



Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands

Verbal derivation and valency in Citumbuka

Chavula, J.J.

Citation

Chavula, J. J. (2016, May 11). *Verbal derivation and valency in Citumbuka*. LOT dissertation series. LOT, Utrecht. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/39665>

Version: Not Applicable (or Unknown)

License: [Licence agreement concerning inclusion of doctoral thesis in the Institutional Repository of the University of Leiden](#)

Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/39665>

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

Cover Page



Universiteit Leiden



The handle <http://hdl.handle.net/1887/39665> holds various files of this Leiden University dissertation.

Author: Chavula, J.J.

Title: Verbal derivation and valency in Citumbuka

Issue Date: 2016-05-11

1. Introduction

1.1. Sociolinguistic background information

1.1.1. The Tumbuka people

Vail (1972) and Phiri (1980) provide a detailed historical background of the Tumbuka people. They both state that the historical origins of the Tumbuka are so complex that they are better viewed as an aggregate history of individual clans. The first groups of the Tumbuka clans settled along the northern trade routes and are believed to have been the second group to enter Malawi after the Chewa of the Maravi Kingdom (Phiri 1980). Some newer groups that crossed through the northern corridor chose to settle among the Tumbuka while other groups continued to other areas. By the 19th century, the “Tumbuka-speaking people spread over an area stretching from the Dwangwa River in the south to the source of the North Rukuru in the north, and from Lwangwa River in neighbouring Zambia to the Lake Malawi in the east” (Phiri 1980:3). One of the ivory traders, Mlowoka arrived from across Lake Malawi in Nkhamanga, the Tumbukaland, as an ivory trader. He married in the Luhanga clan. The Balowoka established a loose confederation over the elephant-rich country running from the modern border of Zambia to the lake. These new settlers established themselves among the Tumbuka. “Some of these clans came from matrilineal zones of northern Zambia and the southern Congo, while others came from the patrilineal areas of north-east Zambia and southern Zambia, others from across Lake Malawi in Tanzania and Mozambique” (Vail 1972: xiv). By mid 19th century, the Tumbuka had a very mixed culture. The Balowoka adopted the language and culture of the earlier Tumbuka settlers and all later migrants adopted the language and to some extent cultural traditions of the Tumbuka land. Citumbuka is, therefore, a complex language due to the influx of migrants from streams of Bantu migrants that passed through the area. The Ngoni were the last influential group to settle among the Tumbuka before the arrival of the missionaries, and the European and colonial rule. Unlike the Balowoka traders, who established the Chikulamayembe dynasty, and later were requested to be leaders of the Tumbukas by the Tumbuka themselves, the Ngoni were militant warriors who survived by raiding and looting. According to the current chief Chikulamayembe, the Tumbuka asked the Balowoka to rule over the Tumbuka because of the generosity of the Balowokas and according to the incumbent Chikulamayembe, the Chikulamayembe authorities got the chieftancy on a silver platter and not through an invasion (personal communication during data collection fieldwork in 2008).

The Ngoni left Natal under the leadership of Zwangendaba in the 1820s during the wars of Shaka Zulu because Zwangendaba feared to confront

Shaka in an open battle (Read 1956). They moved northwards through Mashonaland raiding and looting as they went and incorporating captives into their state (McCracken 1977:7). They crossed the Zambesi in 1835 near Zumbo, through the Nsenga country to the Malawi-Luangwa watershed as far as Ufipa on the eastside of Lake Tanganyika in present day Tanzania where Zwangendaba died in 1845 (McCracken 1977). After the death of Mgayi the regent, who had accompanied Zwangendaba from Natal, South Africa, the sons of Zwangendaba went to different directions, Mpezeni went southwards to Bemba country before settling in Chipata in the present day Zambia. Mpherembe spent some time in the west of Luangwa River before being defeated by a coalition of Bemba in the 1870s after which he joined the Ngoni of Mbelwa (McCracken 1977). The Mbelwa group advanced up to the Henga valley destroying the vestiges of the Chikulamayembe state, reducing most of the Tumbukas to the Ngoni subjection. One group settled in Unyamwezi in Tanzania whilst some, for instance the group of Chiwere Ndhlovu settled in the present day Central Malawi. The Ngoni continued to frequently raid upon their neighbours for cattle and captives to enlarge their group (McCracken 1977). Captives were culturally assimilated into the Ngoni society such that successful warriors, whatever their backgrounds, could compete for positions. The arrival of the Ngoni was not without impact on the Tumbuka settlers and established trade patterns. It disrupted the established long distance trading patterns in the area. At the height of their influence, the Ngoni dominated an area said to be 30,000 square miles in dimension populated by the Tumbuka, Tonga, Henga, Ngonde, Chewa, Bisa and others (Read 1956, McCracken 1977). Henga and Nkhamanga were fully subsumed under the Ngoni domination around 1855 (Davies 2014). However, the arrival of missionaries and Europeans who brought guns weakened the Ngoni dominion. The Tongas, for example, who lived along the lake shore had access to guns and could easily defeat the Ngonis.

