána 1SG.ACC.TOP 'Me, a bedbug has bitten.'	isí bedbug.NOM	ǵak'-íne bite-PF

6. Conclusion

We discussed the information function of two morphemes, nominal suffix **-i**, and **-n-** in first- and second-person pronouns in Basketo. First, though it has been said that Basketo has a nominative-accusative system, the suffix **-i** of Basketo can appear on both subject and object in the same sentence. So, we cannot regard this morpheme as a nominative or topic marker. Here we analyze morpheme **-i** as a specific marker. Second, there are short and long forms of the first- and second-person subject pronouns. The short form is the same as the

²⁵ The same exemplifications are found in Russian. Russian does have a passive construction but its use is less frequent. Russian uses the active with the word order direct object-verb-subject, rather than the passive construction (Comrie 1989: 81).

possessive form. In general, possessive does not bear any pragmatic information in discourse. Likewise, short pronouns also have no pragmatic function, but show what is subject or agent in a clause. On the other hand, long pronouns are not only morphologically but also pragmatically marked. We analyze morpheme *-n-* as the foregrounded topic in discourse in contrast with zero anaphora or a short pronoun as the backgrounded topic. For making sure of this idea, it is important to collect more data from natural discourse.

Abbreviations

1	first person	2	second person	3	third person
ABL	ablative	ABS	absolutive	ACC	accusative
CNV	converb	DAT	dative	DEF	definite
DS	different-subject	EXCL	exclamatory	F	feminine
GEN	genitive	IMPER	imperative	IMPF	imperfective
INDEF	indefinite	INSTR	instrumental	INT	intentional
INTRO	interrogative	M	masculine	NEG	negative
NOM	nominative	PASS	passive	PF	perfective
PL	plural	POSS	possessive	PRED	predicate
REL	relativizer	SG	singular	SPEC	specific
SS	same-subject	TOP	topic		

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English phonological errors by Kimakunduchi speaking EFL learners in Zanzibar

Abstract

The aim of the present study was to find the phonological errors on segmental level involving selected consonant sounds which are produced by Kimakunduchi speaking English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners in Zanzibar. Specifically, the study sought to provide the evidence of cross-linguistic influence involving phonological transfer on segmental level. The study employed two sampling techniques: stratified and random sampling. The data for this study were collected from three secondary schools located at Makunduchi district in Unguja Island – Makunduchi, Kusini, and Kizimkazi secondary schools – using the oral interview and observation. The data were analyzed with the use of both qualitative and quantitative research approach. The study was guided by the transfer theory which was one of the components of Selinker's (1992: 209) interlanguage theory. The findings revealed that, to a large extent, native Kimakunduchi speakers of EFL tended to transfer the sounds existing in their L1, or even in Kiswahili, into English. The transfer was done because of the nonexistence of the particular sound in the students' native language or because of the discrepancy of spelling and pronunciation in English language. The study concludes that an articulation of vowels is more complex compared to consonants because of their absence in the first language (L1) or because of the confusion of spelling and pronunciation in English as FL. Thus, the study recommended that serious

measures should be taken from both education holders to make sure that the learners could be able to pronounce English phonemes/words correctly.

Keywords: consonants, foreign language, interlanguage, Kimakunduchi, language errors

1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the study

The process of acquiring one language in a multilingual setting may be influenced by other preceding language(s). This is because it is believed that if two or more languages come into contact or when a person becomes familiar with two or more languages, like Kimakunduchi speaking EFL learners, these languages cannot exist without affecting one another in different ways and with different processes. Some of these processes are language transfer, borrowing, or code switching. The focus of the present study is on aspect of language transfer which is claimed to be widespread and important characteristic of second language learners (Odlin 1989: 210ff). Linguistic transfer means applying or generalizing the learners' knowledge about their native language (NL) to help them use and understand a second language (L2). It also means, as Odlin (1989: 210) puts it, the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the L1 and other learned or acquired language(s). Therefore, language transfer or what is also known as cross-linguistic influence (henceforth CLI) (Kellerman & Sharwood 1986: 1; Odlin 1989: 210; Selinker 1992 :209ff.) may produce different forms of English depending on the speaker's L1. Some well-known forms of English, as exemplified by Al-Khawalda & Al-Oliemat (n.d.: 2), are Chinglish (Chinese + English), Japlish (Japanese + English), and Spanglish (Spanish + English).

Scholars who have done research on the effect of L1 on learning of the second or foreign language have come up with varied findings. Nickel (1971: 219), for example, suggests that the L1 is a source on which learners rely on less and less as their competence in L2 increases. One major factor that would contribute to learners' increased competence in the target language (henceforth TL) is exposure. According to Nickel (1971: 219-227), this implies that learners who are starting to learn L2 will heavily rely on the knowledge they have about the L1, hence the influence of L1 on learning L2 is inevitable. This effect of L1 on L2 will retard as the learners acquire the second language (henceforth SL). In the context of the present study, therefore, Kimakunduchi speaking EFL learners who are starting to learn two FLs, i.e. English and Arabic, respectively, have a lot of Kimakunduchi and Kiswahili linguistic features being reflected in their FL. This

problem will continue reducing as the learners learn more about the English language.

With respect to the acquisition of L2 phonology, it is said that the influence of the L1 phonological system starts as early as in newborn infants. In the first years of life, while L1 influence develops rapidly but is still quite recent, the acquisition of an L2/FL remains easy for those early learners, contrary to late learners like teenagers or adults. Celce-Murcia, Brinton & Goodwin (1996: 16) explain: "It is undoubtedly the case that adults will acquire phonological system of a second language in a manner different from that of their first language, given that the acquisition of the new sounds in the second language must be integrated into already existing neural networks".

Thereby, Flege (1995: 234) underlines the obvious differences between the acquisition of L1 sounds and the acquisition of L2/FL sounds. While L1 acquirers are newborns and have no other linguistic influence (hence their universal capacity previously mentioned), late L2 learners already possess a whole phonetic system based on the L1, as the L1 influence has kept growing over time (Corder 1981: 17). Therefore, production of errors in L2 is inevitable. In fact, late learners tend to analyze L2/FL phonemes in terms of the L1 phonetic inventory quasi-systematically, and that triggered off the emergence of some famous theories in the field of L2 phonology acquisition. These theories include: transfer theory (Faerch & Kasper 1987: 111-136), contrastive analysis hypothesis (Lado 1957: 2), interlanguage theory (Selinker 1972: 209-241), and critical period hypotheses (Lenneberg 1967: 154-155).

In the context of Zanzibar, particularly the Makunduchi region, as it has been said, when the students learn English language, they have already acquired two languages simultaneously, i.e. Kimakunduchi and Kiswahili. Most of them have learnt Arabic language, although their knowledge of Arabic is confined to terms related to Islam. The prior languages, particularly two NLs and Arabic, have different morphological, syntactical, and phonological structures compared to the English language. Thus, one of the challenges they face is that their previously acquired knowledge of phonological system of these three languages affects their learning of English pronunciation. This was proved to be true in various studies which claim that students have the tendency to make transference of sounds appearing in their mother tongue when they produce new sounds of English (Kassulamemba 1977, after: Mwambapa 2012: 61). As the learners do this, they are making errors unknowingly, as demonstrated by the Institute of Education (1994), where some students from Tanzania are affected with their

Bantu languages and when they speak English, they exchange /l/ and /r/ before a vowel or between vowels, as in *lift* and *rift*, *flying* and *frying* or *fairly* and *fairy*.

Furthermore, a study by Maghway (1995: 30) shows that Tanzanian students fail to mark the inconsistency between spelling and pronunciation in English because they tend to use Kiswahili and other Bantu languages in which words are pronounced as they are written and that they transfer their prior knowledge of consistent orthographical patterns found in Kiswahili and other Bantu languages into the inconsistent forms of English when they pronounce English words. Those kinds of errors mentioned above are the outcome of the learners' MTL. Errors of such kind, according to Mwambapa (2012: 53), can be linked to the Selinker's (1972: 209) notion of interlanguage (henceforth IL), as L1 overlaps the L2 in the process of language learning. The situation may probably happen in Kimakunduchi as there is more than one language which come into contact during learning.

The situation is partly attributed to teachers' incompetence in effective teaching methods and to lack of recommended textbooks for teaching the TL (Roy-Campbell & Qorro 1997: 79). Consequently, as they finished their training and got employed as teachers, they teach their incorrect English to their students (Othman 1990: 51). Batibo (1990: 55) adds that many teachers fail to pronounce a number of English sounds and hence when they teach English, they transfer erroneous sounds to the learners. These are referred to as induced errors.

The aforementioned problem indicates the need to study phonological errors in learning English among Kimakunduchi speaking EFL learners. This is due to the fact that the problem associated with errors in segmental phonology might not be caused only by the reasons indicated by the scholars (Kassulamemba 1977, after: Mwambapa 2012: 62; Maghway 1995: 30; Roy-Campbell & Qorro 1997: 79; Batibo 1990: 55) but it may also result from the nature of the influence of L1's onto the L2/FL acquisition in certain speech community.

1.2. The research problem

As it has been said above, English in Makunduchi district is learnt when the students have already acquired linguistic structures of other languages. This situation leads the learners to have a problem with the production of English words. The difficulty arises due to the phonological differences between the acquired L1 in learning FL. Among the differences is the existence of some sounds in FL but not in L1, and vice versa. For example, sound /z/ exists in English but not in Kimakunduchi (or Kiswahili). In addition, the number of vowels in English

is different from the number of vowels in Bantu languages in Tanzania. English, for instance, has 20 vowels in which 12 are pure vowels and 8 are diphthongs. By contrast, Kimakunduchi and Kiswahili (and similarly also other Bantu languages) have only five vowels (Iddi 2011: 56; Massamba 2002: 5).

Therefore, it was those reasons and other linguistic differences that make several scholars to investigate how L1 speakers make errors when learning English as a FL in Tanzania. Some of the investigations are: a study on morphosyntactic mistakes among Tanzanian pupils learning French (Mahundi 1976: vi) and the study which investigates the relationship between the teachers' competence and pupils' achievements in French language skills (Chipa 1983: 4). Other researchers in this field include Mweteni (1996: 35-67) who studied errors of Tanzanian English learners in the scope of nouns and pronouns.

Studies on phonological errors in both English and French (as the major FLs taught in Tanzanian schools) among Kiswahili learners are very limited. To date, there are very few studies most of which focus on Tanzanian Mainland, e.g. Kassulamemba (1977, after: Mwambapa 2012: 62), Maghway (1995: 39ff.), and Mwambapa (2012: v). Therefore, none of the two main isles of Zanzibar Archipelago are involved in the investigation, even though titles of the studies indicate "Tanzania Language Problems". Another problem is that those studies did not show the influence of Kiswahili dialectal diversity on particular dialect speakers' mastery of English pronunciation.

There is therefore a need to conduct a study concerning Zanzibar since there is no study on the phonological errors among Kiswahili speaking learners of English in Zanzibar nor is there a study showing the Kimakunduchi speakers' (mis-) pronunciation of English language. The present study attempts to analyze English phonological errors among Makunduchi speaking EFL learners in Zanzibar. The focus is on consonants.

2. Materials and methods

The study was conducted in Makunduchi area, a town located in Southern part of Unguja Island. The study involved students of three government secondary schools, namely: Makunduchi, Kusini, and Kizimkazi who came from different wards such as Kajengwa, Ngamani, Kiongoni, Kijini, Mzuri, Tasani, Dimbani, and Mkunguni. Makunduchi was selected because the native speakers of Kimakunduchi dialect are easily accessible in that area. Kimakunduchi in Zanzibar is spoken predominantly there.

For the present study, the researchers employed the case study design in describing the phonological errors in articulating English sounds by Kimakunduchi speaking EFL learners.

The target population were the learners of Form Three and Form Four EFL in three ordinary level schools¹ located in Makunduchi district. This group was expected to have already acquired some experience in English language because they have been using it for seven years in primary school and two/three years as MOI in secondary school. For that reason, they were expected to have good exposure to English compared to the Forms not-included in the study (i.e. Form One and Form Two).

The sample comprised 120 respondents selected from the three schools with equal proportion of males and females. The total of 12 classes in all two Forms from the three selected schools was chosen and an average of 20% of each class was included in the study. This sample was sufficient to be regarded as representative of the entire population.

All the selected respondents were interviewed to obtain the data from the field. The interview comprised two tasks: a “read aloud” task and a conversation task. The “read aloud” task included three sub-tasks: reading a list of words, reading two verses of a poem, and reading six short sentences. The first sub-task comprised 48 words, the second comprised 31 words, and the last had 13 words. The total sum of the studied words was 92 for 17 tested phonemes (i.e. five consonants, six monophthongs, and six diphthongs). The researcher aimed to study the pronunciation of each of the tested phonemes both in the isolated words (i.e. read from the list of words), and combined with other words (i.e. read in a poem and short sentences) in order to see which difficulties the Kimakunduchi speaking EFL learners had in pronouncing English phonemes. All the selected consonants and vowels were tested in all three positions, that is, initial, medial, and final, with the exception of those that do not occur in a particular position. The tasks were written on a sheet of paper, so the selected words were familiar to the respondents what made them feel more relaxed while reading.

As the researcher believed that a “read aloud” task was insufficient to diagnose the pronunciation errors, the respondents were also requested to make a short conversation on the topic “likes and dislikes in their environment” or any of the topics which made the respondents talk comfortably. The kind of task was

¹ This level of education in Tanzanian education system refers to the first four years of education after primary school but before high school.

designed on the basis of the Ordinary level syllabus which the researcher assumed the respondents have already been practised with their teacher during the English classes. The aim was to make the respondents feel free and secure in using English. While the conversation was proceeding, the open questions were asked in order to motivate the respondents to talk. Each participant was given 3 minutes to talk freely. The conversation was recorded. The intention of this task was that the respondents will produce the phonemes targeted in the study.

Observation was used by the researcher to examine the manner the respondents were articulating the tested phonemes. With this method, the researcher was able to observe the movement of some organs of speech by watching and listening attentively to the video records taken when the respondents did the "read aloud" task and spontaneous talking.

Each of the recorded chunks was sent from the recording device to the computer and the files were named R1, R2, R3, R4, and R5, R6, and R7 up to R104. The video files were played many times and listened carefully using the headphones connected to the computer. The headphones were important as they enabled to capture each sound produced by the respondents. Later on, all the data required from the interview were transcribed into phonemic symbols and compared with the standard transcription from the *Longman dictionary of contemporary English* (henceforth LDCE) and the online *Cambridge English pronouncing dictionary* (henceforth CEPD). Furthermore, the IPA Word list program software (henceforth IPA WLPS) installed on the computer was used as an aid for the researcher in identifying whether the pronunciation was correct or not.

Finally, all the data were identified, analyzed, and verified using both qualitative and quantitative research approach. However, the study was mainly qualitative. The qualitative analysis of the raw data was performed with the use of the content analysis technique, i.e. the technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying special characteristics of the given data. Therefore, with this technique the correct and incorrect pronunciation examples were identified, analyzed, and described in terms of specific objectives and research questions. Computation of frequencies and percentage were done using MS Excel. Next, statistical tabulation was constructed to summarize and explain the quantitative data. Using the content analysis, the study was divided into the themes and sub-themes related to the topic where the findings from each specific objective were explained, and in some cases the quotes were provided to validate the qualitative data.

3. The Findings

In this section an analysis of five sample consonant sounds is presented, which are: dental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/, voiced post alveolar fricative /ʒ/, alveolar lateral /l/, and post alveolar approximant /r/. Each of the phonemes was classified into three basic positions.

3.1. Dental fricative /θ/

The English phoneme /θ/ is described as voiceless inter-dental fricative. According to Roach (2000: 56), this means that the speaker produces this kind of phoneme only if s/he fulfils three main features of /θ/ sound. These features are based on three parameters, namely: the state of glottis, the place of articulation, and the manner of articulation. Nonetheless, this particular phoneme does not exist in Kimakunduchi phonetic system (Iddi 2010: 56) but it does exist in Kiswahili sound system inventory (Massamba 2002: 5) which is the respondents' L2. When the researcher tested the pronunciation of this phoneme, six words from all the two tasks were given to the respondents. The results are as illustrated in Table 1.

