Comparative Study of Eastern Bantu Narrative Texts

Steve Nicolle
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Abstract

This study of narrative texts from twelve Bantu languages spoken in eastern Africa reveals a number of discourse-level similarities together with previously undescribed differences. Discourse features investigated include the characteristics of different episodes, inter-clausal and inter-sentential connectives, participant reference (including the use of independent pronouns and demonstratives), tense and aspect, movement expressions (such as itive and ventive markers), information structure, adverbial and relative clauses, and reported speech. Of particular note are variations between the languages concerning the discourse functions of demonstratives and the expression of topic and focus, and evidence of a linguistic cycle affecting quotative markers in reported speech.
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<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>1., 2., etc.</td>
<td>noun class 1, noun class 2, etc</td>
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<tr>
<td>ITIVE</td>
<td>itive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1PL</td>
<td>first person singular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOC</td>
<td>locative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1SG</td>
<td>first person plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NARR</td>
<td>narrative tense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2PL</td>
<td>second person plural</td>
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<td>NEG</td>
<td>negative</td>
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<tr>
<td>2SG</td>
<td>second person singular</td>
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<td>P1</td>
<td>near past</td>
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<tr>
<td>3PL</td>
<td>third person plural (equivalent to noun class 2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>far past (Bena, Kabwa, Malila, Ekoti); intermediate past (Kwaya, Fuliiru)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3SG</td>
<td>third person plural (equivalent to noun class 1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>far past (Jita, Kwaya,); background tense (Fuliiru)</td>
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<tr>
<td>AGNT</td>
<td>agentive suffix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PASS</td>
<td>passive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANT</td>
<td>anterior aspect</td>
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<tr>
<td>PERS</td>
<td>persistive</td>
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<tr>
<td>APPL</td>
<td>applicative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PFV</td>
<td>perfective aspect</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASS</td>
<td>associative marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POSS</td>
<td>possessive</td>
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<tr>
<td>COM</td>
<td>comitative marker (‘and, with’)</td>
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<td>present tense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMP</td>
<td>complementizer</td>
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<td>PST</td>
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<td>reciprocal</td>
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<td>COP</td>
<td>copula</td>
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<td>REF</td>
<td>referential marker</td>
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<td>DEM_DIST</td>
<td>distal demonstrative</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL</td>
<td>relative marker</td>
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<td>proximal demonstrative</td>
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<tr>
<td>RM</td>
<td>referential marker</td>
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<tr>
<td>DEM_REF</td>
<td>referential demonstrative</td>
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<tr>
<td>RS</td>
<td>resultative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FV</td>
<td>final vowel</td>
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<td>subject concord</td>
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<td>sequential tense</td>
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<td>infinitive</td>
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<td>SUB</td>
<td>subjunctive</td>
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<tr>
<td>IPFV</td>
<td>imperfective aspect</td>
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<tr>
<td>VENT</td>
<td>ventive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITER</td>
<td>iterative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VR</td>
<td>verb root</td>
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1 Introduction

This paper compares narrative texts in a selection of Bantu languages from Mozambique, Tanzania, south-east Kenya, and the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo. The eastern Bantu languages\(^1\) are very similar as far as general typological parameters are concerned, but differ in a number of details, or ‘micro-parameters’ (see Marten, Kula and Thwala 2007; Van der Wal and Biberauer 2014). As Paoli notes below, there are advantages to comparing a small number of closely related languages:

Investigating linguistic systems that share the majority of their characteristics and minimally differ from one another in a limited and identifiable number of properties (in a similar fashion to two organisms that share most of their DNA and are differentiated by a few genes), offers the opportunity to zoom in on one variable, and observe, without the interference of ‘background noise’, all its possible realisations, and, crucially, only those ones which are admitted by general principles of the faculty of language. (Paoli 2014:146)

The researchers mentioned above are primarily concerned with morphosyntactic (micro-)parameters of variation, but their approach can be extended, I believe, to discourse-level phenomena. This paper investigates a number of discourse features of narrative texts, and is arranged as follows: After an overview of the languages studied and the classification of narrative texts in the present section, section 2 describes the characteristics of different episodes and the ways in which ‘paragraph’ boundaries are marked, including a discussion of different functions of tail-head linkage and the various expressions which function as thematic development markers in different languages. Section 3 describes clause linkage and connectives with discourse-level functions. Characters or ‘participants’ are an important element of narratives, and in section 4 I describe the different ways in which participants are introduced and referred to subsequently. The eastern Bantu languages exhibit a number of general similarities, such as the widespread use of demonstratives and much rarer and specialized uses of independent pronouns, but underlying these superficially similar systems of participant reference are some striking differences, particularly in the discourse-level functions of demonstratives. Section 5, written jointly with Helen Eaton, describes the use of verbal categories to distinguish the event-line from ‘background’ information, to indicate that events occur sequentially or simultaneously, and to highlight particular events. In section 6 I investigate a number of constraints on the order of constituents in sentences that only come to light when information structure (topic and focus) is studied in the context of whole texts. Section 7 describes the discourse-level functions of adverbial and relative clauses. In section 8 I show how reported speech is used in eastern Bantu narratives, and evidence is presented for a linguistic cycle affecting quotative markers. Lastly, the main findings are summarized in section 9.

1.1 Languages included in this study

Between 2011 and 2014 I worked with a number of colleagues to produce analyses of narrative texts in eight Bantu languages spoken in East Africa: five from Tanzania and one each from Kenya, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mozambique. The methodology was inductive, meaning that whole texts were analyzed to determine how particular discourse features were realized in each language. The individual analyses were also intended to be comparable. Descriptions of Bena and Malila by Helen Eaton and of Digo by me were produced first, and served as models for the other analyses, although authors were given licence to diverge from these models if they wished. The resulting papers were published as part of the SIL Language and Culture Documentation and Description series.

\(^1\)Eastern’ here indicates the geographical distribution of these Bantu languages in Africa rather than a specific genetic affiliation.
In addition to the eight languages described in the SIL Language and Culture Documentation and Description series, data from an additional four languages have been included in this study. Table 1 lists these twelve eastern Bantu languages. Unless otherwise stated, all examples in this study are taken from texts that were either published in the sources listed in Table 1 or used in their preparation. Where additional (unpublished) texts have been made available to me by the author, this is indicated by * and in the case of Digo, I referred to an additional five unpublished texts.

Table 1. Languages included in this study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Classificationa</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Data</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fuliiru</td>
<td>[fli] DJ63</td>
<td>South Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo</td>
<td>153 texts were studied; data were drawn from 11 folk tales, plus one first person and one third person narrative (1,000 clauses approximately)</td>
<td>Van Otterloo (2011; 2015)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kwaya</td>
<td>[kya] EJ251</td>
<td>Mara Rural District, Tanzania</td>
<td>10 lightly edited oral texts: 7 fictional, 3 personal; 8 climactic, 2 episodic (1,015 clauses)</td>
<td>Odom (2015)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suba-Simbiti</td>
<td>[ssc] EJ403</td>
<td>Mara Rural District, Tanzania</td>
<td>8 lightly edited oral texts: 4 fictional, 2 personal, 2 origin myths (513 clauses)</td>
<td>Masatu (2015)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kabwa</td>
<td>[cwa] EJ405</td>
<td>Mara Rural District, Tanzania</td>
<td>9 lightly edited oral texts and 2 written texts; 8 fictional and 3 factual (530 clauses)</td>
<td>Walker (2011)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rangi (Langi)</td>
<td>[lag] F33</td>
<td>Kondoa District, Tanzania</td>
<td>66 texts: 32 legends/anecdotes, 14 trickster tales, 11 magic tales, 7 animal tales, and 2 personal (3,200 clauses)</td>
<td>Stegen (2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mwani</td>
<td>[wmw] G403</td>
<td>Cabo Delgado Province and Quirimba archipelago, Mozambique</td>
<td>7 narrative texts</td>
<td>Floor 1998; 2005a; 2005b</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Examples in this paper are numbered consecutively, and so example numbers do not correspond to those used in the published sources. All examples are given in the orthographies used in the published sources.\

### 1.2 Types of narrative texts

For the purposes of this study, a narrative text will be defined as an oral or written account of a series of causally related events involving one or more participants, where a participant is a person or anthropomorphized creature that is capable of deliberately initiating and reacting to events.

Some of the texts investigated here are factual accounts of personal experiences of the narrator or of people known to the narrator, but most are fictional. Fictional narratives told in Africa are almost always fabulous tales with magical elements. These include stories about mischievous spirits, about animals which speak and outwit humans, and about people with amazing abilities to predict the future and control the present. Although it is fascinating to explore the worlds which these characters inhabit, and what these stories reveal about different cultures, the purpose of this paper is to investigate how narrators use the resources of their languages to create coherent and compelling narratives.

In the western literary tradition, a distinction is generally made between original, unique works of fiction and traditional stories (commonly known as folktales). Works of fiction, such as novels and films, are produced by individuals (authors and directors) who are responsible both for the content of a story and the way in which it is told. Folktales, on the other hand, belong not to individual storytellers but to the community as a whole. Although they can be told in a variety of styles, their content remains essentially the same from one telling to another. Many of the African stories investigated in this study occupy an intermediate point between works of fiction and folktales. Well-known folktales are told, but African narrators are free to add embellishments and to make changes; often, African narrators draw on traditions of storytelling with established conventions and characters (such the devious Hare and the evil stepmother) to create new stories. In this sense, African narrators are like musicians improvising on a popular theme, so that it is at once familiar and yet fresh.

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In examples from Jita and Kwaya, the symbol /:/ at the beginning of a verb indicates far past tense and the symbol / ^/ at the beginning of a verb indicates narrative tense with 3SG subjects. This is because the past anterior and the far past, and the 3SG form of the narrative and the 1SG form of the anterior are only distinguished through tone, which is not marked in the orthography. Thus, these symbols are used to differentiate the forms.

This is simply a working definition. The question of whether there are any essential or necessary characteristics of narratives, and if so what these are, is the subject matter of narratology, which looks at narratives from the perspective of philosophy and textual criticism (see for example Currie 2010).

Discussions of African oral literature can be found in Finnegan (1970) and Okpewho (1992).
2 Structure of eastern Bantu narrative texts

This section is concerned with the overall structure of narrative texts, that is, with the component parts of a text and the ways in which they are combined to form a coherent whole. Within a text it is possible to distinguish both episodes and paragraphs. Episodes are dependent on the content of the narrative itself; each episode serves a distinct purpose within the narrative as a whole. Thus, an orientation is identifiable because it serves the function within the story of introducing the major characters and setting the scene, and an inciting episode is identifiable because it serves the function of initiating the problem or situation upon which the story will hinge, and so forth. Paragraphs differ from episodes in that their purpose is to help the hearer or reader process the text. This is achieved by grouping together closely related material into a manageable chunk of information.\(^5\)

Although a text consists of different episodes and paragraphs, it forms a coherent whole. Coherence is indicated in various ways, including tail-head linkage (which indicates continuity either within or between paragraphs), and through the use of thematic development markers (which help to indicate significant new developments in a story).

2.1 Episodes in eastern Bantu narrative texts

Structurally, narratives can be divided into two (very broad) types: climactic and episodic. Most of the narratives used in this study are climactic. Climactic narratives often have a structure consisting of all or most of the following episodes:\(^6\)

- Orientation (or introduction) in which at least one major participant is introduced; the story theme may also be presented here, along with information such as the time and place in which the story takes place.
- Inciting episode (or complicating action) which presents the problem, conflict, or other situation upon which the story hinges; this is the point at which the event-line starts.
- Developmental (or pre-peak) episodes which develop the situation introduced in the inciting episode and move towards a resolution.
- Peak episode in which the situation introduced in the inciting episode and developed in the developmental episodes reaches a climax; the peak may describe the resolution of the problem or tension that has developed, but it may equally be the point at which the problem or tension reaches a state in which no resolution is possible.
- Denouement (also called the postpeak episode (Longacre 1996:36) or resolution) which contains fairly predictable material either describing events which happen after the peak or summarising the main events of the story.
- Conclusion (or coda) which brings the story to a close, for example by presenting the narrator’s perspective on the story or summarizing the outcome of the story; a formulaic ending may also be used.

Episodic narratives often include an orientation, inciting episode, denouement, and conclusion, but rather than a series of developmental episodes moving towards a peak, episodic narratives consist of a

\(^5\)Longacre (1976:276) states: “The paragraph is the developmental unit of discourse. It is the typical unit of argumentation or exhortation in hortatory discourse, of explanation and exposition in expository discourse, and of episode in narrative discourse.” I differ from Longacre in that I do not consider paragraphs to be the “typical unit” of episode. Episode boundaries and paragraph boundaries may coincide, but they need not. In some—particularly short—texts, a single paragraph may contain more than one episode. Conversely, in other—typically longer—texts, one episode may consist of a number of paragraphs.

\(^6\)This division is based on Longacre (1996:33–38), who in turn refers to Thrall, Hibbard and Holman (1961), although as Longacre (1996:34) notes, “the antecedent tradition goes back to classic times.”
series of self-contained episodes. These episodes often have parallel structures and subject matter and it
is their cumulative effect which is important. Each event may contain tension or a climax, but it need
not, and some episodes—in particular towards the end of the narrative—may be more important than
others.

2.1.1 Orientation

The orientation in fictional narratives is typically used to introduce at least one major participant and to
foreshadow the story theme. Participants are typically introduced in post-verbal position, often modified
by a quantifier such as ‘one’, and there is a past or far past form of an existential verb or copula; see §4.2
for details of the main participant introduction strategies.

Additional information may be provided about a participant who has just been introduced, which
foreshadows the theme of the story. In Makonde, the presentation of the key theme was a feature of all
the texts in the corpus, expressed using both independent and relative clauses. The following example is
from the orientation of a story in which the elephant tramples the nightjar's eggs because he is too big to
notice them and nightjar is too small to chase the elephant away:

Makonde (Leach 2015:5)
(1) Nnembo aju ni nkoko nkumene namene katika mu-mwitu uti

1.elephant 1.DEM COP 1.animal 1.big very concerning 18-bush all

pa-kati pa-vanyama na nalubwabwa ni shuni wa-ku-nyambikang-a namene.
16-among 16-animals and 1.nightjar COP 1.bird 1.ASS-INF-be_despised-FV very
‘The elephant is a huge animal, the biggest of all the animals of the bush—and the nightjar is a bird
of no significance at all.’

Malila, Jita, Kabwa, Kwaya, Suba-Simbiti, Rangi, and occasionally Fuliiru, also use independent
clauses to present additional information concerning the story theme. In Bena, Digo, and usually in
Fuliiru, such information is presented using a relative clause.

Bena (Eaton 2015a:7)
(2) A-a-li pw-a-li umuunu ye a-a-limile umugunda gwakwe ugwa madzebele

3SG-P2-be 16-P2-be 1.person 1.REL 3SG-P2-farm 3.field 3.his 3.ASS 6.maize
‘There was a person who farmed his maize field.’

The setting (time and place) of the story is often mentioned in the orientation, especially in factual
narratives. Since the orientation occurs before the event-line begins, it contains background material and
so tenseless copulas (such as ni below) and general past tenses are used rather than narrative or
consecutive tenses.