By the 1930s Cingoni had almost disappeared as a home language, except in Chief Mpherembe's area in the northern Ngoni kingdom (Read 1956). Read (1957) observes that many older men could still speak and understand the language including the men that had been away to Southern Rhodesia (present day Zimbabwe) or the Transvaal to seek employment. The language continued to be used for traditional offices and objects, words of traditional songs, some ritual formulae, titles, some forms of address although the Ngoni of the Central region were already using Nyanja terms (Read 1956:22). Read (1956) reports that soon the missionaries realized that the majority of the people in northern Ngoni land did not understand the Ngoni language. They then switched from using Cingoni to Citumbuka, which became the language of evangelization and a medium of instruction in their mission schools which were opened at different places in Ngoni land. Many books and readers were produced in Citumbuka to aid the learn-

Chapter 1

ing process. This in a way helped to promote the language and possibly explains the spread of the language throughout the northern Malawi. According to the current Chikulamayembe, the Ngoni left Nkhamanga and the Henga valley due to tsetse flies that were killing their cattle and went to settle in Mzimba (personal communication during data collection fieldwork in 2008).

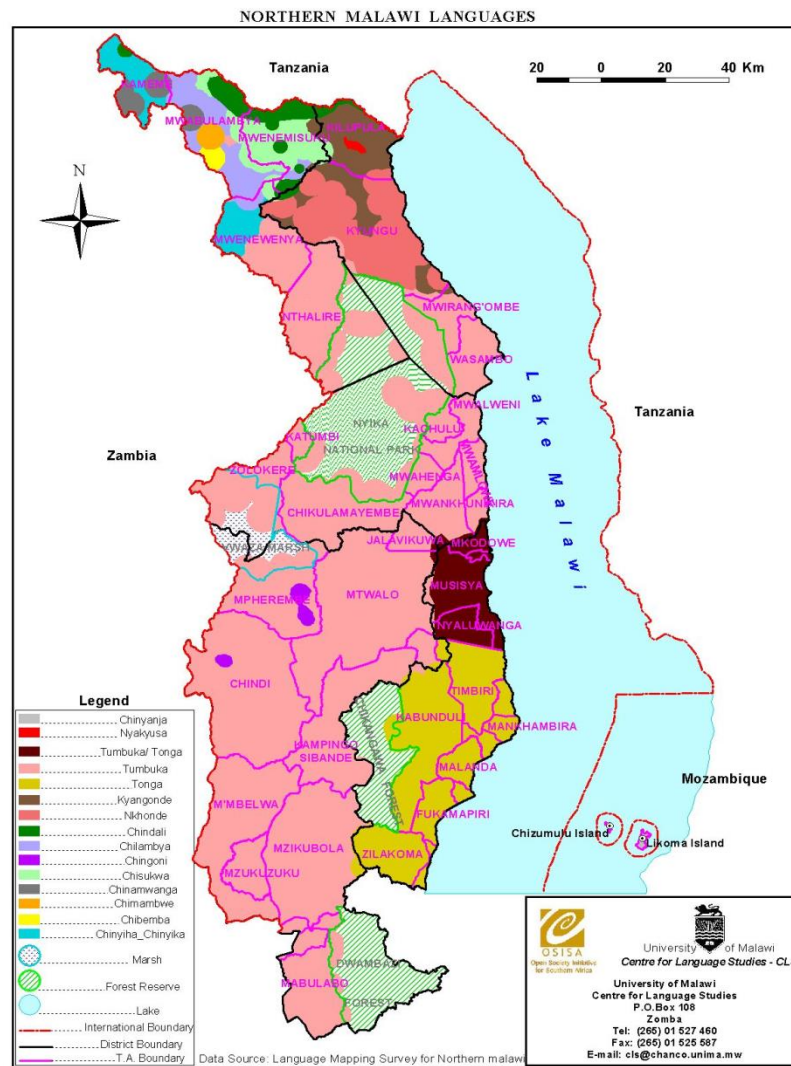
The history of the Tumbuka people and the pattern of Ngoni migrations have implications on the history of Citumbuka. The language came into contact with so many languages and cultures and in the process it may have had influences from these languages. While the Tumbuka chose to be led by foreigners and succumbed to the Ngoni cultures and traditions, they have held on to their language. Tumbuka culture has greatly been influenced by the Ngoni cultural traditions, for example the patrilineal succession, virilocal residence and paying of dowry, locally known as lobola, and domestication of cattle. Citumbuka has survived the contact with the languages of the Ngonde, Balowoka, Swahili, Bemba, Tonga and Ngoni people and many other groups that passed through the northern corridor on their way or invaded them. However, Cingoni has contributed a lot to the vocabulary of Citumbuka. To this day, varieties of Citumbuka and Chichewa in areas where the Ngoni groups settled are called Cingoni and are entered as Cingoni in national census reports.

1.1.2. Language Classification and Geographical distribution

Malawi is divided into three administrative regions, Northern, Central and Southern regions. The three regions are divided into a total of 28 districts. The Northern Region has six districts. Citumbuka is a Bantu language from the Southern Narrow Bantu group classified as N21 by Guthrie (1971). It is one of the major Malawian languages, spoken mainly in the Northern Region of Malawi. It is also spoken in the north eastern Province of Zambia, mainly Isoka district. Other names used to refer to the language include Chitumbuka, Tamboka, Tumbuka, Timbuka, Tombucas, Tumboka (Lewis, Simons and Fennig 2015). According to Lewis, Simons and Fennig (2015), Citumbuka has a total population of speakers amounting to 2,566,000, consisting of 2,200,000 speakers in Malawi and 366,000 in Zambia. Its neighbouring languages include Lambya and Nyiha in the central part of Chitipa district particularly in Chisenga area bordering Traditional Authorities Wenya and Mwenemisuku; Kyangonde and Nyakyusa in Karonga district; Citonga in Rumphi east along the shores of Lake Malawi; and Nkhata Bay north and west as well as Nkhotakota north west; and Chichewa in Kasungu North (CLS 2006). A map of the distribution of Citumbuka based on the

Introduction

National Language Mapping Surveys (CLS 2006) is included in figure 1.1 below.



