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The Structure of a Noun Phrase in Shimwela

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Abstract

It is generally agreed that Bantu languages display a high degree of uniformity in terms of the types of elements which constitute a noun phrase, with such elements as demonstratives, distributives, possessives, intensifiers, interrogatives, numerals, quantifiers, adjectives, relative constructions and associative constructions being robust across the Bantu zone. However, the syntactic behaviour displayed by these noun dependents in different Bantu languages is not the same as there are significant variations in terms of their order, flexibility, and co-occurrence and recurrence restrictions. This paper analyses the syntactic behaviour of noun dependents in Shimwela (P.22), a Bantu language of southern Tanzania, by looking into their order of occurrence, their co-occurrence and recurrence restrictions as well as their saturation point.

Key words: *noun phrase*, *noun dependent*, *Bantu languages*, *Shimwela*

Introduction

Noun phrases in Bantu languages have been widely studied with different approaches, focuses and theoretical grounds (see Dembetembe, 1988; Mugane, 1998; Ndomba, 2006; Rugemalira, 2007; Iribemwangi & Kihara, 2011; Magashi, 2008; Lusekelo, 2009). What is commonly revealed by these scholars is that there is a similarity in the types of elements which make up noun phrase across the Bantu zone, which include demonstratives, distributives, possessives, intensifiers, interrogatives, numerals, quantifiers, adjectives, relative constructions and associative constructions. Despite this similarity in the type of dependents, Bantu languages display significant diversity in terms of syntactic behavior displayed by these noun[1] dependents, particularly in their order of occurrence

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[1] The following abbreviations are used in this paper: 1SG=1st Person Singular; 1PL=1st Person Plural; 2SG=2nd Person Singular; 2PL=2nd Person Plural; 3SG=3rd Person Singular; 3PL=3rd Person Plural; ADJ=Adjective; ASS.=Associative; DEM=Demonstrative; DET=Determiner; DISTR=Distributive; FV=Final Vowel; INF=Infinitive; INT=Intensifier; INTER=Interrogative; N=Noun; NCP=Noun Class Prefix; NP=Noun Phrase; NUM=Numeral; ORD=Ordinal; PASS=Passive; PERF=Perfective; POSS=Possessive; PRED=Pre-determiner; PRES=Present Tense; PROG=Progressive; QUANT=Quantifier; REL=Relative; SM=Subject Marker.

within the NP, and their co-occurrence and recurrence restrictions. This paper considers these variations as a point of departure, and addresses two questions in relation to the syntactic behavior of noun dependents in Shimwela: i) What is the order of occurrence of noun dependents in a Shimwela NP? ii) What are the co-occurrence and recurrence restrictions of noun dependents in Shimwela NPs? iii) What is the saturation point in the stacking of dependents in a Shimwela NP?

Methodology

Data for this paper were collected through a questionnaire, from a sample of four informants in Namupa village, in Lindi. The questionnaire had 137 constructions which were written in Kiswahili with their English translations. Copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the four informants, who were asked to provide the Shimwela equivalents of each Kiswahili and English construction written in the questionnaire. Where translation was not possible, or would result in ungrammatical structure in Shimwela, the informants were asked to provide some alternative constructions capturing the meaning intended by the English and Kiswahili constructions.

Criteria for Categorization of Noun Dependents

In establishing the types of elements that can become noun dependents in a noun phrase, Rugemalira (2007) proposed three criteria to be considered, namely the morphological criterion, the syntactic criterion, and the semantic criterion.

The morphological criterion focuses on the type of agreement affix that a given set of dependents takes. Different types of noun dependents take different sets of agreement affixes. The agreement affixes for adjectives, for example, are different from those taken by demonstratives. So, the agreement pattern of a given word provides a clue for its categorization within a noun phrase. However, due to some overlaps across categories, the morphological criterion cannot be relied upon solely.

The syntactic criterion looks at positioning and co-occurrence of elements within an NP. If two elements cannot co-occur in an NP, we may posit that the two elements occupy the same syntactic position and the language in question does not allow stacking of such elements. This may provide a ground for considering such elements

as belonging to the same syntactic category. This is evident in Shimwela examples 1-4 where the stacking of some elements results in ill-formed constructions:

(1) **ashi ashila shi-téengu shi-la* *'this that chair' (demonstratives)
(2) **n-gunda gwáa-ngu gwá-bho* *'my his/her farm' (possessives)
(3) **bhaa-ndu bhá-bhájínji bhówe* *all many people' (quantifiers)
(4) **mi-kóongo ji- bhili nsheshe**'two four trees' (numerals)

Therefore, the fact that these elements cannot co-occur in an NP provides the basis for grouping them in the same syntactic categories.