Digo (Nicolle 2015:3–4)
(3) Chisa ambacho n’nda-chi-semurir-a hivi sambi, ni chisa ambacho cha-ni-phah-a

7.story 7.which 1SG-FUT-relate-FV right now COP 7.story 7.which it.PST-me-get-FV

miaka minji yo-tsup-a na n’-chisa ambacho n’-cha kpweli.
4.years 4.many 4.REL.PST-pass-FV and COP-7.story 7.which COP-7.ASS true
‘The story which I will tell you now is a story which happened to me many years ago and it is a
story which is true.’
2.1.2 Inciting episode

The transition from the background information presented in the orientation to the start of the event-line occurs in the inciting episode. This transition is indicated linguistically by a combination of various features in eastern Bantu languages, typically including some or all of the following: a change of tense/aspect, a temporal point of departure, a connective or thematic development marker, and a movement expression.

All of these linguistic features are found in example (4) below. In Rangi, the past habitual á-áa is used in the orientation, but in the inciting episode this changes to the consecutive ka- (or occasionally the intermediate past a-á followed by the consecutive) which then continues to mark the event-line of the narrative (Stegen 2011:112–3). The inciting episode often begins with a temporal point of departure such as siku imwi ‘one day’, and in most Rangi narratives, the connective maa (‘then’) or its variant na occurs at the start of the first clause of the inciting episode, and sometimes at the start of each clause in the inciting episode (Stegen 2011:112–6). Note also the use of the itive movement expressions (glossed as ‘go’) in the verb forms ‘went and borrowed’ and ‘went and worked’.

Rangi (Stegen 2011:116)

(4) Maa siku i-mwi nkiku maa i-kiit-o-kazim-a sikeni kwa mw-evi
then 9.day 9-one 9.chicken then 9-CONS.go-REF-borrow-FV 9.needle 17.ASS 3-eagle

maa i-ka-hee-w-a. Maa i-ka-hee-w-e maa i-kiit-o-tumam-ir-a
then 9-CONS-give-PASS-FV then 9-CONS-give-PASS-sub then 9-CONS.go-REF-work-APPL-FV

mu-romo w-aachwe,
3-work 3-3sg.poss

‘Then one day, the chicken went and borrowed a needle from the eagle, and it was given it. And when it was given it, it went and did its work,’

A major participant which has already been introduced will often perform his or her first action in the inciting episode. In Rangi, this participant is usually referred to using a prenominal referential demonstrative ʉwo or avo (DEM+NP being the default order in Rangi), but two of the three occurrences of the proximal demonstrative outside of reported speech occur at the start of the inciting episode: ʉhu Bodo ‘this Bodo’ and ʉhu Laahɨ ‘this Laahɨ’ (Stegen 2011:260–1). In Digo, a participant mentioned at the start of the inciting episode is sometimes referred to using a postnominal proximal demonstrative; this is a very unusual form of participant reference since the default order in Digo is DEM+NP and this is virtually the only time outside of direct speech that proximal demonstratives occur in Digo narrative texts:

Digo (Nicolle 2015:4)

(5) Asichan a hinya a-phyi-a ku-endan-yendeck-a.
2.girls 2.DEM_PROX 3PL.PST-go-FV INF-ITIVE-walk-FV

‘These girls went to go and walk.’

2.1.3 Developmental episodes

The developmental episodes advance the situation introduced in the inciting episode, and lead (in a climactic narrative) to the peak. Episodic narratives consist of a series of episodes which, rather than leading in a linear fashion to a single peak episode, are each to some extent self-contained and often

parallel in structure. An episodic narrative can generally be shortened or lengthened by omitting or adding such episodes with very little effect on the structure of the narrative.

Developmental episodes are characterized by clauses marked for narrative or consecutive tense (see §5.1.1) and often linked through juxtaposition (see §3.1). Episode boundaries are often indicated by points of departure (see §2.3) or by over-specification of referents. The following Jita example taken from the start of a developmental episode illustrates a number of these features: a noun phrase is used in the first clause even though there has been no change of subject (over-specification of the referent), all the verbs are marked for narrative tense, and the clauses are juxtaposed.

Jita (Pyle and Robinson 2015:6–7)
(6) Omukaruka ̕naamusira mw-isambu, ̕naakinga,
old.man he.took.him[NARR] to-field he.arrived[NARR]
    ̕naasuka ridebhe rya obhuro
he.poured[NARR] sack of sorghum
‘The old man took him to the field, he arrived, he poured out a sack of sorghum…’

2.1.4 Peak episode

In a climactic narrative, the peak episode is the point at which the situation introduced in the inciting episode and advanced in the developmental episodes reaches a climax. The peak episode is not always marked linguistically in any of the eastern Bantu languages, and when it is marked, there is no consistent pattern apart from the fact that “something changes”. Where there are linguistic features characteristic of peak episodes, these may include some or all of the following:

• Repetition of clauses

Malila (Eaton 2015b:8)
(7) Bhakhazyʉngʉʉla bhakhazyʉngʉʉla fwanɨ zibhalile mu shizibha zyonti.
they went around they went around gosh they have gone in pond all
‘They went around and around, gosh, they had all gone into the pond.’

• The use of vivid lexical expressions such as lyeryo ‘immediately’, ideophones like dumbwi ‘splash’, and more informal style, such as mbwi’ yuvwe ‘as soon as it heard’ rather than the more formal iri akayuvwa (‘when he heard’) in the Fuliiru example below.

Fuliiru (Van Otterloo 2015:8)
immediately they struggle and they fell in that river quote splash

Ingoona mbwi’ yuvwe ulubi yanabaklya.
crocodile when it heard noise it ate them
‘Immediately they were struggling. They fell into the river, splash! The crocodile when it heard the noise it ate them.’

• Changes to the way tense and aspect are used, such as the change from narrative to anterior in Malila (see example 07 above), from the default narrative to the anterior or ka- consecutive in Makonde (Leach 2015:10–11), and from consecutive tense to present and/or past tense in Digo (Nicolle 2015:5–6). In Bena, the Peak episode may contain more occurrences of the connective neke plus the “consecutive subjunctive” verb form than in other episodes.

• Over-specification of referents, such as the use of a long descriptive noun phrase Mbodze na nduguye Matsosi (‘Mbodze and her sister Matsozi’) in Digo where a subject agreement marker alone would have sufficed (Nicolle 2015:5).

• A high proportion of direct speech compared to the rest of the narrative.
2.1.5 Denouement

The denouement often takes the form of a summary of the main events of the story or describes subsequent events which are generally of a fairly predictable nature. No particular linguistic features were found to distinguish the denouement from the developmental episodes in almost all of the languages investigated. The exceptions were in Digo and Makonde. In some Digo texts, major participants are referred to ‘using referential demonstratives’, as they often are in the orientation section but not elsewhere (Nicolle 2015:6). In Makonde, denouements in 6 out of 8 texts contain a high frequency of relative clauses relating to thematic material.

Makonde (Leach 2015:15)

(9) **kwamwaa nae andyika ndatimbanga ashilá shikukulu shikashimushu nae.**

‘because he went and spoiled that feast which not belong him.’

2.1.6 Conclusion (coda)

In most of the languages surveyed, the conclusion (or ‘coda’) may either summarize the outcome of the story or present the narrator’s perspective on the events. In Fuliiru, Rangi, and Bena most stories conclude with a moral or proverb, whereas in Makonde, “in the majority of cases, the moral or the teaching point is left implicit at the end of the narrative, or even if partially expressed, there is a good deal still left for the audience to think about.” (Leach 2015:15) In Bena and Malila, the narrator sometimes addresses the audience in the conclusion, either directly as in Bena *Na yuuhwe, vadzeela vangu, poodsili ing’ani dse twatwibelalila* (‘And we, my dear friends, there are things which we ignore’) or indirectly as in Malila, when the moral of a story is introduced with the phrase *Akhapango ikha khakutumanyizya kuti/kutiishi…* (‘This story teaches us that…’):

Malila (Eaton 2015b:9)

(10) **Akhapango ikha khakutumanyizya kutiishi abhamwitu anga pe bhali nu muzigo tubhavwaje.**

‘This story teaches us that if our companions have burdens, we should help them.’

Longacre (1996:38) divides the conclusion into ‘closure’ or the conclusion proper, which may include a moral, and ‘finis’ which is a formulaic ending which is not considered part of the structure of the narrative. In most of the languages studied, such a finis was optional, however, all of the Digo fictional texts contained a formulaic ending identical or very similar to *Hadisi na ngano ichisira na hipho* ‘The story and fable/riddle ends here’ (Nicolle 2015:6). In contrast, none of the Suba-Simbiti texts contained a formulaic ending (Masatu 2015:9).

2.2 The role of songs in eastern Bantu narrative texts

Songs occur in a number of the Fuliiru, Digo, Kabwa, Kwaya, Suba-Simbiti, Bena and Rangi fictional texts. The Kwaya and Digo corpora make particular use of songs, and will be discussed here. In both Kwaya and Digo, songs are used to indicate important developments in the story, and typically occur after the inciting episode in Digo and prior to the peak episode in Kwaya. They are sung by a major participant who is in trouble, either to explain the nature of the trouble or as a call for help. In the following song from a Kwaya text, the singer is a girl who has been tricked by her servant into swapping roles, and she is singing to alert her brother to the situation. Odom (2015:11) notes that “when this story was read by a Kwaya speaker he easily put a tune to the song and sang it.”
Kwaya (Odom 2015:12)

(11) Saau Saagusa omugaya arabheeye mwibure.
    Saau Saagusa servant she.has.become native

Saagusa omwibure arabheeye mugaya Saagusa
    Saagusa native she.has.become servant Saagusa

‘Saau Saagusa, the servant has already become the native. Saagusa, the native has already become
    the servant, Saagusa.’

The words ‘Saau Saagusa’ have no meaning for Kwaya speakers and do not come from any
    recognizable language. Another song in the Kwaya corpus uses words from Jita, which is a closely
    related language, and in another song most of the words are from another language which speakers of
    Kwaya were unable to identify. Songs in the Digo corpus also use meaningless words and words that are
    either from the related language Duruma or an archaic form of Digo (Nicolle 2015:7).

2.3 Paragraphs and points of departure

Paragraph breaks correspond to places in the text where there is a discontinuity of some kind:

• Between the orientation and the inciting episode. As noted in §2.1.2, this typically involves a
  change tense/aspect, a temporal point of departure, a connective or thematic development marker,
  or a movement expression.

• When major participants change location abruptly. If the movement from one location to another
  occurs over time and is treated as part of the event-line (for example a description of a journey) this
  need not correspond to a paragraph break.

• When a change of time is mentioned. A change of location entails a change of time, but even when
  the location has not changed, the narrative may jump forwards (or less frequently backwards) in
  time.

• Closed conversations (where two or occasionally more participants talk with little intervening
  narration) are treated as single events, and if long enough may constitute paragraphs in their own
  right. (The typographical convention of placing each turn in a conversation on a separate line masks
  the fact that, conceptually, closed conversations constitute single events.) Similarly, long
  monologues may also be treated as paragraphs.

• Before the conclusion. The conclusion contains background (non-event-line) material and is usually
  contained in a separate paragraph from the preceding foreground material.

    Certain linguistic features are typically found at the beginning of new paragraphs. Features
    pertaining to connectives, participant reference, and tense and aspect will be dealt with in the
    corresponding sections; in this section we will look at points of departure.

    In order to smooth the discontinuities of a narrative, a language may use a ‘point of departure’
    (PoD) where there is a discontinuity to bridge the two sections (Levinsohn 2003, §3.1). PoDs are words
    or phrases which occur sentence-initially, or immediately after a sentence-initial connective (connectives
    are not considered to be PoDs). To function as a PoD, a constituent must create a link between what has
    just been said and what is about to follow, so that the discontinuity in the text can be both recognized
    and overcome by the hearer or reader. PoDs may be referential, temporal, or spatial, corresponding to
    discontinuities in participants, time, and location. This use of the term PoD is somewhat restricted, in
    that it stipulates that PoDs only occur at points where there is a discontinuity, and therefore their
    function is to maintain continuity in the text as a whole. PoDs are more common in some languages than
    in others; for example, they appear at almost all paragraph transitions in Fuliru, but in Bena only
    seventeen out of fifty non-text-initial paragraphs start with a PoD (Eaton 2015a:12). Temporal PoDs are
    very common whilst spatial are very rare across all the texts; referential PoDs are not found in all of the
    languages, and only rarely in some.
2.3.1 Temporal and spatial points of departure

Temporal PoDs are the most common type of PoD in the text corpora. Most temporal PoDs indicate abrupt switches from one time to another in a narrative. General temporal expressions such as ‘One day’ can be used once the event-line has been established, to imply a change of time from one day to another day, or they can be used to begin the event-line, as in the following example in which Rusiku rumwi ‘One day’ begins the inciting episode:

Kabwa (Walker 2011:10)
(12) Akare hayo Wang’iti na Wakatuju bhanga bhasaani.
long_ago there Hyena COM Hare were[HAB] friends

Rusiku rumwi Wakatuju akamuraarika Wang’iti bhagye obhugeni.
day one Hare he.invited[CONS] Hyena they.go[SUBJ] on.journey
‘Long ago Hyena and Hare were friends. One day Hare invited Hyena to go on a journey.’

Other temporal PoDs relate the time of the new paragraph to that of the preceding events in a more specific way, such as the following from Digo: Huyu mchetu ariphogbwira mimba ‘That woman when she became pregnant’, Juma na chisiku ‘After a week and a bit’, and Ligundzu ra phiri ‘On the second morning’.

Temporal PoDs can also be used to renew a temporal reference. In the Kabwa corpus, orusiku ruyo ‘that day’ (referring to the current day in the narrative using a referential demonstrative) introduces important background information before the event-line resumes. The change from foreground to background information represents a discontinuity in the text. Similarly, in another text, the reduplicated referential demonstrative ruyoruyo ‘that same (day)’ indicates renewal (Walker 2011:11).

Spatial PoDs are very rare in all the text corpora, and entirely absent from the Suba-Simbiti and Makonde corpora. A change of location involves a certain amount of time, and therefore most spatial PoDs are simultaneously temporal PoDs. Phrases such as Hinyo atu ariphofika hipho ‘Those people when they arrived there’ (Digo) and Anu bhaakingire munjira ‘When they arrived on the path’ (Kwaya) express not just the place at which the participants arrive, but also use the arrival as a temporal reference point.

Locative phrases usually occur after the clause nucleus, but they can be fronted. However, not every fronted locative phrase functions as a PoD. One function of fronting oblique sentence constituents is to give prominence to the sentence-final constituent. The following Jita example is paragraph initial. Rusiku rumwi ‘One day’ is a temporal PoD but mu-chaaro cheebhwe omwo ‘in their land there’ is not a spatial PoD for two reasons. First, it is not sentence-initial since it is preceded by Rusiku rumwi ‘One day’. Second, the reason it has been fronted is to leave obhuregesi ‘wedding’ in the sentence-final focus position (see §6.2); the point is that there was a wedding, not that the wedding took place in their land. In the second sentence, mu-bhuregesi eyo ‘in that wedding’ has been fronted, not to indicate a new paragraph, but so that the verb phrases jing’oma nijirira ‘drums they cried’ and orukuri nirukongoja ‘flute it soothed’ occur in the sentence-final focus position.

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As Helen Eaton has pointed out (p.c. 27/09/13), ‘one day’ in narrative texts need not refer to a particular day or to a specific day (Monday, market day, etc.) and so its function is solely at the discourse level.
On day there in their land, there was a wedding. So in the wedding there, the drums cried, the flute soothed.