Map 1.1 Map of northern Malawi showing languages spoken there

Chapter 1

Citumbuka is the language of the Tumbuka people; hence it is sometimes referred to as Tumbuka language. However, being a regional *lingua franca*, not all speakers of this language are ethnically Tumbukas.. Citumbuka is the most dominant language of Rumphi district, the cradle of the Tumbuka people, and also Mzimba district, with a large number of native speakers being monolinguals. From Rumphi west and Mzimba west, it spreads to the bordering districts of eastern Zambia. In Chitipa, Citumbuka is the most dominant language in Traditional Authorities (TAs) Nthalire, which borders with Rumphi, and Wenya where the language shares boundaries with Cin-yika, Cilambya, Cisukwa and Ciwandya. In Karonga district, Citumbuka is spoken in all areas of TAs Wasambo and Mwirang'ombe and parts of TAs Kilupula and Kyungu. In Nkhata Bay, which is a Citonga speaking district, Citumbuka is spoken mainly in areas bordering with Rumphi in the northern part especially in TAs Mwausisya, Boghoyo, Mbwana and areas bordering Mzimba in the western part of Nkhata Bay. For more details on the geographical distribution of Citumbuka, see *Map 1.1* above. As already pointed out, where Citumbuka is not dominant, speakers of other languages use it as a language of wider communication.

1.1.3. The Post-colonial linguistic environment

Malawi is a multilingual country with about 15 Bantu languages spoken within its borders (Kishindo 1998: 253, CLS 2006). It shares borders with Tanzania, Mozambique and Zambia. During Banda's dictatorship it was clearly directed at the 1968 party Convention that English should be the official language of Malawi while Chichewa should be the sole national language as well semi-official language. Chichewa was also to be the only the language to be used in the education system as a subject of study throughout the education system and as a medium of instruction in all primary schools from standards 1-4. It was also the only local language to be used in both print and electronic media, while Citumbuka, Kyangonde, Citonga and Ciyawo, which had been in use in some official domains including in education domain, prior to the 1968 directive, were banned from any official domain (Kishindo 1998, CLS 2006). Deliberate efforts were put in place by Dr. Banda to develop Chichewa such as creating the Chichewa Board, radio programmes on the state radio meant to prescribe how the language should be used, and the establishment of a department of Chichewa and Linguistics at the University of Malawi. This has enabled Chichewa to be exposed to scholarly research to the disadvantage of Citumbuka and other local languages in the country as Kishindo (1994 and 1998) also observes. However, no monolingual dictionary and comprehensive description of Chichewa was achieved during his era. With the emergence of the multi-party democracy in 1994, other local languages have been recognised and are finding their way into some official domains especially the state radio. The Chichewa and Linguistics department is now called African Languages

and Linguistics department while the Chichewa Board has been replaced with the Centre for Languages (CLS) to give equal opportunities to the development and research of the other Malawian languages. However, there remains a lot of work to be done for the other languages to reach the level of Chichewa. Almost all Malawian languages are yet to be described to the level of linguistic scholarship.

1.1.4. Dialects/Varieties

The Language Mapping Survey conducted by CLS identified the following Citumbuka varieties: Ciphoka, Cihenga, Cisisya/Cinyaluwanga, Cingoni, Cikamanga, Cinyanja, Citumbunyika, Cimphangweni, as some of the Malawian varieties of Citumbuka. Cisenga was mentioned as a dialect spoken on the Zambian side, Cisenga is distinct from Cinsenga (Lewis, Simons and Fennig 2015). Other dialects of Citumbuka on the Zambian side are Yombe, Fungwe, Nenya, Fililwa, and Magodi (Lewis, Simons, and Fennig 2015). Most of these dialects are named after the names of places where they are spoken. Ciphoka is spoken in the areas around Phoka hills in Rumphi while Cihenga is spoken in the Henga valley of the same district. Cisisya which is a mixture of Citonga and Citumbuka, is spoken in Usisya and Nyaluwanga in the northern part of Nkhata Bay. Cinyanja is the dialect spoken along the shores of Lake Malawi in Rumphi district. *Nyanja* in Citumbuka means ‘lake’ and thus the name Cinyanja means the variety spoken by the lake shore side (this should be distinguished from the Chichewa-Chinyanja of Guthrie’s N31). Cikamanga is the variety spoken in the Nkhamanga plain in Rumphi district while Cimphangweni is spoken in areas bordering Nkhata Bay and Nkhotakota districts which stretches to Embangweni south of Mzimba district. It has been influenced by both Citonga and Cingoni. The variety of Citumbuka spoken in Mzimba district is referred to as Cingoni because it is highly influenced by Cingoni (S42) in terms of vocabulary. Mzimba is dominated by the Ngoni. Although Cingoni has almost disappeared among the Ngoni people of Mzimba, there are still some residues in terms of vocabulary found in the Citumbuka spoken in the district (Kishindo 2007; Soko 2007). The data in the current study was recorded in Rumphi districts in the Nkhamanga and Henga areas under TAs Chikulamayembe, Mwahenga and Mwankhunikira. My data from Citumbuka books and the bible may have been written by authors from different areas. All the Tumbuka dialects are mutually intelligible.