However, there are few cases where elements of the same category can co-occur because stacking is permitted. In such cases co-occurrence cannot be relied upon as a signal of category membership. Adjectives provide a good example of such elements as shown below:

(5) *mbui* *yá-í-shókó* *yá-náapi*
10-goats ASS-10-small 10-black
'Small black goats'

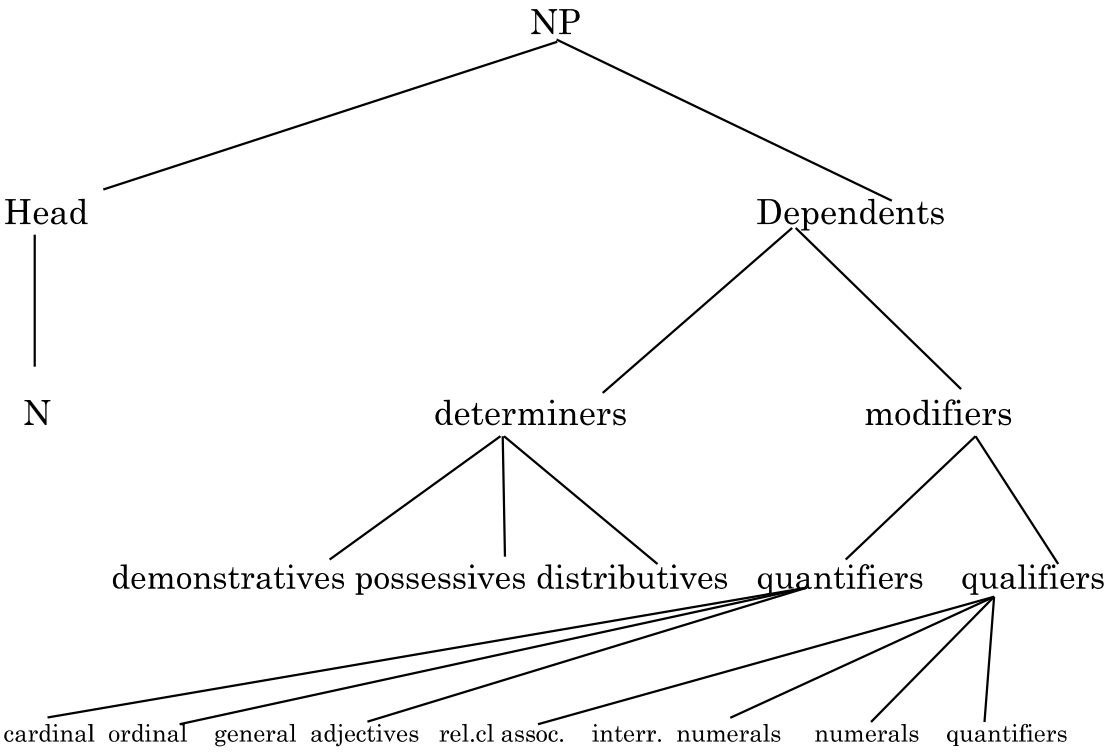
However, as Rugemalira and Phanuel (2012) observe, even in cases like the above where the adjectives seem to co-occur, there are clues of category membership since the adjectives belong to different subcategories: *ishoko* 'small' belongs to the category of general adjectives, while *yanaapi* 'black' belongs to the category of colour adjectives.

The semantic criterion focuses on the compatibility/non-compatibility of semantic features of elements in question. Even in cases where stacking is permitted, two elements with non-compatible semantic features cannot co-occur, as they will lead to semantically ill-formed constructions such as 'a red white book', and 'a tall short boy'. In example 6 below, the Shimwela construction is ill-formed due to stacking of adjectives which convey incompatible semantic features, 'big' and 'small'.

(6) **n- kóongo* ***gwá- n- kúlúngwa*** ***gwá- n- shóoko*** *u- gw- íle* 3-tree ASS- 3- big ASS- 3- small 3SM- fall- PERF
*'A big small tree has fallen.'

Shimwela Noun Dependents

Basing on the morphological, syntactic and semantic properties of words outlined in the foregoing section, two major categories of words have been identified as noun dependents in Shimwela NPs, namely determiners and modifiers. Determiners include demonstratives, possessives and distributives. Modifiers encompass two sub-categories: quantifiers and qualifiers. Quantifiers include cardinal numerals, ordinal numerals and general quantifiers (many, all), while qualifiers include adjectives, associative phrases, relative clauses as well as interrogatives. This categorization is summarized in the tree diagram on the next page.



Determiners

Determiners pick out the entity denoted by the head noun. In Shimwela, there are three categories of dependents which play the role of determiners, namely demonstratives, possessives and distributives. These are described below.