TABLE 1. The learners' pronunciation of /θ/

The learners' realization of phoneme /θ/									
Position	Word(s)	Transcription	Correct realization	Ill-formed realization					Total in %
			/θ/	/ð/	/s/	/z/	/t/		
Initial	thin	[θɪn]	75 (72%)	18 (18%)	11 (11%)	0	0	100%	
	threat	[θret]	68 (65%)	10 (10%)	13 (13%)	03 (3%)	10 (10%)	100%	
Medial	Catholic	[kæθəɪɪk]	82 (79%)	02 (2%)	06 (6%)	0	14 (13%)	100%	
	anything	[enɪθɪŋ]	88 (85%)	0	16 (15%)	0	0	100%	
Final	both	[bəʊθ]	87 (86%)	05 (5%)	12 (12%)	0	0	100%	
	moth	[mɒθ]	90 (87%)	03 (3%)	11 (10%)	0	0	100%	
Total realization of phoneme			81 (79%)	6 (6%)	12 (11%)	1 (1%)	4 (4%)	100%	

Table 1 indicates that an average of 81 respondents, i.e. 79%, tended to produce the phoneme /θ/ correctly in all three positions, but others made merely several kinds of deviation. One of the deviations occurred when the target phoneme /θ/ was articulated as [ð]. On average 6% of the respondents made this error in all three slots. The replacement occurred since the phoneme /ð/ shares the same manner of articulation: dental fricative. The distinction is only in the state of the vocal cords, as /θ/ is a voiceless sound while /ð/ is a voiced sound. It is shown that /θ/ was often deviated to /ð/ in five words, excluding the word *anything*. In the initial position, the errors were found in words *thin* and *threat* which were pronounced as ***[ðɪn]** by 18% and as ***[ðrɪt]** by 10% of the respondents, respectively. In the medial position, none of the respondents pronounced the sound /θ/ as [ð] in the word *anything*, and only 2% of the respondents replaced this target sound with [ð] in articulating the word *Catholic*, pronouncing it as ***[kaðɒlɪk]**. Also the replacement of this particular sound with [ð] was made by an average of 4% of the respondents when reading the words *both* and *moth* which they pronounced as ***[boð]** and ***[moð]**, respectively.

Furthermore, /θ/ was replaced with alveolar fricatives [s] and [z]. The former was produced by an average of 12% and the later by only 1% of the respondents as indicated in Table 1. Those two sounds share only the manner of articulation with /θ/ but differ in place and the state of the vocal cords. The ill-formedness of [s] occurred in all the positions for 12% of the respondents; whereby in the initial slot, the words *thin* and *threat* were ill-articulated as ***[sɪn]** and ***[srɪt]**, respectively, by an average of 12% of the respondents. Words such as *Catholic* and *anything* in which /θ/ is in the word-medial position were erroneously articulated by 11% of the respondents as ***[kasɒlɪk]** and ***[enɪsɪn]**, whereas in the final slot an average of 11% of the respondents failed to articulate the target sound. As a result, they articulated the words *both* as ***[bos]** and *mouth* as ***[mos]**. For the case of the replacement of /θ/ with /z/, it occurred initially in only one word when connecting words in a given poem. The error was made in a word *threat* which was pronounced as ***[zrɪt]** by only three respondents.

Other kinds of errors were the substitution of /θ/ with /t/ in words *threat* initially and *Catholic* in the medial position whereby 10% of the respondents pronounced ***[trɪt]** instead of /θrɛt/ and 14% articulated the second word as ***[katɒlɪk]** instead of /kæθɒlɪk/, as indicated above. This kind of ill-formedness could happen since both /θ/ and /t/ are produced when the vocal cords are open in which they provide voiceless feature. Nonetheless, when the respondents made this error, they altered two important features of /θ/: they changed the place of articulation of /θ/ from dental to alveolar and on the side of manner they stopped the air-

stream for a brief time and then released it abruptly, creating the stop instead of the fricative.

From all the five phonetic realizations of /θ/, it was noticed that only 22% of the respondents deviated the sound, but a large number of 88% did not experience any difficulty when pronouncing the voiceless inter-dental fricative in all three slots. The results of error for this particular sound in the present study are minimal compared to Yiing's (2011: 43) observation that the sound /θ/ was replaced with /d/ among Malaysian English students in 100% of the sample. Even though the phoneme /θ/ does not exist in Kimakunduchi sound inventory as it is claimed by Iddi (2010: 56), the phoneme was accurately articulated. The reason is probably the presence of Kiswahili as L2 in this speech community, as well as the fact that most of the respondents had knowledge of the Arabic language that is taught as a subject in Zanzibar schools. Both languages (i.e. Kiswahili and Arabic) have /θ/ in their sound system inventory (Massamba 2002: 12) which was the reason why the majority of the respondents found it easier to articulate as they transferred their previously acquired language competences into pronouncing the phoneme /θ/.

3.2. Dental fricative /ð/

The voiced phoneme /ð/ is the counterpart of the voiceless /θ/. In English /ð/ is listed as a voiced dental fricative (Gimson 1980: 352). In the present study, six words were tested where the respondents produced three realizations of the phoneme /ð/ as indicated in Table 2.

TABLE 2. The learners' pronunciation of /ð/

The learners' realization of phoneme /ð/						
Position	Word(s)	Transcription	Correct realization	Ill-formed realization		Total in %
			/ð/	/θ/	/z/	
Initial	they	[ðeɪ]	84 (81%)	0	20 (19%)	100%
	that	[ðət]	66 (63%)	03 (3%)	35 (34%)	100%
Medial	father	[fɑðə]	91 (87%)	0	13 (13%)	100%
	brother	[brʌðə]	89 (86%)	0	15 (14%)	100%
Final	breath	[brið]	50 (48%)	39 (38%)	15 (14%)	100%
	with	[wɪð]	61 (59%)	31 (30%)	12 (12%)	100%
Total realization of phoneme			74 (71%)	12 (12%)	18 (18%)	100%

Table 2 demonstrates that a total average 71% of the respondents mastered the features of /ð/ phoneme: voiced a dental fricative. Even though the phoneme does not exist in Kimakunduchi sound system inventory (Iddi 2011: 56; Maganga 1994: vii), it exists in Kiswahili (Massamba 2004: 5) which is the respondents' L2 and also occurs in the Arabic language (Huthaily 2003: v). It was for that reason that the majority of the respondents did not experience any hard difficulty in articulating the voiced dental fricative phoneme. These results are in line with Yavas's (1994: 7) argument as languages acquired in a certain speech community have a major role on influencing the production of the TL. This argument seems to be supported by the current study as Kiswahili and Arabic are the two languages acquired before English that had an influence on the production of /ð/.

Nonetheless, there are two ill-formed realizations of /ð/ made by an average of 29% of the respondents. The first is replacement of /ð/ with [z] which was done by an average of 18%. This kind of errors was found in all the slots, where the six tested words were articulated as *[zei], *[zat], *[faza], *[braza], *[briz] and *[wiz]. In this error type, the respondents maintained two features of the phoneme /ð/ since /ð/ and /z/ share two identical characteristics: voiced state and frication (Roach 2000: 56). Conversely, one important feature of the target phoneme was deviant. Normally, to articulate /ð/, considering the point of articulation, the tip of the tongue is put behind the upper teeth (Roach 2000: 56). However, the overall of 18% of respondents from all the selected schools where Kimakunduchi is spoken put the front part of their tongue on their alveolar ridge. This process made the respondents articulate an alveolar sound, instead of a dental sound.

The second ill-formedness was changing /ð/ to /θ/. This kind of error was noticed in the word-initial and final position only, where the prominent replacement was in the final slot. As seen in Table 2, this type of error was made by a total average of 12% of the respondents in which 3 respondents devoiced the phoneme /ð/ in the word *that* pronouncing it as *[θat]. The words *breath* and *with*, in which the target phoneme was tested in the final slot, were articulated as *[brɪθ] by 39 respondents and as *[wɪθ] by 31 respondents, respectively. Nevertheless, the devoicing /ð/ in word *with* is not considered an error, as according to the LDCE, the word can be pronounced as [wɪð] or [wɪθ]. Essentially, when producing this variant of sound, the respondents altered only the state of glottis since they did not vibrate the vocal cords in producing the tested phoneme, which resulted in the occurrence of the nearest sound that had an equivalent value, that is /θ/.

The findings concerning these particular sounds are nearly consistent with the previous research which has demonstrated that the inter-dental fricatives constituted the largest area of difficulty for non-native learners of English (henceforth

NNLE) in acquisition of English segments. The Egyptian English speaking learners, for example, replaced /θ/ and /ð/, respectively, with either or both of /t/, /s/, and /z/, /d/ (Moustapha 1979: 435). However, the difference is that in the present study no respondent replaced the two target sounds with /d/, /d/, and /v/.

3.3. Post alveolar fricative /ʒ/

Generally, English phonetic system classifies /ʒ/ as a voiced post alveolar fricative (Roach 1999: 43). Regardless of the medial or final occurrence of /ʒ/ in English, this particular phoneme was seriously problematic to the majority of the respondents as illustrated in Table 3.

TABLE 3. The learners' pronunciation of /ʒ/

The learners' realization of phoneme /ʒ/								
Position	Word(s)	Transcription	Correct realization	Ill-formed realization				Total in %
			/ʒ/	/ʃ/	/s/	/z/	/dʒ/	
Medial	pleasure	[plɛɪʒə]	26 (25%)	65 (63%)	07 (7%)	06 (6%)	0	100%
	vision	[vɪʒən]	23 (22%)	70 (67%)	08 (7%)	03 (4%)	0	100%
Final	garage	[gɛrɛʒ]	0	0	0	0	10 (100%)	100%
	village	[vɪlɪʒ]	0	0	0	0	104 (100%)	100%
Total realization of phoneme			12 (12%)	34 (33%)	4 (4%)	2 (2%)	52 (50%)	100%

Table 3 demonstrates that an average of 88% of the respondents tended to mispronounce /ʒ/ by substituting it with four different phonetic realizations. However, the sample words in which /ʒ/ occurred in the final slot, such as *village* and *garage*, were pronounced as *[vɪlɛdʒ] and *[gɛrɛdʒ] – the phoneme /ʒ/ was replaced with /dʒ/ by all respondents. In fact, it is not an error but an alternative pronunciation of these words (i.e. /dʒ/, instead of /ʒ/), according to LDCE. The pronunciation of /dʒ/ for /ʒ/ was simpler for the respondents due to an intra-lingual transfer as the learners had knowledge that all words in English ending with spelling '-ge', such as *manage*, *college*, *cottage*, *age*, including the target words *village* and *garage*, should be pronounced with /dʒ/.

Contrastingly, there are three deviant forms that occurred when respondents were asked to read the words *pleasure* and *vision*. This is due to the difficulty of the phoneme /ʒ/, as the sound does not exist in respondents' L1, be it Kiswahili or Arabic (the languages that make Kimakunduchi a multilingual speech community). The respondents replaced the sound /ʒ/ with /ʃ/, /s/, and /z/. The prominent deviation was its substitution with /ʃ/ which was made by an average of 33% of the respondents. It appears that these two sounds, /ʃ/ and /ʒ/, can be categorized as the same phonemes with regard to place and manner of articulation, but they are distinct sounds in terms of the state of vocal cords. Whereas /ʒ/ is the voiced, the phoneme /ʃ/ is the voiceless. Consequently, when the respondents changed /ʒ/ to /ʃ/ they in fact made an error by pronouncing the target words as *[pleʃa] and *[vɪʃən] instead of the accurate articulation as /pleɪʒə/ and /vɪʒən/, respectively.

The second and third deviant forms were made by very few respondents in the present study. This was the replacement of /ʒ/ with two alveolar fricatives: /s/ and /z/. In case of these two, the respondents shifted the place of articulation from palatal alveolar to the front of the tongue on the alveolar ridge. However, the replacement of /ʒ/ with /s/ involved an additional change, that is, the state of the glottis of /ʒ/ was altered. The respondents did not vibrate their vocal cords and consequently produced completely different realizations, as in word *pleasure* which was pronounced *[plesə] and *[plezə], and *vision* which surfaced as *[vɪsən] and *[vɪzən].

Many researchers have investigated the production of /ʒ/ among the non-native language educators (NNLE) where they found that the phoneme was difficult to articulate. Tiono & Yostanto (2008: 79), for example, made a similar investigation on the production of /ʒ/ and they observed the same realization as it was found in the present study. In their study, they observed that the Indonesian University students tended to articulate the phonemes /ʃ/, /s/, and /z/ instead of /ʒ/ due to the absence of the phoneme in their L1. Similarly, in the present study the replacement of the phoneme /ʒ/ with those applied instead, as shown above, could be probably due to the lack of this phoneme in Kimakunduchi (Iddi 2011: vi) as well as in Kiswahili (Massamba 2011: 34). As this was the reason, Kimakunduchi speaking EFL learners considered sounds that could be found in L1 simple in articulating the given words.

3.4. Alveolar lateral /l/

This is another phoneme investigated in the present study. In English, /l/ occurs in all the slots but has variant pronunciation, depending on the position in which

it appears. The term variant refers to the variation of a phoneme in pronunciation (Deterding & Poedjosoedarmo 1998; Odden 2005; Roach 2000). Thus, /l/ has two allophones: the "clear" /l/ which normally occurs in the initial slot and the "dark" /ɫ/ or the velarized /l/ which occurs after a vowel or before consonant at the end of the word. In the present study, most of the respondents in all schools tend to articulate the tested phoneme accurately. However, the minority mispronounced the phoneme as demonstrated in Table 4.

TABLE 4. The learners' pronunciation of /l/

The learners' realization of phoneme /l/						
Position	Word(s)	Transcription	Correct realization	Ill-formed realization		Total in %
			/l/	/ɫ/	/r/	
Initial	lie	[laɪ]	83 (80%)	15 (14%)	06 (6%)	100%
	looks	[lʊks]	88 (85%)	11 (11%)	05 (5%)	100%
Medial	melon	[melon]	85 (82%)	13 (13%)	06 (6%)	100%
	hardly	[hɑ:dli]	84 (81%)	14 (14%)	06 (6%)	100%
Final	tell	[tel]	0	104 (100%)	0	100%
	wall	[wal]	0	104 (100%)	0	100%
Total realization of phoneme			57 (55%)	44 (42%)	4 (4%)	100%

Table 4 shows clearly that /l/ was articulated correctly in all the slots by an average of 55% of the respondents. However, since the phoneme does not exist in Kikakunduchi (Iddi 2011) the given number of the respondents did not experience great difficulty in articulating the phoneme due to the influence of Kiswahili in which the phoneme exists (Massamba 2004). It was Kiswahili that made the respondents abide by the rules of articulating the clear /l/ when it appeared in the word-initial and word-medial positions. The words *lie* and *looks* were accurately pronounced as [laɪ] and [lʊks], whereas the words *melon* and *hardly* were articulated as [melon] and [hadli], respectively.

Furthermore, when /l/ occurred at the end of the word, all respondents velarized the phoneme. In that case, they pronounced the words *wall* and *tell* as [woɫ] and [teɫ]. This kind of articulation is not an error if the rules explained above are applied. The concrete reason for articulating the velarized /l/ could be probably the influence of L1, as the Kimakunduchi native speakers most often pronounced this type of sound (Iddi 2011:) instead of /l/.

Still, in an average of 48% of the respondents two deviations were observed, particularly in articulating /l/ in the initial and medial positions. The first deviation happened when some of them replaced /l/ with allophone /ɫ/. In this type of error, the respondents maintained the feature of alveolar lateral but made some distinctions. In producing the “clear” /l/ the tip of the tongue is placed against alveolar ridge, the air flows over sides of the tongue which is why /l/ is called a lateral consonant. When the respondents made this type of error, i.e. produced /ɫ/ instead of /l/, they still placed the tip of the tongue against alveolar ridge but arched up the back of the tongue toward the velum (i.e. soft palate) while the air flows over sides of the tongue. As a result, they articulated the words *lie* and *looks* as *[ɫaɪ] and *[ɫʊks], respectively.

Another deviation of /l/ was made by an average of 4% of the respondents by replacing the phoneme with alveolar trill /r/ when they read words such as *lie*, *looks*, *melon*, and *hardly*. In this error, they produced the given words as *[raɪ], *[rʊks], *[meron], and *[hadri], respectively. In that case, the respondents changed two important features: first, they changed the place of articulation of /l/ from alveolar to post-alveolar, and second, in the manner of articulation they stopped bending the tongue upward; instead the tip of the tongue touched the back of the alveolar ridge in the form of bouncing, creating the phoneme /r/. Yet, the respondents maintained the same state of glottis as both the target and erroneous phonemes were articulated while the vocal cords were vibrating.