1.1.5. Language Use

Citumbuka is first and foremost used as a regional *lingua franca* in northern Malawi. It is also used as a mark of identity and solidarity among different

Chapter 1

ethnic groups of northern Malawi. It is unofficially used as a medium of instruction in primary schools within the region, especially in the first four grades. It is also the main language used in churches. At the official level, the language is used for news broadcasting and very few developmental programs on the state radio. Age and speech domains also contribute to speakers' choice to use the language or not. CLS (2006) observed the following trends: (a) while everyone is comfortable using the language at home with family and friends, the younger generation may opt to use Chichewa, the national language, when they are away from the northern region; (b) the youth argue that they use Chichewa for fear of being known as coming from the northern region despite the fact that the influence of Citumbuka in their Chichewa still gives them away; (c) the older generation does not mind whether they are at home or not as they struggle to speak Chichewa and their loyalty to Citumbuka is quite high; (d) speakers of other languages may opt for Citumbuka away from their home areas within the region and stick to their own native languages at home.

Language loyalty among the speakers of Citumbuka is very high. This is evidenced by their ability to establish the Citumbuka Language and Culture Association (CLACA) with the objective of conserving both the language and culture of the Tumbuka. Through this association, they are able to comment on issues regarding their language. Kamwendo (2004) reports that the association had the temerity of trying to monitor how the language is used on the state radio and other media, mostly recommending use of the variety spoken in the villages. This tendency should not be surprising since CLACA is only doing what the Chichewa Board was doing for Chichewa and what the Academie Francaise does for French. A conversation with the core members of this association also reveals that it also has a task of campaigning for the inclusion of Citumbuka in the education system both as a medium of instruction and subject of study. Most of these core members went to school before the 1968 convention when Citumbuka was both medium of instruction and subject of study in the region. They argue that the Ministry of Education should not worry about the teaching materials because they are ready to improve on the ones that were used when they were in school before the first regime ordered Citumbuka off the education system. To prove their point, they are now editing "A grammar of the Tumbuka" written by the early White Fathers missionaries (unpublished manuscript) aimed at equipping foreign priests with basic skills of the language. However, the glaring irony of the situation here is that the grammar is in English and not Citumbuka, the language that they are advocating.

Interviews conducted by the Centre for Language Studies during their Sociolinguistic Surveys (1999) as well as the (2006) Language Mapping Survey also reveal a high degree of language loyalty among the Citumbuka speakers. Most of the people interviewed said they would love to see Ci-

tumbuka back in schools both as a subject of study and medium of instruction as a way of promoting and safeguarding the language. Recent debates on whether to constitutionalize Chichewa as Malawi's national language clearly show that Citumbuka speakers including the youth are against the proposal. Citumbuka speakers, led by the Livingstonia synod as well as CLACA, have been arguing that if Chichewa is included in the constitution as the sole national language, it could lead to the demise of other local languages especially Citumbuka. This also shows how strongly the native speakers feel about Citumbuka.

Citumbuka being a regional *lingua franca* has been in contact with several languages within the northern region. At national level, the introduction of Chichewa as the sole local language of study and also as medium of instruction in lower primary school has also enabled it to be in contact with other local languages including Citumbuka. Contact between Chichewa and Citumbuka has had a huge impact on Citumbuka in various ways. Speakers of Citumbuka struggle to read and write sounds that are unique to Citumbuka. In Karonga, Chitipa and Nkhata Bay, Citumbuka is also in contact with other local languages spoken in these districts. Historically, the invasion of the Tumbuka by the Ngoni also brought Citumbuka into contact with Cingoni and the languages of their captives.

1.1.6. Available Literature

Results of the 2006 Language mapping survey conducted by the CLS reveal that Citumbuka has quite a considerable amount written materials which date back to the time when it was used as a medium of instruction by the Livingstonia mission. Some of the literature was used for teaching the language as a subject of study, others are readers meant to supplement the teaching/learning materials mostly written by graduates of the Livingstonia Mission schools. Most of the written materials are Christian literature published by the Livingstonia Synod as well as Catholic Mission stations. There is also a Citumbuka translation of the bible, *Mazgu ya Ciuta*, published by the Bible Society of Malawi (1995). Since most of the church business is conducted in Citumbuka in the north, there are a variety of small publications written in the language including hymn books, prayer books, tracts as well as catechisms.

In their struggle to learn and comprehend the language, missionaries tried to compile bilingual/ trilingual dictionaries. Some of the dictionaries were published while others were kept in their institutions. Some of them include Turner's (1952) *Tumbuka-Tonga-English and English-Tumbuka Tonga Dictionary*, Catholic Mission's *Chitumbuka-English dictionary*. The CLS is currently working on the first monolingual dictionary under the Malawi Lexicon Project which will be web based and will also have a simplified

Chapter 1

print version to be used in schools in readiness of the approval of Mother-tongue Instruction Policy. Recently, *The Nation Publications* has introduced a fortnightly supplementary publication called *Fuko*, published in Chichewa and Citumbuka targeting the rural community.

