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Verbal derivation and valency in Citumbuka

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8. Intensive/excessive

8.1. Introduction

The intensive marker serves to express intensity or quickness of action while an excessive form expresses the notion of ‘too much’ or that something is carried to excess (Doke 1935). In many Bantu languages, an intensive form is characterized by a derivational suffix that is akin to the causative suffix (Doke 1935:130). It is common among languages of the world to find affixes that mark both causation and intensity. Comrie (1985) reports that the causative-intensive polysemy is the most recurrent one. The common denominator shared by the two is that they both involve some external force (Li 1991, Kulikov 2001) and plurality of situations (Golovko 1993). Doke (1935) argues that although the causative and intensive affixes are alike, in reality they must be distinguished from each other. For instance, in Zulu, he points out that the intensive uses *-isisa* while the causative uses the form *-isa*. He further argues that it is true that there must be an etymological connection between the intensive and the causative, but their functions are clearly distinct and therefore, they must be treated as distinct forms. Following Doke (1935), I argue that the causative form and the intensive/excessive in Citumbuka should be treated as distinct forms.

8.2. Double intensive/ or excessive markers

Doubling of the intensive/excessive suffix implies a higher degree of intensity/or excessiveness. Below are some examples to illustrate this.

- | | | | |
|------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------|
| 7. a | Mwana | wa-ku-ly-a | sima. |
| | 1.child | 1.SM-Pres-eat-FV | 9.food |
| | ‘A child eats sima.’ | | |
| b | Mwana | wa-ku-ly-ésk-a | sima. |
| | 1.child | 1.SM-Pres-eat-Intens-FV | 9.sima |
| | ‘A child eats too much sima.’ | | |
| c | Mwana | wa-ku-ly-ésk-ésk-a | sima. |
| | 1.child | 1.SM-Pres-eat-Intens-Intens-FV | 9.sima |
| | ‘A child eats sima overly too much.’ | | |
| 8. a | Doda | li-ku-mw-a | phele. |
| | 5.man | 5.SM-Pres-drink-FV | 5.beer |
| | A man drinks beer. | | |
| b | Doda | li-ku-mw-ésk-a | phele. |
| | 5.man | 5.SM-Pres-drink-Intens-FV | 5.drink |
| | ‘A man drinks beer too much’ | | |
| c | Doda | li-ku-mw-ésk-ésk-a | phele. |
| | 5.man | 5.SM-Pres-drink-Intens-Intens-FV | 5.drink |
| | ‘A man drinks beer overly too much.’ | | |

In the examples above, doubling of the intensive morpheme increases the degree of intensity or excessiveness as (b) examples in (7-8) above show. The sentences with double intensive morpheme can be translated literally as ‘doing something too much too much.’ Intensive constructions can also be derived from causative verb stems. We illustrate this in the following examples:

- | | | |
|-------|-----------|-----------------------------------|
| 9. a | lya | eat |
| b | lyeska | feed |
| c | lyeskéska | feed too much |
| 10. a | ona | see |
| b | oneska | show |
| c | oneskéska | see too much/very very carefully, |
| 11. a | pola | cool down |
| b | pozg-a | make cool down |
| c | pozgéska | make cool down too much |

8.3. Conclusion

In this chapter, it has been argued that the excessive marker should be treated as being distinct from the causative marker in Citumbuka. It has been demonstrated that there are basically two differences between the intensive/excessive and the causative markers, the former does not introduce a new argument unlike the latter. Secondly, the former has a high accent on its vowel. While doubling of the causative marker entails double causativization, doubling of the intensive/excessive signals a higher degree of intensity/excessiveness.