3.5. Palato – alveolar approximant /r/

This phoneme is considered as having different forms of articulation and its distribution is found in different accents of English. However, there is really only one pronunciation that can be recommended to the foreign learners and that is /r/ (Roach 2000: 53). Like other consonants, the phoneme /r/ can be described by three parameters which make the sound to be attributed as the voiced post-alveolar approximant. In the present study, four words in regard to its initial and medial occurrence of the /r/ sound were tested. Table 5 illustrates the results of respondents' articulation of /r/.

TABLE 5. The learners' pronunciation of /r/

The learners' realization of phoneme /r/					
Position	Word(s)	Transcription	CR	lFR	Total in %
			/r/	/l/	
Initial	read	[rid]	94 (90%)	10 (10%)	100%
	rose	[rəʊz]	89 (86%)	15 (14%)	100%
Medial	surrender	[sərəndə]	80 (77%)	24 (23%)	100%
	crew	[kru:]	89 (86%)	15 (14%)	100%
Total realization of phoneme			88 (85%)	16 (15%)	100%

The existence of phoneme /r/ in Kimakunduchi is debatable among scholars. Maganga (1994) claimed that the sound does exist. He observed that the sound system inventory of Kimakunduchi and Kiswahili do not differ. This was refuted later by Iddi (2011: 55). An average of 85% of the respondents did not have any difficulty when they were tested for the sound. They articulated the sample words accurately as indicated in Table 5. Articulating this particular sound accurately could be explained as similar to the previous consonants since the respondents have already learnt the phoneme from their earlier acquired languages, Kiswahili and Arabic, in which the phoneme exists. Therefore, the prior knowledge of the two languages helped them to make transfers while reading sample words having the phoneme /r/.

Nonetheless, some respondents (an average of 15%) had a problem in articulation of /r/ and replaced the phoneme with /l/. In this particular form of deviation, they did not alter all the features of /r/. Still, they produced erroneous phoneme in vibration state of the vocal cords to maintain the voiced feature while they altered the attribution of place and manner. As way of articulation is concerned, they shifted their tongue forward from palate-alveolar to alveolar ridge, whereas in manner of articulation they bent their sides of the tongue to allow air to pass over the sides of the mouth instead of forming intermittent feature by bouncing their tips of the tongue to the alveolar ridge. In that case, they pronounced all four mentioned words as *[lid], *[loz], *[salenda], and *[klu:] with the lateral /l/, instead of using the phoneme /r/.

The present finding for these particular sounds: both /l/ and /r/ are on a par with Ragnarsson's (2011: 2) claims that many Bantu speakers of English have problems in distinguishing /r/ and /l/ and may pronounce the word *lorry* as *[loli] or

*[rori] instead of [lori]. The author says that in Kenya, for example, the Gikuyu tended to use /r/ in place of /l/, whereas the Embu prefer /l/ in place of /r/. What Ragnarsson argues in his paper appears to be consistent with the present study, as Kimakunduchi speaking English learners also were being confused when articulating /l/ and /r/. However, in the present study the problem was not serious due to the background of the learners as they were taught Arabic in Islamic *madrasa* and acquired Kiswahili during their childhood. The acquisition of these languages at an early stage have influenced them and that could be the reason why the majority of the respondents had accurate articulation of the consonant sounds even if the phonemes were absent in their L1.

4. Conclusion

The study analyzed the errors made by Kimakunduchi speaking EFL learners. Five consonants, namely: /θ/, /ð/, /ʒ/, /l/, and /r/ were tested. The findings have shown that the most problematic phoneme for the students to articulate was /ʒ/. The findings have also shown that these sounds were replaced with phonemes that were simple to pronounce for the students due to the interference of their first acquired languages or their confusion regarding the English spelling system. The learners transferred their L1 sounds system to pronouncing the given words.

It can be concluded that although the students made phonological errors, most of them still managed to pronounce some of the words correctly. In addition, as it was noticed in the previous section, the indigenous language – Kimakunduchi – influenced to a great extent the production of English phonemes by Kimakunduchi speaking EFL learners. Apart from Kimakunduchi, other languages acquired before English, i.e. Kiswahili and Arabic, also interfered with the acquisition of certain sound segments. The learners were noticed to transfer the previously known systems of these languages into the use of English as FL. This situation led to the communication inefficiency of the learners. They failed to acquire this basic skill necessary for the students learning English language.

4.1. Recommendations

It goes without saying that English pronunciation is challenging for the FL learners. This holds also true for our learners of English. This area needs proper attention and research. It has to be pointed out what factors cause errors in pronunciation and to determine what problems in unintelligibility are caused by such pronunciation errors.

Based on the findings of the present study, the following recommendations are put forward:

- 1) Awareness is the first step in learning phonology. All education holders, particularly the teachers, should make learners aware of the importance of English pronunciation within English language learning programs. The learners should be given basic knowledge of phonetics and phonology, and made familiar with the IPA symbols. In this respect, the Tanzanian Ministry of Education and Vocational Training should ensure that the teachers could have enough knowledge on the production of English phonemes by providing the long and refresher courses to the employed English language teachers. This will help the teachers themselves being a model by posting the accurate production of the phonemes which results in learners' awareness on English pronunciation.
- 2) Our Tanzanian schools and colleges may be provided with well-equipped language laboratories where students will be drilling on articulation of English phonemes and words under the supervision of qualified teachers.
- 3) An exclusive training program for English teachers may be planned on a permanent basis to prepare master trainers of English pronunciation amongst our teachers of English. Knowledge of these master trainers may be used and workshops on English pronunciation may be held to share the knowledge and practice of English pronunciation with other teachers. However, this depends on the provisions of required resources and on the opinion of the experts in this field.
- 4) It is recommended that time for teaching English in general and pronunciation in particular must be increased since learning is a gradual process which often requires extended amount of exposure to English. With regard to this view, the question of pronunciation should no longer be trivialized nor be relegated to the periphery in teaching of EFL.
- 5) As teachers' own correct pronunciation is very important, it is recommended for English teachers to consult good English dictionaries in order to know the correct pronunciation of the words.
- 6) News broadcasts play very important role in learning correct pronunciation. An English teacher may easily benefit from news, announcements, and speeches on the radio, Internet, and TV. So our English teachers should listen to or watch the English broadcast regularly for purpose of improving their pronunciation.

- 7) There is a need for teachers to avail the opportunities to listen the speech of native speakers of English and to meet them frequently. For this purpose, some of the brilliant and interested teachers should be given opportunities to spend some time among the native speakers of English. This will help to establish the right model of articulating English phonemes for the learners.

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Islamic martyrdom in northern Nigeria¹

Abstract

The paper discusses some elements of the tradition of martyrdom among Muslims in northern Nigeria. It describes the basic frameworks of the concept of martyrdom in Islam with special reference to its contemporary usage. Then it discusses the shape of the idea of martyrdom during the times of Usman dan Fodio's jihad. It further examines the concept of martyrdom as presented in the speeches of Muhammad Yusuf, the ideologue of the Boko Haram organisation, as well as its practical implementation in the times of the current rebellion in northern Nigeria.

Keywords: Boko Haram, Islam, martyrdom, northern Nigeria, suicide

1. Introduction

The idea of physical sacrifice of one's life for the sake of beliefs is common in various religions across the world, including Christianity, Judaism and Islam, (Kilani & Suberu 2015: 122-123). The concept of martyrdom serves as a means to make sense of one of the most difficult experiences humans unavoidably face. As David Cook puts it,

¹ This article was written as part of project no. 2015/19/N/HS1/02398, entitled *Background of the development of Islamic fundamentalism in northern Nigeria. The case of Boko Haram*, financed by the National Science Centre, Poland.

[u]ltimately martyrdom is an attempt to rescue some type of meaning and dignity from death. Since all humans die, often unexpectedly, many in agony or horror, martyrdom represents a control over the uncontrollable. It does not seek to avoid death, but gives meaning to it by embracing the process and making it significant for the other faithful and also for prospective converts. By recounting in excruciating and oftentimes gory detail this death process the martyrology makes death comprehensible and familiar, even enticing to some people (Cook 2007: 11).

Apart from its religious sense, the idea of martyrdom gains pragmatic meaning when analyzed with regard to a phenomenon of suicide terrorism. In this dimension, martyrdom has been presented by plenty of authors as a rational choice based on martyrs' conviction that benefits of their death outweigh the cost (Moghadam 2008: 51). When applied by a non-state actor (e.g. an insurgent group) as tactics of asymmetric war against more powerful state forces, suicide terrorism is perceived as rational strategy to defeat stronger enemy. Indeed, there exist several reasons to see the decision to adopt suicide missions as a rational and well calculated method, such as relatively low operational and cadre costs, as well as large-scale impact of the attack, which captures media attention, shocks public opinion and can influence policymakers. These factors prove martyrdom's rationality on the level of organizational decisions, whilst they do not explain why individuals accept their role as martyrs to fulfil the goals of the organization they belong to or the group they identify with. Beyond rational arguments, cultural and religious symbolism plays a vital role in motivating future martyrs to sacrifice their lives in suicide missions (Hafez 2009).

In northern Nigeria, the first suicide mission took place on the 16th of June 2011, in Abuja. It was planned by Mamman Nur and Khalid al-Barnawi (reflected in Arabic as Ḥālīd al-Barnāwī)², members of an organisation known as Boko Haram³, who presumably had connections to Al-Qaeda of the Islamic Maghreb (Arabic

² Hausa and Arabic names, terms, and words are written in standard orthography and scientific transcription, respectively. The transcription is given in italics and follows the first mention of the English-domesticated terms such as e.g. jihad or sura (in brackets).

³ The full name of the organisation is *Ġamā'at Ahl as-Sunna li-d-Dā'wa wa-l-ġihād* (Arabic for 'Association of the People of the Sunna for Preaching and Jihad'). In March 2015, the then leader of Boko Haram, Abubakar Shekau, pledged allegiance to the Islamic State then caliph, Abubakar al-Baghdadi (Arabic Abū Bakr al-Baġdādī), and renamed his organization for *Ad-Dawla al-Islāmiyya Wilāyat Ġarb Ifriqiya* (Arabic for 'Islamic State West Africa Province', ISWAP). In the present paper I use the popular and recognizable name "Boko Haram" to refer to the group of fighters responsible for the rebellion in northern Nigeria, although it has never been accepted by the rebels themselves. Cf. an interesting account on dubious nature of the term "Boko Haram" in Brigaglia & Iocchi (2017).

Al-Qā'ida fī Bilād al-Maġrib al-Islāmī, AQIM). The perpetrator, Mohammed Manga, attacked the police headquarters in the Nigerian capital, killing six people including himself. He was a 35-year-old well-to-do businessman, married, with five children, and was reported to have left a will of four million naira for his family (Salkida 2011). The attack was conducted with a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device. In a photograph taken shortly before his death, Manga was pictured sitting in a car, holding a rifle, waving his hand to the camera and smiling to the photographer and those who would see the picture after his death. In the aftermath of the attack, Boko Haram enjoyed many fresh converts who were enthused by Manga's readiness for the ultimate sacrifice and devotion to God. The fact that certain people appreciated the mystical aspect of Manga's martyrdom is underlined by the way local tabloids narrated his story. For instance, one of the reports claimed that "shortly after he [Manga] carried out the suicide mission, he was said to have put a call to one of his friends that he was on his way to Paradise" (*Nigeria Films* 2011).

Suicide operations have become one of the most characteristic features of Boko Haram's armed struggle against those perceived by the organisation as unbelievers. From the beginning of its military campaign in 2011 until June 2017 the group deployed 434 bombers (*The Economist* 2017). Although the practical implementation of the concept of martyrdom has become a landmark of Boko Haram's current activity, the thesis of the present paper is that ideological frameworks of this concept existed before. Firstly, the idea of martyrdom is clearly quotable from the Islamic scriptures; secondly, it was relied on in the 19th-century jihad (Arabic *ġihād*) led by Usman ḍan Fodio (known in the Arabic language sources as 'Uṭmān Ibn Fūdī) in the territories of today's northern Nigeria; and thirdly, it was elaborated on by Muhammad Yusuf, a preacher and the first ideologue of Boko Haram. Therefore, some of these concepts and canons were later exploited by the leaders of the current insurgency to motivate fighters to sacrifice their lives in the fight against the secular state. To explore the concept of martyrdom in this part of the world and its contemporary application in the Boko Haram rebellion, this research analyzes the content of Muhammad Yusuf's speeches in Hausa and his sermons transcribed to and published in Arabic. Other consulted sources include the English translations of jihadi treatises published by AQIM and ISWAP, academic literature, and Nigerian press.

2. Martyrdom in Islam

The notion of Muslim martyrdom is mostly associated with the suicide missions that have been growing in number since the beginning of the 21st century

(Moghadam 2008: 47). However, the idea of bodily suffering and death for the sake of beliefs is deeply rooted in the Islamic history. One of the earliest stories about martyrdom dates back to the Meccan period of Prophet Muḥammad's life. It is a well-known account of Bilāl, an Ethiopian slave, who was tortured by his master because of his Islamic beliefs. He was laid down outside in the sweltering heat, exposed to the sun. His master placed a heavy stone on his chest and declared: "You will continue like this until you die or you deny Muḥammad and worship al-Lāt and al-'Uzza" (Ibn Hisham [n.d.], I: 339-340, after: Cook 2007: 13). Al-Lāt and al-'Uzza are two pre-Islamic deities from Tā'if and Mecca (Fahd 2000: 93-94). Finally, Bilāl did not die during his ordeal, because one of the earliest converts to Islam, named Abū Bakr, bought him from his master and freed him from slavery. Even though Bilāl was saved, his story is often recalled as the early paradigm of a person martyred because of the Islamic faith (Cook 2007: 13-14). He consciously (to the extent we can judge from this account) refused to renounce Islam and chose to suffer bodily harms in the name of his belief, even though it could have led to his death.

The Arabic term *šahīd* (lit. 'witness', pl. *šuhadā*) that is typically used with reference to martyrs in Islam, appears in the Quran (Arabic Qur'ān) in various connotations, including its literal meaning that is attested in verses 2:282 and 24:4, among others. Muslim scholars maintain that in several Quranic verses the term clearly refers to martyrs: "Allah may know who are the believers and choose martyrs from among you"⁴ (3:140); "Those who obey Allah and the Messenger will be in the company of those whom God has favoured of the Prophets, the saints, the martyrs, and the righteous people" (4:69); "And those who believe in Allah and His Messengers are truly the pious and the martyrs in their Lord's Sight. They shall have their wage and their light" (57:19) (Kohlberg 2012). There are also rich descriptions of the rewards those who sacrifice their lives in the fight for Islam will receive in the afterlife: "struggle in the Cause of Allah with your possessions and yourselves. That is far better for you, if only you knew. He will then forgive you your sins and admit you into Gardens, beneath which rivers flow, and into fine dwellings in the Gardens of Eden. That is the great triumph" (61:11-12).

Numerous accounts of the Islamic martyrdom are provided in the hadiths (Arabic *ḥadīth*, pl. *aḥādīth*). There are various types of martyrs recalled in the tradition, including innocent martyrs who reflect the type of martyrdom that is universal

⁴ All the Quranic verses are quoted based on the interpretation of the Quran by Fakhry (2002).

for monotheistic religions, and fighting martyrs – a concept limited to Islam only (Cook 2007: 23). An example of the first type is provided by the story of Ḥubayb Ibn 'Adī who was captured in revenge for the Qurayš killed during the Battle of Badr in 624. The tradition says that, while waiting in detention for his execution, he found a razor to shave with it, but refused to use it as a weapon to free himself, as it would require killing another person. While awaiting death, he was already marked special and provided support from God. One of the women from the neighbourhood reported that she had seen Ḥubayb eating a bunch of grapes, during the time when there were no fruits in Mecca at all, and he was bound with iron chains, additionally. Directly before his execution he asked his oppressors to let him pray and recited a poem: "I [am] being martyred as a Muslim, / Do not mind how I am killed in Allah's Cause, / For my killing is for Allah's Sake, / And if Allah wishes, He will bless the amputated parts of a torn body"⁵ (Saḥīḥ al-Buḥārī 3045).