1.1.7. Literacy

The National Statistical Office of Malawi in its Population and Housing census reports only document language literacy rates figures for English and Chichewa and then group the rest of the Malawian languages together without specifying them (NSO, 2008 Malawi Population and Housing Census Preliminary Report, Table 16). The 2008 census figures show that the northern region has the highest literacy rate at 77% followed by central region at 63% and the southern region at 62% among people aged five years and above. The 2010 Malawi Demographic and Health Survey (MDHS) Report shows that the north has the highest literacy rate at 80% compared to the central region and southern region at 64% and 67%, respectively. Their targeted age group was 15-49. The MDHS indicate that their literacy assessment is based on a person's ability to read all or part of a simple sentence in any of the following languages: English, Chichewa, Ciyawo or Citumbuka. Thus, no language specific literacy details are available for Citumbuka and other local languages. However, it is common among native speakers of these local languages to transfer their literacy skills from Chichewa to their native languages. Many people in the northern region of Malawi, where Citumbuka is the lingua franca, are literate in Citumbuka. For example, they can read the bible, catechisms, hymns, notices posted in their churches and other religious gatherings. People are able to read notices in the language posted in places such as markets, government offices and hospitals.

1.2. Orthography

There have been diverse Citumbuka orthographies in use prompting the need to have a standard orthography. CLS put together a committee comprising of linguists and native speakers to produce a standard orthography for the language. The idea to have a standard orthography was also necessitated by discussions to bring back Citumbuka into the education system. CLS embarked on the standardization process in 2000 and the first edition of the orthography was published in 2006. The standard orthography draws inspiration from the harmonised orthographies for cross-border languages in Southern Africa being promoted by the Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society (CASAS). In this orthography the voiced bilabial fricative [β] is represented by [w̥]. The presence of /h/ in consonantal cluster marks aspiration for example, *kala* 'scratch' *khala* 'sit'. The digraph *ch* represents the sound [tʃ^h]. The velar fricative /ɣ/ is represented by the digraph *gh*.

Citumbuka is not a tonal language. It has five vowels and all of them are short in quality and these are a, e, i, o u (CLS 2005). Citumbuka consonant phonemes are presented in the table below.

Table 1.1: Citumbuka consonant phonemes

Citumbuka consonant	Example	English translation
b /b/	<i>bala</i>	‘porridge’
c /tʃ/	Citumbuka	Citumbuka
ch /tʃʰ/	<i>chalichi</i>	‘church’
d /d/	<i>dula</i>	‘be expensive’
f /f/	<i>fula</i>	‘dig up’
g /g/	<i>gaga</i>	‘maize husks’
gh /ɣ/	<i>ghanaghana</i>	‘think’
h /h/	<i>hala</i>	‘inherit’
j /dʒ/	<i>jembe</i>	‘hoe’
k /k/	<i>kula</i>	‘grow’
kh /kʰ/	<i>khuni</i>	‘tree’
l /l/	<i>luta</i>	‘go’
m /m/	<i>amama</i>	‘my mother’
n /n/	<i>nena</i>	‘say/insult’
ny /ɲ/	<i>nyumba</i>	‘house’
ng’ /ŋ/	<i>ng’ombe</i>	‘cattle’
p /p/	<i>pepala</i>	‘paper’
ph /pʰ/	<i>phika</i>	‘cook’
s /s/	<i>suka</i>	‘wash something’
r /r/	<i>lira</i>	‘cry’
t /t/	<i>tola</i>	‘pick’
th /tʰ/	<i>otha</i>	‘warm yourself to some heat source’
v /v/	<i>vula</i>	‘rain/undress’
w /w/	<i>iwa</i>	‘fall down’
ŵ /β/	<i>ŵana</i>	‘children’
y /j/	<i>kuyenda</i>	‘to walk’
z /z/	<i>zula</i>	‘be full’

Below is a table showing Citumbuka consonantal clusters.

Table 1.2: Citumbuka permitted consonant clusters

consonant	consonant clusters	Example	English translation
b	bw	kubwata	‘to boil’
c	cw	kucweta	‘to cry hard’
d	dw	kucedwa	‘to be late’
	dy	kudyelewuka	‘to be slippery’
f	fw	kufwa	‘to die’
	fy	kufyula	‘to wipe’
g	gw	kugwada	‘to kneel down’
j	jw	kujwanthila	‘to limp’
k	khw	khwanya	‘bean leaves’
	kw	kukwela	‘to climb’
l	lw	kulwa	‘to fight some battle’
	ly	kulya	‘to eat’
m	mb	mbale	‘plate’
	mbw	mbwambwantha	‘shiver’
	mby	mbyululu	‘stripe’
	mc	mcila	‘tail’
	ml	mlimi	‘farmer’
	mph	mphasa	‘mat’
	mphw	mphwaŵi	‘lack of initiative’
	mph	pyumphyu	‘overzealousness’
	ms	msepuka	‘little boy’
	msw	msweni	‘husband’
	mt	mteweti	‘deacon’
	mthy	mthyemu	‘sneeze’
	mw	mwana	‘child’
	my	kumyanga	‘to lick’
n	nch	nchito	‘work’
	nd	mtunda	‘distance on land’
	ndw	ndwadwa	‘semi-fresh maize cob’,
	ng	ng’anga	‘witch doctor’
	ngw	zingwa	‘be surround by problems’
	ng’w	ng’wina	‘crocodile’
	nj	njala	‘hunger’
	nk	nkhalo	‘behaviour’
	nkhw	nkhwapa	‘arm pit’
	nth	vinthu	‘things’
	nthw	nthwake	‘they belong to’

