The Role of Discourse in Kihehe Object Marking

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Abstract
The study analyses the role of discourse in Kihehe object marking (henceforth, OM). Specifically, the study focuses on how the discourse features such as animate, definiteness, deictic expression, proper nouns, and titles influences the post verbal NP to occupy the verb object slots. Only secondary data extracted from Kihehe written sources and recorded conversations were used. From the data, it was found that discourse features such as specificity, person, and definiteness are essential in Kihehe OM. However, animate feature does not command OM in Kihehe. Animate NP will be object marked as long as they are definite and specific or can be retrieved from the context. With definite and specific features, even inanimate NPs command object marking. Proper nouns, kingship terms, titles, and person pronouns (first and second) are compulsorily object marked because they have higher rank in the person hierarchy system of object marking.
Keywords: Discourse, Kihehe, Object Marking

1.0 Introduction

One area in which Bantu languages have contributed to the growth of various syntactic theories is grammatical relations. Starting from 1970s, through the influence of Relational Grammar, various studies were conducted on the nature of grammatical relations in a number of Bantu languages notably among these are: Hawkinson and Hyman, (1974); Morolong and Hyman, (1977), and Hyman and Duranti, (1982). The interest in grammatical relations in Bantu languages continued in the 1990s. The focus was on establishing typology of double object constructions leading to the phenomenon of object asymmetry and symmetrical languages (Bresnan & Moshi, 1993; Alsina & Mchombo, 1993). The phenomenon of OM has been recognized as constituting a major challenge for syntactic typology and universal grammar (Plank, 1979). Hyman and Durant, (1982) assert that the major difficulty in Bantu languages arises when it comes to the notion of 'indirect' object. Examine the following examples from Haya.

1.   a). A- ka-h omwana ebitooke
       He-P3-give child bananas
       He gave child banana
     b). A-ka-siig omwana amajuta
       He-P3-smear child oil
       He smeared the child with oil   (Haya; Hyman & Durant, 1982)

Based on the European model of subject and object analysis, the sentences in (1a-b) are said to have a subject *a* 'he/she', a verb *h* 'give', *siig* 'smear' and the following successive nouns after the verb *omwana* 'child' and *ebitoke* 'banana' are treated as indirect object and direct object respectively. In addition, the same could be said in the following sentences that are introduced by extended verbs.

2.   a). A-ka –tum-il   omwana ebitooke
       He-P3-send-app   child   banana
       He sent the   child   banana
     b). A-ka-cumb-il omwana ebitooke
       He-P3-cook-app child banana
       He cooked the child banana   (Haya; Hyman & Durant, 1982)

In the above cases, the two post-verbal nouns *omwana* 'child' and *ebitoke* 'banan', introduced by the applicative extension *–il-*, are also considered as indirect object and direct object respectively. Hyman and Durant (ibid) provide a final situation of object marking in Bantu languages. This is when there is a subject and a sequence of two nouns after the verb which are said to be the result of possessor rising as in (3b). The first NP *omwana* 'child' is referred to as the possessor NP affected by the action of the verb while the second NP *omukono* 'arm' is referred to as possessed NP.

3.   a). A-ka-hend omukono gwa omwana
        He –P3 break   arm   of child
        He broke the arm of the child
     b). A-ka-hend omwaan omukono
       He-P3-break child   arm
       He broke the child's arm   (Haya; Hyman & Durant, 1982)

In sentence (3a), the associative construction indicates that the possessor NP *omwaan* 'the child' is not affected by the action of the verb. It looks like the child did not possess the arm. Nevertheless, in the sentence (3b), after

the possessor rising, the two successive nouns are being treated as the objects. In all six cases of direct and indirect objects explained above, when each of the above nouns is subjected to the three most frequently tests used to test the object in Bantu languages the results were confusing. The test for the object-hood features includes coding properties such as word order, verb agreement and nominal morphology. Givon, (2001) defines them as follows:

    i.   Word order: focuses on the temporal sequential order of the three core arguments of the clauses (subject, object and the verb) vis-a-vis each other.

    ii.   Verb agreement: Refers to the NP's control of pronominal affixes on the verb.

    iii.   Nominal morphology: focuses on the NP's morphological case marking

These properties were applicable only in Haya examples (1a-3a) but not in example (3b). It was observed that the NP 'child' could be subject of passive but not the NP 'arm'; the NP 'child' could form agreement with the verb but not the NP 'arm' Other researchers such as Morimoto, (2002) calls this situation as a Differential Object Marking (DOM), whereby only some direct objects are case marked due to their semantic and pragmatic properties. On the other hand Rugemalira, (1991) explains that, there are no languages, which are purely symmetrical or asymmetrical in Bantu. Even the criteria themselves are not enough reasons to explain why one object is marked over the other. His conclusion came after he subjected the two Bantu languages Kiswahili (asymmetrical) and Runyambo (asymmetrical) into word order test as in the following examples:

    4.   a). A-ka-teec-er-a   Kato ebitoke

          She-PAST-cook-APP-fv Kato banana

          She cooked banana for Kato

      b). *a-ka-teec-er-a ebitoke kato

As is shown in (4), in Runyambo, only one word order was acceptable. The one which puts the human participant before non-human as in (4a) and the reverse order was unacceptable, as in (4b). On the other hand, in Kiswahili, any word order was unacceptable without object marking as shown in (5a and b).