The second type of martyr indicated by Cook is the fighting one. A vivid example is provided by the story of the Battle of Badr. Before the battle, Muḥammad informed his followers about rewards dedicated for those who fight the enemy frantically. He is reported to have told them:

By the one who holds the soul of Muḥammad in His hand, every man who fights today and is killed, demonstrating patience, seeking a reward from God, going forward without going backward, God will take him into paradise (Ibn Hisham [n.d.], II: 267-268, after: Cook 2007: 23).

Having heard this, one of the warriors cried out: "Really, now! Nothing is between me and entering paradise other than killing those infidels?!" He was eating dates at that moment, therefore he threw them away, took up the sword and rushed into the battlefield, where he fought until being killed. The story portrays the idea of martyrdom, and it presents the cause and the effect clearly: Muḥammad promised a reward to the most dedicated, and then observed his followers believe him and die for this belief (Cook 2007: 23).

Currently, the concept of martyrdom is exploited by the extremists to rationalize the use of violence. It is quite characteristic, though, that the literature authored by recent proponents of armed jihad usually ignores any dimension of martyrdom other than death as a result of fight. Contemporary authors tend to ignore

⁵ All the hadiths passages are quoted after the *sunna* on-line collection available at <https://sunnah.com/> [21.12.2019].

the rich tradition of martyrdom in non-military settings and recognize warfare as the only occasion in which achieving martyrdom is possible. As Salafis (Arabic *salafīyya*), they follow the rule of advocating the literary interpretation of the Quran and avoid quotations from traditions or exegesis except from the most authoritative collections of Muslim and Al-Buḥārī. Thus, they struggle to define the martyr as a warrior. It is problematic, because most accounts of dying in the battlefield are provided by the hadiths and early Islamic literature, while in the Quran we find no single story of a martyr of this type. Moreover, the Quranic meaning of *ṣuḥadā'* is multi-layered, with none of the interpretations clearly restricted to an armed fighter. It is also difficult to base the justification of the suicide missions on the opinions of classical writers who hesitated about the legality of suicidal operations and the practice of a single fighter responsible for killing significant number of the enemies.

The first challenge that the advocates of suicide bombings face is how to provide convincing argumentation, based on reliable sources, that martyrdom is actually not equivalent to committing suicide. There exists strong evidence in the Islamic scriptures condemning suicide by stressing the sacrosanct nature of life. Quran states that "whoever kills a soul, not in retaliation for a soul or corruption in the land, is like one who has killed the whole of mankind" (5:32), while another verse says "and do not kill yourselves" (4:29). Similarly, one of the hadiths quotes Prophet who told his followers that "if somebody commits suicide with anything in this world, he will be tortured with that very thing on the Day of Resurrection" (Saḥīḥ al-Buḥārī 6047). Thus, contemporary Salafi scholars strive to distinguish between martyrdom and suicide. When Nāṣir ad-Dīn al-Albānī (d. 1999) was asked for opinion about using suicide bombings against enemies, he responded: "That is not considered suicide, suicide is when a Muslim kills himself to be saved from his miserable life" (Kilani & Suberu 2015: 130). Similarly, Yūsuf al-Qarāḍāwī, a well-known Egyptian scholar, claimed that Muslims' attacks on their enemies are not suicidal acts but heroic martyrdom operations. Basing his argumentation on the Quranic verses of sura (Arabic *sūra*) *Al-Anfāl* (The Spoils), "make ready for them whatever you can of fighting men and horses, to terrify thereby the enemies of Allah and your enemy" (8: 60), al-Qarāḍāwī portrays martyrdom operations as a legitimate method of war against unbelievers (Kilani & Suberu 2015: 130).

The distinction between suicide and martyrdom is also important in the debate on the motivations that should underlie the jihadi efforts. Ideally, jihad is fought anonymously for the sake of God only. Based on the Islamic tradition, a fighter who conducts a suicide operation to achieve personal gains like fame, material

rewards, vanity, expression of courage or honour, does not enter paradise, but is damned as a suicidal (Hafez 2009: 59-60). Thus Salafi-jihadi intellectuals underline that ordinary suicide is committed for personal gains, while martyrs die in the name of God (Moghadam 2008: 63). It is visible that contemporary jihadi scholars contend with the actual context of martyrdom stated in the authoritative texts and face the dilemma of presenting suicide warriors in the desired framework of martyrdom operations. Cook states that, "reading contemporary books on the subject of martyrdom one senses some desperation on the part of writers because of this fact" (Cook 2007: 148).

The practical aspect of providing religion-based justification for suicide missions can be exemplified by Hamas in Palestine. In propaganda materials disseminated by this organisation since the Second Intifada of 2000-2005, suicide operations are presented as a way to obtain salvation. Contrary to the content popularized during the first Intifada (1987-1993), which focused on exposing the advantages conferred by the martyr on the society and the importance of the struggle for a cause of liberating the land from occupation, materials promoted in the 21st century underline religious aspects of the suicide operations. Authors propagate the idea that suicide mission leads the believer directly to heaven and martyrdom is currently perceived as an individual act of moral purification, in contrast to the previously exposed aspect of bringing benefits to the society.

Documents disseminated by Hamas fall into three categories: 1) *waṣīyya* – the last will, through which the martyr passes advices on morality and ethics to his close ones; 2) *sīra* – a biography of the martyr; 3) transcripts of speeches provided by Hamas members during funeral ceremonies of martyrs. These documents are distributed on a large scale in the leaflets, placards, audio and video cassettes, as well as on the Hamas-related websites. Additionally, some fragments are also quoted in mosques during Friday sermons. Their content is based on private memories of those preparing for a mission, and enriched with the Quranic and hadith quotations. The texts serve as an effective mobilisation tool for future suicide bombers.

Some documents produced by Hamas suggest that Muslims should persistently seek to sacrifice their lives in order to find themselves in heaven. As one martyr-to-be maintained, "[p]aradise anticipates its beloved ones. Therefore, you should not miss the opportunity to meet your Lord", and another one stated, "I wish for you to raise your sons and daughters to desire martyrdom" (Alshech 2008: 33). Moreover, authors present evidence that the fighters achieve salvation immediately after dying in a suicide mission. They narrate stories about miracles happening in the vicinity of martyrs' burial places. In many documents, Hamas maintains

that fighters' bodies and their personal belongings emit a scent of musk – the fragrance that is related to paradise in the Quranic verses⁶. The hadiths collections by Buḥārī, aṭ-Ṭabarī and the Quranic commentary (*tafsīr*) by al-Qurtubī consider the scent of musk as a proof that the martyr has been accepted by God in heaven. Therefore, the documents provide prospective martyrs with evidence that paradise actually exists and offer a means to access it. They increase the likelihood that an individual would decide to join the fighters and commit the ultimate sacrifice. Unsurprisingly, Hamas does not solve the problem of legality of suicide missions in the light of the Quran, which values worldly life and guides believers towards fulfilling their obligations dutifully in their earthly lives (Alshech 2008).

3. Martyrdom in the times of jihad of Usman ḍan Fodio

Although suicide operations in northern Nigeria were not conducted by contemporary radical Muslim organisations before 2011, the idea of martyrdom in the battlefield is not unfamiliar in this region. It dates back to the military jihad led by Usman ḍan Fodio (1754-1817). As a member of a prominent Fulani Torodbe clan, ḍan Fodio perceived the elites of the Hausa city-states, located in the territories of today's northern Nigeria, as corrupt and ignorant of Islamic principles of governance. He became especially critical of the king of Gobir, a city-state close to Degel, where ḍan Fodio was born. He lived in that area before performing symbolic hijra (Arabic *hiġra* 'migration') to Gudu in 1804, imitating Prophet Muḥammad's emigration from Mecca to Medina. After the migration, ḍan Fodio consolidated his army and called on military invasion on the city-states. He blamed local establishment for the acceptance of the syncretic practices originating from the pre-Islamic era which might lead to apostasy. Thus, he condemned those who used to sprinkle their heads with ashes in the presence of the earthy rulers, and who used the Holy Quran for magical purposes. Ḍan Fodio drew people's attention to the fact that the ruling dynasty (called Habe in his native Fulfulde language) had put on them extra taxes that were not prescribed by the sharia law (Arabic *šarī'a*), usurped offices by inheritance, and made their gains illegally. In practice, ḍan Fodio's emergence in the opposition to the then ruling elites should also be perceived in the light of political and eco-

⁶ See verses 22-26 of sura *Al-Muṭaffifīn* (The Skimpers): "The pious are indeed in Bliss; / Upon couches gazing round. / You will recognize in their faces the glow of bliss. / They are given to drink from a sealed wine; / Whose seal is musk. / Over that, let the competitors compete".

conomic rivalry, even though the religious arguments played central role in the narratives legitimizing his war (Waldman 1965).

Jihad led by *ḍan Fodio* and his followers turned out to be a successful initiative. After less than six years, they founded the Sokoto Caliphate in the Hausaland, establishing control over traditional rulers of Habe dynasty. Sharia was introduced as an official legal system, emirates were built as administrative units based on the city-states, and Arabic was promoted as an official language. Despite its weaknesses – many emirs did not follow the official regulations strictly – the Caliphate remained one of the dominant political structures in West Africa until the colonial conquest (Trimingham 1970). British administration involved certain emirs in the indirect rule system, and at least symbolically, the traditional religious establishment – the legacy of the Sokoto Caliphate – has been maintained during the independence era.

Dan Fodio strived to conduct jihad in accordance with the Islamic rules. Paying attention to the intellectual sphere of his initiative, in the beginning he concentrated on teaching and calling for purification of religious practices. He sent letters to traditional rulers, whom he regarded as strayed from the path of Islam, with warnings to purify their religious stances. Only after three decades of peaceful preaching activities, he decided to undertake military action, but even then he laid exhaustive theoretical foundations for the struggle. In the times of jihad, religious literature blossomed, as many works were produced by Usman *ḍan Fodio* himself, his brother Abdullahi *ḍan Fodio* (1766-1829), and his son Muhammadu Bello (1781-1837). They wrote in Fulfulde, Hausa, and Arabic, considering various groups of population to whom their works were addressed. The reason to produce literary works so extensively was clear. Since jihad was not only a religious initiative, but had also political and economic motivations, and at some point could even be called a popular uprising, its success depended mainly on the support from the masses. The leaders of jihad were aware that literature explaining the necessity for military struggle in religious terms was a key to their success.

The list of writings authored by Usman *ḍan Fodio* contains more than one hundred titles in Arabic only (Hunwick 1995: 58-80). Despite the abundance of literary works encouraging Muslims to engage in the war, the leader of the jihad nowhere addresses the issue of martyrdom. Even his most significant work entitled *Bayān wuḡūb al-hiġra'ala al-ibād* ("Clarification of the necessity of hijra for the servants of God"), which is by far the most extensive treatise about the rules of jihad and hijra in the modern Islamic literature, does not bring up the subject of the benefits of martyrdom. The most probable explanation for this is Usman *ḍan Fodio*'s

limited experience in the battlefield. He focused on providing theoretical justification of the jihad, but did not engage in it personally, which was the reason why he didn't feel the need to dwell on details of bodily sacrifices of warfare (Cook 2007: 89).

Nevertheless, very limited remarks on martyrdom can be found in the works of other prominent Fulani writers, including Usman dan Fodio's daughter, Nana Asma'u (d. 1864), who described in several works heavenly pleasures accessible for those who sacrificed their lives during the jihad (Boyd & Mack 1997: 176-188). Her brother, Muhammadu Bello, wrote a number of poems to commemorate the believers who died in the battlefield. Bello's works, as well as those of Abdullahi dan Fodio, report lists of names of those who were martyred during jihad, but for the most part without details (cf. e.g. Denham, Clapperton & Oudney 1828: 461). In *Infāq al-maysūr fī Tārīḥ bilād at-Takrūr* ("Accomplishing the feasible concerning the history of the land of Takrūr") by Muhammadu Bello, we find one of the scarce accounts of the martyrdom:

From the Day of Alus, when the mill of war turned; they attained, and we attained, and we bore the glorious deeds;

Their secret was the martyrdom they gave us – this death that preserves our exploits.

Whoever they killed, they caused to reach his goal, blessed is he, with grace and excellent musk.

Spirit, basil, and eternal paradise, together with inheritance of the free women hours.

Whoever inhabits paradise will be dressed all in silk, brocade, and bright gold' (Bello 1964: 142, after: Cook 2007: 90).

It is probable that there existed more reports on martyrdom achieved by the believers during battles conducted by the Fulani army, and possibly also descriptions of heavenly pleasures that would motivate fighters to sacrifice their lives. During the jihad, many poems were disseminated in their oral version, which helped to streamline the effective propagation of the ideas over a wide area, especially among the illiterates. On the other hand, their oral form impeded their conservation, which is a possible reason of the current lack of preserved sources elaborating on martyrdom during the jihad.

4. Martyrdom in contemporary northern Nigeria

The significance of martyrdom is acknowledged by contemporary warriors to considerably greater extent than what is provided in the reports from the

19th-century *dan Fodio's* jihad. Fighters connected to Boko Haram rebellion have referred to the idea extensively since the beginning of the military campaign led by the organisation. However, we also find abundant references to the concept of martyrdom in the teachings of Muhammad Yusuf (1970-2009), the main ideologue of Boko Haram, who died before the eruption of the current violent rebellion. He was a controversial Islamic preacher and gained noticeable popularity in north-eastern Nigeria at the turn of the 21st century. His teachings laid the ideological foundations for the doctrine that is currently used by Abubakar Shekau (born ca. 1968-1975; also known under his arabicized nickname *Abū Bakr aš-Šikawī* which appears as Abu Bakr al-Shekawi in Latin script) and the ISWAP rebels to justify the use of violence. Yusuf's ideology was based on two main concepts: lack of acceptance of the Nigerian state as secular, and thus un-Islamic; and condemnation of Western influences in northern Nigerian culture and education that led him to disapprove secular schools. As a result of his growing popularity and openly anti-governmental instruction, his activities attracted the attention of the state security forces. In July 2009, Yusuf was killed in Maiduguri alongside about eight hundred of his followers during heavy clashes with the Nigerian military.

As an opponent of the Nigerian state, Yusuf vigorously preached the necessity of opposing the government, that he painted as un-Islamic, and replacing it with religious authorities that would operate based on Islamic and not secular jurisprudence. He perceived this process as jihad against the secular rulers and called on his followers to sacrifice their lives in the fight for the Islamic cause. Certain parts of his preserved lectures suggest that he promoted a non-violent form of the struggle, which he occasionally equated with mission (Arabic *da'wa*) (Brakoniecka 2016: 21-22; Yusuf [n.d.]a; Yusuf [n.d.]b). However, when the conflict between his followers and the state security forces became more violent, Yusuf turned to the more military forms of jihad, espousing the confrontational aspects of the concept of jihad in his speeches, especially those made towards the end of his life. In these sermons, Yusuf put the fight against the Nigerian state in the framework of martyrdom to which he encouraged his followers to carry out.

On 28th of March 2009, Yusuf delivered a sermon that was later popularized under the title *Guzurin mujahidai* (Provision of the Muslim fighters). He presented the characteristics of an ideal martyr that Muslims should emulate if they want to enter paradise as easily as martyrs do. For him, the most important attributes of a warrior in the path of God include: readiness to sacrifice as much as God wants them to devote, even against their own will or that of their parents; perse-

verance in prayers and fasting; patience to endure trials sent by God; and deep fear of God. According to Yusuf, for any Muslim who wants to become God's own soldier, it is necessary to achieve these virtues first. Before coming to jihad, everybody should train themselves and focus on self-improvement to attain virtues desired by every prospective martyr (Yusuf 2009).

In another speech, Yusuf refers to police and army officers who, in his opinion, indiscriminately kill Muslims in northern Nigeria. He quotes Quranic verses on martyrdom: "And do not say of those who are killed for the Cause of Allah that they are dead. They are alive" (2:154) and "Do not think those who have been killed in the Way of Allah as dead; they are rather living with their Lord, well-provided for. Rejoicing in what their Lord has given them of His Bounty, and they rejoice for those who stayed behind and did not join them; knowing that they have nothing to fear and that they shall not grieve" (3:169-170). Yusuf stresses the fact that those who were killed by the unbelievers, are alive and well in the house of God. Therefore, any believer killed by the army or police officers should be treated as *šahīd*. Yusuf provides detailed descriptions of martyrdom, such as the fact that a martyr does not feel any pain of death. He cites *wašīyya*, a testimony, of one of the martyrs who died during the war in Afghanistan. In the battlefield, the martyr's stomach was cut open. Despite the fact that his intestines spilled out on the ground, he was sitting calmly and bearing witness to the power of God. People around him were crying because of his fate, and he asked them, with a sense of surprise, what was the reason for their despair (Yusuf 2008).