Chapter 1

			him/her'
	ny	<i>enya</i>	'yes'
	nw	<i>nweka</i>	'be anxious'
p	ph	<i>kuphala</i>	'to win'
	phw	<i>phwafula</i>	'deflate'
	pw	<i>as pwelelela</i>	'care for'
	phy	<i>kuphya</i>	'to be cooked/to be burnt'
	py	<i>vipyo</i>	'sufferings'
s	sk	<i>suska</i>	'oppose'
	sw	<i>viswaswa</i>	'garbage'
t	thw	<i>kuthwa</i>	'to be sharp'
	thy	<i>kuthya</i>	'to trap'
v	vw	<i>kuvwala</i>	'to wear or put on'
	vy	<i>vyakulya</i>	'foods'
z	zg	<i>zgolo</i>	'an answer'
	zw	<i>zizwa</i>	'be surprised'

The list of consonant phonemes and consonant clusters are taken from CLS's (2005) *The Standardized Orthography of Citumbuka* except for the IPA symbols in the phoneme table.

1.3. Earlier studies of Citumbuka

"Tumbuka is a language that has not enjoyed much linguistic analysis and description in spite of the large number of people who speak it and the wide expanse of territory over which it is spoken" (Vail 1972: xix). Nearly forty five years down the line, Vail's (1972) observation still holds true. Citumbuka remains one of the understudied languages to this day. Most of the earliest works on Citumbuka were done by the early Christian missionaries for the purpose of aiding them to understand the language and to impart literacy among their followers and for evangelization. These works include Emslie (1891), Young (1932) and Mackenzie (1913). In more recent times language scholars have become interested in systematically describing Citumbuka. For example, Vail (1971) focuses on the description of the noun class system in the language and Vail (1972) concentrates on the description of aspects of the verb. Phiri (1980) describes nominal derivation in Citumbuka with special reference to deverbatives. The current study builds on Vail (1972) and Phiri (1980). Mphande (1989) gives a detailed phonetic, phonological and morphological characterisation of the ideophone in Citumbuka. Kiso (2012) compares tense and aspect systems of Citumbuka, Cisenwa and Chichewa. The Malawi Lexicon NUFU project (2007-2013) aimed at generating a corpus of Citumbuka, Ciyawo and Chichewa from which online monolingual dictionaries are being compiled. So

a simplified version of the Ciyawo dictionary has already been published while the Citumbuka manuscript is almost ready for publication.

1.4. Noun Class system

Nouns across Bantu languages are grouped into noun classes, also known as grammatical gender. Citumbuka has 18 noun classes. Each noun class is numbered conventionally. The noun classes generally exist in pairs. For instance, nouns in class 1 have their plural counterparts in class 2, those in class 3 have their plurals in class 4 and so forth. However this does not work for all the noun classes. As we will see in the table below, nouns in classes 15-18 have no plural due to their semantics. Nouns in class 11 have their plurals in class 6. Nouns in class 14 are mostly collectives and abstract entities which are not countable. Where a plural counterpart of class 14 exists, it goes into class 6. Some nouns in class 9 also have their plurals in class 6 e.g. *nthenda* 'disease' vs *matenda* 'diseases'. It is common to find borrowed nouns in class 9 having their plurals in class 6. E.g. *shati* 'shirt' and *mashati* 'shirts', *nyuzipepala* 'newspaper' and *manyuzipepala* 'newspapers'.

Noun class prefixes and concordial agreement markers are used to identify the noun classes. The semantic content of certain particular nouns also guides one to the appropriate noun class. For instance, nouns in classes 12 and 13 are characterised by their diminutive nature. Classes 1/2 are associated with human beings. Proper names in Citumbuka, regardless of the things they name for examples places, rivers, domestic animals, objects, humans, are found in class 1/2. Classes 15 and 17 both use the prefix *ku-* and both use the same prefix *ku-* for concordial agreement. The major difference between the two classes is that class 15 *ku-* is attached to verbs only while class 17 is attached to nouns. Class 15 *ku-* is an infinitival marker, hence the class is also known as the infinitival noun class. In certain environments, the infinitival *ku-* functions purely as a verb. Below is a table of Citumbuka noun classes based on Vail (1971) with some modification.

