

An Analysis of the Kiuru Noun Phrase

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Abstract

KiUru is one of the Ethnic Community Languages spoken by the Chagga people in Kilimanjaro region in Tanzania. This language is counted under the Chagga group along with other Chagga related languages like KiRombo, KiKibosho, KiMashami, KiMochi, KiVunjo and others. It is named KiUru as it is spoken by people residing in Uru; a part of Kilimanjaro region, particularly Moshi rural district.

This paper investigates the way noun phrases are formed in KiUru. The order of their formation (constituents) has been examined thoroughly and then the writer sum up with how noun phrases (NPs) can be categorized in this particular language.

Therefore the main objectives of this paper were:

- i. To find out the Criteria for categorizing noun phrase elements in KiUru.
- ii. To examine Noun phrase constituents and order in KiUru.

In arriving at these objectives, the writer posed the following questions as a guide:

- i. What are the criteria relevant in categorizing the dependents of the noun in KiUru?
- ii. What elements can modify KiUru noun and in what order?

A conclusion has been drawn from this work in that, like other Bantu languages, the structure of KiUru NPs can be presented in a particular order with the following elements: possessives, demonstrative, adjectives, numeral, quantifiers, relative clause as well as interrogatives.

Key words: Noun phrase (NP)

1. Introduction

It is undoubted that among the different types of phrases in different languages namely noun phrases, verb phrases, adjective phrases, adverb phrases, and preposition phrases; noun phrases are the most common playing various syntactic functions in the sentence and clause structure: subject, object, and complement (of various kinds), apposition and attribute. (Van Lam, 2004)

Since little attention have been paid by the linguists on the syntax of the noun and its dependents (Rugemalira, 2007) then it becomes vital to go through the analysis of KiUru noun phrase.

Studies of the noun in Bantu languages have traditionally concentrated on the morphology of the noun with its elaborate class system and the underlying semantic strands. When treatment of the noun and its dependents is undertaken or mentioned it is usually with special focus on the concord system (Nurse & Phillipson, 2003 in Rugemalira, 2007).

2. Criteria for categorizing noun phrase elements in KiUru.

Mainly, there are three ways in which the types of elements that can become dependents of the noun in the noun phrase may be established. In so doing, one should observe the morphological properties, syntactic behavior, as well as semantic features. As far as the course is concerned, syntactic behavior is our main concern though the mentioned three ways work together smoothly than when a person decides to base on just one of them.

For an element to occur or not occur with other elements, depends on the set of agreement affixes. For instance, the agreement affixes for adjectives are different from the agreement affixes of numerals. If an element cannot co-occur with another, it may be because the two occupy the same syntactic position and stacking is not permitted. This would be a strong basis for considering such elements as belonging to the same syntactic category. The class of a lexicon depends on the affixes it takes as the following table presents.

Rugemalira pointed out a further syntactic criterion concerning the phrasal properties of a category in that adjective may be modified by intensifiers (adverbs) whereas demonstratives, possessives, and quantifiers may not. This test may be applied in KiUru while quantifiers would be distinguished.

	Adjectives	Quantifiers
KiUru	Maembe ang'anyi mnu	Maembe hose* mnu
Gloss	Mangoes big much = so much big mangoes	Mangoes all much = so much *all mangoes

In this regard, quantifiers seem to be like the numerals as they do not take an intensive modifier.

3. Noun phrase Constituents

Following the work done by Givon (2001: 2) and Mwihaki (2007: 26-27) in: (Lusekelo, 2009) there are word categories that appear around the head of a noun phrase in KiUru. These include: demonstratives, possessives, numerals, adjectives, and quantifiers. In KiUru, these categories can be grouped mainly into two groups namely determiners and modifiers.

3.1 Determiners

Determiners occur close to the head in KiUru and they consist of two sets (possessives and demonstratives).

3.1.1 Possessives

In KiUru the possessives take their position immediately after the head noun as they specifically denote the ownership (possession). Example: Kiaru kyako; whereby kiaru = Noun (shoe) and kyako = possessive (my) – my shoe.

3.1.2 Demonstratives

According to Dryer, (2007b), demonstratives play an important role in indicating the location of the referent in relation to the speaker and hearer's position. A good example may be traced from KiUru as follows: Kitima kilya

Chair	that (that chair)
Kitima	ki
Chair	this (this chair)

Definitely, the two sets of determiners, that is, demonstratives and possessives appear to occur in KiUru frequently picking out the entity denoted by the noun. That is to say, in this particular language, the members of the two sets (demonstratives and possessives) may co- occur. It is the item in each set that are internally mutually exclusive meaning that demonstratives may not co-occur, and possessives may not co- occur. Also, no other element can precede the demonstrative or intervene between the demonstrative and the possessive in KiUru. If this happens, then, the construction will be ill formed. The following table provides a clear picture of the well and ill formed determiner patterns in this language.