Another martyrdom account provided by Yusuf concerns two Muslims who died after a bomb exploded in their car when they were on their way to the mosque. Several months later, in the site of their death, the fragrance of musk lingered in the air as an evidence that they had entered paradise. According to Yusuf, martyrs spend their time with God in heaven, and when God asks them if they would be willing to die for him again, they agree, because for a true believer martyrdom is a pleasure. Furthermore, Yusuf recalls Muslims who sacrificed their lives during the Battle of Uhud in 625. He narrates that the bodies of the *šuhadā'* were buried at the bottom of the Uhud hill. Forty years later, heavy rains in that region washed the ground and uncovered the remains of the martyrs. The bodies were buried again, but they left blood on the leaves around the martyrs' graves, which has not dried up until today (Yusuf 2008).

Several sermons by Muhammad Yusuf were translated into Arabic and printed by *Al-Urwa al-Wuṭqā* (The Firmest Bond), a group related to Boko Haram, which is named after the renowned 19th-century journal edited by Salafi scholars, Muḥammad 'Abduh (1849-1905) and Ġamāl ad-Dīn al-Afġānī (d. 1897). Pre-

sumably, the members of *Al-Urwa al-Wuṭqā* were involved with the Islamic State organisation, and for a certain period of time were responsible for Boko Haram's media presence. In the introduction to a booklet containing his speeches (Yusuf 2015), the authors call Yusuf *ṣahīd*, referring to his execution by the forces of unbelievers i.e., Nigerian police officers, during the July 2009 Maiduguri clashes.

One of the Yusuf's lectures presented by *Al-Urwa al-Wuṭqā* carries the title *Hayyā li-l-ġihād* (Come to jihad), which is a paraphrase of the words of Islamic call to prayer (Arabic *'aḍān*). The author discusses the necessity for Muslims to stand and fight against the enemy, who is equated with the representatives of the secular state. Yusuf quotes verses 38-41 of sura *At-Tawba* (Repentance) to convince his followers about their obligation to participate in the struggle against unbelievers. After instructing listeners how to prepare their souls for jihad, by purifying them and avoiding polytheism (Arabic *širk*), he discusses material aspect of these preparations:

This mobilisation also covers physical preparations like shooting training, obtaining rifles and bombs, and preparing Muslim army for the fight against unbelievers. You should sacrifice your souls, your houses, your cars and bikes in the path of God. Spare no blood of yourselves and that of your relatives to glorify God (Yusuf 2015: 17).

Then, Yusuf cites a large number of hadiths to provide textual evidence of the benefits of martyrdom. He quotes passages from the collection of Muslim: "All the sins of a *ṣahīd* are forgiven except debt" (Yusuf 2015: 21, after: Saḥīḥ Muslim 1886a), and "He who asks Allah for martyrdom, Allah will raise him to the high status of the martyrs, even if he dies on his bed" (Yusuf 2015: 21, after: Riyāḍ aṣ-Ṣāliḥīn 1, 57), as well as Abū Dawūd: "The Messenger of Allah (saws) said: If anyone fights in Allah's path as long as the time between two milkings of a she-camel, Paradise will be assured for him. If anyone sincerely asks Allah for being killed and then dies or is killed, there will be a reward of a martyr for him [...] If anyone is wounded in Allah's path, or suffers a misfortune, it will come on the Day of resurrection as copious as possible, its colour saffron, and its odour musk" (Yusuf 2015: 18, after: Sunan Abi Dawud 2541). Relying on the Quran and the authoritative collections of hadiths extensively, Yusuf follows the pattern of argumentation typical for the Salafi scholars, who underline the necessity to build their opinions mostly on textual basis.

After Muhammad Yusuf's demise, his followers dispersed throughout the region. In September 2010, Yusuf's former assistant Abubakar Shekau emerged as a new head of the organisation. He took harder line in the confrontation with the Nigerian authorities, declaring in his first made-public video that he had closed the page

of *da'wa* (mission, mostly related to preaching) and opened that of jihad, obviously, referring clearly to its violent form. He commenced an armed struggle in the literal sense of the word. The rebels are responsible (together with the state security forces who are also significant party to the conflict) for more than 35 000 deaths, almost 2 million refugees, and many atrocities in the region (Sumaina 2019).

Boko Haram fighters use new means of communication to call on their brethren to participate in warfare. Aminu Sidiq Ogwuche, who was responsible for planning Nyanya bombings in 2014, used his Facebook account to promote the idea of martyrdom. He wrote on his profile page: “[t]hose who strive in the path of Allah love death like the *kuffār* love life [...] Let them know, we are always ready to meet our Lord anytime he wills” (Scan News 2014). To illustrate the significance of a spiritual aspect of suicide mission for the perpetrators, professor Abdul Raufu Mustapha recalls an example of Mustapha Umar. He was a Boko Haram member who accidentally did not die in a suicide bomb attack he conducted in Kaduna in 2012. Local journalists reported him crying over his failure to access paradise during the mission. When interrogated by the police, he told the officers he “was unhappy because not dying with the victims of the attack had denied him the opportunity to make heaven” (*Information Nigeria* 2013; Mustapha 2014: 167).

Another interesting aspect of Boko Haram’s understanding of martyrdom was stressed by Kashim Shettima, the governor of Borno state between 2011 and 2019, which is the epicentre and birthplace of the conflict. Observing the crisis in the state, Shettima identified martyrdom-related motivations inspiring people to join Boko Haram and participate in its campaign of terror:

[They] are led into believing that when they kill, they obtain rewards from Allah and the rewards translate into houses in paradise. When they are killed, they automatically die as martyrs and go to paradise straight away. In other words, death is the beginning of their pleasure (Abbah & Idris 2014).

In this narration we find an ordinary belief about martyrs who, if killed in the battlefield, go to heaven directly and do not face responsibility for the mistakes made earlier in their lives. However, Shettima’s opinion underlines additional aspect of the Boko Haram doctrine related to martyrdom that makes rebels feel free to kill Muslims and non-Muslims indiscriminately:

One dangerous thing about their ideology is their belief that when they attack a gathering or a community, any righteous person in the sight of God, who dies as a result of their attack, will go to paradise, which means they would have assisted the person to go to paradise in good time by their actions, and any infidel killed by their attack will go to hell, which to them is what he or she deserves and no regret for his death (Abbah & Idris 2014).

Shettima perceives the Boko Haram fighters' doctrine of life sacrifice and martyrdom as having broader dimension than the typical understanding of the notion obtainable in the literature. According to his perception, they do not only believe that they enter paradise as a result of a suicide operation, but also assume that their actions have a causative effect on the salvation of others who were caught up and died as a result of their actions. By killing the rightly-guided, they assist them in meeting God and achieving heaven even earlier than they would otherwise; an added advantage.

Boko Haram's recent activity provides an interesting insight into the relation between the notions of martyrdom and suicide missions. It is difficult to assess how many suicide bombers deployed by Boko Haram have made conscious decision to participate in what the organization leadership sees as jihad. In fact, evidence exists that many suicide bombers were coerced, stunned with drugs such as tramadol, or suffered from psychological trauma after being abducted. Certain number of perpetrators possibly were not even aware of the fact that what they were partaking in was a suicide mission (Okereke 2017; Bloom & Matfess 2016: 111-112). Thus, the quite common assumption that martyrdom mission can be freely equated with suicide bombing raises doubts. The main component of a martyrdom operation is the willingness of the attacker to sacrifice his/her life (Pape 2005: 27-29), which certainly is not the case with coerced suicide bombers. Therefore, many recent missions conducted under the umbrella of Boko Haram cannot, in fact, be classified as martyrdom operations. Mia Bloom and Hilary Matfess go even further, claiming that "[w]hile the majority of these attacks have been suicide bombings, this is perhaps a misnomer as 'suicide bomber' implies that the perpetrator's decision to martyr oneself is made of his or her own volition. Yet, many of the Boko Haram attacks were conducted by girls too young to have agency" (Bloom & Matfess 2016: 111). The lack of perpetrator's consent or even awareness entails that he/she should be perceived a victim and not a warrior-martyr of the war seen by the rebels as jihad.

Most recent development of jihadism in northern Nigeria is marked by factional disputes between Abubakar Shekau and his opponents. After having pledged allegiance to the Islamic State in 2015, in August 2016 Shekau was ejected from ISWAP and replaced by presumably a son of late Muhammad Yusuf, known under his Arabic name Abū Muṣ'ab al-Barnāwī⁷. The reason to question Shekau's

⁷ According to some reports, in March 2019 Al-Barnāwī was demoted and a man known as Ba Idrisa became ISWAP's new leader (Zenn 2020). Abubakar Shekau and his followers remain active in the southern part of the Borno state (Onuoha 2016) and carry on fighting with ISWAP.

authority was – apart from the controversies related to his leadership and the way he treats his commanders – a disagreement on conditions upon which it is legitimate to declare *takfīr* (Arabic for 'excommunication') on Muslims living by conscious choice under the rule of unbelievers, and to fight against them, as a consequence. Several papers authored by the jihadi theologians present their criticism of Shekau's eagerness to fight Muslim civilians in detail. One of them is a treatise titled "Some advice and guidelines" published in 2017 by *Mu'assasāt al-Andalus* (Arabic for 'Foundations of Andalus'), a media wing of AQIM (Brigaglia & Iocchi 2017: 27; Al-Tamimi 2018a). Another work, titled "Slicing off the tumour of Shekau's 'Kharijites'⁸ in pledging allegiance to the honourable ones" was probably co-authored by Abū Muṣ'ab al-Barnāwī and released by ISWAP in 2018 (Brigaglia 2018: 3; Al-Tamimi 2018b). The authors of these treatises suggest, in regard to the use of violence, that targeting Muslim civilians – a common practice of Shekau's forces – should preferably be avoided, even if they are not enthusiastic about the jihadi project (Brigaglia 2018). Interestingly, in these works we find little direct reference to the concept of martyrdom, except for listing names of people who died in the battles with the state forces (cf. Brigaglia 2018: 8), with special reference to the heroic martyrdom of Muhammad Yusuf. While the concept of martyrdom is not a central focus of the Shekau-ISWAP debate, the dispute concerns the phenomenon of martyrdom indirectly, as it relates to legitimacy of war in the land inhabited by Muslims. Within this framework rival parties' views on permissibility of the use of violence can be extrapolated to whether Muslims can or should not fall a victim to martyrdom operations.

5. Conclusions

Reports on martyrdom, containing mystical stories about those who entered paradise because of their readiness to sacrifice their lives for God, account for a substantial content of jihadi literature, both written and oral. Lectures, speeches and printed documents disseminated by the terrorist organisations are used to mobilize prospective suicide bombers, luring them with detailed descriptions of heavenly pleasures waiting for them. These accounts are provided and popularized by preachers and leaders of jihadi organisations, in whose best interest it is to gain recruits willing to die as warriors. It is no coincidence that the members of

⁸ Arabic *ḥārīġī*, pl. *ḥawāriġ*. Kharijites, historically speaking, were the earliest Islamic sect, which traces its beginning to a religio-political controversy over the caliphate. They were known for their puritanism and fanaticism. They considered any Muslim who committed a mortal sin an apostate (Levi Della Vida 2012).

Al-Urwa al-Wuṭqa have selected Muhammad Yusuf's speech on martyrdom from many others, translated it into Arabic and popularized to reach a wider audience. Moreover, the supposed benefits of martyrdom are also described by the suicide bombers themselves in the testimonies they often give before carrying out their missions. They transmit their message to the brethren who remain alive, explaining why it is worth to become a martyr. They leave evidence that preparing for martyrdom is a form of self-fulfilment that gives happiness, and some of them, like Mohammed Manga did, even decide to present it in graphic forms.

In northern Nigeria, suicide operations were not applied as a battle technique before 2011. However, since then bombings have become an important component of the Boko Haram rebellion. Because of their virtual absence in that region before Mohammed Manga's attack on Abuja police headquarters, it is often assumed that introducing this previously unknown method was inspired by outside forces. While most certainly the Abuja attack was indeed organized in cooperation with Al-Qaeda of the Islamic Maghreb, it is important to underline that there had been elements of local martyrdom tradition as well. They date back to the times of the 19th-century 'Dan Fodio's jihad, though the reports of those who sacrificed their lives during the war consist surprisingly insignificant part of jihadi literature that has been preserved in abundance until today. Many more accounts are to be found in the speeches of Muhammad Yusuf, the main ideologue of Boko Haram, whose teachings provide the foundation and legitimize the current rebellion. The importance that Yusuf attached to the concept of martyrdom suggests that he contributed to the readiness of his followers to engage in physical struggles, including those who decide to carry out suicide missions until today. It is important to underline, however, that during the Boko Haram rebellion, many people conduct bombing attacks under duress, because they were coerced by the fighters, or perceive suicide as a means to free themselves from the difficulties they suffer while being held hostage in terrorists' camps. The concept of martyrdom is, after all, only one among the many possible motifs to perform a suicide operation.

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Images of Amhara women in oral poetry

Abstract

The objective of this article is to describe the thematic images of Amhara women in oral poetry. The study is based on field research conducted in rural areas of Western Gojjam and Awi Zone. The data was collected by observation, interview, and focus group discussion. For documentary evidence, twelve informants were selected with the use of a purposive sampling technique. The research method employed was ethnographic qualitative description. The result revealed that the images reflected through oral poems address women mainly as wives, their particular aspects refer to love, woman's attitude towards marriage issues, divorce, and include general knowledge, understanding of the life and personages within women's worldview. By the same token, oral poetry portrayed those women as inferior to men. Finally, the study recommended a further research on oral literature of Amhara region of Ethiopia.

Keywords: image of women, gender theme, oral poetry, Amharic

1. Introduction

Women in Ethiopia occupy a low status position in the society, although they represent half of the population and contribute significantly to food production and perform many other duties. On some occasions, they may not have shared the fruits of growth as have their male counterparts (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia 1994: 10). Furthermore, Ethiopian women in most families are in an inferior rank to their brothers and male counterparts. Given the heavy workload

compulsory at an early age, premature marriage without choice, and a submissive function to both husband and mother-in-law, girls and women are left with few opportunities to make and act on their own decisions. These and related events are mirrored in oral poetry. Thus, oral poetry as a medium of cultural communication has been recognized as one of the significant means to record the marginalization of women (Furniss & Gunner 1995: 21ff). The cultural images connected with women reveal and endorse the social philosophies and viewpoints of the society. Woman has been given both positive and negative images in society.

The oral poetry reflects social attitudes in general and women's views which are their clear manifestation. However, the researcher's recognition shows that no study on images of women in Amharic oral poetry has been made so far. This work intends to fill this gap in the field of interpreting oral poetry. The main objective of this study is to analyze the samples of Amharic oral poetry from the point of view of creating an image of women. Therefore, the specific objectives of the study include:

- to examine images reflected through Amharic oral poetry,
- to explore gender themes which are rooted in the image of woman in the Amhara society.

2. The role of oral poetry in traditional society

Oral poetry is the genre of literature which is composed and transmitted without the aid of writing. Oral poetic customs deal with the poetic creation and the public performance, when the poem is sung (Toelken 1996: 55-60). Oral poets are distinguished by the joy of creation. No matter what poets perform, they create and recreate; their art is fostered and hold up through the use of customary accompaniments (Alembi 2002: 35). For traditional society, oral poetry is the repository of the important knowledge, philosophy, and wisdom. It offers an image of life as experienced by the humanity in its particular time and place with its sole existential challenges (Alembong 1996: 121; Sone 2009: 162). Oral poetry summarizes the traditional knowledge, beliefs and morals about the situation and the nature of the social order itself. It arises in response to the widespread aesthetic images to present narratives that explain the nature of life and describe human responses to challenges (Hurreiz 1986: 87). Oral poetry also portrays how one is to live a moral life and explains the nature of one's relationships to holiness. Oral poetry thus retains the society's knowledge to be passed on to succeeding generations (Gellner 1987: 8-12). It contains the history of the society

and refers to women's experiences in particular. In various forms the oral poetry portrays the society's system of beliefs that makes sense of women life.

Oral poetry intended for traditional society is also the repository of an artistic expression accepted in the society. Its beauty resonates across human cultural frontiers. Oral poetry is an imagery response to the universal human being instinct to find sense of balance, synchronization, and beauty in the world and the need to understand pain, suffering, and evil. It can explain the causes of human suffering, justifies them, and suggests ways of arbitration and the remedial of suffering (Okpewho 1990: 80-88).