Chapter 1

Table 1.3: *List of Citumbuka noun classes and their examples*

Noun class	Nominal prefix	Subject marker	Object marker	Associative marker	Examples
1	mu-	wa-	mu-	w-	mu-nthu w-ane 'my person'
1.a	ø-	wa-	mu-	w-	kalulu w-ane 'my rabbit'
2	ŵa-	ŵa-	ŵa-	ŵ-	ŵa-nthu ŵ-ane 'my people'
3	mu-	wa-	u-	w-	mu-nwe w-ane 'my finger'
4	mi-	ya-	yi-	y-	mi-nwe y-ane 'my fingers'
5	li-	li-	li-	l-	jembe l-ane 'my hoe'
6	ma-	gha-	gha-	gh-	ma-yembe gh-ane 'my hoes'
7	ci-	ci-	ci-	c-	ci-soti c-ane 'my hat'
8	vi-	vi-	vi-	v-	vi-pewa vy-ane 'my hats'
9	ø-	yi-	yi-	y-	njinga y-ane 'my bicycle'
10	ø-	zi-	zi-	z-	njinga z-ane 'my bicycles'
11	lu-	lw-/l-	lu-/li-	l-	lu-lombo lw-ane 'my prayer'
12	ka-	ka-	ka-	k-	ka-mu-nthu k-ane 'my little person'
13	tu-	tu-	tu-	tw-	tu-ŵa-nthu tw-ane 'my little people'
14	u-	wa-	u-	w-	uheni w-ane 'my evil nature'
15	ku-	ku-	ku-	ku-	ku-imba kw-ane 'my singing'
16	pa-	pa-	pa-	p-	pa-nyumba p-ane 'at my house'
17	ku-	ku-	ku-	ku-	ku-nyumba kw-ane 'at my house'
18	mu-	mu-	mu-	mu-	mu-nyumba mw-ane 'in my house'

1.5. An overview of Bantu verb extensions

Verb extensions are verbal derivational morphemes that may be suffixed to the verb stem (Bearth 2003). They form an integral part of verbal morphology in most Bantu languages. The canonical extension has the structure -VC-, with some extensions having -V-/VCV (Schadeberg 2003:72). The extension is inserted after the root and before the final vowel. Bantu verb extensions do not form a neat semantic or syntactic system (Schadeberg 2003:73). Extension suffixes can either increase, decrease or maintain the verb valency. Adding one or more extensions to the verb stem modifies the syntactic frame associated with the verb (Bearth 2003:126; Good 2005; Fleish 2005). Extensions differ in terms of productivity, some are less productive while others are more productive and yet others are not productive at all. The most productive extensions are passive, causative, applicative and reciprocal. Several extensions can combine in the same verb stem (Schadeberg 2003:73). The extensions combine in such a way that the less productive ones will appear closer to the verb stem. The attachment of verb extensions, though a morphological process, affects the grammatical relations in a sentence.

Passive

‘The extension indicates that the subject is acted upon by the agent’ (Lodhi 2002: 5). Passivization decreases the verb valency by one. The most widespread passive extension is *-(ib)-w-/-(ig)w-* (Fleisch 2005: 94). The *-ik-* neuter-passive has been attested in typical passive contexts in Ndonga (Fleisch 2005:95 citing Fivaz 1986). The passive extension is very productive in many Bantu languages. Some Bantu languages like Ngala, Ngombe are known to have lost the passive extension and instead use the stative extension *-am-* to mark the passive (Lodhi 2002:5). In Citumbuka, the stative extension *-ik-* has replaced the passive extension *-iw-* such that *-ik-* has almost replaced functions both as stative and passive extension suffix.

Reciprocal

The reciprocal extension most widely used in Bantu languages is *-an-*. It is also known as the associative extension. The most productive function of the extension is deriving reciprocals. Reciprocals require more than one agent that are at the same time patients and involved in symmetrical activity. The extension also has non-reciprocal functions in many Bantu languages, for instance repetitive, intensive, joint actions by several agents, and actions directed towards several other people. The extension is also used to denote association (Lodhi 2002:7). In Citumbuka the non-reciprocal use of *-an-* includes the derivation of depatientives and anticausatives.

Applicative

The applicative extension in most Bantu languages is *-il-/el-* subject to vowel harmony. The applicative is also known as the dative, prepositional and the directive extension. The applicative can be derived from about any verb (Schadeberg 2003). In an applicative, a new argument is introduced which takes over object properties of the base object except for the motive and manner applicative. The new object may have the following semantic roles: beneficiary, place, time, instrument, ingredients, reason/motive/purpose. In Citumbuka the introduced NP may also be a judger as is the case in judicantis applicative.

Causative

The causative in most languages is *-i-* after consonant or *-ici-* after a vowel (Schadeberg 2003). There are other complicated causative forms with the original *-ya* forms such as *-ima/imya* ('get up/raise') in Lamba and *ona/onya* ('see/warn') and *ogopa/ogofya* ('fear/frighten') in Kiswahili (Lodhi 2002: 6). The same scenario is observed in Citumbuka with the *-y-* causative. In addition to the *-y-* causative form, Citumbuka has *-isk-*, which is the most productive form in the language. The extensions can be added to both transitive and intransitive bases. Suffixation of a causative extension introduces a new argument that becomes the new subject and plays the role of the causer. The semantics of causatives includes coercion, assistive, and intensity.

Positional/stative

The positional extension *-am-* is one of the less productive extensions. The common meaning associated with the extension is assuming a position or being in a certain position. It is used to form passive verbs in a group of contiguous languages in Zone C e.g. Lingala, Ngombe and Mono (Schadeberg 2003:76).

Extensive

The extensive extension, *-al-* is productive in some Southern Bantu languages. It expresses the meaning "to be in a spread out position" (Schadeberg 2003:76). The extension is also called the durative (Lodhi 2002).

Impositive

The impositive extension *-ik-* is homophonous with the *-ik-* neuter/stative. It is a kind of causative associated with expressing direct causation. Its more precise meaning is to put something into some position.

Neuter/stative *ik*

The extension *-ik-* is homophonous with the impositive. It is associated with verbs of destruction and verbs of experience. It is very productive in

some languages such that it can be combined with a wide range of transitive basic verbs (Schadeberg 2003). In neuter/stative derivations no agent is implied and it is impossible to express the agent.