Demonstratives

Demonstratives occur before the head of an NP and like in other Bantu languages, they agree with the head noun by taking the agreement affix. All demonstratives take the initial vowel */a/*. Demonstratives in Shimwela perform two important functions. The first function is to show proximity and remoteness, and the second is to show definiteness.

A Demonstrative as a Marker of Proximity and Remoteness

When used to show proximity and remoteness, Shimwela demonstratives follow a three-order system of referring to objects, as they are found in three sets, namely proximal demonstratives, non-proximal demonstratives and distal demonstratives. Proximal demonstratives are used for referents that are close to the speaker. They take the form of initial vowel */a/* + ROOT + FV, as shown in example 7(a). The final vowel of a proximal demonstrative changes in response to deixis and noun class of the referent. Non-proximal demonstratives are used for referents which are close to the addressee. These take the form of initial vowel */a/* + ROOT + */o/* as in example 7(b) below. Distal demonstratives are used to show that something is far from both the speaker and the addressee. The form of this set of demonstratives is initial vowel */a/* + ROOT + *la.* This is shown in example 7(c).

(7) (a) ***aju*** *mw-áánâ* ***ju***
DEM 1-child DEM
'This child'

(b) ***ajo*** *mw-áánâ* ***jo***
DEM 1-child DEM
'That child'

(c) ***ajula*** *mw-áána* ***jula***
DEM 1-child DEM
'That child'

As evident in the above examples, in Shimwela NPs, demonstratives occur simultaneously in both pre-head and post-head positions, sandwiching the head noun. Although both demonstratives surrounding the head noun have the same grammatical status, the post-head demonstrative is phonologically reduced as it drops the initial vowel.

The simultaneous occurrence of demonstratives illustrated above raises questions regarding the canonical syntactic position of

demonstrative in Shimwela, whether pre-head or post-head. This question can easily be tackled by employing a deletion test as shown in example 8.

(8) (a) ***aji*** *mi-kóongo* ***ji***
DEM 4-tree DEM
'These trees'

(b) *mi-kóongo* ***ji***
4-tree DEM
'These trees'

(c) ****aji*** *mi-kóongo*
DEM 4-tree
'These trees'

(9) (a) ***ajula*** *mw-áana* *jwá- n-shóoko* ***jula***
DEM 1-child ASS-1-small DEM
'That small child'

(b) *mw-áana* *jwá- n-shóoko* ***jula***
1-child ASS-1-small DEM
'That small child'

(c) ****ajula*** *mw-áana* *jwá- n-shóoko*
DEM 1-child ASS-1-small
'That small child'

The foregoing examples show that the pre-head demonstrative can be left out without affecting the grammaticality of a sentence as in 8(b) and 9(b). On the other hand, when the post-head demonstrative is left out, the sentence becomes ungrammatical, as in 8(c) and 9(c). These examples all together point to a conclusion that the post-head demonstrative is obligatory and that the post-head slot is the canonical position of demonstratives in Shimwela.

A Demonstrative as a Marker of Definiteness

As regards definiteness, Shimwela demonstratives can be used to show that both the speaker and the addressee have prior information about the object being mentioned even if it is not within the range of their visibility. Demonstratives used in this way are called *anaphoric*

demonstratives (Petzell, 2008). This is possible with the distal demonstratives, as shown in example 10.

(10) ***ajula*** *mw-ááná* *jwá-n-shóoko* ***jula***
DEM 1-child ASS- 1-small DEM
'That small child (we talked about)'

When used to show definiteness, the pre-head demonstrative may be left out but the post-head demonstrative must remain as shown in 11 below:

(11) *mw-ááná* *jwá-n-shóoko* ***jula***
1-child ASS- 1- small DEM
'That small child (we talked about)'

Distributive

Only one word has been noted to play the distributive function in Shimwela NP. This is the word *kila* 'each/every'. Like determiners, the distributive occurs before the head noun and the two i.e. determiner and distributive, cannot co-occur. Example 12 below presents an NP with a distributive.

(12) ***kilá*** *mu-undu* *a-ish-é* *na* *aká-gwé*
DISTR 1-person SM-arrive-PST and wife-his
'Each person came with his wife.'

Possessives

In Shimwela, possessives occur immediately after the head noun and they agree with the head nouns. Table 1 below presents Shimwela possessives and examples 13-16 present NPs containing them:

Table 1: Shimwela Possessives

Person	Possessive stem	Gloss
1SG	-*angu*	'my'
1PL	-*etu*	'our'
2SG	-*ako*	'your'
2PL	-*enu*	'your'
3SG	-*ao*	'his/her/its'
3PL	-*ao*	'their'

(13) *shi-máje* ***sh-angu*** *shá* *n-kóongo*
7-knife 7-my 7-of 3-tree
'My wooden knife'

(14) *i-máje* ***y-etu*** *i-náa-tema*
8-knife 8-our 8-Prog-cut
'Our knives are sharp'.