Oral poetry serves as a medium of education. Historical information as well as the accumulated knowledge of the people is transmitted through songs and dances (Miruka 1994: 118-20; Okpewho 1985: 258; Zewde 2000: 34). It also serves as a reservoir for the culture of the community. The songs also serve as a means of social control. Through such poems, the societal and cultural values, customs, and traditions are perpetuated.

As for the question of performance, oral poetry is the authentic instance of formation that can be performed at homes, various workplaces, different festivals, wedding ceremonies, and other customary contexts. Spectacular capability and the playing talent of the players is oriented at maintenance of the audience (Lindfors 1977). Thus, performance is all the time important in oral poetry. Performance is the form of expression which employs poetic speech that causes interaction¹.

The position of oral singers in the social order says nothing about them as oral poets. All the singers are illiterate, but they express a desire to attain expertise in singing oral poetry. In the occurrence of apprenticeship as a poet they have to follow stages like listening and absorbing, application, and finally the stage of singing before an audience. In the first phase of their preparation they sit or stand aside at the same time as others chant: they enthusiastically hear the music of their elders and learn about the heroes (Bauman 1986: 4).

The performance starts with established formulas. Subsequently, performers of oral poetry implement the most important constituents of the outward appearance, the rhythm, and melody (Bauman 1977: 11). The subsequent stage is based on a procedure of simulation in which the singers reproduce the *modus operandi*

¹ On various aspects of performance see Alembi 2002, Bauman 1977, Fine 1984, Finnegan 1970, Finnegan 2012, Okpewho 1990, and Okpewho 1992.

of composition known from their master or masters. It is worth mentioning that the singers learn to sing by a procedure of adjustment through listening from which a large amount is put into practice. The education process ends when the singer is capable to sing songs all the way through for a significant audience. At this time, singers are able to modify some parts of the song as they wish in the long-established outward appearance. In this way, their repertoire enlarges and their capability develops. At the third stage, they establish their repertoire of songs; they are also improving the singing of the songs that they have already known. They start mounting the songs. The ability of expanding the older songs and of acquiring innovative ones is carried to the top at which they know how to keep their audience amused for a full twilight which is one of their goals. The concluding phase of preparation comes to closing stages when the singers' repertoire is great and sufficient to offer entertainments for quite a lot of contexts. This stage is noticeable as the singers gain popularity in the society and become part of its cultural profile. The lead singers never stop in the process of building up, recombining, and remodelling the procedure and images contained in their songs.

The extent of presentation devices correlates with contexts surroundings which stimulate audience's attention. The poets' ability to compose poetry contributes to the predictable self-motivated scenery of oral poetry. During performance, miscellaneous parts of the body, such as face, hands, shoulders, neck, and other parts are used to create an accompaniment playing a role in making the performance attractive (Okpewho 1992: 46-47).

Structural variations are typical components of oral poetic performances. Therefore, the audiences are impressed more by players who show a number of imageries with the text of the song than by those who merely recite their lines without human intervention. While reciting and performing the intended oral poem, devices like repetition, rhyme, alliteration, parallelism, piling and association, tonality, idiophones, imagery, digression, allusion, and symbolism are taken into consideration (Bauman 2011: 9; Finnegan 1970: 13).

Amhara oral poetry displays characteristics of oral poetic performances known from other parts of Africa and elsewhere. Oral poets can represent any class of the Amhara society (Gelaye 2001). One additional mode of poetic performance is the use of kebero and other similar instruments for producing impression for the audience and the poet as well (Alembi 2002: 36). The most distinctive element of the Amhara oral poetry is transmitting the images which represent cultural code in social behaviour. Gender themes belong to the most commonly used and the most attractive in oral poetry.

3. Gender in Ethiopian context

Gender is a set of characteristic roles and performance patterns that differentiate women from men communally and ethnically and determine relations of power between them (Hirut 2005: 16). These distinctive roles, behaviour patterns, and power relations are dynamic. In Ethiopia, they vary over time and are diversified between various cultural groups. Therefore, the meanings of gender are culturally determined and their content should be investigated with regard to their constant shifting and variation (Hirut 2004). Therefore, gender events can be identified as action, locus, visualization, and power, among other things, and they function as components in the identification of different roles of men and women.

The deeply rooted patriarchal culture prevalent in most societies of Ethiopia attributes power to men at both home and the community level. Thus, Ethiopian society retains women in an inferior position. There is a conviction that women are passive, obedient, enduring, and tolerant of monotonous work and violence, in which culture is used as a justification (Cherinet & Mulugeta 2003: 10). In Ethiopian society, girls are brought up to conform, be submissive, reliant, and specialize in indoor activities like cooking, washing clothes, fetching water, caring for children, etc. Moreover, women are responsible for most of the food production process, clearing the land, preparing soil, sowing, weeding, harvesting, transporting, and performing many post harvest activities. They also shoulder various livestock management tasks. Responsibility of bearing and rearing children, necessary practices to insure the natural tradition and continuity of life rests on women.

This study takes descriptive, ethnographic, and thematic approach in studying the images of Amhara women in oral poetry. It is attempted to record the live phenomena which are reflected in this poetry as holistically as possible. By purposive sampling, the researcher has judged who could provide valuable information to achieve the intended objective. This sampling technique (Kumar 1996) was used to contrast events. It enabled to capture the real contexts of various phenomena, which were little known. Thus, the first task was to record performance and relevant accessions of oral poetry in different socio-cultural contexts (Fine 1984: 99). The field research was conducted in the rural areas of Western Gojjam and Awi Zone where oral poetry and related ethnographic data were documented. All informants represent only the Orthodox Christians. In this context, the majority of oral poems were collected from women performers. Few folk poems were also captured from men poets. Consequently, the performance in live settings on relevant occasions and information were captured through interview, observation, and focus group discussion.

The interviews were carried out with carefully selected 12 (10 female and 2 male) key informants who were recognized as knowledgeable and skillful in composing, reciting, and singing of the Amharic oral poetry, as well as in traditional dancing. Moreover, two focus groups (Bruce 1987) and discussions with other intended informants yielded important information. According to the nature of the behaviours recorded, some direct and indirect observations were conducted.

The method of data analysis employed in this study included collection, thematic classification, and analysis (Jackson 1987). The image analysis of oral poetry includes the live events of oral performance, the socio-cultural events, symbols, and the meaning of anything from the context of women's world (Bruce 1987: 29, 63).

4. Images of women in Amharic oral poetry

4.1. Woman's emotions: Expressing love and affection

Woman's affection and attitude towards man's love is often expressed through Amharic oral poems. Women use a wide variety of phrases related to emotional attitudes which are in line with love, as Alemitu Jembere performs in (1):

- | | |
|--|--|
| (1) <i>Yesētītuma bal birch'ik'o neh²</i> | <i>Glass like a husband of another woman³</i> |
| <i>Fik'ir adek'ek'eny ketef bel bakih.</i> | <i>Your love has crushed me, please come.</i> |
| <i>Ihud k'idamē bimet'a minew?</i> | <i>When will Saturday and Sunday come?</i> |
| <i>Indemar k'ibē yemīt'afitew.</i> | <i>Who is so sweet as butter and honey.</i> |

According to the above poem, the persona⁴ loves a man who has a wife. She favoured to introduce him through his wonderful appearance of white glass.

² The transcription of the original Amharic texts follows the convention known as "BGN/PCGN 1967 System" designed for use in romanizing names written in the Ethiopic script approved jointly by the U.S. Board on Geographic Names (BGN), and the Permanent Committee on Geographic Names (PCGN) for British Official Use.

³ Based on the research objective, the translation was concentrated predominantly on the content, tone, and meaning of the Amharic oral poems. Once the researcher understood the content of Amharic oral poetry, he simply re-cast them into English using his own literary comprehension. Researcher tried to maintain the similarity of style, but the main goal of translation was the transference of the thematic images from the Amharic to English language.

⁴ Oral poetic words such as 'singer', 'composer', 'performer', 'persona', and 'poet' refer to the same actor in oral poetry performance. A *persona*, in the word's everyday usage, is a folk poetic role or a character played by an actor.

The glass in the study area has a special significance. It represents beauty, cleanness, and good look. As a result, she applies this metaphor in order to describe the attribute of the man whom she loves. She informs that it is the feeling of affection that crushed and hurt her. She strongly asks to share the love affair with him, which has currently come into sight. She is waiting for Saturday and Sunday. The culture of the study area (particularly rural) strictly imposes parental consent on her making love with a man. Thus, on those days either her father or mother may not be present at home. For example, on Saturday her family may go to the market. On Sunday, they also may go to the church. Hence, as she informs, they two may have a good opportunity to make love.

In the Christian view, however, only true love between husband and wife draws the richness, beauty, and joy from the love that Jesus brought from heaven to share with his friends. Thus, the poem performed at workplace portrayed it as in (2):

- | | |
|---|---|
| (2) <i>Iwodihalehu yegzēruni⁵,
Habt alfeligim Yezemenuni
Atek'rihalehu ijguni.</i> | <i>It is the love of Jesus that I wish,
Modern wealth, I do not wish for
From your love, I want warmth.</i> |
|---|---|

According to the beliefs held in the study area, since the love has planted in the human heart, it brings the joy of life which will last forever as the gift of God himself. It is a holy thing, but no less delightful because it is holy. It is certainly what God intended for Christians and for a Christian marriage. Therefore, the singer suggests her love is as warm as God's love for human beings. True love cannot be exchanged for modern wealth. Therefore, she seeks a deep-rooted love from an imaginary lover. On the other hand, in the poem (3) which was performed at a coffee ceremony the love warmth is referred to as a "roasting action" in the woman's world:

- | | |
|---|---|
| (3) <i>K'ilētam aluny silafek'erkuhu.
Iwnetawunma inē awk'alehu
Kezih ager k'urt'imati.
Minew bezafu lay bewet'ahuti?</i> | <i>When I love you, they say she is roasting.
I know the truth is
Oh! The backbiting rumors of this country.
Shall I climb up a tree?</i> |
|---|---|

As expressed in the above poem, the actions of the performer are seriously criticized from different perspectives. Her love is considered dishonourable behaviour. The opposing view which disturbs her social life comes from her neighbours. They considered her as roasting. According to her view, she asked them

⁵ The name of God and Jesus are represented in Amharic as አግባብ-ብሔር (*igzābihēr*). Using the oral poetic composing freedom, the performer changes this name into *yegzēruni*.

what she should do? Where should she go? She asked a hypothetical question: "Shall I climb up a tree?". Love is an experience of the body, the soul, or both. There can also be a sexual understanding and it can give rise to emotions ranging from delight to despair, as expressed in (4):

- (4) *Fik'irihna zarē bamet'achihut t'at'a* *My love and my Satan are matching*
Nefsina sigayē ch'erso liwet'a *My body, and my soul is being demolished*
Silefik'ir amlak tewuny alik'et'a. *For the love of God, please do not punish me.*

As portrayed in the poem (4), the separation of the soul from the body takes the lovers apart from each other. It is not an ending, but it is the beginning of a new cycle. The poem ends with the image of a circle, the symbol of accomplishment, representing the union of souls in a love relationship. As she stated, Satan⁶ that possesses her together with her lover demands her life be unpleasant and distasteful. In this case, her body as well as her soul were worried, disappointed, and tormented. Thus, she strappingly begs both the loved man and Satan to create peace in her life. She might have rested when the anticipated personality made contact within her in a love relationship. However, love's warmth is kept secret, as expressed in (5):

- (5) *Bemist'ir yanorkutin simētēni.* *I was keeping the feeling secret.*
Minew serek'hew libēni. *You have stolen my heart.*
Isun lemesebseb yedekemkutni. *That I have scarified to collect.*

In this poetry, the persona uses the current imagery – her imagination is two-dimensional and double edged. On one side, she has been keeping the event secret. On the other side, she has tried to collect the isolated thoughts. This shows that the love recurrently repaired and confused her. Perception and thought continuously fuse in her mind, so that she could see the conception and the originator all at once involved in the situation.

4.2. Woman's attitude towards marriage issues

These days, women are using the songs to break down barriers between couples, the obstructions that keep husbands and wives from fully expressing their love

⁶ The Devil or Satan is the epitome of evil as it is imagined in many and diverse cultures of Western Gojjam and Awi as well as in the Orthodox religious traditions. Satan is seen as the objectification of an aggressive and destructive force. In Christianity, evil is personified in the Satan, a fallen angel who is the main enemy of God. According to the belief, held in the study area, Satan terrorizes the world all the way through evil, he is the direct opposite of truth, and shall be fated.

for each other. A woman is so obviously equal in importance to that of her lover; the context could only be accepted in the Amhara culture by taking it as an allegory like (6):

- (6) *Tewodaj neh wet'atu liji* *Young man very popular and desirable*
Indenatē t'ut wodedkuh injī. *I love you like my mother's breast.*
Inatēna inatih yafatuny, *Your mother and mine have divorced us,*
Yehonewim yihun meliseh wusedeny. *Whatever happens, take me back as soon as possible.*

Conformity between two successful families can enhance the power, prestige, and wellbeing of the couples. The intended poem about the couple performed by a woman indicates that the actions of the family cause the wife to divorce her husband. The poet gave no specific reason of separation; however, the event was illustrated with the words "your mother and mine have divorced us". The speaker of the poem strongly needs to renew the old marriage. She refers to that event with the words "whatever happens, take me back as soon as possible".

According to the tradition of the study area, when a couple intends to marry, they should provide the domestic animals or an equivalent in Ethiopian currency for prior arrangement. Except for a few occasions, marking prosperity is obligatory in rural areas. This trend sounds as:

- (7) *Yek'ola habt bemebzatu* *The lowlander is prosperous*
Isua kebt yelat alu. *They called me "animalless".*
Illik atagabuny inēni. *Don't be stubborn as me.*
Dihaw yagebal dihawani. *The poor might marry me.*
Adey abeba kebtihma. *Your animals are wild flowers.*
Inēm yinorenyal amlakē kalema. *I might have them, if God blesses.*

This poem addresses the current span of the singer. She is living in the highlands of Western Gojjam. There is someone who comes from the lowlands to ask her to marry him. Unfortunately, in the case of wealth, they do not reach an agreement, therefore, he withdraws from the current inquiry. In this regard, she compares the domestic animals with wild flowers. The specific flower can only grow and flower during September. After two months, it becomes dry and disappears from the surroundings. Similarly, the domestic animals are mortal. They might die. As portrayed in the poem, she does not have the sufficient quantity of animals that were taken as criteria to marriage. She feels like fool. The poet informs that, if God gave her health and blessed her with animals, she may marry a man who has an equivalent background:

- (8) *Igzēr yat'amerew gabicha* *A marriage joined by God*
Zelalemawī yelewum mefcha. *Is a lifelong companionship.*

According to the poem, marriage is the unique relationship of a man and woman joined together by God in a union. He wills it to be both permanent and exclusive, binding the couple to each other in a lifelong companionship of common life and conjugal love (Gen. 2:23-24, Matt. 19:4-8, Rom. 7:2-3). Therefore, a marriage joined by God is very strong and amalgamated as a bond. As the singer emphasizes, no internal or external occasion can prevent their marriage from lasting forever.

4.3. Woman and divorce

According to the tradition, divorce happens after a husband, a wife or both decide not to live together anymore. It may sound simple, but it is not easy for a husband and wife to decide to end a marriage. Often they spend a long time trying to solve problems before deciding to divorce. However, sometimes they just cannot fix the problems and decide that a divorce is a natural part of life which is hard to deal with.

Some people get married, divorce, and then remarry. In most cases, marriage ends after a divorce, and the couple never remarries. On the contrary, a singer requests remarriage, as in (9):

- (9) *Banteguday mendedun sichē,* *It is because of you I lost the road,*
Yihew met'ahulih libēn kefishē. *I am coming back, my heart is being opened.*
Kelijē abatim tefatichē. *With the father of my child, I will divorce.*
Lagbah indegena kemīstih k'emichē. *Remarrying, let us be transformed.*

In this context, sexual incompatibility and the related reasons may be missing on her side because marriage is concluded not always out of love. She is looking for a quick divorce. The performer with irrepressible libido cannot be faithful to her partner. Therefore, when her heart becomes open, the imaginary journey to the first husband starts. She has a child from her former partner but she is now going to divorce the present husband. The divorce turns out to be the closing stage. Therefore, she is trying to convince the former partner to restore the marriage.