    5.   a). *A-li-pik-i-a   kato ndizi

          She-PAST-cook-APP-FV Kato banana

          She cooked banana for Kato

      b) *A-li-pik-i-a kato ndizi

However, when an object was marked either order is acceptable as indicated in (6a and b) examples.

    6.   a). Ag-li-m-pik-i-a kato ndizi

          She-PAST-OM-cook- APP- FV

          She cooked banana for Kato

      b). A-li-m-pik-i-a ndizi kato

According to Rugemalira, language like Runyambo, which is classified as symmetrical in the sense that both of its post-verbal nouns can be passivised, form an agreement with the verb, and be adjacent to the verb, provides contradictory results on the word order. In addition, Kiswahili, which is regarded as asymmetrical, has free-word order. Given the contradictory results from the two languages, Rugemalira (1991:208) argues:

> Language could not be neatly classified as either symmetrical or asymmetrical…. languages have vested interest in keeping a degree of inequality among the arguments to facilitate interpretation. Hence, there is no such thing as asymmetrical languages.

Therefore Rugemalira, (1991) together with Hyman and Durant, (1982) suggested that there are number of other strategies that can be used to differentiate arguments of the verb. The three tests (word order, adjacency and object marking) do not work alone. There is an interaction between them and other semantic strategies such as animate, number, person, definiteness and semantic roles. Therefore, this study presents how discourse plays role in Kihehe object marking; a Bantu language spoken in South-West highlands of Tanzania.

2.0 Literature Review
2.1. Discourse Features and Object Marking

The situation of marking one object "direct object" over the other has been extensively documented in Bantu languages. This is because the syntax of object marking in Bantu language has been associated with the object with more many features among them being prominence features of definiteness and animacy as presented in the following level:

Animacy Scale: Human > Animate > Inanimate

Definiteness Hierarchy: Proper name > Pronoun > Definite NP>Indefinite>Specific NP > Non-specific NP

                            (Swahili; Riedel, 2009)

Person: 1st person> 2nd person > 3rd person

Number: singular > plural

                         (Runyambo; Rugemalira, 1991)

Moreover, Mkude, (2005) presents the extended hierarchy of animacy and definiteness for all Bantu languages as follows:

> First person pronoun > Second person pronoun > Third person pronoun > Proper noun > Definite human > Definite animate > Indefinite human > animate > Definite animate > Indefinite animate (Bantu; Mkude, 2005).

However, the application of these features in object marking varies across Bantu languages. For example, Woolford, (2001) explains that in Ruwundi, no single feature is sufficient to trigger object agreement. Instead, object agreement occurs when an object has any one of four different combinations of features: [+ animate, + specific], [+ specific, + focus], [+ animate, + goal], or [+ animate, + Benefactive / malefactive]. In Kiswahili, discourse features such as information status, animacy, definiteness and full noun phrase may or may not influence object marking. According to Seidl and Dimitriadis, (1997), in Kiswahili, basing on informational status, Brand, and Inferable Entities (hearer old "already known to the hearer") are rarely or never object marked, while Unused and Evoked (hearer new) entities are object marked; animate objects were not marked when they are brand new, but when evoked whilst inanimate object were not marked even when they are evoked; in definiteness, evoked object (definite) were object marked.

Generally, there are a lot of studies focusing on the role of discourse in object marking across Bantu languages such as Kinyakyusa, (Lusekelo, 2012); Giha, (Philpo, 2012); Runyambo, (Rugemalira 1991); Sesotho, (Hyman and Morolong 1977); Kiswahili and Sambaa (Riedel 2009); Kiluguru, Marten and Ramadhani (2002); and Woolford (1999), among others. Given limited space, we cannot analyse each study in detail. However, the role of discourse features in object marking has been providing intriguing results across Bantu languages. It is the aim of this study to discuss how the discourse features play role in the object marking in Kihehe.