2.3.2 Referential Points of Departure

Referential PoDs are topicalized NPs which are “left-dislocated”; that is, they are shifted to the start of the sentence. Although Bantu languages have canonical SVO word order, subjects can nevertheless be left-dislocated (see §6.2 for further discussion); this is typically indicated by a pause between the subject and the verb, or the use of spacers (a non-argument, like an adverbial, which intervenes between the subject and the following verb). In Makonde, there is also a “trace” in the clause nucleus referring back to the referential PoD. The following example starts a new paragraph due to a discontinuity of participants and the NP ‘the elder himself’ modified by the relative clause ‘who had called a feast’ functions as a PoD; the proximal demonstrative aju in the following clause is the “trace” which refers anaphorically to the PoD:

Makonde (Leach 2015:22)

(14) Napane nang’olo mwene ave ashamële shikukulu,
now elder himself being who.had.called feast

aju kumwona shingula aijá dimembe dindigwanga.
this saw.him hare that horns they.have.fallen

‘Now the elder himself, he who had called the party, this one saw that the hare’s horns had fallen off.’ (Free translation SN)

Referential PoDs can occur when the subject has changed in Fuliiuru, Jita, Kabwa, and Malila. In Digo, however, referential PoDs usually involve the repetition of a referring expression, even when the expression was the subject of the previous clause (hence, referential PoDs in Digo result in over-specification of referents). No referential PoDs were recorded in the Kwaya text corpus.

2.4 Tail-head linkage

Tail-head linkage occurs when information from one clause is repeated at the start of the following clause, and the main verb is repeated, either verbatim or as a paraphrase. Most eastern Bantu languages make use of tail-head linkage to maintain continuity at various points in a narrative, and in many texts tail-head linkage has the additional function of highlighting the following event. Eaton (2015b:13) notes that tail-head-linkage is a feature of oral texts and does not occur in the written texts in the Malila corpus. Whether this is true of other languages is difficult to ascertain from the available data, as most texts in the corpora are oral.

Maintaining continuity within a text is a matter of relating what has just been said and what is about to follow. This can happen both between paragraphs, where despite discontinuity at a local level each successive paragraph is related to the preceding one, and within a single paragraph. Eastern Bantu languages differ over whether tail-head linkage is used to bridge discontinuities (thereby indicating paragraph breaks) or not, and whether or not episodes or paragraphs introduced using tail-head linkage contain thematically important material.

In Makonde, tail-head linkage is often used at the start of a new episode to slow the action down before a significant development in the story. In the following example, the verb kuudukila ‘to sweat’ is
repeated at the start of the episode in which the hare’s sweat causes his horns to fall off, which is a crucial event as it causes him to be recognized and killed:

Makonde (Leach 2015:28)

(15) Nae kwinjilinneu kuvina, kuvina shingula mpaka kuudukila.

Paanjenge kuudukila dimembe adilá kwanjanga kunyang'anyuka mwaaw wakuvina namene na liduva allá, dimembe adilá kutwala kugwanga kujaikanga.

‘So Hare joined straight in with the dancing; he danced until he sweated.

But when he began to sweat, those horns started to melt because of dancing so much and the hot sun, those horns fell off and were ruined.’

In contrast tail-head linkage constructions in Jita do not signal discontinuities and thus do not indicate paragraph breaks. In the example below, the dependent clauses Ejire aakinga (‘When he arrived’) and Ejire aamara (‘When he finished’) use the perfective aspect, whilst the main clauses naabhakeesya (‘he greeted them’) and naayika (‘he said’) use the narrative tense.

Jita (Pyle and Robinson 2015:12)

(16) Mbe rusiku rumwi, Wang’oko naagenda yiika ewa Wamutuuju. Ejire aakinga yiika ewa Wamutuuju, naabhakeesya. Ejire aamara okubhakeesya kisikisi, naayika…

‘So one day chicken went to Hare’s house. When he arrived at Hare’s house, he greeted them. When he had greeted them properly, he said…’

Digo has two kinds of tail-head linkage constructions: First, a new paragraph may begin by repeating information from the previous paragraph using a relative clause construction consisting of the class 16 relative marker pho, as in Isengbwa ariphosikira hivyo (‘His father when he heard this’). This tail-head linkage does not seem to indicate that what follows is particularly important, and is probably simply an instance of the more general category of temporal PoD, since the same structure also occurs when the information is new. Second, within a sentence, information can be repeated using a tail-head construction in which a verb is repeated using the anterior aspect. Since this occurs sentence-internally, it obviously does not indicate a paragraph break; its purpose seems to be primarily to describe the movement of participants (‘having arrived,’ ‘having left,’ etc.) without starting a new paragraph.

Digo (Nicolle 2015:21)

(17) Phahi tsungula wa-kpweds-a a-ka-fik-a hipho wa-amb-a…

so hare 3SG.PST-come-FV 3SG-ANT-arrive-FV 16.DEM_REF 3SG.PST-say-FV

‘So the hare came and having arrived there he said…’

2.5 Thematic development markers

Thematic development markers (TDMs) indicate important steps in reaching the story’s objective. They do not necessarily signal discontinuities of time, place, action or participants, and can therefore be found at various places within a paragraph (not just at the beginning or end). They do not occur in the orientation, because the objective of the story has not been established at this point.

To illustrate the function of TDMs, we will consider the use of the connective aphano (‘then’) in Eko. A narrative text in Eko with occurrences of aphano highlighted can be found in Appendix 1. Aphano starts sentences 6 and 17, and also occurs in 20b and 25c (we ignore the use of aphano in 12b, 25j and 28d since these are in direct speech). In this story, Lion has a daughter who refuses to speak, and so he promises her in marriage to whoever succeeds in making her speak. In each of these places where aphano occurs, the following clause describes an important event in solving the problem of how to make the daughter speak:

• Lion’s response in 6 is especially important as it establishes the conditions under which someone may marry the girl, namely, by making her speak.
• When Hare goes to the field with the girl (17), this is very important because that is the place where he succeeds in making her speak.

• Hare’s actions in 20b are important because they provoke the girl to speak.

• Finally, in 25c, aphano introduces the most important event of all, when the girl speaks.

Some Bantu languages, such as Digo, Jita and Kwaya, do not appear to make use of TDMs. In those languages which do have TDMs, they can take various forms, notably temporal connectives derived from locative demonstratives or locative relative markers, demonstratives referring to participants, and relative clauses. The Ekoti TDM aphano (‘then’) is a temporal connective derived from a class 16 locative demonstrative. Similarly, in Kabwa, the class 16 proximal demonstrative hanu (‘here’ or ‘now’) seems to function as a TDM, as it “introduces a new and important development in the plot of the story” (Walker 2011:17). In Suba-Simbiti, two demonstrative forms bhoono (‘now’—a temporal connective) and hano (‘when’—a subordinating conjunction) both function as TDMs, occasionally in combination (bhoono hano); however they do not function exclusively as TDMs, as both forms are found in the orientation and denouement of some texts, and important developments in the peak episode are more likely to be indicated with the discourse marker mbe. This may indicate that bhoono and hano are intermediate between TDMs and text-structuring connectives (see §3.3 below). Similarly, in Bena the connective neke (‘then’) functions as both a TDM and to introduce events that are contingent on a previous event, and in Malila the TDM takes the form of the class 16 relative pronoun pe, which also functions as a temporal connective usually glossed as ‘then’ (Eaton 2015b:13).

In Fuliiru, important thematic developments are indicated by the use of distal (or ‘remote’) demonstratives to refer to participants in the narrative, whilst new but less important developments are indicated by referring to participants with proximal demonstratives. Proximal demonstratives are used to indicate relatively predictable developments, whereas distal demonstratives indicate critical developments, and so perhaps only the distal demonstratives should be termed TDMs. For a detailed account of the functions of these demonstrative forms, see Van Otterloo (2015, §4.1 and 4.2).

Languages also differ in how frequently TDMs usually occur. For example, Fuliiru narratives may contain as many as twenty demonstratives functioning as TDMs, whereas in Tembo, which is closely related to Fuliiru, demonstratives functioning as TDMs typically occur between one and four times in narratives of similar length. In Bena, neke occurs on average six times per narrative, but does not always function as a TDM (Eaton 2015a:16).

3 Connectives

The languages in this survey vary in terms of the variety of connectives used in narrative texts. Some languages, such as Digo and Suba-Simbiti, use a wide variety of connectives; in Suba-Simbiti nine different connectives are found inter-sententially and five different connectives are found within sentences. Other languages use far fewer connectives; Bena and Malila use only five inter-sentential connectives each, of which most occur infrequently.

Cognate connectives (forms with the same or similar form which share a common etymology) do not necessarily have the same functions. For example, in Bena neke (‘then’) introduces a main clause whilst the class 16 relative pronoun pe (‘when, after’) introduces a temporal relative clause; however, in Malila the class 16 relative pronoun pe (‘then’) introduces a main clause whilst the class 14 relative pronoun we (‘when, after’) introduces a temporal relative clause. In this paper, rather than discussing specific connectives in individual languages, I shall instead describe general patterns.

3.1 Juxtaposition and the use of na (‘and’)

The most common way of co-ordinating sentences and clauses in eastern Bantu narratives is by juxtaposition. For example, in Digo, only about one sentence in seven starts with a connective, and in Kwaya it is one sentence in six. Juxtaposed clauses may express various relations, as the following example from Makonde illustrates:
Makonde (Leach 2015:34)

(18) Shuni do: “Nangu mwanda, nkongwe wandikulakela ajo, mali anikulakela ala.”

bird thus I journey wife whom I leave you this riches that I leave you these

“The bird said, “I need to go, [but] I’m leaving this wife for you, [and] I’m leaving all these good things for you.’”

Since juxtaposition is the norm, connectives are used with specific functions. This applies to all connectives, including the comitative marker na and cognate forms, which is usually glossed as ‘and’ or ‘with’. Although na is one of the most widespread connectives in eastern Bantu languages, it is nonetheless rare in narrative texts: in Kabwa, only one out of five texts uses inter-clausal na; in Malila, two out of six texts have inter-clausal na; in Suba-Simbiti na occurs only four times in the entire text corpus; and in Makonde its frequency varies between approximately one sentence in seven in one text to three texts in which inter-clausal na does not occur at all. In Kwaya and Digo, na occurs primarily in direct speech (in Digo all but one of the occurrences of na occurs in direct speech).

Given that na has such a restricted distribution, when it does occur, its occurrence indicates that a particular relation holds between the conjoined clauses. Three relations in particular are signaled by the presence of na: 1) it connects non-sequential events, when the norm is for events in narrative texts to occur sequentially; 2) it introduces the most important event in a sequence of events, or gives prominence to a whole conjunct; and 3) it indicates contrast between participants in conjoined clauses, as in the following example:

Makonde (Leach 2015:43–44)

(19) Nnembo aju ni nkoko nkumene namene katika mumwitu uti pakati pavanyama

Elephant this it.is animal big very about in.bush all among the.animals

na Nalubwabwa ni shuni wakunyambikanga namene.

but Nightjar it.is bird of.being.despised very

‘The elephant is the biggest of all the animals of the bush and [whereas] Nightjar is a bird, of no significance at all.’

3.2 Adversatives and concessives

Contrast can be (and often is) expressed through juxtaposition or by clauses joined with na as in example (19) above. However, contrast can also be expressed by specific connectives which indicate that the clause which they introduce counters another idea, either by directly contradicting an idea which has been explicitly expressed (in the case of adversatives) or by countering an inference or expectation generated by other material (in the case of concessives). Whereas some languages make use of a variety of adversative and concessive expressions (such as English but, although, nevertheless, however, instead, on the other hand), adversatives and concessives in eastern Bantu languages are typically few in number and infrequent.

In Suba-Simbiti there is only one adversative or concessive, kasi (‘but’), which occurs in only three texts. In two of these, kasi indicates that the following clause contains surprising or unexpected events. In the other text, kasi is used to indicate a contrast between two wives:

Suba-Simbiti (Masatu 2015:13)

(20) Omöntö uyö a-a-hansh-irë uwömwe

1.person 1.DEM_REF 3SG-PST-love-PROX 1.one

kasi uwöndë oora te-ya-a-mo-hansh-irë hë.

but 1.other 1.DEM_DIST NEG-3SG-PST-3SG-love-PROX NEG

‘That person loved one (wife) but he didn’t love the other.’
Makonde has a concessive *kanji*; where *kanji* expresses direct contradiction (rather than contradicting an implicit proposition), the clause which it introduces is more important than the preceding clause, as in the following example:

Makonde (Leach 2015:38)

(21) Litunu *namu* Nashove, vanu *ava* kudyavalananga

Hyena and Pied Crow people these they were friends

*kanji* Nashove *hashiwanawananga* vila.
but Pied Crow he was not going around only

‘Hyena and Pied Crow were friends, but Pied Crow was not happy in their friendship.’

The only adversative or concessive in Kwaya (out of seventeen connectives found in the Kwaya text corpus) is *rakiini*, which is borrowed from Swahili *lakini* which in turn is derived from the Arabic conjunction *lakin* (‘but’). Digo, Kabwa, Malila, Bena and Rangi also have connectives cognate with *lakini*. A number of these languages also use another adversative connective. Malila *ileelo* (‘but’) and Bena *lino* (‘but, now’) do not appear to be borrowed and may express less direct contrast than the term that is cognate with Swahili *lakini*. Digo *ela* (‘but’) is probably derived—through Swahili—from the Arabic preposition *illa* meaning ‘except/but for/apart from’; there is no noticeable difference in meaning between *ela* and *lakini*. The Rangi connective *maa* expresses consecutive events in clause-initial position but indicates a “new direction” in a narrative in second position in a clause, where it can usually be translated as ‘however’ (Stegen 2011:229). In Ekoti, the connective *masi* (‘but’) is derived from Portuguese *mas* (see line 7b in Appendix 1).

The language in this study with the largest inventory of concessives is Jita with *nawe*, *tari* and *lakini*, all of which are translated as ‘but.’ *Nawe*, which can be used both inter-clausally and inter-sententially, is the most common. *Tari* occurs only once in the corpus in a speech clause. One possible reason for the greater variety of concessives in Jita as opposed to the other languages studied is that larger inventories of concessives tend to occur in languages spoken by communities with frequent and prolonged contact with outsiders, some of whom learn the language as adults, whereas languages with small inventories of concessives tend to be spoken by small, isolated communities with tight social networks. Within the Mara Region, Kabwa has a population of 14,000, Suba-Sibiti 113,000 and Kwaya 115,000; Jita, on the other hand, has a population of over 205,000 (2005 figure cited in Ethnologue 17th edition) and speakers of other Mara Region languages are more likely to learn Jita than Jita speakers are to learn other languages (except Swahili and the local Language of Wider Communication Sukuma).

### 3.3 Text-structuring connectives

A number of the languages in the survey have connectives which are used to signal some kind of discontinuity within the text, such as a paragraph break, or a resumption of the event-line after background information or a long stretch of direct speech, rather than (or in addition to) expressing logical relations between propositions (such as contrast, cause, consequence, or consecutive occurrence). Such connectives may at first glance appear similar to Thematic Development Markers (see §2.5 above); but since their use does not correlate with important developments in a narrative, they are treated as a distinct category in this study and in the individual narrative discourse write-ups.

As an illustration, consider the Digo connectives *phahi* and *ndipho*. These are sometimes used to indicate logical relations between propositions: *phahi* may indicate a consequence relation (and can be translated as ‘so’) and *ndipho* may indicate a consecutive relation (translated as ‘then’). However, *phahi*
and *ndipho* often mark new paragraphs without expressing any logical relation. Because they almost always occur at the beginning of paragraphs and do not consistently indicate important developments in the story, their primary function is to structure the text rather than to indicate logical relations or important thematic developments.