(15) *ajula muu-ndu* ***jw-áko*** *a-kúngúluka* *jula* *a-ishe*
DEM 1-person 1-your 1SM-talk DEM 1SM-come.Perf
'That person of yours who is talkative has come.'

(16) *ma-jela* ***gáo*** *gá-má-kúlúngwa* *ga-shi-témeka*
6-hoe their ASS-6-big SM-PERF-break
'Their big hoes have been broken.'

Modifiers

Modifiers introduce additional properties to the noun that has been picked. These may be divided into two groups. The first group constitutes *quantifiers* and the second includes *qualifiers*. Quantifiers include cardinal numerals, ordinal numerals and general quantifiers (*many*, *all*), while qualifiers include such elements as adjectives, associative (connective) phrases and relative clauses. Below is a description of each of these elements.

Cardinal Numerals

The counting system in Shimwela has base five. Counting from 5 to nine is done by adding the exceeding number to five. Most southern Tanzanian languages such as Chiyao, Kimakonde and Kimakua reflect this phenomenon. Numeral stems for numbers 1-3 take noun class prefixes (NCPs) of the nouns they modify, while those for numbers 4-9 do not take NCPs. That is to say, there is noun-adjective agreement for numbers 1-3, but there is no such agreement beyond number 3 except for number 10 which takes the class 5 prefix *li-,* and which is considered a noun, since it can inflect to produce plural forms by taking a class 6 prefix *ma-*. The basic numerals include the following:

(17)

1	*-mo*
2	*-bhili*
3	*-tatu*
4	*nsheshe*
5	*nng'aáno*

Example 18 below presents the Shimwela numeral agreement patterns for noun classes 1 and 2 for numbers 1 through 10 and 20.

(18)

1	*muundu júmo*	'one person'
2	*bhaandu bhábhili*	'two persons'
3	*bhaandu bhátatu*	'three persons'
4	*bhaandú nsheshe*	'four persons'
5	*bhaandú nng'aano*	'five persons'
6	*bhaandú nng'aano ná jumo*	'six persons'
7	*bhaandú nng'aano ná bhábhili*	'seven persons'
8	*bhaandú nng'aano ná bhátatu*	'eight persons'
9	*bhaandú nng'aano ná nsheshe*	'nine persons'
10	*bhaandu likúmí limo*	'ten persons'
20	*bhaandu makúmí gábhili*	'twenty persons'

It is interesting to note that some cardinal numerals do not take the noun class prefixes of the nouns they quantify. These include *nng'aano* 'five', *nsheshe* 'four' which take class 9/10 prefix and *likúmi* 'ten' which takes class 5 prefix and forms its plural from class 6 *makúmi* 'tens'.

When used to express frequency of occurrence of a certain activity, the cardinal numerals are marked with a class 16 locative prefix *pa-*, as shown in the following example:

(19)

pamo	'once'
pabhili	'twice'
patatu	'thrice'
pansheshe	'four times'
panng'aano	'five times'

Ordinal Numerals

Ordinal numerals in Shimwela are derived from cardinal numerals by using the associative marker *a-*. However, the words for 'first' *-átái* and 'last' *-ámpélébhéshéyo* are distinct in that although they use the associative marker, they are not derived from cardinal numerals.

These can be regarded as exceptional to the rule. The list of ordinal numerals in Shimwela is as follows:

(20)

-átái	'1st'
-ábhíli	'2nd'
-átátu	'3rd'
-ánshéshe	'4th'
-ánng'aano	'5th'
-ámpélébhéshéyo	'last'

In counting, the ordinals commonly occur with the associative marker *–a*, as in the following examples:

(21) *muu-ndu* ***jwá*** ***ntái***
1-person ASS first
'The first person'

(22) *mwaáli* ***jwá*** ***mpélébhéshéyo***
1-girl ASS last
'The last girl'

(23) *li- kája* ***lyá*** ***nshéshe***
5-village ASS four
'The fourth village'

Quantifiers

While numerals indicate the actual number of a noun, quantifiers are distinct in that they do not show the actual number of the nouns they modify. They function to indicate indefiniteness (Lusekelo, 2009). Words which function as noun quantifiers in Shimwela include the following:

(24)

-owe	'all'
-jínji	'many'
-shóoko	'few'
-ána	'other'
pe	'only'

With the exception of *pe* 'only', which takes a zero prefix, all other quantifiers copy the prefix of the nouns they quantify, as shown in examples 25-29.