SN	Noun	Determiners		Gloss
		Dem	Poss	
1	Kite	kilya	kyako	dog of mine that
2	*kite	kyako	kilya	
3	Mana	ulya	oko	child of mine that
4	*mana	oko	ulya	

3.2 Modifiers

In addition to the determiners mentioned before, there are a large number of other closed-system items that may occur either before or after the head of noun phrases. These items are referred to as closed system pre and post modifiers

The term modifiers refer to words that occur beyond determiners in KiUru NPs. These words include: numerals, quantifiers, adjectives, and intensifiers.

3.2.1 Quantifiers

Quantifiers differ from numerals in that they are indefinite and functions to indicate indefiniteness. It is NP prefix that determines the shape of the quantifier' prefix.(Lusekelo, 2009). For instance in a KiUru sentence: *wandu walya woose*, (all those people) the underlined word stands as a quantifier.

3.2.2 Numerals

Numerals in a noun phrase occur to denote a number, an amount, and the like. Example: *wandu walya watanu*. *Those five* . The underlined word is a numeral.

3.2.3 Adjectives

Adjectives describe the quality of nouns

Good	icha/ mcha
Short	fui

However, determiners and modifiers occur in a particular order. For example, as it the case in different Bantu languages, the possessive is strictly fixed immediately after the head word of a noun phrase in KiUru. All other elements follow the possessive and their ordering is considerably free especially the numerals, ordinals, and general quantifiers in the modification of a noun phrase. Let's pay attention to the following data from KiUru:

		1	2	3	4	5
	Noun	Dem.	Poss.	Num.	Ord.	Quant.
a	wandu	walya	wako	watanu	wokwanza	woose
'All those first five people of mine'						
	Noun	Dem.	Poss.	Quant.	Ord.	Num.
b	wandu	walya	wako	woose	wokwanza	watanu
'All those first five people of mine' [general quantifier before ordinal and numerals]						
	Noun	Dem.	Poss.	Num.	Ord.	Quant.
c	wandu	walya	wako	watanu	-	woose
'All those five people of mine'						
	Noun.	Dem.	Poss.	Quant.	Ord.	Num.
d	wandu	walya	wako	woose	wokwanza	-
'All those first people of mine' (general quantifier before ordinal)						
	Noun	Dem.	Poss.	Num.	Ord.	Quant.
e	wandu	walya	wako	-	wokwanza	woose
'All those first people of mine' (ordinal before general quantifier)						
	Noun	Dem.	Poss.	Quant.	Num.	Ord.
f	wandu	walya	wako	woose	watanu	-
'All those five people of mine' (general quantifier before numeral)						
	Noun	Dem.	Poss.	Num.	Ord.	Quant.
g	wandu	walya	wako	-	-	woose
' All those people of mine'						

Like in other Bantu languages, nominal dependents in KiUru are frequently supplied with determiners each / every. An example can be shown from the table below:

	Det	Noun	gloss
KiUru	kilya	kindo	Every thing

4. Summary and Conclusion

From what have been discussed on the analysis of noun phrases in KiUru, one may draw the following conclusion: As far as the dependents of the head of a noun phrase in KiUru are concerned, that is possessives, demonstratives, adjectives, numeral and quantifier, the structure of the noun phrase in KiUru can be presented as follows:

01	0	1	2					3
Pred.	Noun.	Det.	modifier					Post mod.
			a	b	c	d	e	
Dem.		Poss.	Num.	Ord.	Quant.	Adj.	Rel. clause	Inter.
Distr.		Dem.		Ass.				

Note: Number systems and labels used in this work are borrowed from (Rugemalira, 2007: 135 – 148).

List of abbreviations and Labels:

- Pred.pre determiner
- Det.determiner
- Post modpost modifier
- Dem.demonstrative
- Distr.....distributive
- Post Dem.....post demonstrative
- Num.....numeral
- Ord.....ordinal
- Quant.....quantifier
- Adj.....adjective
- Rel. clause.....relative clause
- Inter.....interrogative
- NP.....Noun phrase
- Eg.....example
- Gloss.....glossary
- s. aff.....subject affix
- Obj. aff.....object affix
- Adj. aff.....adjective affix
- poss.....possessive
- Ass.....associative

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