Similarly, the most frequent use of *napanelo* (‘then, so, now’) in Makonde is to mark the start of new episodes, notably the inciting episode (Leach 2015:6–7). *Napanelo* is also used to highlight important information, such as the introduction of a new participant (which can also be viewed as a kind of discontinuity). The fact that it occurs in background information, and also in direct speech indicates that its primary function is to structure the text, rather than to mark thematic developments.

The most common function of text-structuring connectives in the languages surveyed is to resume the event-line after background material or direct speech. Connectives with this primary function include *bai* in Makonde and *basi* in Malila (borrowed from Swahili). In Kabwa, *bhoono* (‘so, now’) marks transitions from background material, speech, or song back to the event-line, and occasionally from the event-line to background material, although two out of six texts do not use *bhoono* at all (Walker 2011:19–20). The example below illustrates the use of *bhoono* to transition between foreground and background material. The story concerns the building of a bridge to replace an old ‘Roman’ bridge; various foreigners tried and failed to rebuild it, and then the story continues:

(22) Kabwa (Text H6 Bridge)


‘Then Canadians came and they too failed. **Now** Julius Nyerere was the president of our country then. **So** he found another tribe of white men called Italians. Italians came to the Roman bridge since the foundations of the Roman bridge were sound. **So** they started to build. They came with their own language; every country has its own language. **So** the Italians came and they worked at night.’

In Jita, there are two text-structuring connectives: *mbe* (‘so’) and *woori* (‘now’). *Mbe* seems to have a general function of indicating discontinuity; it usually coincides with a paragraph break but can also indicate the resumption of the event-line after background material (Pyle and Robinson 2015:15–16). *Woori* has a wider variety of uses; as well as marking the beginning of paragraphs, it marks transitions between foreground and background material, and can be placed between a verb and its object so that the object is postposed and receives identificational focus (ibid. 16–18).

4 Participant reference

Following Dooley and Levinsohn (2001) and Levinsohn (2003), the term ‘participant’ is used to refer to any character in a narrative text which plays some kind of active role in the story.10 Two broad categories of participants can be distinguished: major and minor. Major participants “are active for a large part of the narrative and play leading roles” (Dooley and Levinsohn 2001:119). They typically receive some specific introduction and perform the roles of protagonist (the character which initiates

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10This use of the term ‘participant’ differs from that of Werth (1999), for whom participants are “the people who function in the discourse world—language users—and who are busy negotiating discourses” in contrast to ‘characters’ which are “the people that the participants people the text world with.” (Werth 1999:189, cited in Stegen 2011:245). Hence, what we refer to as participants are equivalent to Werth’s characters.
most of the action) and antagonist (the character which reacts to the events initiated by the protagonist). Most major participants are present and active throughout all or most of the narrative, but some are present in only one or two episodes whilst nonetheless playing an important and active role during this time; such participants are termed ‘episodic major participants’. Minor participants “are activated briefly and lapse into deactivation.” (Dooley and Levinsohn ibid.) They are often referred to for the first time without any specific introduction, or are introduced as objects of a verb, and they are only present for short periods and usually play a more passive role. All participants are active to some degree; in contrast, ‘props’ are passive characters or objects which do not play an active role in the story (Grimes 1975:43ff).

Participants need to be introduced into the narrative, and then referred to subsequently (or ‘tracked’) as the narrative develops. The ways in which a participant is referred to may depend on a number of factors, such as whether it is a major or minor participant, and where in the narrative the reference occurs, including whether it occurs within or at the beginning of a paragraph, and the kind of episode—orientation, inciting, developmental, peak, or denouement—in which it occurs. In this section, after noting the different kinds of expressions which can be used to refer to participants in eastern Bantu languages, we will describe the ways in which participants are introduced, reactivated after an absence, and tracked. This section concludes with a comparative analysis of pronouns and demonstratives in eastern Bantu languages.

4.1 Nominal forms in eastern Bantu languages

The most common nominal forms used to refer to participants in the sample texts are:

- proper names such as Matsozi;
- descriptive noun phrases such as zimu ‘ghost’ and mutu wa kani ‘stubborn person’ (Digo);
- noun phrases containing a demonstrative such as rira zimu ‘that ghost’ and yuya wa kani ‘that stubborn one’ (literally: that of stubborn);
- noun phrases containing a relative clause such as mnwenga ambaye kala ana kani ‘one who was stubborn’ (Digo);
- independent pronouns (also referred to as ‘self standing pronouns’) referring to animate entities, such as we ‘she/he’ (Simbiti) and emphatic pronouns such as naanye ‘I’ (Kwaya);
- additive pronouns, such as naye (Digo; see §4.4.2 for a discussion);
- prefixes\textsuperscript{11} referring to the subject such as ri- in richifika ‘it arrived’ (referring to the ghost) and wa- in wahenda ‘he did’ where wa- combines reference to a human subject with the past tense marker, or referring to the object such as mu- in amurye ‘eat him’ (Digo).

4.2 Introduction of participants

Participants can be introduced either into a new narrative, as part of the orientation, or they can be introduced into a narrative which has already been established. Major participants are typically introduced in the orientation, but may also be introduced in subsequent episodes; minor participants are typically referred to after the orientation without any formal introduction. Dooley and Levinsohn (2001:119) describe the difference between the way major and minor participants are introduced as follows:

\textsuperscript{11}Subject and object prefixes are also referred to in the literature on Bantu languages as subject and object markers, agreement markers, concord markers, incorporated pronouns, and prefix pronouns. Subject prefixes agree in terms of person/number or noun class with the subject and are obligatory in most tense and aspect forms; object prefixes are optional (see Bearth 2003:122–6 for an overview).
Major participants commonly have a formal introduction, whereas minor participants do not. A FORMAL INTRODUCTION is linguistic material that instructs the hearer not only to activate the participant, but also to be prepared to organize a major part of the mental representation around him or her. This prominence can be signaled either on the level of the proposition (through presentational or other nonactive sentences) or on the level of the concept (e.g., with a special indefiniteness marker).

Four main strategies for introducing participants are found in eastern Bantu languages: locative inversion, existential verb plus a suffixed locative clitic, existential verb, and verb of arrival; all of these involve post-verbal subjects or obliques. Bena uses a mixed construction in which two existential verbs occur in sequence, followed by a post-verbal subject. The four main strategies and the mixed construction will be illustrated below, along with some minor strategies.

### 4.2.1 Locative inversion

In locative inversion, a verb (usually ‘be’ or a copula) takes a locative subject marker, and the participant being introduced occurs post-verbally. Digo, Fuliiru and Rangi use locative inversion to introduce major participants.

In Fuliiru, the usual locative subject marker is class 16 ha-, although class 18 mu- can be used when preceded by a class 18 locative phrase indicating the location in which the narrative is set.

Fuliiru (Van Otterloo 2011:492)


16-P3 COP-RS-FV 1-young_man 1-one 1-P2-want-FV INF-marry-FV 1-woman

‘There was a certain young man (who) wanted to marry a woman.’

Fuliiru (Van Otterloo 2011:492)

(24) Mu=ki-shuka mw-āli ri-ir-i i=ki-nyuni ki-hamu bweneene.

18-PST COP-RS-FV AUG 7-bush 18-P3 COP-RS-FV 7-large very_much

‘In the bush there was a very large bird.’

In Rangi, only class 17 ku- is used to introduce participants, and this provides subject agreement on two verbs: ‘be’ and ‘have’, unless a comitative marker is used (see below).

Rangi (Stegen 2011:104)

(25) Aho kalì ku-a-vij-āa kw-a-ti̵te ...

16-DEM_REF long_ago 17-PST-be-HAB 17-PST-have

‘Long ago there was…’

In Digo, class 17 ku- is the usual locative class used to introduce participants, and the verb is either kala ‘be’ or henda ‘do’ (functioning in this construction as an intransitive copula).

Digo (Nicolle 2015:26)

(26) Hipho kare ku-a-hend-a mutu na mchewe

16-DEM_REF long_ago 17-PST-DO-FV 1.person COM 1.his_wife

‘Long ago there was a man and his wife...’

Occasionally class 16 pha- or class 18 mu- occur in Digo, and other verbs can be used (so long as these are unaccusative, in which the participant being introduced has the role of ‘theme’). In the following example, where an episodic major participant is introduced, the verb tsupa ‘pass’ is used with class 16 subject agreement:
Since subject agreement on the verb is with a locative noun class rather than the noun class of the participant being introduced, the participant is not the grammatical subject of the clause. This accounts for the fact that, in Digo and Rangi, the participant can occur optionally as part of an oblique phrase introduced by the comitative marker na. In Rangi, there is only one verb with a class 17 subject marker when the comitative marker is used, instead of the usual two verbs.

Jita, Kabwa, Kwaya, Malila and one Suba-Simbiti text introduce major participants using an existential verb plus a suffixed locative clitic. The participant is expressed as a post-verbal subject and the verb contains a subject prefix which agrees with the noun class of this post-verbal subject. The first example below occurs in exactly the same form in both Jita and Kwaya. For further discussion of Suba-Simbiti, see §6.4.

In Makonde and Ekoti, major participants are introduced as post-verbal subjects following an existential verb form. In these constructions there is no locative element.

Now there was an animal...
4.2.4 Mixed constructions

Bena, has a mixed construction in which two existential predicates occur in sequence, followed by a post-verbal subject. The first existential predicate agrees with the subject and the second has a locative subject marker in either class 16 or 17: *Aali pwali umuunu* (*There was a man*), *Aali kwali umuunu yuminga* (*There was an old man*), *Vaali pwali...* (*There were...*) etc.

Bena (Eaton 2015a:46)
(34) **A-a-li**  

3sg-p2-be 16.r2-be 1.person

‘There was a man.’

4.2.5 Verb of arrival

After the orientation, a participant may be introduced into a narrative using a verb such as ‘arrive’, ‘come’ or ‘appear’, typically with a post-verbal subject. In Fuliiru, the verb takes locative agreement, but in all the other languages surveyed the verb agrees with the post-verbal subject (exemplified below by Rangi):

Fuliiru (Van Otterloo 2011:109)
(35) **ha-ka-yij-a**  

16-PST-come-FV 13.birds 13.many

‘there came many birds.’

Rangi (Stegen 2011:418)
(36) **Sikʉ ɨmwɨ ma a-kʉj-a**  

9.day 9.one however 3sg.pst-come-FV 1.youth 1.one

‘One day however came one young man.’

4.2.6 Other ways of introducing major participants

The strategies described above are the most common ways in which major participants are introduced in the orientations of narratives, but other strategies are possible. Major participants can be introduced as pre-verbal subjects, typically when they are well-known (either real individuals known to the audience or typical characters from folktales), as in the Kwaya example below, but also when this is not the case, as in the following Fuliiru example.

Kwaya (Odom 2015:21)
(37) **Ng’wena na Mutuuju :bha-a-ri-ga**  

crocodile COM hare 3pl-p3-cop-hab 3pl-do:p2 14.friendship

‘Crocodile and Hare were developing a friendship.’

Fuliiru (Van Otterloo 2011:493)
(38) **Mú-tesì mū-gumà ɗ-àlī’ gw-èt-í**  

1-trapper 1-one 1-P3 have-res-FV AUG=12-dog 12-ass-1

‘One trapper had his dog.’
In Suba-Simbiti, participants can be introduced using the past copula \( m \) and the verb \( rë \) ‘to be’. The copula is a clitic which attaches to a noun which follows either a proper noun or descriptive noun phrase referring to the participant; this noun phrase is the subject of the verb, which occurs at the end of the clause in the past habitual or remote past form.

Suba-Simbiti (Masatu 2015:16)

\[\text{Musimbëtë} \text{ na } \text{ Mohaasha} \ m=bhaana \ abha \ enda \ \text{ëmwë} \ \text{bha-a-rë} \]

\( \text{Msimbiti} \ \text{COM Mohaasha} \ \text{COP=2.child} \ 2.\text{ASS} \ 9.\text{stomach} \ 9.\text{one} \ 3\text{PL-PST-be} \)

‘Msimbiti and Mohaasha were siblings, they were.’

In a number of narratives from eastern Bantu languages, major participants are introduced in relation to another character which plays a minimal role, or no role whatsoever in the story, but which nonetheless receives a formal introduction. These characters are typically either the parents or the husband of the major participant. Stegen (2011:250) describes the situation in two of the Rangi texts as follows:

…there are a few cases where the formula introduces a participant which does not seem to fit Dooley & Levinsohn’s definition of a major participant in that they do not play a leading role in the rest of the story. For example, both B12 and R12 introduce an old man called Lübʉʉva but the major participants of the story are his offspring, his three sons in the former, his son Mwiiru in the latter, and Lübʉʉva is not mentioned again. In some way, Lübʉʉva is not a minor participant either as he does not even play a minor role for the remainder of the story. In the context of Rangi culture however, where family ties and community relationships are of high importance..., I would suggest such participants to function as frame [participants] (Werth 1999).

Rangi (Stegen 2011:368)

\[\text{Aho} \ \text{kali} \ \text{ku-a-vij-áa} \ \text{na} \ \text{moosi} \ \text{Lübʉʉva} \ \text{a-vyaal-a} \ \text{va-ana} \ \text{va-tatu.} \]

\(16.\text{DEM} \_ \text{REF} \ \text{long}_\text{-ago} \ \text{17-PST-be-HAB} \ \text{COM} \ 1.\text{old}\_\text{man} \ \text{NAME} \ \text{3SG.PST-sire-FV} \ \text{2-children} \ \text{2-three} \)

‘In times of old there was old Lübʉʉva, he sired three sons.’

4.3 Continued reference to participants

Once a major participant has been introduced, it is generally referred to in the inciting episode, where it starts to play an active role. Participants in the inciting episode in Digo and Rangi texts can be referred to using proximal, referential, or distal demonstratives (Stegen 2011:116), but in many of the texts in Jita, Kwaya, Kabwa, Suba-Simbiti, Malila and Fuliiru, the first mention of a third person participant after the orientation requires a referential12 demonstrative. In the following Jita example, the first mention of each major participant after the introduction uses the referential demonstrative \( \text{oyo} \):

Jita (Pyle and Robinson 2015:24)

\[\text{Mbe} \ \text{naariga} \ \text{niri} \ \text{na omusaani} \ \text{’naatogwaga} \ \text{Jeeradi} \ \text{M Mabewo.} \ \text{Rusiku} \ \text{rwa} \ \text{tareeye} \ 27-2-1987 \ \text{omusaani} \ \text{waani} \ \text{oyo} \ :\text{aaasookaga} \ \text{okutwara} \ \text{omuyarakaji} \ \text{wa} \ \text{Echikerebhe.} \ \text{Omuyarakaji} \ \text{oyo} \ :\text{aatogwaga} \ \text{Perusi} \ \text{Mayingu.} \]

‘So, I had a friend and he was called Jeradi M Mabewo. On the 27th of February 1987, that [REF] friend of mine was returning from having married the daughter of Kikerewe. That [REF] daughter was called Perusi Maingu.’

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12Referential demonstratives are also called ‘non-proximal’ or ‘middle’. The term ‘referential’ is used because the root of this demonstrative series is the so-called ‘O of reference’ (Ashton 1947:159). For further discussion of classifications of Bantu demonstratives, see Nicolle (2012:194–6).
In the following example from the start of a Kabwa text, the king is referred to twice with a referential demonstrative; once during the orientation, and again at the start of the inciting episode, the king remains activated throughout:

Kabwa

(42) Akare hayo yaringaho omukama umwi Omukama uyo yaringa na abbahara bhabhiri. Weki na mukaye mbho baaringa bhamanyiri amarina ga abhaana bhabho. Ataringaho muntu undi unu yaringa amanyiri amarina gaabho.