(25) *bhá́á-ná* ***bhówé***
2-children 2-all
'All children

(26) *bhaa-ndu* ***bhá- jínji***
2-people 2- many
'Many people'

(27) *bhaa-ndu* ***bhá-ana***
2-people 2-other
'Other people'

(28) *bhaa-ndu* ***bhá-shóoko***
2-people 2-few
'Few people'

(29) *bhaa-ndu* *bhá-ngu* ***pe***
2-people 2-my only
'My people only'

Adjectives

Adjectives describe the quality of nouns. They provide information about the noun's dimension, physical property, colour, behaviour, value, speed, age etc. Most Bantu languages have just a few underived adjectives (Petzell, 2008; Rugemalira, 2008). This is because properties that are expressed by adjectives in other language families can be expressed by other word categories in Bantu languages such as verbs and associative constructions. As a Bantu language, Shimwela reflects this phenomenon. The following adjective stems are attested in Shimwela.

(30) *-ámbóone* 'good'
-shóoko 'small'
-kúlúungwa 'big'
-ánáapi 'black'
-átémá 'sharp'
-péényá 'beautiful'
-léeu 'long'

In Shimwela, all adjectives follow the nouns they qualify and they have to agree with the head noun by taking the noun class prefix (NCP) of the nouns they qualify. Unlike in other Bantu languages, where the NCP of the modified noun occurs first in the adjective, in Shimwela the NCP occurs after the associative followed by the

adjective stem. The template of a Shimwela adjective is therefore ASS + NCP + STEM. This is evident in the following examples:

(31) *m-kóngo* ***gwá-*** ***n-*** ***kúlúungwa***
3-tree ASS- NCP- big
'A big tree'

(32) *mw-áná* ***jwá-*** ***n-*** ***shóko***
1-child ASS- NCP small
'A small child'

One of the distinguishing characteristics of adjectives is that they can be intensified. Shimwela adjectives are intensified by the word *kajekaje* 'very', which occurs immediately after the adjective it intensifies, as shown in the following examples:

(33) *bhaa-ndu* *bhá-bhájinji* ***kajekaje*** *bha-w-il-enje*
2-people 2-many very 2-die-PERF- PL
'So many people died'.

(34) *li-kája* *lyá-lí-kúlúngwa* ***kajekaje*** *ly-éetu*
5-village ASS-5-big very 5-ours
'The largest village is ours.'

Associative Constructions

The associative construction conjoins elements within the NP. In Shimwela, the associative phrase uses the associative marker *–a*. The associative marker has also been referred to as *connective* (Meeusen, 1967 cited in Petzel, 2008), *genitival marker*, or *–a- binder* (Loogman, 1965 cited in Petzel, ibid). The associative construction agrees with the head noun by taking the agreement class prefix (ACP). The associative construction can be used with several other elements such as ordinal numerals (example 35), locative constructions (example 36), adjective constructions (example 37), as well as possessives (example 38).

(35) *muu-ndu* ***jwá*** *ntái*
1-person ASS first
'The first person'

(36) *n-kóongo* ***gwá*** *kú-n-guunda*
9-tree ASS 17-3-farm
'Farm tree'

(37) *shi-máje* ***shá*** *shi* *shóoko*
7-knife ASS 7- small
'A small knife'

(38) *lu-kóongono* ***lwá*** *angu*
11-leg ASS my
'My leg'

Relative Clauses

In Shimwela, a relative clause is overtly marked by using a relativiser which takes the shape of a noun class prefix (NCP). The relative clause is then followed by a demonstrative which occurs before the main verb. The demonstrative helps to restrict the information provided by the relative construction to the noun being modified. Below are some examples.

(39) *mbúí* ***yá****-tólw-eeshé* ***ila*** *i-won-éshe*
10-goat REL-escape-PST DEM SM-find-PASS
'Those goats that escaped have been found.'

(40) *ainá* *bhenu* ***bhá****-ishé* ***bha*** *bha-pinga* *kú-ku-tóla*
1a-father your REL- come DEM SM-want INF-OM-take
'This father of yours who has come wants to take you away.'

(41) *bhaa-ndu* *bhá-tatu* ***bha****-ík-éngé-ne* ***bhala*** *bha-guja*
2-people 2-three REL-arrive-PERF-PL DEM 2-good
'Those three people who have come are good.'

As the foregoing examples illustrate, the position of the demonstrative accompanying a relative clause is strictly immediately before the verb, and not otherwise. Placing the demonstrative immediately after the head noun is not permitted as shown in the examples below:

(42) **mbúí* ***ila*** ***yá****-tólw-eeshé* *i-won-éshe*
10-goat DEM REL-escape-PST SM-find-PASS
'Those goats that escaped have been found.'