3.0 Methodology
Bowern, (2008) proposes that field linguists should not rely much on the natural elicited data. A comprehensive description of the language should also rely on the spontaneously produced speech. Thus to analyse the role of discourse in Kihehe object marking, Kihehe narratives, which were recorded without the researcher being a participant or observer, along with Kihehe text such as "Tukumwiwuka Uyuva vetu Telesa" (We are remembering our Mother Teresa), and other written short stories were used. Descriptively, data were analysed and recorded text were transcribed accordingly. After transcription, data were pre-coded and coded. According to Dornyei (2011), pre-coding involves reading and re-reading transcript, reflecting on them and noting down our thought. Coding involves reading the texts and highlighting all the verbs relevant to object marking. Using verb fragmentation (morphological parsing) and coding methods, verb complex structures were broken down into fragments to separate the pre-stem and post-stem affixes from their roots. Then, morphemes were coded with labels and their meanings were given accurately with the functions they denote.

4.0 Findings and Discussion
4.1 The Role of Discourse in Kihehe OM
According to Mkude (2005), language behaviour is a communicative process. It takes place in a given place, between individuals and about a given topic, which involves people and objects. Hence, the structure of the communication will reflect the relative prominence of all the participating noun phrases including the interlocutors themselves. One of the factors which trigger agreement in many Bantu languages is animacy. Object marking is often said to be restricted to the objects with animacy features. That is, a noun with high animacy features is more likely to occupy the object position. However, from the data collected, the following patterns were observed, +**animate, -OM + full NP.**

1. a). Ku-ly-a vanu
     To-eat-FV people
     To eat people
   b). U-ku-wulag-a avanu
     Aug-to-kill-FV
     To kill the people
   c). N-ga-teg-w-e umunu
     SM-past-take-PAS-perf person
      I took a person
   d). I-wulag-a umwanakwe
    He-kill-FV his child
    He kills his child

From the examples (7a-d), we have mono-transitive verbs followed by the animate object NP but the NP is not cliticised in the verb. Also, consider the sentence patterns in (8a-c) where we have +**animate + OM -full NP.**

Sentences	Noun associated with the OM

8   a). U-ku-**mu**-ninil-a   kwikungu mkwamisi   *boy*
       Aug-cl14-2OM-hunt-FV 17loc-forest
       To hunt him in the forest
     b). Ye pe-a-**ga**-ven-e   ga-kusa makongo   *beasts*
       That when SM-OM-see-perf cl.20come
       When he saw them coming
     c). A-**mu**-wul-ige   swe a-ku-**m**-tag-a kwihala mwana   *child*
       SM-OM-kill-perf then SM-cl14-OM-throw-FV cl17-bush
       He killed him then he threw him to the bush

The instances described in (8a-c), animate NPs are cliticised but there is no co-concurrence between the noun and the object clitic but the nouns cliticised were mentioned somewhere in the story. This is contrary to what we saw in the examples (7a-d) where despite the presence of post-verbal animate NPs, still the nouns were not cliticised into the verb. This means that, in Kihehe, the criterion of being animate especially human is not enough for the noun to occupy the object position in the verb templates. In addition, the noun should be **definite** and **specific** as in (8a-c). Further indication of how definiteness and specificity are important features for object marking in Kihehe can be seen from the examples in (9a-b), where the inanimate NPs occupy the object position simply because they are definite and specific. Therefore, we have sentence patterns of **-animate + OM -full NP.**

9.   a). Ga-ku-**ki**-won-a
       Cl20SM-cl.14-7OM-see-fv
       They see it
     b). Si-ndi-**yi**-sel-e
       Neg-SM-OM-know
       I do not know it

The examples in (9a-b) provide more evidence to the reason that animate in Kihehe is not a solitary factor that powers object marking. Even inanimate NP can be object marked as long as they are definite and specific. That is to say, both animate and inanimate nouns have higher access to the verb object position when they are definite and specific than when they are indefinite and unspecific. More examples of definite and specific animate and inanimate NPs with their appropriate object markers are shown in examples (10a-b).

10.   a). A-ku-**m**-longel-ag-a   u-dade
       SM-cl.14-1OM-tell-perf-FV his-father
       He told his father
     b). A-ku-**si**-lek-a   i-senga
       SM-cl.14-9om-leave-FV aug-cl9 cow
       He left the cows

To the contrary, there were some verbs with the structure of **+animate, +NP, -OM** (11a and b) in their post-verbal position and NP were not object marked even though they were animate NP. This means that, in Kihehe, animate objects are not object marked as long as they are indefinite and non-specific

11.   a). Ku-wulag-a avanu
       Cl.14-kill Aug-cl2 people
       To kill people
     b). Ku-ly-a avanu
       Cl.14-eat-FV aug.cl2people
       To eat people

4.2 The Use of Deictic Expression

When a referring expression is definite, the speaker assumes that the referent can be addressee using the following four reasons can identify the referent.