Tentative/contactive

It is not known to be productive in any language. The tentative extension -*at-* expresses the meaning of actively making firm contact.

The Reversive/Conversive/Separative

There are two extensions, -*ul-* and -*uk-*. Separative verbs are frequent but cannot be freely formed from other verbs. The extension expresses reversal of an action (Lodhi 2002). However, as argued by Schadeberg (2003), the definition only fits a small portion of data and does not say which member in a given pair will have the separative extension. There are verbs with the separative extension that do not have their non-reversive counterparts.

1.6. Data

The data used in this thesis was collected under the Malawi Lexicon (MaLex) NUFU project with the main goal of developing Chichewa, Ciyawo and Citumbuka monolingual dictionaries. This thesis is part of the NUFU MaLex project. Data collection for the Citumbuka dictionary involved going to Citumbuka speaking areas like Nkhamanga and Henga areas in Rumphi district to record stories, folktales, group discussions on diverse topics using audio recorders with the aim of producing a corpus from which a list of words for dictionary entries would be generated. The recorded data was transcribed into word texts amounting to data size of 1.47MB. The corpus also included texts from translated documents available at the Centre for Language Studies. The corpus plus the tools for compiling online dictionaries were archived on the CLS local server with an off-shore back up. Currently, the corpus can be accessed online using the following link; <http://www.unima-cls.org/corpus/>. The corpus was only accessible at the CLS since the work on dictionaries was still in progress. The author of the thesis kept a copy of the word documents copies of the corpus for easy access while away from CLS. Citumbuka books were sought from the National Archives Library in Zomba and from speakers who had kept copies of Citumbuka books in their homes during the field-work.

The author of the current thesis is a native speaker. She also made wide consultations with other speakers in the course of writing this thesis. Relevant data from Citumbuka story books, *Fuko* newspaper, and natural conversations were also used. While visiting or staying in Citumbuka speaking communities, the author used that chance to record interesting data in a notebook. For example the use of causative suffixes as verbalizers, recipro-

Chapter 1

cal suffix in non-reciprocal situations, as well “autobenefactive” causatives were observed to be very common in daily conversations, inspiring the author to include them in her study of verbal derivation.

1.7. Structure of the thesis

The thesis is structured into ten chapters. Chapter one is an introduction. Chapter two discusses grammatical relations in Citumbuka. The chapter is crucial for the present investigation as it sets the criteria for identifying the object, core and non-core arguments and adjuncts in Citumbuka. The chapter also discusses prepositional phrases in Citumbuka and concludes that some are non-core arguments while others are mere adjuncts. Chapter two also investigates the function of the comitative *na* and concludes that Citumbuka is a “With-language”. Chapter three investigates object marking in Citumbuka and concludes that object marking in Citumbuka is largely optional. Only one object marker is allowed per verb. Object marking has a tendency of indicating definiteness and specificity.

Chapter four discusses passive derivational suffixes *-ik-* and *-i/w-* in Citumbuka. The suffix *-ik-* is more widely used and it also marks neuter-passive, and potential passive. While in the passive the agent is implied, in the neuter-passive it is deleted and therefore cannot be implied at all. The suffix *-ik* is also homophonous to the *-ik* causative which is discussed in chapter 6. Suffixation of the passive suffix in Citumbuka demotes the agent and introduces a new subject. The grammatical subject of the passive can be a logical object or the default agreement prefix marker *ku-* for impersonal passives. Impersonal passives can be derived from both transitive and intransitive verbs including unergative verbs. The chapter concludes that the passive in Citumbuka suppresses the agent but does not always promote the logical object to the subject position.

Chapter five discusses the reciprocal derivational suffix, *-an*, in Citumbuka. The reciprocal suffix has pluractional aspect and only attaches to transitive verbs. The suffix has a wide range of usages including deriving reciprocal, anticausative, associative (or collective), distributive and de-objective (or-depatientive/antipassive) expressions. In constructions with the reciprocal suffix there are several participants (or comparable parts) that are engaged in symmetrical activity or state of affairs. The depatientive parallels the impersonal passive discussed in chapter 4.

Chapter six discusses the applicative in Citumbuka. The applicative suffix, *-il* introduces an applied object (AO) with a range of functions: beneficiary, maleficiary, possessor, goal, locative (and source, path), instrument (and ingredients), judicantis. It also introduces non-object NPs: motive, sociative and manner. The AOs are always required and therefore core arguments.

They take over object properties of base objects which become non-core arguments. Double applicatives have been analyzed as instances of applicative reduplication.

Chapter seven discusses the causative derivational suffixes in Citumbuka. There are three causative derivational suffixes in Citumbuka, these are *-ik-*, *-y-* and *-isk-*. The suffix *-ik-* is the least productive while *-isk-* is the most productive form. The first two tend to be associated with direct causation, while *-isk-* tends to be associated with indirect causation. Double suffixation of the causative suffixes signifies multiple and/or distant causation. Chapter eight discusses the excessive (also known as the intensive) derivational suffix in Citumbuka, *-ísk-*. Doubling or tripling of the excessive marker signals degree of excessiveness.

Chapter nine investigates the ordering of the derivational suffixes in Citumbuka. It concludes that suffix order in Citumbuka is compositional and templatic. Chapter ten summarises and concludes the thesis and makes recommendations for further research.