(43) **ainá* ***bha*** *bhenu* ***bhá****-ishé* *bha-pinga* *kú-ku-tóla*
1a-father DEM your REL- come SM-want INF-OM-take
'This father of yours who has come wants to take you away.'

(44) **bhaa-ndu* ***bhala*** *bhá-tatu* ***bha****-ík-éngé-ne* *bha-guja*
2-people DEM 2-three REL-arrive-PERF-PL 2-good
'Those three people who have come are good.'

Interrogative Words
The interrogative word seeks further specification of the head noun. The list of interrogative words in Shimwela is as follows:

(45) *gani* 'who'
shakani 'when'
indí 'what'
indyashí 'why'
-lííngwá 'how many'
kwaapí 'where'

These can be exemplified in 45 and 46 below:

(46) *bhaa-ndu* *bhá-lííngwá?*
2-people 2-how many
'How many people?'

(47) *muu-ndu* *gání?*
1-person who?
Which person? (who?)

Order of Elements in Shimwela Noun Phrase
In Shimwela, a noun phrase can constitute one or several dependents. When more than one dependents team up in a single NP, they do not occur randomly but they follow a certain order. Below are some possible combinations and their orders.

Order of Two Dependents
Two dependents belonging to different categories can modify an NP. Possible combinations of two dependents which have been attested in Shimwela include the following:

(48) Noun + possessive + adjective
mbaaká ***jw-angu*** ***jw-anáapi***
9.cat 9-my 9-small
'My black cat /the black cat of mine'

(49) Noun + possessive + numeral
bh-ana ***bh-ángu*** ***bh-átatu***
2-children 2-my 2-three
'My three children'

(50) Noun + possessive + demonstrative
mbuyi ***jw-étu*** ***ajulá***
9.goat 9-our that
'That goat of ours'

(51) Noun + numeral + adjective
mbwá ***í-tatu*** ***ya-náapi***
9.dog 9-three 9-black
'Three black dogs'

(52) Noun + adjective + numeral
m-kongo ***gwa-m-kúlúngwa*** ***gu-mo***
3-tree ASS-3-big 3-one
'One big tree'

(53) Noun + adjective + demonstrative
mw-ana ***jwá-n-shóko*** ***jula***
1-child ASS-1-small that
'That small child'

(54) Noun + numeral + demonstrative
bha-shanda ***nsheshe*** ***vala***
2-boy four those
'Those four boys'

In the above patterns, some of the orders are strict while others allow exchanging of positions. For example, the order illustrated in 51 (noun + numeral + adjective) is flexible as the dependents numeral and adjective can swap positions, resulting in the order (noun + adjective + numeral) as shown in 52. The rest of the orders illustrated above are fixed in the since that any attempt to change the position of dependents will result in ungrammatical forms.

Order of Three Dependents

Possible combinations of three noun dependents in a Shimwela NP include the following:

(55) Noun + numeral + relative + demonstrative
bha-ndu ***bhá-tatu*** ***bha-íkéngéne*** ***bhalá***
2-person 2-three Rel-come. PERF those
'Those three people who have come'

(56) Noun + possessive + numeral + adjective
mw-aana ***jw-ángu*** ***jumo*** ***jwá-n-shóoko***
1-child 1-my one ASS-1-small
'One small child of mine'

(57) Noun + possessive + adjective + demonstrative
li-jela ***ly-áko*** ***ly-ámbóone*** ***lila***
5-hoe 5- your 5-good that
'That good hoe of yours'

Like in the order of two dependents, some dependents in the order of two dependents are fixed while others are mobile. For example, as is evident in examples 56 and 57 above, the possessive, must occur closer to the head, preceding all other dependents. When the possessive is placed in a different position, the phrase becomes ill-formed as illustrated below:

(58) **mw-ááná* ***jumo*** ***jw-áangu*** *jwá-n-shóoko a-shi-óbha*
1-child one 1-my ASS-1-small SM-PRES- get lost
*'One small child of mine is missing.'

(59) **mw-ááná* ***jwá-n-shóoko*** ***jw-angu*** ***júmo*** *a-shi-óbha*
1-child 1-small 1-my one
SM-PRES-get lost
*'One small child of mine is missing.'

The fact that the demonstrative occupies a fixed position contrasts with the numeral, which as exemplified in 60 below, can either precede (60a) or follow the adjective (60b).

(60) (a) *mw-ááná* ***jw-ángu jumo jwá-n-shóoko*** *a-shi-óbha*
1-child 1-my one ASS-1-small SM-PRES-get lost
'One small child of mine is missing.'

(b) *mw-ááná* ***jw-ángu jwá-n-shóoko jumo*** *a-shi-óbha*
1-child 1-my ASS-1-small one SM-PRES-get lost
'One small child of mine is missing.'