Rusiku rumwi, omukama uyo akakeerya abhantu bha ekyaro kyaye ega…

‘Long ago there was a certain king. That [REF] king had two daughters. He and his wife were the (only) ones who knew the names of their daughters. There was no one else who knew their names.

One day, that [REF] king told the people of his country that…’

Within sentences, further reference to active participants is through subject and object prefixes alone. Between sentences, there is some variation. In Fuliru, reference to participants where the subject has not changed from one sentence to the next is expressed using a noun phrase including a referential or distal demonstrative when this coincides with a development in the story. In most of the languages in the survey, on the other hand, reference to participants where the subject has not changed generally involves subject prefixes only. However, a subject which was the subject of the previous sentence or clause can be made explicit under the following conditions:

- when it occurs at the beginning of a new episode or paragraph;
- when information is presented out of chronological order, for example, in elaborations;
- immediately following a (long) speech made by the same participant;
- when key information is presented, or in the peak episode.

The first three conditions listed above are all examples of ways in which discontinuities can be introduced into a text. This is illustrated in the following Digo example. The first occurrence of the noun zimu ‘ghost’ is at a new paragraph where there is a change of subject; all further reference to the ghost in this and the following sentence is through the subject prefix ri-. This is as expected: a NP is used when there is a change of subject, and a subject prefix is used in subsequent clauses when the subject has not changed. However, the noun zimu is repeated—despite there being no change of subject—in some of the subsequent clauses because these clauses involve various kinds of discontinuity; the second occurrence of zimu occurs because the clause it introduces elaborates the preceding material, and therefore does not form part of the main event-line (the following clause, which contains only the subject prefix ri-, continues this elaboration); the third occurrence of zimu resumes the event-line after the elaboration; and the final occurrence of zimu occurs at the start of a new paragraph.

Digo (Nicolle 2015:59)

(43) Zimu kala rina tabiya ya kuiha hara asichana wakati kala richikha phaphi na hira nyumbaye. Siku hira rahenda dia vivyo na richikala rina rikirwa kama kawida. Zimu raiha Mbozde, achihi a mafigani. Riri pho Matsozi, achihi a chitsagani. Zimu ratezeka mana rakuta rina rikirwa ni mashonde ga mavi. Siku hiyo zimu kala rika alkia aya ake de ake aye hara asichana….

‘The ghost had a habit of calling out for those girls when it was coming close to its house. That day it did just like that and it was answered as usual. The ghost called Mbozde and she replied from the cooking stones. When it called Matsozi she replied from the grain store. The ghost was astonished because it found that it had been answered by piles of excrement.

That day the ghost had invited its friends to come and eat those girls…’

The final condition under which a subject which was the subject of the previous sentence or clause can be made explicit is illustrated in the following Makonde example. The bird (the antagonist in the story) is referred to first simply as shuni ‘bird’ and in the following clause as shuni aijá ‘that bird’, even
though there has been no change of subject. This repetition is because the bird’s action of coming down to start a conversation with the fisherman is a key event in the story.

Makonde (Leach 2015:58)

(44) **Shuni me kuleka vila mpaka shuni aijdá kushuluka naikala po paikele munu.**

‘The bird didn’t stop repeating this until that bird came down and settled beside the person.’

4.4 Pronominal forms

Independent pronominal forms are far less frequent than demonstratives in all of the languages in the sample, and third person pronominal forms are less frequent than first and second person forms. For example, in 7 Digo texts containing 864 clauses, there were a total of 147 third person demonstratives but only 29 third person independent pronominal forms. Out of a total of 117 independent pronominal forms (including additive pronouns and emphatic pronouns as well as independent pronouns), 48 were first person, 40 were second person, and 29 were third person. All of the first and second person forms occurred either in direct speech (or thought), or in the one first person narrative.

In this section, I shall describe the functions of various kinds of independent pronominal forms in narrative discourse (excluding possessive pronouns, relative pronouns, and copula forms). The function of a pronominal form in one language need not correlate with the function of a cognate form in another language, as Table 2 illustrates. Table 2 presents the various 3SG pronominal forms that are attested in the text corpora. Where a particular function is listed as ‘not attested’, this indicates that it did not occur in the corpus, not that it never occurs in the language. Note that the labels are taken from the descriptions of each language, and reflect the functions of the pronominal forms in narrative texts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label →</th>
<th>Language ↓</th>
<th>basic / contrastive</th>
<th>additive</th>
<th>exclusive / emphatic</th>
<th>other functions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fuliiru</td>
<td>yêhê</td>
<td>naye</td>
<td>nyene / ngwa</td>
<td>yeki (‘unexpected alternative’)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digo</td>
<td>iye</td>
<td>naye</td>
<td>mwenye</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jita</td>
<td>(not attested)</td>
<td>wonse (invariant form glossed as ‘also’)</td>
<td>omwene</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kabwa</td>
<td>(not attested)</td>
<td>wonse</td>
<td>wene / weki</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kwaya</td>
<td>weki</td>
<td>woone</td>
<td>(not attested)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suba-Simbiti</td>
<td>we</td>
<td>nawe or independent pronoun or DEM followed by wonse</td>
<td>umwene / we (exceptional form; other persons/numbers formed by copula plus pronoun, e.g. 1SG nö=öni, 3PL m=bho)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rangi</td>
<td>yeeye</td>
<td>naye</td>
<td>yeemweene</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bena</td>
<td>umwene</td>
<td>naye</td>
<td>yumwene</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malila</td>
<td>uweene</td>
<td>woope (1SG form niüe)</td>
<td>wunu yo mwene</td>
<td>wenewo (‘objective’)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makonde</td>
<td>nae</td>
<td>(not attested)</td>
<td>mwene</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following example, from Van Ottlerloo (2015:27) illustrates three Fuliiru independent pronominal forms. The first participant uses the contrastive pronoun yêhê when saying that it is impossible for anyone to trick **him** (implying that **others** could be tricked.) The second participant replies in a similar way, indicated by the additive pronoun **naye** ‘and he also’. The second participant
uses the ‘unexpected alternative’ pronoun yeke to indicate that he will trick the first participant, thereby contradicting the statement that no one would be able to do so. None of these pronouns is necessary for participant reference; each could be removed and the intended referents would still be clear.

Fuliru

(45) Muguma *anabwira uwabo kwo yeke ndaaye uwabo mundu uwangamúteba.
    One told his fellow that HE there is no fellow person who would trick him.

    Naye uwabo *anamúbwira kwo yeke anagamúteba.
    And he fellow told him that HE would trick him.
    ‘A certain person told his companion that as for him [contrastive] there was no other person who would be able to trick him. That fellow he also [additive] told him that HE [unexpected alternative] would be the one who would trick him.’

Fuliru also has ‘exclusive’ pronominal forms nyene and ngwa which denote ‘self/selves (to the exclusion of others)’; that is, ‘he himself’.

There is not space to describe all the pronouns in each language, so I shall discuss one or two examples of each functional category and attempt some generalizations.

4.4.1 Basic/contrastive pronouns

The ‘basic’ independent pronouns are those forms which are felt to have the least amount of specific semantic content compared with other independent pronominal forms. However, in almost all the languages in this study, these forms are also used in a contrastive sense; that is, they indicate one referent to the exclusion of other potential referents (whether explicitly mentioned or merely implied). This is also true for basic independent pronouns in other eastern Bantu languages, such as yeje in Swahili, íyé in Chewa (Bresnan and Mchombo 1987:774), and oc in Kuria (Cammenga 2004:214–215). In the following Malila example, the narrator expresses contrast between himself—with the 1SG pronoun *ɨne— and a child.

Malila (Eaton 2015b:20)

    1SG 1SG-NEG.P1-hear-FV no gosh 1.child 1.DEM_DIST 3SG.P1-hear-FV
    ‘I did not hear at all, (but) gosh that child heard.’

The ‘basic’ independent pronouns do not always express contrast, however. In the following Malila example, the 1SG pronoun *ɨne functions as an external topic, leaving the NP umwoyo ‘heart’ in subject position. No contrast—explicit or implied—is associated with this use of the 1SG pronoun (Eaton 2015b:21), suggesting that contrast may be an implicature rather than encoded as part of the semantic content of the pronoun.

Malila (Eaton 2015b:20)

(47) Pe *ɨne umwoyo wu-kha-and-a ku-dund-a sana,
    then 1SG 3.heart 3-NARR-start-FV INF-beat-FV DEG
    we in-ku-stih-a ku-ti-ishí fwaní ishi uwamwitú unu,
    when 1SG-PRES-think-FV INF-say-thus gosh now 1.companion 1.DEM_PROX
    pe bha-tu-lem-a ni bangí.
    then 3PL.P1-1PL-catch-FV COM 9.marijuana
    ‘Then me (my) heart started to beat a lot, when I thought that gosh now this companion, they have caught us with marijuana.’
In the following Kwaya example the pronoun *weeki* indicates a change of subject from the father to the son, but not necessarily a contrast between the father’s actions and those of the son. Three sentences later in the text, *weeki* is used three times in succession to indicate a change of subject from the father to the son.

Kwaya (Odom 2015:25)

(48) *Baasi ’n-a-a-gend-ag-a kutyo weeki k-e-emb-a.*

So NARR-3SG-go-HAB-FV thus 3SG PRES-3SG-sing-FV

‘So, he (the father) went along in this way, while he (the son) sang.’

It is notable that there is greater variety between languages in the forms of basic independent pronouns than there is for other pronominal expressions. The forms *umwene* in Bena and *ʉ́ weéne* in Malila resemble the exclusive/emphatic forms which include the suffix -*ene* in most other languages. This may indicate that the basic pronouns in Bena and Malila have developed out of emphatic forms through a process of “semantic bleaching”. Similarly, *weeki* in Kwaya resembles *weki* in Kabwa and *yeki* in Fuliiru, both of which have more specific semantic content, i.e. emphatic and ‘unexpected alternative’ respectively.

There can also be considerable formal variation between different person and number forms of the basic pronouns. This is particularly clear in the Makonde paradigm (Leach 2015:53) below:

Table 3: Basic pronominal forms in Makonde

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1SG</th>
<th>2SG</th>
<th>3SG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>nangu</em></td>
<td><em>wako</em></td>
<td><em>nae</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1PL</td>
<td>2PL</td>
<td>3PL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>wetu</em></td>
<td><em>mwenu</em></td>
<td><em>vanavo</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4.2 Additive pronouns

Independent pronouns occur in place of a NP, unlike demonstratives, which may occur as part of a larger NP. Strictly speaking, then, additive pronouns are not really independent pronouns, since (at least in the third person) they usually occur together with a NP.

Additive pronouns are formed through a combination of a conjunction and a pronominal form, and for this reason Nicolle (2015) treated Digo additive pronouns as a type of connective. In Fuliiru, Digo, Suba-Simbiti, Bena, and the 1SG form *niíne* in Malila, the pronominal form is cliticized as a suffix to the comitative marker *na*. These additive pronouns have the same form as the adjunct meaning ‘with him/her’ as the following Rangi example illustrates:

Rangi (Stegen 2011:515, glossing added)

(49) *Baadaye n-chünkula a-ka-pat-a ki-jeengi wiíngi wa kiïkal-a *na=ye*

later 9-hare 3SG-CONS-receive-FV 7-friend 1.OTHER 1.ASS INF.sit-FV COM = 3SG

‘Later the hare got another friend to stay with him’

In the Malila 3SG additive pronoun *woope*, a pronominal form is cliticized as a prefix to the class 16 relative pronoun *pe* which also functions as a temporal connective usually glossed as ‘then’.

In Suba-Simbiti, the additive pronoun can also be formed by suffixing a pronominal form (an independent pronoun or a demonstrative) to the specifier -*onswe* ‘all’ (see also Cammenga 2004:217 for Kuria). In Kabwa and Kwaya the cognate forms are *wonse* and *wone* respectively, and in Jita this has developed into an invariant form, *wone*, which should probably be regarded as a specifier in its own right.

The function of additive pronouns is to indicate that a situation involving a particular participant is similar to a situation involving some other participant. Additive pronouns therefore do not express contrast but rather that the clauses in which they occur are to be interpreted in addition to what has already been expressed. In the following Digo example the speaker describes the food that the addressee will have and how he will get it. In the previous clause, the speaker described the food that the crocodile
will have and how he will get it, and so the additive pronoun *nawe* highlights the similarity between the addressee and the crocodile, and indicates that the two clauses should be interpreted in parallel.

Digo (Nicolle 2015:12)

(50) **Na=we** ka-rim-e yo tsulu wala ku-nda-on-a ndzala.


‘You **likewise** go and farm that anthill and you will not experience hunger.’

In Kabwa, the additive pronoun *wonse* can be used in this way, so long as the participant referred to is particularly important in the narrative. However, this function has been extended to indicate that a participant is important at a particular point in a narrative, or to emphasize an action performed by that participant, without the need for any previous parallel clause (Walker 2011:33–34).

### 4.4.3 Exclusive/emphatic pronouns

The majority of the languages in the study have what is termed an exclusive or emphatic pronoun consisting of a nominal prefix and the suffix *-ene* or *-enye*. Grammatically, these roots behave as adjectives (as Cammenga 2004:212 notes with respect to *-ene* in Kuria), and like the additive pronouns, emphatic/exclusive pronouns often co-occur with another nominal expression, including independent pronouns.

The function of this kind of pronoun is to indicate that a certain participant—and no other—is being referred to, either because this participant alone is involved in the event being described, or because the involvement of other participants is irrelevant. In the Malila example below, *wuuyo mwene* indicates that Mbiida alone remained unmarried.

Malila (Eaton 2015b:22)

(51) **Pe na** bhasakhaala bhe bhá-kul-il-e peeka nu Mbiida,
then COM 2.men 2.REL 3PL.P2-grow-ANT-FV together COM name

bhoti bha-kheeg-a abhashɨ, a-kha-syal-a **wuuyo mwene**.
2.all 3PL.NARR.take-FV 2.wives 3SG.NARR-remain-FV he himself

‘Then the men who were together with Mbiida, all of them took wives, he remained **by himself.**’

The 3SG form in *-ene* or *-enye*, which is found in texts in all of the languages except Kwaya and Rangi, is cognate with the noun meaning ‘owner’. In the following Makonde example, *mwene* is used first as an exclusive pronoun referring to a fisherman (the protagonist in the story) and then as a noun referring to the owner of the boat.

Makonde

(52) **Yomba** jumo akannipe udeni,
5.fish 5.one he.would.pay.it 14.debt

junji aju akanniele mwene na ndyagwe
5.fish 5.DEM.PROX he.would.eat.it 1.EXCLUSIVE COM 1.his.wife

junji aju akannipe mwene ingalava.
5.other 5.DEM.PROX he.would.pay.it 1.owner 9.boat

‘With one fish he would pay his debts, another fish he would eat it himself with his wife, and the third he used to pay the owner of the boat.’

Malila also has a form *wenéwo* (*bhenebho* in class 2; *yeneyo* in class 9) which has a similar function to the emphatic pronoun. Eaton (2015b:22) calls it the ‘objective’ pronoun because it is restricted to object position, whereas the emphatic pronoun can function as (part of) either a subject or an object. The
objective pronoun appears to be a genuine pronoun, since it functions alone as a NP and does not modify other NPs.