Only occasionally both people in the couple want to separate and every so often one wants to divorce but the other one does not. Usually both parents are disappointed that their marriage cannot last, even if one wants a divorce and to live apart more than the other one, as in (10):

- (10) *Aynē tessek'lo bante guday.* *My eyes are being slung.*
Libē tessek'lo bante guday. *My heart is being stolen.*
Inē aleknim izīhlay. *In this moment, I do not stay.*

*Mīstihin fitat alkuh.
Guzoyen jemerkuhihi.*

*Quickly, split-up with your wife.
I am coming forth rapidly.*

As affirmed in (10), divorce hurts the woman's feelings when she stays on living in the house where they lived. It is hard not to take it personally. It is important to remind herself that divorce happens between the husband and wife, and even though it affects her life. She falls in love and wishes to live with a new man. Due to the context, because of love's warmth, her eyes are being slung, and her heart is being also stolen by his love. At this moment, she looks as if she never stayed with the current husband. She informed that he ought to divorce his wife rapidly. He must not let up, since she is running towards him to get in touch with a new marriage.

Everyone has his or her own reasons for wanting a divorce. The most common reason people give for their divorce are lack of assurance, too much disagreement, and faithlessness. In the present song, the lack of communication aggravates the future divorcees, as in (11):

- | | |
|---|---|
| (11) <i>Kolo berēwum t'imad newu.
Haylu berēwum t'imad newu.
Fetashalehu maletim limadh new.
Fetalehu kalkma fichīwun dengigu.
Yishalen neber lijochachin bīadgu.</i> | <i>Kolo ox was given by somebody as a loan.
Haylu ox was given by somebody temporarily.
Divorce is your recurrent contemplation.
If you decide, formulate a separation.
Leave it, for the sake of our children.</i> |
|---|---|

The poem (11) says that the described person may have a valid reason to divorce but she does not refer to it when the divorce occurs. According to the poem, the couples seem poor. Two oxen are not their wealth. Recurrently, the husband seems to be nagging that divorce is his persistent contemplation. She turns out to be very aggressive. She initiates the separation and confidently says "if you decide, formulate a separation". However, she wants to raise their children with him. This is because many children do not want their parents to divorce. Some kids may have mixed feelings about it, especially if they know their parents were not happy together. A number of children may even feel relieved when parents divorce, especially if there is a lot of fighting between the parents during the marriage:

- | | |
|--|---|
| (12) <i>Yelijochē abat simany milewuni
Abren inikrem yezendironi.
Kermos alat'am lēlawuni.</i> | <i>You man, the father of my children
For this year, let us keep on together.
Upcoming, I might have another.</i> |
|--|---|

The poem manifests a strong feeling of displeasing, hostility or antagonism towards the partner. The spouses seem to fight a lot or say many rude things to

each other. In this respect, she has tried to convince him to stay together until the marriage ends in divorce. She does not know the exact date of divorce. She is forced to search for another marriage. A woman has her own reasons for divorce:

- (13) *Wofch'o fech'alehuny indefechita. I am not a skillful grinder⁷, but I am crushed.*
Temekrēm neber wodante indalmet'a Don't go with you, they advised
Angeragralehu kengidThis, Onwards, I will say be careful,
Wondimē yiseral guarowunis. My brother can build the shelter.

According to the poet, she didn't acquire the capacity to perform an activity related to grinding, but she tried to crush crops. At the beginning, parents informed her that the intended husband will not marry her. Now, disagreement is created between them because of an unknown reason. If the current disagreement is continued, she may not stay silent. She would prefer to live with her brother:

- (14) *lyet'et'ah arek'ēwuni⁸. You become captivated by alcohol.*
Abek'enkew nibretachinini. Our prosperity has ended.
Bemin lasadig Ijochin? How will the children grow?
Bel tidarachinim yifres Our marriage ought to end
Nedijē almotim inēs. Otherwise I will not burn up.

As she states, her husband has become addicted to alcohol. The abuse prevents the marital bliss because of the change in his behaviour, which makes an adverse impact upon the couple's mental peace and physical security. Thus, an aimless habit of her husband highly affects the relationship and the entire economic system of the couple. This leads to a personal as well as mental conflict. Because what the singer wants the husband to do, the husband does not do, there are dissatisfaction and frustration. The exacerbated financial problems lead marital needs to remain unfulfilled and create discontent in the minds of both spouses as the one who cannot give feels humiliated and the other one is frustrated. She asks him with what means they will feed their children.

⁷ This folk song was taken from a grinding task in Awi. In Awi and Western Gojjam, grinding is basically the task of women. Crops such as yam, sorghum, oats, wheat, barley, millet, and teff have been ground for centuries either with a crude mortar and pestle fashioned from a tree stump and branch or by using flat stones or rubbing stones. All these types of grinding systems are still in common use throughout the study area.

⁸ *Arek'ē* is the type of alcohol locally made at home by women.

4.4. Woman as an inferior

In the study area, the division of labour is gender based. Every member of the family knows his or her role and responsibility in the economic production and distribution of family resources to ensure the material prosperity of the group:

- (15) *Sīmeshm sīnegam beza nīzniz.* *Her nagging frequency has reappeared.*
Kengidīh behwala abren anguaz. *From now onwards we cannot walk together.*
Lenēm mebt yinureny bahilum yiserez. *Let me have freedom, culture shall be broken.*
Inēm indantehul lēla sew liyaz. *Like you too let me have another partner.*

The poem (15) talks about the situation in which the man has sexual relations outside of marriage. This leads to a disagreement. In some Awi and Western Gojjam cultures, married women unlike men are not permitted to have multiple associates. For this reason, having more than one partner is regarded as morally wrong, but only for a woman. Thus, she is perceived as a promiscuous woman while such a behaviour of her male counterparts (even those who cheat their wives) is tolerated by the culture.

Due to this, the singer wants to break the existing male dominance. She is convinced that the disagreement that just occurred in between them must be stopped. From now onwards, the woman does not allow her husband to have extramarital sexual relations. If his reprehensible behaviour has no end, she is enforced to have sex out of marriage as he does. She intends to address the man's illegitimate ground rules. Moreover, the image of male dominance has been cueing up, as in (16)⁹:

- (16) *Sēt kesētinetish latalfī.* *You are woman for eternity.*
Berē temdeshm latarshī. *You can't plow up the land by oxen.*
Minim inkwan bitk'ejī bitgagrī *Even if you beaked and fetched*
Ikul menager atchīyim anchī. *You cannot speak equally like me.*

As portrayed in the folk poem, gender stereotypes are powerful forces of communal control. In Awi and Western Gijjam, it is commonly accepted that the task of plowing up the land is a men's duty, whereas the task of carrying water in a jar

⁹ Folk poems (16) – (24) were performed by the male folk poets at harvesting and plough work occasions in 2019 in Awi and Western Gojjam. Harvesting is the process of gathering rip crops from the field. Reaping is the cutting of grain for harvest, typically using a sickle. Men and women participate in this work. A plough or plow is a farm tool, traditionally drawn by oxen and horses, for releasing or turning the soil before sowing seed or planting (only in Awi).

and baking belongs to woman. In actual daily practices, the household and fieldwork tasks of women exceed those of men. However, he says that his wife's everyday jobs were less than his daily activities. As a result, she cannot speak equally with him. This wrong male supremacy activity is socially acceptable in rural communities of the study area. Similarly, the subsequent male's oral poetry depicts this situation, as in (17):

- (17) *Yebalwan amel mīst kalchalechiwuma, Wife should tolerate the husband's temper,
Ikul kemelesech iswam indegena. If she answers equally like her husband.
Ibelt'alehu kalech tesastalechina. She is wrong if she acts as superior.
Yihew tebelashe migbar ahun gena. Now the comportment has been distorted.*

As stated in the above poem, women imagine themselves as submissive to their husbands, even if the husbands are incorrect and unreasonable. They are women who do not complain when they are treated inadequately. According to the poet, women should be recognizing their assets and they may actually guard their husbands from the consequences of a cruel behaviour:

- (18) *Arshē balabelash anchīni. I plow the soil therefore you eat.
K'ofrē balabelash mīstēni. I excavate the land, as a result you eat.
Min yiwut'ish neber ahun? What would happen to you if I wouldn't work?*

According to the singer, the status of a woman is based on her relationship with her husband in terms of labour and economic circumstances. He confirms that farming and digging tasks in the farm field are entirely the tasks of the husband. Due to this, his wife is dependent and hides behind her husband's farming occupation. This wrong assumption explains the status of a homemaker as obvious while the woman stays idly at home expecting to be supported by her husband. The image of woman's idleness is more descriptive in (19):

- (19) *Sinesa siwodk' lij asadig biye. To grow children, I go up and down doing.
Senefnesh mindin new yenēhod mistiye, Why you became indolent, my wife,
Ine baldekim balefama, If I do not go up and acquire responsibility,
Bētachin bēt ayhonima. Our living system might be at risk.*

In the first line of the poem the speaker states that he is the only one responsible for earning money to bring up the children. In the second line, he puts emphasis on the woman's idleness and care freeness, as he knows that even if she did not work, the husband would provide everything for her and their children. The poet is convinced that he is responsible for everything at their home. Thus, his wife may be also depicted as malevolent. Moreover, in the last line, he indicates the

extent of his superiority. He nervously describes his wife's manner of dependence as she profits from his achievements. The significance of the place occupied by women in the social order is best captured in the subsequent folksong:

- (20) *Yewend diha alawk'im yeseṭitun injī.* *I didn't know poor man, but women.*
Yihinin iwuneta atawuk'iliny anchī. *(You) don't be aware of this happening.*

As stated in the above poem, men and women have different roles and responsibilities in the society, the causes and experience of poverty are also differentiated by gender. Rights such as access to land, credit, and other productive resources are difficult for women to attain:

- (21) *Bebirtuw kindih arseh iyabelah.* *You feed us by plowing with your strong arm.*
Lijina mistihn tastedadiraleh. *You administered to our children and me.*
Inēm bebēt siraw yihew alehulh. *I am here at the household works.*
Zim bleh k'uch' bel mechēm yebelayneh. *Take a seat, lastly you are superior.*

According to the poem, an assortment of outlooks of women gives the impression of a multitude of roles allocated to them by society. Woman acknowledges the social thoughts towards him. As a result, the speaker of the poem accepts that she is inferior to him and is supposed to be in an inferior position in the house. She also comes to the conclusion that her husband is physically stronger than her. The fact that she is not gifted with the same strength that would allow her to carry out comparable actions as a man, men's roles are more significant than hers are.

4.5. Woman as a wife

In Awi and Wesern Gojjam societies, both men and women are encouraged and persuaded to get married. The wives' role is supposed to be subordinate to men. They anticipate being excellent and accountable wives to their husbands as in (22):

- (22) *Yihew yizeshinyal ashmonmunesh* *You are handling me as shimmering*
Menfek' indalmolaw indelijish, *Like your small child,*
Hiywotē bejish nat yaziny ibakish. *My life is in your hands, please take it.*

The song depicts the fact that the persona has a good wife who thinks about her husband, is graced with his presence and is open to all his needs and desires. Due to this, he strongly needs to care for her like for their small child. She also agrees to act as her husband tells her to do, to share his likes and dislikes, and to pay respect to him.

In the study area, a woman is perceived mainly as a mother. As a result, she is viewed as the foundation of the family unit as in (23):

- (23) *Yebētē meseret yenuroyē mama, You are the base of my house,*
Minim hiywot yelem mistē yalanchīma. Devoid of you it is not life at all.

According to the husband's view, his wife forms the establishment of the farmstead, and devoid of her, the homestead might be broken. The woman, though in a subordinate role, is the essential person in securing the wellbeing of the family and the home. It is true that his wife is the homemaker; there is no home without her in the sense of his social and economic life. The speaker of the poem depicts his life through her performance in different circumstances. He claims that there is no life without her. As a result, the foundation of their life is based on her daily activities:

- (24) *Yetik'imt abeba libel marshetē, A flower of December, let me say, honey,*
Kushnaw aymok'im aydemk'im ibētē, The kitchen and our house have no warmth,
Banchī imebētnet yisakal minyotē. My goal is accomplished by you.

As portrayed in the poem, flower and honey are used by a man to describe his wife's beauty. At the same time, the poem refers to the idea that the kitchen work responsibilities lie with the woman to strengthen the stereotype that the man is the only provider for the family and his wife's place is the kitchen. As stated in the poem, his objectives have been accomplished with the help of his wife's household activities.

5. Conclusions

The main objective of this article was to describe and analyze the current thematic images of Amhara women in Amharic oral poetry. The result showed that the images fashioned in the oral poetry portray women as inferior to men, particularly in their physical and rational capability. In this regard, the authority to manage the public and other structures of the community is given to men. On the other hand, oral poetry propagates traditional perception, commenting on local actions, relaying history, instilling pride, and accepting shared aims. Similarly, the critics of local actions, love, marriage, divorce, and personage images are reflected in the oral poetry.

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REVIEWS

***A history of African linguistics*, ed. by H. Ekkehard Wolff.
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2019, 351 pp.
ISBN 978-11-0828-397-7. DOI: 10.1017/9781108283977**

The editor of the book, Prof. H. Ekkehard Wolff, is a renowned German scholar specializing in African studies. During his decades-long academic career in this field, he focused in particular on Afro-Asiatic linguistics. Wolff has envisaged *A history...* as an accompaniment to *The Cambridge handbook of African linguistics* (Wolff 2019). The two volumes were published almost simultaneously. Academics from all continents, actively working on African languages data, were invited to contribute to *A history...* 7 out of total 26 authors are from Africa (affiliated to the African universities). Among them there are researchers whose works are recognized outside the narrow circle of specialist in African languages. This highlights the significance of African linguistics within the general linguistic studies.

A historical reflection gives a man an impulse to revise his achievements and point out things that should be improved by next generations. Most certainly, this idea applies to all sorts of scientific activity which ought to be summarized once in a while as it gives an opportunity “to look back” in order to see a discipline’s state of the art as a whole: its achievements and gaps¹. In order to secure an accumulative forward-moving continuity of any scientific discipline, self-reflection is needed. This is done in the first place by means of a critical study of its history. *A history of African linguistics* edited by H. Ekkehard Wolff is the first ever (!) monograph devoted entirely to the history of African linguistics in global perspective². It is a detailed and elaborated report on its development from the

¹ See section 1.2 “Learning from History” from p. 3 onwards in *A history...*

² Recently, some valuable monumental monographs on African linguistics have been published. However, they neglect the history of the discipline (Güldemann 2018, Vossen & Dimmendaal 2020) or provide but a very short one with the focus on contributions from Germany (Agwuele & Bodomo 2018).

very beginnings up to the present day that provides “expert ‘inside’ views on the academic history of African linguistics within and outside Africa, which may serve as a first fact-finding and fact-describing vade mecum to the global history of African linguistics since its inception as a ‘colonial science’ in imperialist Europe more than 130 years ago” (“Preface”, p. xvii). The book demonstrates that initially European-established African linguistics has now relocated to a large extent to African academic centres, where it became the foundation of national philologies. Yet, European universities are still leading in long-term research and good quality publishing.

The message of the book can be encapsulated in the statement that the history of African studies is related to the history of the world, as it reflects mutual cultural and political influences, among various African and non-African peoples. The European colonialism gave impetus to the development of language-oriented Africanistics. Despite this atrocious inborn stigma, the new discipline developed scientific standards and quickly became established in the countries that did not have colonial traditions, such as those located in Central, Eastern, and Northern Europe. With some delay, the same processes took place in the African states. African linguistics in all these countries developed according to their own conditions. *A history...* does not value the achievements and allocates relatively the same amount of space to various regions of the world. However, as a result, the transparency of these regional descriptions is different (e.g. almost the same amount of pages is dedicated to Eastern Europe as a whole, where the tradition of Africanistics is relatively long, and to Canada, where the discipline is young, and limited to the individual contributors). The editor tried to keep *A history...* balanced in terms of the number of pages devoted to history of the studies in particular sub-regions, with Africa covering well deserved 131 pages, Europe 51, other parts of the world 45.

A history of African linguistics comprises 12 chapters. Their shortened versions, as the editor indicated in Preface (p. xvii), were included also in the aforementioned work (Wolff 2019) in order to depict briefly the history of the discipline at the margin of the main topic. There, full descriptions could not be included mainly due to the huge amount of space occupied by the extensive references lists. This constraint, though, does not hold for the current publication whose bibliographic entries cover 80 out of total 351 pages. Such stock of data is of great use for the researchers.