Order of Four Dependents

In a Shimwela NP with four dependents, there are four possible orders. These four orders are basically caused by the flexibility of the relative clause which, in this language, can be placed before the adjective or at any position other than the end of an NP. Table 2 below illustrates the four possible orders, with the relative clause occurring at (a) the final position of a phrase, (b) before a cardinal numeral, (c) before an associative construction, and (d) before an ordinal numeral.

Table 2: Four Possible Positions of the Relative Construction in Shimwela

a	DEM	N	POSS	NUM	ORD	ADJ	ASS	**REL**
	abhala	*bhaandu*	*bhángu*	*nng'aáno*	*Bhátái*	*Bhámbóone*	*bhá ku Masama*	***bhákúli mányá lííná***
b	DEM	N	POSS	**REL**	NUM	ORD	ADJ	ASS
	abhala	*bhaandu*	*bhángu*	***bhákúli mányá lííná***	*nng'aáno*	*Bhátái*	*Bhámbóone*	*bhá ku Masama*
c	DEM	N	POSS	NUM	ORD	ADJ	**REL**	ASS
	abhala	*bhaandu*	*bhángu*	*nng'aáno*	*Bhátái*	*Bhámbóone*	***bhákúli mányá lííná***	*bhá ku Masama*
d	DEM	N	POSS	NUM	**REL**	ORD	ADJ	ASS
	abhala	*bhaandu*	*bhángu*	*nng'aáno*	***bhákúli mányá lííná***	*Bhátái*	*Bhámbóone*	*bhá ku Masama*
	'Those first five good people of mine from Masama who know the name'							

Flexibility of the relative clause in Shimwela illustrated in table 2 above seems to run counter to other Bantu languages such as Mashami, Runyambo (Rugemalira, 2005; Rugemalira and Phanuel,

2012), Sukuma (Magashi, 2008) and Nyakyusa (Lusekelo, 2009) in which the relative clause occurs at the final position of a phrase.

Order of Five Dependents

In the combination of five dependents, the following orders are possible.

(61) Noun + possessive + quantifier + numeral + ordinal + adjective

bha-ndu ***bhángu*** ***bhóe*** ***nng'aano*** ***bhatai*** ***bhá-mbóne***

2-person my all five first 2-good

'All those first five people of mine'

(62) Noun + possessive + numeral + ordinal + adjective + relative clause.

li-jí ***lyao*** ***limo*** ***lyátái*** ***lyá-lí-kúlungwa*** ***lílí akula*** *líla*

5-egg their one first ASS-5-big RELthere DEM

'One egg of theirs which is there.'

Order of Six Dependents

A more complex Shimwela NP can have up to six dependents, although this can hardly be uttered in normal conversation. Possible combinations of six dependents include the following:

(63) Noun + possessive + quantifier + numeral + ordinal + adjective + relative clause

bha-ndu ***bhángu*** ***bhóe*** ***ngaano*** ***bhátái*** ***bhá-mbóne*** ***bhá-kópóshela*** ***ku-Milóla***

2-person my all five first 2-good REL-come from 17-Molola

'Those first five good people of mine who come from Milola'

(64) Noun + possessive + quantifier + numeral + associative + adjective + demonstrative

má-jí ***genu gowe nnga'aáno gá-kú- Rondo gámbóone gala***
6-egg your all five ASS-17-Rondo good DEM
'All those five good eggs of yours from Rondo.'

The above analysis reveals that there are nine types of elements which can function as NP dependents in Shimwela. These include demonstratives (DEM), distributives (DISTR), possessives (POSS), adjectives (ADJ), numerals (NUM), quantifiers (QUANT), relative constructions (REL), associative constructions (ASS), as well as interrogative markers (INTER). However, due to some co-occurrence and recurrence constraints, it is not possible to include all ten elements in the same NP. As such, the longest Shimwela NP can hardly go beyond six dependents.

As regards the order of these dependents, it has been observed that in Shimwela NP some elements occupy fixed positions, while others allow some flexibility. Four elements, namely demonstratives, distributives, possessives, and interrogatives seem to be highly restricted in their positions. The demonstrative and the distributive strictly occupy the position before the head noun and the two cannot co-occur. The possessive has its position immediately after the head noun and the intensifier must follow the adjective it intensifies. The interrogative and the demonstrative occupy the final position in an NP. Other elements, including numerals, adjectives, relative clauses, associative constructions and quantifiers may exchange positions in the slot between the possessive and the demonstrative or interrogative. This can be summarized in the following Table.