4.4.4 Forms with -eki

Pronominal forms ending in -eki occur in Kabwa, Kwaya, and Fuliiru but with different functions. In Kwaya, the form ending in -eki functions as a basic independent pronoun, and is used to indicate a change of subject (Odom 2015:24–25). In the closely related language Kabwa, according to Walker (2011:34), there is no obvious difference in meaning between forms ending in -ene and those ending in -eki; both can function as exclusive pronouns indicating one participant to the exclusion of others. In Fuliiru, the pronominal form ending in -eki refers to an ‘unexpected alternative’ which indicates a contrast to something that would otherwise be assumed (Van Otterloo 2011:47–48).

4.5 Demonstratives

All of the languages in this survey have at least three demonstrative ‘series’: proximal, referential, and distal. In spatial-deictic (exophoric) use, the proximal demonstrative refers to things that are near to both the speaker and the addressee, the referential demonstrative refers to things that are near to the addressee only, and the distal demonstrative refers to things that are far from both the speaker and the addressee.

The proximal demonstrative series takes one of two forms: in Fuliiru, Rangi, Bena, Malila and Makonde it is formed by prefixing the vowel of the noun class prefix to the CV noun class prefix (e.g. Bena uyu class 1, ava class 2), although class 1 in Makonde is irregular: aju; in Jita, Kabwa, Kwaya and Suba-Simbiti the proximal demonstrative is formed by prefixing the noun class prefix to the CV noun class prefix to nu or no (e.g. Suba-Simbiti ono class 1, Jita bhanu class 2).14 In all languages, the referential demonstrative is formed by prefixing the noun class prefix to the root o or yo (e.g. Fuliiru uyọ class 1, Rangi avo class 2). The distal demonstrative is formed by prefixing the noun class prefix to the root ọya, ra or la (e.g. Kwaya ụrya class 1, Rangi vara class 2, Malila ụla class 1). Digo has variants of all three series, and is irregular in classes 1 and 2. The ‘basic’ class 1/class 2 forms in Digo are hiyu/hinya (proximal), hiye/hinyo (referential) and yuya/hara (distal).

In narrative texts, demonstratives have a range of non-spatial-deictic uses. Himmelmann (1996) distinguishes four uses of demonstratives in narratives: situational, discourse deictic, tracking, and recognitional. Situational use establishes a referent relative to the situation in which the narrative is being related; for example, one Makonde text starts by situating the story during ing’ondo ailá itandi ‘that first war’, where the distal demonstrative ailá situates the war (ing’ondo) relative to the time that the story was told. Discourse deictic use refers to the use of demonstratives to refer to propositions and events; the Digo class 8 referential demonstrative hivyo ‘thus’ has this function. Recognitional use identifies a particular referent using shared knowledge rather than situational clues or preceding discourse. Finally, tracking use refers to the way demonstratives are used to help the addressee to keep track of what is happening to (usually major) participants in a narrative; most occurrences of demonstratives in eastern Bantu narrative texts have a tracking use. However, in addition to this basic tracking function, the languages surveyed exhibit four other narrative functions: activation status,

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A more detailed account of the discourse-level functions of demonstratives in eastern Bantu narratives can be found in Nicolle (2014).

Originally the two forms of the proximal demonstrative were distinct series, with the nu/no form referring to things that are very close to (i.e. touching) the speaker. Malila has unnu in classes 1 and 3 only, and some other languages have retained four demonstrative series, such as Fuliiru where the no form indicates proximity plus contrast, and Digo in which it no longer has a spatial-deictic use (see Nicolle 2012). We will not be concerned with this fourth series here.
agency, text structuring, and thematic development. Each language appears to favor one of these functions, although not necessarily to the exclusion of other functions.

4.5.1 **Activation status**

The primary discourse level function of referential and distal demonstratives in Jita, Kwaya, Kabwa, Suba-Simbiti, Malila, and possibly also in Rangi, is to indicate the activation status of (major) participants. Activation is defined as follows:

participants are considered to be activated in the mind of the listener if they have been explicitly mentioned in the previous event (which is not necessarily comprised of the previous clause or sentence alone), or if they are not mentioned but assumed to be an active participant in the action. (Masatu 2015:20)

In Jita and Kwaya, when a major participant functioning as subject is activated and is referred to using a NP rather than just a subject prefix, a referential demonstrative is almost always used, as in the following example from Jita:

**Jita** (Pyle and Robinson 2015:24)

(53) ... abhaanu abharebhe mubhanu :bhaasigaaye kwigogo :bhaariga nibhamenya okuwuga.

Abhawugi abho bha-a-sakir-ag-a abheejabho...

2.swimmers 2.DEM_REF 3PL-P3-help-IPFV-FV 2.their_fellows

‘...some of the people among those who remained on the log knew how to swim. **Those** [REF] swimmers were helping their fellows...’

Whereas the use of referential demonstratives for activated participants is virtually obligatory in Jita and Kwaya, it is a tendency only in Suba-Simbiti: activated participants were referred to nineteen times with referential demonstratives and six times with distal demonstratives. In Kabwa and Malila, roughly equal numbers of referential and distal demonstratives were used to refer to activated participants.

In Jita, Kwaya, Kabwa and Malila a major participant functioning as subject that is reactivated after a period of inactivity is always referred to using a distal demonstrative plus noun. In the following example, the participant (‘that relative’) is reintroduced to the narrative after an absence of ten sentences:

**Kwaya**

(54) :E-e-j-ire oku-remer-a bha-chaar-ri, waamuwaabho urya "n-aa-bha-ror-a

3SG-PST3-come-PST3 INF.refuse-FV 3PL-PERS-COP relative.Poss.3SG 1.DEM_DIST NARR-3SG-3PL-see-FV

‘While she was still refusing, **that** [DIST] relative saw them...’

In the following Malila example, the participants are reactivated after a digression about wild animals that lived in the area where the events took place.

**Malila** (Eaton 2015b:18)

(55) Basi abhantu bhaala i-kha-biidi bha-piny-e umuntu ula mwi pagali.

well 2.people 2.DEM_DIST 9-NARR-be_necessary 3PL-tie-SUB 1.person 1.DEM_DIST 18 5.stretcher

‘Well, **those** [DIST] people, it was necessary that they should tie **that** [DIST] person to the stretcher.’

In Suba-Simbiti, what appears to be obligatory in Jita, Kwaya, Kabwa and Malila, is again just a tendency; reactivated participants in Suba-Simbiti were referred to using distal demonstratives twenty

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15Rundell (2012:81–88) reports the same strategy for Ngoreme [ngq] and Ikizu [ikz].
one times and referential demonstratives seven times. In the example below, the subject (an old man) is reactivated after an absence of two sentences using a NP plus distal demonstrative.

Suba-Simbiti
(56) Omoghaaka oora a-ka-tweena umwandö
   1. old_man 1. DEM_DIST 3SG-NARR-divide-FV 3. inheritance
   ‘That [DIST] old man divided his possessions.’

The situation in Rangi is less clear-cut. Distal demonstratives are more frequent than referential demonstratives in the text corpus, but there is considerable variation between texts. Stegen (2011:262) comments: “While there are no hard and fast rules, as exceptions can be found to any regularities, ṭuwo [referential] tends to be used to reactivate a major participant after an episode involving other participants, whereas ṭura [distal] tends to be used to continue the active status of a major participant.” If this is correct, the functions of referential and distal demonstratives are reversed relative to their cognates in Jita, Kwaya, Kabwa, Suba-Simbiti and Malila. However, there are numerous exceptions to these generalizations in Rangi.

The generalizations discussed so far apply to participants functioning as subjects. However, in Malila distal demonstratives are used to refer to almost all objects (nine out of ten) regardless of activation status. In Kwaya, seven out of thirteen objects were referred to using referential demonstratives, but five (all activated) were referred to using distal demonstratives (there was also one proximal demonstrative). The following Kwaya example illustrates the use of a distal demonstrative to refer to an activated participant functioning as object.

Kwaya
(57) ^n-aa-nyoor-a abhayeesi. Abhayeesi bharya ka-a-bha-bhwir-a ati...
   NARR-3SG-meet-FV 2.blacksmiths 2.blacksmiths 2.DEM_DIST PRES-3SG-3PL-tell-FV that
   ‘...he met some blacksmiths. Those [DIST] blacksmiths, he told them that…’

There is no evidence that distal demonstratives systematically refer to objects in the Jita, Kabwa, Suba-Simbiti or Rangi texts.

In another study, it has been suggested that activation status may be related to variation in the order of NP and Dem. Mwamzandi (2014:59–129) claims that NP+Dem order in Swahili indicates that the referent is activated, whereas Dem+NP order is used to reactivate referents which have become inactive.16 However, Malila, Jita, Kabwa, Kwaya (with one exception) and Suba-Simbiti17 only allow NP+Dem word order, and Rangi almost always has Dem+NP word order.18 Thus, variation in the order of NP and Dem is not relevant to activation status in these languages.

While distal and referential demonstratives are frequent in narrative texts in these languages, proximal demonstratives rarely occur outside of direct speech. When a proximal demonstrative is used, it is for a particular purpose. For example, in the following Kwaya example, a servant has tricked her mistress into swapping clothes. Their host thinks that the mistress is the servant and the servant is the mistress, so he gives the mistress hard work while the servant relaxes in the house. The servant is

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16Mwamzandi restricted his study to proximal and distal demonstratives (2014:64), claiming that the referential demonstrative in Swahili “has a limited function of marking definiteness of activated NPs” (ibid, 63). His study was also restricted to nouns of class 1 (animate singular) and to written texts.
17Dem+NP occurs in the phrase oora uwa mo-magbinga (‘that of in-islands’) referring to a son who lived in the islands (Masatu 2015, Appendix C). This order seems not to be required by the presence of the associative marker uwa (‘of’), since the other son is referred to as uwa bjoraaya oora (‘of Europe that’) with NP+Dem order.
18There are over 300 occurrences of Dem+NP word order in Rangi and fewer than 30 NP+Dem. Of the latter, almost all the NPs are sikū ‘day’ (in the phrase sikū iyo ‘that day’) and lusīmo ‘story’ (in the phrase lusīmo ulū ‘this story’). It may be relevant that sikū ‘day’ is cognate with Swahili sikū and Swahili shows a strong preference for NP+Dem order.
referred to using a proximal demonstrative because the situations are simultaneous rather than sequential, and because the situations are in contrast. Note also that the demonstrative precedes the noun, which is very unusual in Kwaya, although this may also be due to the length of the NP which it modifies.

Kwaya (58) m-ba-yaan-ag-a mirimu emisito. Unu onugaya owa omwenda
NARR-3PL-3SG-give-HAB-FV 4.work 4.hard 1.DEM_PROX 1.servant 1.ASS 3.cloth
gwa ekisi °n-aa-sigar-a °n-aa-ry-a ebhiinu iika.
3.ASS 7.fine NARR-3SG-remain-FV NARR-3SG-eat-FV 7.thing house
‘...then they were giving her hard labor. This [PROX] servant of the nice clothes then remained, eating things at the house.’

4.5.2 Agency

In Bena, demonstratives are used to distinguish participants which function as agents from those which play a more passive role, such as patient or experiencer. Distal demonstratives are used to refer to both major and minor participants, whether they remain activated or are reactivated, so long as they play an agent-like role on the event-line, whilst referential demonstratives refer to participants with non-agent roles, such as experiencer and patient.

This can be seen in the first two sentences of the example below, where the farmer and the child function as agents and are referred to using distal demonstratives. The use of the distal demonstrative is not linked to activation status in Bena: The farmer has been absent from the narrative for the previous two sentences, and is reactivated here, whereas the child is referred to as the object in the first sentence and is therefore already activated in the second sentence. In the third sentence, the bird is referred to using a referential demonstrative since it is an experiencer rather than an agent. In the final sentence, both the child and the bird are agents and are referred to using distal demonstratives.

‘That [DIST] farmer sent his child to check on that trap. That [DIST] child went, and he found the large bird caught. That [REF] bird when it saw him it said, “I beg you to free me and one day I will help you.” That [DIST] child freed it, that [DIST] bird flew up and went away.’

Since participants in object position and in complement clauses are typically patients rather than agents, they are usually referred to with referential demonstratives in Bena. (Note that this is different from Kwaya and Malila, where participants in object position are typically referred to using distal demonstratives.) In the six Bena texts, distal demonstratives are used seventeen times to refer to participants functioning as agents, with verbs meaning ‘set a trap’, ‘send’, ‘go’, ‘untie’, ‘fly’, ‘return’, ‘answer’, ‘climb’, ‘deny’, ‘stay’, ‘come’, ‘leave’, ‘make noise’, ‘get up’ and ‘be deceitful’. Referential demonstratives are used nine times to refer to participants with non-agent roles, with verbs meaning ‘see’, ‘get fat’, ‘agree’ and ‘refuse’. There are, however, two uses of distal demonstratives with non-agentive subjects, in clauses with the verbs ‘be able and ‘remember’.

Proximal demonstratives in Bena are only found in background clauses, as the following example illustrates:
Bena (Broomhall 2011)
(60) ... pakuva alukagwe ukutigila avatavangu vali bihi mu luvala lwano. Kangi alukagwe ukuta avatavangu ava vavifu hiilo.
‘...because he knew that enemies were near their area. Moreover, he knew that these [PROX] enemies were very bad.’

Bena only allows NP + Dem word order, and so word order variation is not a factor.

4.5.3 Text structuring

Digo uses different demonstratives to indicate the start and occasionally the end of the main event-line, and to distinguish major and minor participants. Some of these functions are also exhibited in Makonde, although in a more restricted way. I have grouped these functions together under the general category of ‘text structuring’.

In Digo, different episodes are characterized by different demonstratives. The orientation, inciting episode, and denouement typically involve just the major participant(s). Minor participants are usually only mentioned in the developmental episodes and occasionally in the peak. The orientation often serves simply to introduce the major participant(s), but when additional information is provided about a major participant that has just been introduced, a referential demonstrative is used.

Digo (Nicolle 2015:60)
(61) Chisha pha-chi-kal-a na mjeni pha=pho lalo-ni.
   then 16-CONS-be-FV COM 1.stranger 16=16.REF locality-LOC

Mjeni hiye kala ka-many-w-a a-ri-vyo…
1.stranger 1.DEM_REF PST 3SG.NEG-know-PASS-FV 3SG-COP-8.REL
‘Now there was a stranger there at their place. No-one knew much about that [REF] stranger...’

In Makonde, in contrast, the orientation may contain a proximal demonstrative referring to a participant who has just been introduced:

Makonde (Leach 2015:63)
(62) A-ndi-paw-a munu, munu aju madengo ake ku-vele kwaka dyomba.
   3SG-PST-be-FV 1.person 1.person 1.DEM_PROX 6.work 6.3SG.POS NARR-COP INF.hunt 10.fish
‘There was a person, this [PROX] person, his work was to catch fish.’