The structure of the book reflects the geographical and chronological distribution of the institutions and scholars dealing with “African linguistics”, i.e. a scien-

tific research field covering such domains as “African languages”, “language in Africa” and “the applied dimension of linguistics in Africa” (p. 1). Thus, each chapter covers roughly three periods that can be labelled as “pre-scientific”, “colonial and postcolonial”, and “contemporary times”. Going back to the geographical division that organizes the structure of the book: first three chapters cover Europe, from the Western colonial countries to countries with lesser ties to Africa located in Central and Eastern Europe and in Scandinavia. Next seven chapters deal with Africa starting from Arab countries in the north, and down south, distinguishing such sub-regions as Eastern, North-Eastern, and Southern Africa. Additionally, in regard to some sub-regions a criterion of official language was established. Therefore, separate chapters deal with African linguistics in francophone West and Central African countries, anglophone in West Africa, as well as luzo- and hispanophone states. One chapter covers Americas. The book closes with the story of African linguistics in Asia and Australia.

In this review, I would like to comment on history of African linguistics in Poland which is discussed in Chapter 3 “African linguistics in Central and Eastern Europe and in the Nordic countries” by a linguist and Hausaist Nina Pawlak from the University of Warsaw. This part of the book focuses on the regional ties in the development of African linguistics in selected countries formerly belonging to what was known as the “Eastern Block”. First of all, it is important to acknowledge that due to the geo-political issues the East European countries, such as Poland, drew inspiration both from the West and the East (Russia). It led to the development of new perspectives which combined these two “schools”. The discipline of African linguistics in Poland is not very impressive in terms of institutions. It developed (and still develops) to a large extent thanks to individual contributors. Hence, firstly, not enough information was provided concerning the pioneer of African linguistics in Poland, professor Roman Stopa (1895-1995) from Jagiellonian University in Kraków. He was a scholar renowned worldwide, thus by virtue of this fact he also deserves special attention. Let me take the liberty to add here a few words on his account. Stopa devoted his life to the study of African languages but also to musicology. He authored about 100 works mainly on Khoisan languages and cultures (whereas only two are cited, including one on Swahili). In the beginning of his career in the 1930s he published in Polish and German, later also in English. He studied in Hamburg, Paris, London, and conducted a field research in South-Western Africa. His travels gave him opportunity to meet in person and keep in contact with some of the greatest experts in African languages and linguistics of that time (including Meinhof, Westermann, Moillet, Cohen, Bleek, Bargery), as well as anthropology (Malinowski), all of

whom appreciated his work. This secured his position in the Western academic circles as an expert on “click languages”. During his long carrier (he was publishing until the 1990s) he focused on tracing the cradle of human language for which, he believed, the Khoisan languages are the key source data. Controversial are some of his ideas that linked the Khoisan languages to other languages and language families, including the Indo-European. These theses were fairly criticized (Raa 1973, Tucker 1973). Evidently, Stopa was a supporter of the hypothesis of monogenesis of the language, nowadays predominantly rejected. Nevertheless, it does not diminish the scientific value of Stopa’s works, especially in the field of phonetics. Most of them are today completely forgotten. Despite this, Roman Stopa is the only example of the Polish contribution to African linguistics development in its early stage and thus deserves to be remembered and honoured. Unfortunately, his research on the “click languages” has no continuators in Poland but is reportedly appreciated abroad, particularly in Germany, where many of the studies on Khoisan are published (Kłosowicz 2017, Kowal 1992). Secondly, the description lacks any references to Stanisław Piłaszewicz’s numerous works on Hausa language and literature. Until recently, he was a leading Polish Hausaist and Africanist based in Warsaw, now retired. Moreover, the chapter does not mention a crucial role of Eugeniusz Rzewuski in establishing a department devoted to studies on local languages in Mozambique, yet we can find this information elsewhere in the book (p. 193). Thirdly, I think it is worth to at least mention the name of Izabela Will from the University of Warsaw. Her works on Hausa cross the boundaries of linguistics and focus, i.a. on the relationship between speech and gestures (i.a. Will 2009), as well as speech and culture (Will 2017). The aforementioned information could not be included in the chapter due to limited space dedicated in *A history...* to the Polish contribution. The editor’s decision to combine the history of African linguistics in Russia, Czechia, Hungary, and Poland in one multi-thread story is understandable albeit not fair in respect to Poland. Whereas the Russian achievements undoubtedly surpass those of other countries described in this section, Poland deserves to be placed in the middle of the achievements ranking, overwhelmingly surpassing the rest both institutionally and in terms of quantity of research. It seems that the necessity of reducing the content to the “crucial information” did not allow to include some of the significant contributions (i.a. Nina Pawlak’s papers on various aspects of Hausa), whereas in respect to other regions (e.g. the Nordic countries, Canada) even the minor ones were mentioned. Hence there is a relatively small number of references to the works of the Polish scholars, compared to what is provided in other chapters (cf. excessive lists of works in Chapters 4 and 9).

In regard to Ethiopian studies in my *alma mater*, Chapter 5, p. 90 states that “regular Geez courses” were available in Warsaw in the period of 1952-1968 thanks to the work of Stefan Strelcyn. It needs to be noted that tradition of Geez studies has never died out completely. In the 1970s a student of Strelcyn, Aleksander Ferenc, joined the university staff³. Recently, the tradition has been re-established by Marcin Krawczuk who thought Geez introductory course dedicated to students of Amharic but available also to other students in the academic years 2014/15 and 2019/20. There is a will to offer this course on regular basis in addition to Krawczuk’s research on Geez literature (see e.g. Krawczuk 2014, 2019).

Generally speaking, I regard all chapters of *A history...* to be well written and highly informative. My attention was grabbed by Chapter 10, which contains a particularly interesting analysis of (under)development of African linguistics against the historical background of luzo- and hispanophonic countries in Africa, illustrated with a few “quick facts” about each of them.

A history... attracts the reader with its beautiful baobab forest cover picture, so different from the monotonic one-colour covers of most of the linguistic publications we have seen so far. The book has four separate indexes: index of African languages, countries, keywords index, and name index. This makes it a useful source for any preliminary query. Most importantly, the text of the whole publication is nicely formatted using easy to read fonts and minimal number of footnotes that do not distract while reading. Yet some minor typographic errors were spotted, e.g. a reversed apostrophe ‘ instead of ’ (p. 123), missing dot at the end of the sentence (p. 134, p. 241 paragraph 2), unnecessary space (p. 140 first paragraph, p. 151 second, p. 180 first, p. 188 acknowledgement, 194 first, p. 244 fifth, p. 247 first), missing “of” in the phrase “University Zanzibar” (p. 140), “African” instead of “Africa” (p. 148, f.n. 4), a whole fragment without spaces starting: “NancyC...” on page 152, unnecessary bracket in “1843)” (p. 157), missing coma between the words “Chaga-Rombo” and “Amharic” (p. 234). Moreover, on p. 172 instead of “*bookoo*”, I recommend scientific notation of this Hausa word as “*bōkō*”. In turn, on p. 134 it is advised to use the term “Muslims” in place of “Moslems” as this term is “formerly common but now old-fashioned, increasingly rare, and sometimes offensive variant of ‘Muslim’” (Merriam-Webster). It is not clear what the author meant, stating on p. 242 that “Noordin Shariffa Begam [...]”

³ Information on Ethiopian studies in Poland can be found at: <http://www.afrykanistyka.uw.edu.pl/pliki/files/Ethiopian%20studies%20in%20Poland.pdf> [17.06.2020].

compared Chinese tones with Kiswahili tones [...]”⁴, taking into account that Swahili is a major non-tonal language of the world. (However, the majority of linguists agree that Swahili was a tonal language at earlier stages of its development). A few misspelled names of languages have been spotted, e.g. Tigré instead of Tigre (p. 96), KiBajuni should be Kibajuni⁵ (or Bajuni), and Chi-Mwiini should be Chimwiini (or simple Mwiini⁶) (p. 107), Hadzabe should be simply Hadza⁷ (p. 133), Wollaitta is a non-standard spelling of Wolayta (or Wolaytta) (p. 237 and in the index), Berbers should be Berber (p. 241), on p. 205 Kambaata is spelled wrongly as Kambataa, and Basketo as Baskeet (also in the index). In regard to Sidamo it is recommended to unify the spelling: on p. 66 we see Sidaamu, whereas on p. 237 – Sidaama. Another issue is lack of diacritics in the notation of certain Polish names, such as Orlowska instead of Orłowska (p. 99 and in the index), Stanislaw should be Stanisław (p. 100, in the references and in the index), Bogumil – Bogumił (p. 107 and in the references) or misspelling, e.g. Lipski appears twice incorrectly as Lispski on p. 231.

It is rather unlikely that *A history of African linguistics* will find its way to a random reader. The publication is addressed to a narrow circle of specialists and provides a fine self-reflection in African linguistics on the level of a discipline. A unique character of *A history...* is the reason why the publication deserves the highest recommendations to all Africanists and linguists. It is a first ever publication covering all known history of African linguistics on all continents written by the contributors working and living in their respective countries and/or in their countries of professional interest. What is more, the book includes 80 pages of references covering the works on African linguistics. It is an enormous stock of useful data for scholars of related disciplines. This, as well as the fact that studying history of African linguistics can help to find ways to improve the language planning as a part of sustainable development planning in Africa and elsewhere (p. 19), slightly extends the scope of its potential readers.

Patryk Zając

⁴ In fact Noordin Shariffa Begam in his MA thesis titled *Comparative study of Chinese and Swahili dialect speech* „analyzes the differences and similarities between the Chinese and Swahili phonetic system” (online: <https://www.dissertationtopic.net/doc/1871550> [18.06.2020]).

⁵ By the analogy to the spelling of *Kiswahili* and other names of Bantu languages in which the editor decided not to use capital letters or a hyphen to mark the morphological structure of the word.

⁶ As a rule, the names of Bantu languages in the book are given without prefix class morpheme, e.g. Swahili rather than Kiswahili.

⁷ In Hadza language the term *Hadzabe* is an ethnonym, while the native name of the language is *Hadzane* 'of Hadza'.

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Massimo Villa, *Filologia e linguistica del testi gə'əz di età aksumita: Il Pastore di Erma.* (Studi Africanistici. Serie Etiopica 10).

Napoli: UniorPress 2019, 285 pp. ISBN 978-88-6719-178-9

The present book is a revised version of the author's PhD dissertation entitled *La versione etiopica del Pastore di Erma. Riedizione critica del testo (visioni e precetti)* which was prepared under the supervision of Gianfrancesco Lusini and defended at the University of Naples "L'Orientale" in 2016. It should be of interest to at least two types of audiences (who unfortunately do not meet as often as they should), i.e. Gə'əz philologists and historians of early Church and its literature.

The book consists of bibliography (pp. xi-xxxv), 9 chapters, and indexes of: personal names, toponyms and ethnonyms, authors, quoted works, and manuscripts (including inscriptions).

In Chapter 1 (pp. 1-30) the author presents general information about *Ποιμὴν τοῦ Ἑρμᾶ* (Greek *Poimēn tou Herma* 'The Shepherd of Hermas'), an early Christian work, dating to the 2nd century and usually classified as an apocalypse. After summarizing the main findings concerning the internal structure of the work, he presents the current state of research concerning its textual transmission in Greek (pp. 16-23), Latin (23-26), and Oriental languages excluding Gə'əz (pp. 27-30).

Chapter 2 (pp. 31-47) contains two subchapters. The first one, entitled "The recovery of Aksumite literary heritage" (pp. 31-42) is of great importance, as it provides an up-to-date survey of the oldest layer of Gə'əz literature which consisted of translations from Greek and includes i.a. also *Ποιμὴν*. The second subchapter (pp. 42-47) offers tentative hypothesis on how *Ποιμὴν* reached Aksum/Ethiopia stating that "the picture which emerges on the basis of the few available data is extremely lacunose" (p. 45). In the same subchapter the author expresses his disagreement with previous opinions on the Ethiopic version of *Ποιμὴν* as being a free paraphrasis rather than a reliable translation.

In Chapter 3 (pp. 49-78) the author presents meticulously analyzed textual examples which prove that the Ethiopic *Ποιμὴν* is indeed a direct translation from Greek, the fact already suggested in the 19th century but without providing firmly based philological evidence. Additionally, he compares the Ethiopic text with the previous editions of Greek, Latin, and Ethiopic texts, as well as with the

manuscript documentation, thus contributing to the issue of transmission from Greek into Ethiopic.

While Chapters 1-3 may be of interest to a reader unfamiliar with Gəʿəz philology, Chapters 4-9 will require a certain competence in Gəʿəz and a knowledge of Ethiopian tradition.

The Ethiopic textual tradition of *Ποιμήν* is presented in Chapter 4 (pp. 79-127). This tradition is rather small as it consists of “six manuscript copies of which only three are relevant from the text-critical point of view” (p. 79). Each of the six manuscripts is generously described including textual features pertaining to the relation between them. The textual tradition is bi-fold (cf. the *stemma codicum* on p. 127) and consists of “Gundä Gunde branch” and “Ṭana Qirqos branch” (so named after the monasteries from which the text witnesses originate). It is very important to note that the “Ṭana Qirqos branch” (consisting of EMLL 8508 and its two *descripti*) was unknown to any previous editor of the Ethiopic *Ποιμήν*. Furthermore, EMLL 8508 appears to be older than both main witnesses of the “Gundä Gunde branch”, i.e. BnF Éth, Abb. 174 and ms. Parm. 3842.

Chapters 5 (pp. 129-143) and 6 (pp. 145-172) describe what the author calls “the indirect tradition”, i.e. the indigenous Ethiopian book inventories which contain the mention of *Ποιμήν* (Chapter 5) and quotations from *Ποιμήν* in Gəʿəz literature (Chapter 6). A particularly interesting fragment concerns the presence of passages inspired by *Ποιμήν* in the lives of monastic figures associated with the monastery of Däbrä Maryam Qoḥayn, a clear testimony of the *Ποιμήν*'s importance for this community. The two chapters show how the circulation and influence of *Ποιμήν* might have been wider than the three surviving witnesses would suggest.

In Chapter 7 (pp. 173-186) the author tackles the question why the textual transmission of *Ποιμήν* is so limited and why it ceased altogether. Without offering any definitive answer, the author mentions several factors which contributed to the decline of the textual transmission, some of them of strictly philological nature, others connected with certain historical developments within the Ethiopian Church.

In this reviewer's opinion Chapter 8 (pp. 187-221) is the most important in the entire book and should be carefully studied by anyone interested in the Gəʿəz language. The author's attempt is, taking *Ποιμήν* as a case study, to highlight the linguistic features of the “Aksumite” Gəʿəz (i.e. the language of the translations from Greek in the Aksumite times) as opposed to the “Classical” Gəʿəz attested from 1270 onwards. Some of the most distinctive features include:

- the lack of the final *-ä* in the accusative forms, particularly when these are an element of *status contractus*, a noun preceded by a demonstrative pronoun, a noun with a possessive suffix or a nominal phrase consisting of a noun and an attribute,
- the phonetic law /əLa/ → /äLa/ (where L stands for any laryngeal consonant) does not apply to the conjugation of the imperfective verb,
- conjunctions ending in *-e* instead of *-a*,
- oscillation *uw/əw* and *iy/əy*.

The handy compilation of such features will be an indispensable aid to researchers who will try to distinguish the “Aksumite layer” from within the vast body of translations into Gə‘əz.

Finally, Chapter 9 (pp. 230-261) contains a new critical edition of a portion of *Ποιμήν* (Vision 3) together with an Italian translation. The edition has been prepared “according to the neo-Lachmannian” method (p. 223) and is based on the three manuscripts mentioned above. The critical apparatus consists of three levels. The first describes the testes of particular text portions, the second registers the important variants between the three manuscripts, the third records variants in the interpunction. The orthography has been normalized according to the August Dillmann’s lexicon.

To summarize, while this reviewer is not qualified to assess the importance of Villa’s study for the general research on *Ποιμήν*, it is beyond doubt that the book is a very important step for Ethiopic philology. No other Aksumite text (perhaps with the exception of the Biblical books which, however, pose a whole different set of problems) had been before a subject of a book-long philological and historical scrutiny. One should hope that this contribution will stimulate further research of this type.

Marcin Krawczuk

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