Table 3: Shimwela Noun Phrase Template

01	0	1	2					
PRED	Noun	Determiners	Modifiers					
			1					2
DEM		POSS	a	b	C	D	E	DEM
DISTR			NUM	ADJ	REL	ASS	QUANT	INTER

Recurrence and Co-occurrence of Elements in Shimwela NP

Recurrence

If elements of the same category can appear more than once in the same NP, such elements are said to display the characteristics of recurrence. In Shimwela, two categories of elements, namely the adjective category and the relative construction have been noted to show this behaviour in an NP.

More than one adjective may be stacked in a single NP provided they belong to different subcategories such as size, shape, colour, etc in order to avoid semantic repetition. Example 65 presents an NP with a series of three adjectives: *jwanleeu* 'tall', *jwánáapi* 'black' and *jwámbóone* 'good'.

(65) *mu-ndu* ***jwá-n-léeu*** ***jwá-náapi*** ***jwá-mbóone*** *a-ísh-e*
1-person ASS- 1-tall 1-black 1-good
SM-arrive-PERF
'The tall black good person has arrived'

The adjectives in 65 above belong to different subcategories, i.e. height, colour, and behaviour. When adjectives belong to the same semantic category, stacking is not possible and any attempt to do so may result in an ill-formed NP as in example 66 below:

(66) **shi-máje* ***shá-shí-shóoko*** ***shá-shí-kúlúngwa*** *shi-ná-ush-wa*
7-knife ASS- 7-small ASS- 7- big SM- PRES- sell-PASS
*'A small big knife is sold'

As shown in example 66 above, stacking of the two adjectives *sháshíshóoko* 'small', and *sháshíkúlúngwa* 'big' does not result in a well formed sentence since they both belong to the category of dimension.

Another category of elements which can recur in the Shimwela NP is the relative construction. There may be two or more relative clauses modifying the head noun. Example 67 presents a sentence with two relative clauses.

(67) *ng'íshaana* ***á-kópóshele kwi-Lindi a-weteligáuni ly-ánáapi***
1-girl REL-come from 17-Lindi REL-wear 5-dress 5-black *a-na-lwaala* SM-PRES sick 'The girl who comes from Lindi, who is wearing a red dress, is sick.'

As is the case with co-occurrence of adjectives, co-occurrence of relative clauses is possible if they provide different specifications of the head noun. For example, in 67 above, the first relative clause specifies the girl in terms of where she comes from while the second relative clause offers information about her appearance. If the two relative clauses provided similar specifications of the head noun, co-occurrence would not have been possible.

Co-occurrence

If two elements can occur together in a noun phrase, such elements are said to display characteristics of co-occurrence. In most cases, elements which can co-occur in an NP belong to different syntactic categories. It is on such grounds that co-occurrence is regarded as one of the criteria for category membership.

In Shimwela, limitations on the co-occurrence of elements in the NP are not so high since most of the elements belonging to different categories can appear together. However, a few elements have been noted to limit the occurrence of other elements in an NP. Distributives and pre-head demonstratives, for example, cannot co-occur as they both occupy the pre-head position. Therefore, the occurrence of one restricts the occurrence of the other, as illustrated in 68 where a sentence contains both a pre-head demonstrative and a distributive, making it ungrammatical.

(68) ****kilá ashila*** *shí-téengu* *shila* *sh-ámbóone*
DISTR DEM 7-chair DEM 7-good
'*Each that chair is good.'

The occurrence of a distributive also restricts the occurrence of a numeral in Shimwela NP. Once the two co-occur the structure becomes ill-formed as shown in 69 below:

(69) ****kilá*** *mu-undu* ***júmo*** *aish-é* *na* *aká-gwé*
DISTR 1-person one arrive-PST and wife-his
*'Each one person came with his wife'

The Maximum Number of Dependents in Shimwela NP

Although it was pointed out earlier that a more complex Shimwela NP can take up to six dependents, in normal conversation such complex NPs are not so common. Very often, a normal Shimwela NP can hardly go beyond four dependents. This is because there is a tendency among speakers to avoid long and complex constructions.

Conclusion

This paper has revealed that although a Shimwela NP is modified by the same dependents as in other Bantu languages, the syntactic behavior displayed by these dependents is not the same as in other Bantu languages. Shimwela noun dependents display significant divergence from other Bantu languages in terms of how they are ordered and their co-occurrence and recurrence restrictions. In terms of their order, Shimwela noun dependents fall into two main categories, namely fixed and flexible dependents. Fixed dependents include demonstratives, distributives, possessives, and interrogatives while flexible dependents include numerals, quantifiers, adjectives, relative constructions and associative constructions. Regarding co-occurrence and recurrence of dependents, it has been indicated that demonstratives are the most frequently occurring dependents. This is probably because, unlike other elements which perform only single functions, demonstratives are multifunctional as they can show proximity and definiteness.

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