The inciting episode in Digo is characterized by the use of either proximal demonstratives or distal demonstratives to refer to major participants. Distal demonstratives are also the default way of referring to major participants in the developmental episodes. Outside of direct speech, proximal demonstratives are very rare in Digo texts, although in one text proximal demonstratives occurred twice at the beginning of new paragraphs, although one was also the start of the inciting episode (Nicolle 2015:10). Often, however, the inciting episode is the only place in a given text where a proximal demonstrative is found. The following example illustrates this use:

Digo (Nicolle 2015:56)
(63) Hiphoo kare ku-a-kal-a na asichana a-iri, Mibodze na Matsozi.
   long_ago 17-PST-be-FV COM 2.girls 2-TWO NAME COM NAME

Asichana hin-yaa a-phy-a ku-enda-nyendek-a.
2.girls 2.DEM_PROX 3PL-go-FV INF-ITIVE-walk-FV
‘Long ago there lived two girls, Mibodze and Matsozi. These [PROX] girls went to go for a walk.’
Major participants are referred to throughout the developmental episodes (and often also in the peak episode) with distal demonstratives. In the seven Digo texts, distal demonstratives refer to major participants in developmental and peak episodes sixty four times, referential demonstratives five times, and proximal demonstratives three times (twice in background material). In texts with a protagonist vs. antagonist distinction, or with primary and secondary major participants, the protagonist or primary major participant is referred to more often with distal demonstratives than the antagonist or secondary major participant is. In all texts, minor participants are usually referred to using descriptive noun phrases rather than demonstratives.

Both distal and referential demonstratives occur in the denouement, as the following example illustrates:

Digo (Nicolle 2015:55)

(64) Phahi hiye m-chetu adabu-ye wa-zol-w-a phara
    so 1.DEM_REF 1-woman 9.punishment-9.3SG.POS 3SG.PST-chase-PASS-FV 16.DEM_DIST
    kaya, na yuya mzee a-chi-lól-a m-chetu w-anjina
    9.home COM 1.DEM_DIST 1.elder 3SG-CONS-marry-FV 1-woman 1-other
    a-chi-sagal-a na ana-e osi vinono.
    3PL-CONS-stay-FV COM 2.children-2.3SG.POS 2.all 8.good
    ‘So that [REF] woman her punishment, she was chased away from her home, and that [DIST] old man married another woman and they lived happily with both of his children.’

Finally, Digo has a marked preference for Dem+NP word order, but NP+Dem word order is attested (see examples (61) and (63)). Nicolle (2013:81–85) notes that the less frequent NP+Dem word order is common in the inciting episode and in procedural texts describing a series of procedures involving the same referent, and may also indicate the end of a paragraph, emphasis, and counter-expectation.

4.5.4 Thematic development

In Makonde and Fuliiru, demonstratives function as ‘thematic development markers’ (TDMs), indicating important developments in narrative texts, as the story moves from the initial problem to its culmination.¹⁹ In Makonde, distal demonstratives are used to refer to minor participants and props, and less frequently to major participants. With minor participants and props, distal demonstratives indicate temporary salience, but with major participants, distal demonstratives indicate key developments in the narrative (including, but not restricted to, the peak episode).²⁰ This is illustrated in the following example, where a mother runs back into an enemy-occupied village to rescue a child who has been left behind:

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¹⁹“Thematic development markers (also called ‘thematic salience markers’ or ‘developmental markers’ by Dooley and Levinsohn) ‘indicate that the material so marked represents a new development in the story or argument, as far as the author’s purpose is concerned.’” (2001:93)

²⁰Referential demonstratives are extremely rare in Makonde, but a short form of the referential demonstrative is used to maintain reference to minor participants and props. Dem+NP word order predominates in the Fuliiru corpus, but it has not been possible to establish whether or how word order variation interacts with thematic development. In Makonde, NP+Dem order is by far the most common (105 occurrences in the corpus), and the number of other word orders (7 Dem+NP and 6 Dem+NP+Dem) is too low to allow generalizations.
Makonde (Leach 2015:64)

(65) Mwiu nkongwe ajá a-ka-tukut-a ku-j-a kavili…

true 1.woman 1.DEM,DIST 3SG-CONS-run-FV INF-return-FV again

‘Then that [DIST] woman started to run back…’

In Fuliiru, referential demonstratives indicate regular developments; the initial problem is typically introduced in the inciting episode, and the inciting episode of most texts contains a referential demonstrative. In some texts, both referential and distal demonstratives occur, in which case distal demonstratives indicate major developments (Van Otterloo 2011:447–448). However, some texts make no use of distal demonstratives at all, and some texts do not use referential demonstratives at all, outside of the inciting episode.21 In either situation, whichever demonstrative is used seems to indicate thematic developments regardless of the distinction between regular and major developments. (Proximal demonstratives are extremely rare, and are absent from most texts in the corpus.)

The following table presents the major events in one Fuliiru narrative. All the clauses containing a demonstrative are listed, and those with distal demonstratives (indicating major thematic developments) are in bold type. These clauses provide a synopsis of the story. Unless otherwise stated, NPs containing demonstratives are in subject position. The default TDMs (referential demonstratives) tend to occur towards the beginning of the story, and major TDMs (distal demonstratives) tend to occur towards the end. The culmination of the story occurs when the old man opens the door and allows the lion to enter the room where the cow is hiding. After this point, there are no more demonstratives functioning as TDMs since the story has reached its climax, and all further events are predictable.

Table 4: Thematic development markers in a Fuliiru text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Summary of main events</th>
<th>Fuliiru</th>
<th>Demonstratives as TDMs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Lion and cow became friends</td>
<td>Uyo wandare na wangaavu</td>
<td>That [REF] lion and cow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Their children were playing</td>
<td>Yabo baana</td>
<td>Those [REF] children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Cow’s child accidentally kills lion’s child</td>
<td>Mu yukwo kushaata</td>
<td>In that [REF] playing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11–13</td>
<td>Cow sees child dead, runs away, and asks an old man for protection</td>
<td>Iyo ngaavu / uyo mwana</td>
<td>That [REF] cow / that [REF] child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Old man asks why he should hide cow</td>
<td>Uyo mushaaja</td>
<td>That [REF] old man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Old man hides cow and its child</td>
<td>Uyo mushosi</td>
<td>That [REF] man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Old man tells cow the rooster will crow when lion arrives</td>
<td>Uyo mushosi</td>
<td>That [REF] man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Lion finds dead child and suspects cow</td>
<td>(no demonstrative)</td>
<td>(no demonstrative)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Lion meets old man</td>
<td>anahulukira ku’lya mushaaja</td>
<td>she met that [DIST] old man (oblique)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Lion asks old man where cow is</td>
<td>ulya mushaaja</td>
<td>that [DIST] old man (object)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Rooster crows</td>
<td>Lulya luhazi</td>
<td>That [DIST] rooster</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

21Van Otterloo (2011:447) states that in “formal” texts, only referential demonstratives, indicating ‘default’ developments occur; he does not discuss texts in which only distal demonstratives occur after the inciting episode.
When rooster crows, cow realizes danger

Lion returns to old man and asks about cow

Old man stalls for time

Old man warns cow that lion is outside

After some days, cow's child dies of hunger and lion hears cow crying

Lion accuses old man of lying about cow

Old man denies harboring cow

Lion tells old man to open the door

Old man opens the door

Lion enters the room, argues with cow, and finally kills cow

4.5.5 Summary

The most common narrative function of demonstratives (found in Jita, Kwaya, Kabwa, Suba-Simbiti, Malila, and possibly also in Rangi), is to indicate whether participants remain activated (mentioned or involved in the previous event) or are reactivated after an absence. This function is not applied uniformly in all languages, however. Referential demonstratives in Jita, Kwaya, Kabwa and Malila consistently refer to activated participants, but distal demonstratives consistently refer to participants which are reactivated after an absence only in Jita and Kwaya, and then only in subject position. In Suba-Simbiti there is a tendency for referential demonstratives to refer to activated participants and for distal demonstratives to refer to reactivated participants, and in Rangi this tendency appears to be reversed. In Malila, and possibly also in Kwaya, most objects are referred to using distal demonstratives even when already activated.

In Bena, distal demonstratives refer to participants that are agents, and referential demonstratives refer to participants which are non-agents (experiencers and patients). Proximal demonstratives are used for non-agents in background clauses only, where referential demonstratives may also occur.

In Digo, distal demonstratives refer to major participants, and in particular to protagonists and primary major participants, throughout the episodes which contain the main event-line as far as the peak episode. Major participants can be referred to with referential demonstratives in the orientation and the denouement. Proximal demonstratives may occur in the inciting episode in Digo, but in the orientation in Makonde.

In Makonde, referential demonstratives are used only for minor participants and props, whereas distal demonstratives refer to both minor and major participants. However, distal demonstratives only refer to major participants at places in the narrative where key thematic developments occur. Likewise, in Fuliiuru, referential and distal demonstratives function as thematic development markers (TDMs), indicating developments leading towards the culmination of a story. In some texts, referential demonstratives indicate regular developments and distal demonstratives indicate major developments (including the culmination of the story).

The discourse-level functions of demonstratives in eastern Bantu languages are summarized in Table 5.
Table 5: Discourse-level functions of demonstratives in eastern Bantu languages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Distal demonstrative</th>
<th>Referential demonstrative</th>
<th>Proximal demonstrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jita, Kwaya, Kabwa, Malila, Suba-Simbiti (possibly reversed in Rangi)</td>
<td>Reactivated referent (Jita, Kwaya; tendency in Suba-Simbiti) (Malila: most objects)</td>
<td>Activated referent (tendency in Suba-Simbiti)</td>
<td>Rare: possibly for background material and/or contrast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bena</td>
<td>Agent semantic role</td>
<td>Non-agent semantic role</td>
<td>Background material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digo</td>
<td>Major participants (especially protagonists and primary major participants) in foreground clauses</td>
<td>Major participants in the orientation and the denouement</td>
<td>Some major participants in the inciting episode and some background material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makonde</td>
<td>Temporarily salient minor participants; key developments with major participants</td>
<td>Continued reference to minor participants and props (using a short form)</td>
<td>Major participants in the orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuliiru</td>
<td>Major thematic developments</td>
<td>Regular thematic developments</td>
<td>Extremely rare</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5 Tense, aspect and movement

The eastern Bantu languages in our sample all exhibit a typically Bantu tendency to express tense and aspect categories by means of verbal inflection. In addition, some languages have grammaticalized expressions of movement which resemble tense and aspect markers in being expressed by means of verbal inflection, either in addition to or in place of tense and aspect markers. The tense and aspect categories themselves reflect what is expected of Bantu languages in that, for example, they often include several divisions of past time reference and a special (often dependent) tense which is used to narrate events in sequence. These categories in particular play important roles in indicating events which are on or off the main event-line. A further characteristic of Bantu languages is their set of aspectual categories, commonly including perfective, imperfective, progressive, habitual, persistive and anterior (Nurse 2008:24). In many of the languages in our sample, these categories are used to express discourse features, such as the relative chronology of the situations described by the verbs in a narrative.

In this section we will briefly describe the relevant tense and aspect categories in the languages of the sample and then show how these categories are used in narrative texts. A major function of tense and aspect is to distinguish foreground and background material. Tense and aspect are also used to show the relative chronology of situations and thereby express sequentiality and simultaneity. Some of the languages in the sample also use tense and aspect to indicate the relative importance of information expressed by the verb. Variation in the discourse uses of tense and aspect due to style and register will also be discussed. Finally, we will describe how movement expressions help to indicate how events and participants are related to the deictic centre (that is, the notional location of the narrator, which is usually the location of a major participant).

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22This section is co-authored by Helen Eaton and Steve Nicolle.
Narratives can be characterized as texts which describe a series of events performed by agents and exhibiting contingent temporal succession (Dooley and Levinsohn 2001). The events which are presented in iconic temporal order constitute the event-line material and correspond to what Labov and Waletsky (1967) term ‘foreground’ material. Non-event-line clauses, such as those describing pre-existing situations, flashbacks, motivations for a participant’s actions and so forth, therefore correspond to ‘background’ material. The terms ‘foreground’ and ‘background’ have been defined in various, often mutually incompatible and genre-specific, ways (see Unger 2002 for a discussion), but will be retained here as they are terms with which most readers will be familiar. In this paper, foreground will be treated as equivalent to event-line material and background as equivalent to non-event-line material. The term ‘backgrounded’ is distinct from ‘background’, and is used here to refer to events which are presented in iconic temporal order (that is, they are part of the foreground material) but which are described as if they were non-event-line material (that is, as if they were background material), for example by using imperfective verb forms (such as habitual and progressive aspect) or subordinate clauses.

In the languages in our sample, foreground and background clauses are largely distinguished through tense and aspect. Thus, in addition to their primary grammatical functions of indicating different temporal and aspectual values, verb forms have the important discourse function of guiding the addressee through the chronology of the narrative.

### 5.1.1 Foreground clauses

As is common in most languages, the choice of tense is more restricted in foreground material than in background material. In some eastern Bantu languages, one verb form predominates and is the default choice for encoding sequences of events in a narrative. Although the precise properties of this verb form vary across the languages, a relevant distinction is that between narrative and consecutive tenses:

> A narrative tense […] is a special form which carries the primary event line of a story and is neither dependent on a special initial form in some span nor is rank-shifted in sequence with non-storyline initials. By contrast, a consecutive tense, which also carries the primary storyline, is either dependent on a special initial form in some span and/or is rank-shifted in sequence with non-storyline initials. (Longacre 1990:109)

Suba-Simbiti exemplifies a narrative tense according to this definition. The example below is the first sentence of a story, and thus clearly shows how the narrative tense is not dependent on a previous tense to establish the time reference.

**Suba-Simbiti**

(66) *Mbe abhaghaaka abhandë o-ka-nyoor-a bha-ra-nyw-a amarwa.*

So 2.elderly_men 2.certain 2SG-NARR-find-FV 3PL-CONT-drink-FV 6.alcohol

‘So, it happened [lit: you found] that elderly men were drinking alcohol.’

The same is true of the narrative tense in Jita (Pyle and Robinson 2015:26), which has a different form (*ni-SC-VR-a*) from the narrative tense in Suba-Simbiti (*SC-ka-VR-a*), but the same function.

Malila also has a narrative tense (*SC-ka-VR-a*), but one which is restricted to a far past reference:

**Malila** (Eaton 2015b:23)

(67) *Abhantu bhaala bha-kha-lenzy-a umubhinu, bha-kha-tiishi, “Twimile umwoyo.”*

2.people 2.DEM_DIST 3PL-NARR-drop-FV 1.sick_person 3PL-NARR-say_thus help_us heart

‘Those people, they dropped the sick person and said, “Have mercy on us.”’

If a story begins with a near past tense, the main event-line is instead carried by a compound tense form (*anza SC-ka-VR-a*). This verb form can only be used after a near past tense has established the time reference and is therefore a consecutive, rather than a narrative tense. Thus Malila has both a narrative...
(for the far past) and a consecutive (for the near past), both of which are restricted in their time reference, but differ in whether they need to follow an establishing tense.

Digo also has two verb forms which can be used to encode sequences of events in the foreground, but unlike Malila, both must follow another establishing tense or aspect and are therefore analysed as consecutives. Nicolle (2015:19) labels one (SC-chi-VR-a) the consecutive and the other (SC-ka-VR-a) the sequential. The consecutive follows a general past tense and the sequential follows a hodiernal past tense or any other tense or aspect excepting the future:

Digo (Nicolle 2015:88)

(68) **Ná-fik-a skuli n-chi-a-ambir-a alimu ayangu.**

1SG.PST-arrive-FV 9.school 1SG-CONS-3PL-tell-FV 2.teachers 2.my.fellows
‘I arrived at school and told my fellow teachers.’

Digo (Nicolle 2013:139)

(69) **Mmwenga nku-phand-a na wanjina a-ka-vun-a.**

3SG.one HAB-plant-FV COM 3SG.other 3SG-SEQ-reap-FV
‘One plants and (then) another reaps.’