i.   The speaker assumes that the hearer can identify the referent from the physical-social context form of deictic
ii.   The speaker assumes that the addressee can make the necessary implicature to relate a new reference to a previous one.
iii. The reference is fixed and therefore presumably part of the addressee's general knowledge. A referring expression with fixed reference is always definite.
iv.   The referent has a unique or nearly unique position in the more limited world of the speaker and addressee. Referring expressions like these are much the same as names. Names like *Richard* and *Barbara* are definite and specific as referring expressions (Kreidler, 2002)

Some of these factors, such as factor in (i) (ii) and (iv) above are largely used in Kihehe to mark definiteness and hence object marking. In Kihehe, the use of deictic expressions to mark definiteness involves the use of demonstrative expression such as *uyu* 'this' *uyo* 'that' and *yula* 'that.'

N.B The demonstrative pronoun *uyu* 'this' refers to the things that are close to the speaker; *uyo* 'that' refers to the things that are close to the hearer but far from the speaker and *yula* 'that' refers to the things that are removed from both the speaker and the hearer.

In the sentence where these deictic expressions are used, the NPs occupy the object position as exemplified below.

12. a). Va-ku-**mw**-ogop-a   uyu
         Sm-cl14-om-fear-fv   Aug-this
         They are afraid of this old person

     b). A-Ø-**mu**-ege-e   u-mu-nginetu yu-la
         SM-past-OM-carry-perf aug-cl1-mother-our cl.1that
         He carried that mother of ours

     c). I-n-yumba   yi-la   a-Ø-**yi**-fung-w-e
         Aug-cl9-house cl9-that SM-past-OM-open-PASS-Perf
         He opened that house.

     d). A-Ø-**mu**-kemel-e   mwilmbo yu-la
         She-past-OM-call-perf cl.1boy cl.1that
         She called that boy

From the examples above, we see that demonstrative pronouns are placed before or after the nouns that they modify and give definite reading that lead to object marking.

4.3 Proper Nouns and Titles

In some bantu languages object marking becomes mandatory for the inherently definite proper nouns, kingship terms and titles, and dropping the object marker makes the sentence become ungrammatical (for example, Riedel, 2009 in Sambaa, Lusekelo, 2012 in Kinyakyusa). Similarly, in Kihehe proper nouns, kinship terms and titles are obligatorily object marked. When the object markers are dropped they result into ungrammatical sentences as in (77b, 78b, and 79b).

13. a). A-**mu**-lal-ike   uyuve vetu Telesa
         SM-OM-invite-perf our mother Teresa
         He invited (her) our mother Teresa

     b). *A-lal-ike uyuve vetu Telesa
          SM-invite-perf our mother Teresa
          He invited (her) our mother Telesa

14. a). Ku-**yi**-kagul-a   Nguluvi
         Cl14-OM-know Jesus
         To know Jesus

     b). *Ku-kagul-a nguluvi
          Cl14-know Jesus
          To know Jesus

15. a). A-ku-**mu**-wus-a   umvina   va-tambule Waziri Mkuu
         He-cl.14-OM-ask-FV aug-cl1-elder cl2.call   prime minister
         He asks (him) an elder person they call prime minister

     b). *A-ku-wus-a u-m-vina va-tambule   Waziri Mkuu
          He-cl.14-OM-ask-FV aug-cl1-elder cl2.call   prime minister
          He asks (him) an elder person they call Prime Minister

In speech situation and in written narrative the interlocutors, addressors and addressees who are presented using first and second person pronouns, must be object marked.

16. a). U-ndi-hom-a myago
         You-OM-hit-FV sm-fellow
         You will hit me, your fellow

     b). *U-hom-a   myago
          You-hit-FV SM-fellow
          You will hit me, your fellow

17. a). Nde ndi-**ku**-home
         If 1st SM- OM-hit-perf
         If I hit you

     b). *Nde ndi-home
          If 1st SM-hit-perf
          If I hit you

Therefore, *-ndi-* "I" and *–ku-* "you" personal pronouns trigger an object marker in the verb template. When they

are dropped as in the sentences (16b & 17b), the sentences become ungrammatical.

5.0 Conclusion

This paper analysed the role of discourse in Kihehe object marking. The findings indicate that, being an animate NP does not licence object marking. The animate nouns have to be definite, specific, or previously mentioned for them to occupy the verb object position. Failure to have those features, they will not be marked. On that note, even inanimate nouns trigger object marking provided that they are definite, specific, or previously mentioned. Besides, animate and inanimate nouns which give definite reading by deictic expressions are also object marked. However, object marking is mandatory with proper nouns, titles as well as interlocutors, addressor and addressee, marked by the first and second person pronouns.

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