Malila and Digo both run counter to the tendency noted by Nurse (2008:120) for Bantu languages to have only one narrative or consecutive verb form, even when they have multiple pasts.

Fuliiru, Bena and Mwani also have two narrative strategies for marking foreground material, but unlike Malila and Digo, their distribution is not determined by the establishing tense or aspect. In Fuliiru, the choice between the two strategies is determined by the notion of predictability. Van Otterloo (2015:18–20) identifies two sequential tenses which carry the event-line of the narrative. One can be considered the default tense for this function and the other additionally marks the events as predictable. The default sequential (SC-ana-VR-a) can be seen in the following example:

Fuliiru (Van Otterloo 2015:18)

(70) **Lyeryo wandare ana-tondeer-a uku-lwis-a wangaavu, ana-mu-yit-a.**

right_then lion 3SG.SEQ-begin-FV INF_fight-FV cow 3SG.SEQ-1-kill-FV
‘Right then, lion began to fight the cow, and she killed it.’

The predictable sequential tense (SC-na-VR-e) occurs especially in more informal registers and shows that the events described are somehow expected. In the following example, the mother does the actions which her son had previously told her to do and therefore the predictable sequential is used:

Fuliiru (Van Otterloo 2015:20)

(71) **Nyina a-na-gwat-e lulya luhazi, a-na-lu-baq-e, a-na-lu-zimaan-e walukwawu.**

his_mother 3SG-SEQ-grab-SUB 5.DEM_DIST 5.rooster 3SG-SEQ-5-slaughter-SUB

3SG-SEQ-serve_as_guest_food-SUB hare
‘His mother grabbed that rooster, and slaughtered it, and served it as guest food to the hare.’

The Bena text corpus shows variation in the choice of which verb form indicates foreground material, and this variation may be determined by the dialekt of the speaker. In the first example below, the foreground clauses use the consecutive tense (i-VR-ag-a23), which is seen in inyamulaga ‘he took’ and

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23The 3SG subject concord a- is deleted before the tense prefix i-; when there is an object, the form is SC-ku-VR-ag-a with no surface evidence of the tense prefix i-. The tense prefix i- is identical to the present tense marker, and is replaced by ku- when there is an object in the present tense also.
narratives. The example below illustrates both verb forms:

Bena (Eaton 2015a:27)
(72) U-Ngamusungula *i-nyamul-ag-a* ikibadu ikinya wubaaga,
   1a-hare 3SG.CONS-take-CONS-FV 7.carved_spoon 7.having 14.porridge
   
   *i-nyuw-ag-a, umuyagwe ii-git-a ku-naav-a swe.*
   3SG.CONS-drink-CONS-FV 1.companion.3SG.POSS 3SG.PRES-make-FV INF-lick-FV just
   ‘Hare took a carved spoon with porridge on it and drank; his companion could just lick.’

Bena (Eaton 2015a:28)
   7.day 7.ASS two 3PL-P2-hunt-ANT INF.NEG-succeed-FV thing 3PL-P2-sleep-ANT INF.NEG-eat-FV
   ‘The second day they hunted without success and went to sleep without eating.’

A second case of verb form variation correlates with this preference, as those texts which favor the consecutive tend to use *neke* ‘then’ plus SC-VR-ag-e as a marker of thematic developments. On the other hand, those which favor the far past perfective tend to use the shorter *neke* ‘then’ plus SC-VR-e construction for the same purpose.

Mwani also has two verb forms used to encode sequential events: the consecutive (SC-ki-VR-a) and the perfect (SC-VR-a). The factor determining their distribution in a narrative is the type of storyline they carry. Floor (2004) follows Longacre (1989; 1994) in distinguishing three types of storyline. The primary storyline consists of the main events of the narrative, ordered chronologically, and as such is the default type. The secondary storyline also consists of events, but those which are backgrounded relative to others. This storyline is still considered part of the event-line, but the events it describes are ranked lower than those of the primary storyline in some way; for example, these events may set up or result from the events of the primary storyline. The third storyline type is called the pivotal storyline, and it is this which carries the climactic events of the narrative. In Mwani, the distribution of the consecutive and the perfect patterns with these three storyline types. Floor (2004:86) concludes that the primary storyline is carried by both the consecutive and the perfect (the choice between the two often depending on speaker style), whereas the pivotal storyline is generally carried by the perfect and the secondary storyline by the consecutive. The perfect is the more marked (i.e., less frequent) form of the two in narratives. The example below illustrates both verb forms:

Mwani (Floor 2004:77)
(74) Ire Sufu pa-a-law-ire, a-k-ük-a kwake,
   that Sufu 16-3SG-leave-PERF 3SG.CONS-go-FV 17.3SG.POSS
   
   *ka-n-síng-an-a* nkawake...
   3SG.PERF-3SG.OBJ-encounter-RECIP-FV 1.wife.3SG.POSS
   ‘That Sufu when he left, he then went to his place/home, he encountered his wife…’

Floor analyzes the first and third clauses as part of the pivotal storyline and the second as part of the secondary storyline. See 5.3 below for examples of languages in which tense and aspect choices in narratives have been analysed as indicating the relative importance of individual events, rather than storylines.

Speech clauses behave differently from other event-line clauses in Digo and Kwaya. In Digo, about half of all occurrences of the usual speech verb *amba* (‘say’) are in the present tense. Kwaya also shows a strong tendency for the present tense to introduce speech clauses, whereas the narrative tense is used elsewhere:
Kwaya (Odom 2015:26)

(75) Abhaanu bhayo a-hha-aik-a ati, “Aa anye e-ni-ga-tur-a era.”
2.person 2.DEM_REF PRES-3PL-say-FV that aa 1SG PRES-1SG-be-able-FV easily

Mmbe owa okwamba m-ma-mu-yaan-a omutiyaaani n-aa-tam-w-a
so 1.ASS INF.begin NARR-3PL-1-give-FV 3.test NARR-3SG-win-PASS-FV
‘Those people say that, “Aa I can do it easily.” So, the first, they gave him the test, and he failed.’

In Malila, the narrative verb form (SC-kha-VR-a) is interpreted as perfective and therefore, if an event or situation happens more than once, an imperfective verb form (SC-kha-VR-ag-a) must be used instead, as in the first word of the next example. This verb form is identical to the narrative but for the imperfective suffix –ag (realized as –nj in the example below). However, it is analyzed as a far past imperfective rather than a narrative imperfective since, although it may carry the main event-line, it may also be used to convey backgrounded information which the narrative tense cannot.

Malila (Eaton 2015b:23)

(76) A-kha-tɨ-njɨ 24 “Imbeyu ini n-á-fum-ile na=yo ku Sumbuwanga.”
‘He would say, “This seed, I came with it from Sumbawanga.’

In some eastern Bantu languages, when there is a close conceptual link between sequential events, such as getting dressed and setting off on a journey, or setting a trap and placing it in a field, the second clause may use an infinitive verb form preceded by the comitative marker (na in Digo and nu in Bena), as in the following examples. It should be noted, however, that this construction is extremely rare, and is absent from most of the text corpora used in this study:

Digo (Nicolle 2013:266)

(77) Saa sita wa-hal-a fimbo ye na chifulana che
hour six 3SG.PST-take-FV 9.stick 9.3SG.POSS COM 7.vest 7.3SG.POSS

na ku-gbwir-a yo barabara
COM INF-seize-FV 9.DEM_REF 9.road
‘At 12 o’clock he picked up his stick and his vest and took the road…’

Bena (Eaton 2015a:46)

(78) Neke umunya mugunda yula a-wuyap-ag-e umuhadiho
then 1.owner 3.field 1.DEM_DIST 3SG-set-CONS-SUB 3.trap

nu ku-vii-k-a mu mugunda ugwa madze b e le.
COM INF-put-FV in 3.field 3.ASS 6.maize
‘When the maize had ripened, the birds came to eat it. Then the field owner set a trap and put it in the maize field.’

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24The verb root tɨ is VC, which changes the suffix from -ag to -ang. In addition, the final vowel is a copy of that which occurs in the verb root and this causes velar softening, which is represented orthographically as j.
5.1.2 Background clauses

While there is often a very restricted set of tense and aspect categories used to convey foreground material, there is much more variety found in background material. A single text in Digo, for example, provides instances of the present, continuous, anterior, past, past continuous, past anterior, consecutive, general negative, imperative and subjunctive in background clauses (Nicolle 2015:19–22). Of these categories, the anterior (SC-ka-VR-a) is the most common and occurs particularly with two functions. Firstly, it can be used to describe an event which is not on the event-line, as in the arrival of the lion in the example below:

Digo (Nicolle 2015:21)
(79) Ligundzu a-ka-fik-a hiphɔ ni saa mbiri,
morning 3SG-ANT-arrive-FV 16.DEM_REF COP hour two
hiyu mutu na=ye a-redz-a saa mbiri na dakika kumi.
1.DEM_PROX 1.person COM=3SG 3SG-come.PRES-FV hour two COM minutes ten
‘In the morning he (lion) had arrived there at eight o’clock, the man also came at ten past eight.’

Secondly, the anterior in Digo can be used in tail-head linkage, where the information presented in one clause is repeated in a following, dependent clause:

Digo (Nicolle 2015:21)
(80) Phahi tsungula wo-kpwedz-a, a-ka-fik-a hiphɔ wa-amb-a…
so hare 3SG.PST-come-FV 3SG-ANT-arrive-FV 16.DEM_REF 3SG.PST-say-FV
‘So the hare came, and having arrived there he said…’

Tail-head linkage is common in other eastern Bantu languages, but the verb form used varies according to language. Kwaya, for example, uses an infinitive in tail-head constructions:

Kwaya (Odom 2015:15)
NARR-3PL-3SG-give-FV 14.sorghum INF-3SG-give-FV 14.sorghum NARR-3SG-go-FV
‘They gave him the sorghum plants. Giving him the sorghum plants, he then left.’

For languages with a narrative or consecutive verb form, past events that do not form part of the event-line are often expressed using anteriors or past tenses. Suba-Simbiti provides examples of the past habitual (SC-a-VR-ang-a), proximal past (SC-a-VR-irë) and distal past (SC-a-VR-a) in background clauses (Masatu 2015:24). The example below illustrates the past habitual:

Suba-Simbiti (Masatu 2015:24)
(82) Bha-ambok-ang-a uku-ghy-a humbɔ bha-ré-ngé bhane mu-bhwato
3PL.PST-cross-HAB-FV INF-go-FV other_side 3PL-be-HAB 2.four 18.LOC-14.boat
‘They were crossing to go to the other side, being four in the boat.’

Masatu (2015:25) notes that these tenses normally occur in relative clauses outside of the orientation of the narrative. Kwaya utilises both a near past and a remote past in background clauses.

Note: any subsequent events that are also not on the event-line are conveyed with the present tense (SC-na-VR-a), as seen in example (79) with the coming of the man (the present tense form of the verb kpwedza ‘come’ is irregular: redza).
In contrast to Suba-Simbiti and Kwaya, Bena and Malila do not use their equivalent near past tense forms in background clauses. Background material is instead expressed by the far past, either perfective (SC-aa-VR-ile for Bena; SC-á-VR-ile for Malila) or imperfective (SC-aa-VR-ag-a for Bena; SC-kha-VR-ag-a for Malila). The extract below illustrates both forms for Bena in an orientation:

Bena (Eaton 2015a:29)
(83) A-a-li27 kwá-li umumu yumwinga, a-a-tambul-w-ag-a Kaluvekele.

3SG-P2-be 17.P2-be 1.person 1.one 3SG-P2-call-PASS-IPFV-FV PLACE_NAME

Umumu uyu iikal-ag-a28 mwene kwi Hovandza.

1.person 1.DEM_PROX 3SG.P2.live-IPFV-FV 1.alone at Ihovandza

Mu minanile gyakwe u-Kaluvekele asaatool-ile29 umunyagati poonu, in 4.life 4.3SG.POSS 1a-Kaluvekele 3SG.NEG.P2-marry-ANT 1.wife at_all

kangi a-a-li mu-ngaya mwana.
again 3SG-P2-be 1-without 1.child

‘There was a person called Kaluvekele. This person lived alone in Ihovandza. Kaluvekele never married a wife, and he did not have any children.’

The use of tense and aspect categories here is typical for a Bena narrative. The far past perfective is used with a verb of introduction in the first clause (aali kwali ‘there was’) and then later for a state which existed before the start of the main event-line (asaatoolile ‘he did not marry’; aali mungaya mwana ‘he was without child’). The far past imperfective is used for situations which began before the start of the main event-line and continue to hold (aatambulwaga Kaluvekele ‘he was called Kaluvekele’; iikalaga mwene ‘he lived alone’). In some Bena texts, the default narrative strategy for the main event-line is the far past perfective and therefore the same verb form is commonly used in both foreground and background clauses. In such texts, a temporal point of departure, such as kigono kimwinga ‘one day’ or the use of a proximal demonstrative may indicate the change from background to foreground.

It is common for background sections which conclude a text to show more variety in tense and aspect categories than those which occur earlier in the narrative and describe events and states which are secondary to the main event-line. The following example from Bena illustrates three different present tenses: general present (ali ‘she is’), habitual (aigenda ‘she always walks’) and anterior (agundiime ‘she has bent over’):

Bena (Eaton 2015a:30)
(84) Ukuhumila baaho u-Seluhanga a-li ni kiduudzu pa mugongo.

since then 1a-Seluhanga 3SG-be COM 7.hump at 3.back

Lino a-i-gend-a, a-gundiime.

now 3SG-HAB-walk-FV 3SG-bend_over.ANT

‘Since then Seluhanga has a hump on her back. Now she walks bent over.’

---

26Although the text corpora for both languages do not include narratives which are located in the recent past, it is possible that narratives of this kind would in fact use the near past for backgrounded material.

27The verb li ‘be’ is irregular and does not take the suffix -ile.

28Underlying: a-a-iikal-ag-a 3SG-P2.live-IPFV-FV.

29Underlying: a-si-a-tool-ile 3SG.NEG-P2-marry.ANT.
5.2 The relative chronology of situations described by the verb

In addition to the function of distinguishing foreground and background material, and the expected grammatical function of expressing the tense and aspect of an individual situation, tense and aspect categories in narrative texts indicate the relative chronological relations between situations. In this section, we consider the ways in which the languages in our sample use tense and aspect to indicate that two events occur consecutively or simultaneously.

5.2.1 Sequentiality

The most common way to show that two events occur sequentially is simply to use the narrative or consecutive tense, as has been seen in §5.1.1 above. However, these tenses are not normally found in subordinate clauses and therefore an event which is conveyed in such a clause must be marked in a different way to show its chronological relationship to the clauses around it. Fuliiru has two ways to mark a clause of this type. In the first construction, which can be considered the default strategy, the conjunction *iri* ‘when’ in the subordinate clause is followed by an unmarked past tense (SC-*ka*-VR-*a*).

Fuliiru (Van Otterloo 2015:16)

(85) *Iri i-ka-ba* keera ya-mal-a siku zi-ta-li niini,

    when 9-PST-be-FV already 9.ANT-finish-FV 10.days 10-NEG-be few

    iyo mbongo y-ana-galuk-*a*


‘When many days had already finished [lit. When it was already finished many days], that gazelle returned.’

In the second strategy, the conjunction *mbu* (or *ngu*) ‘as soon as’ is followed by a subjunctive verb (SC-VR-*e*) and a sense of suddenness or immediacy is conveyed:

Fuliiru (Van Otterloo 2015:17)

(86) *Ingoona mbu i-yuvw-e ulubi, y-ana-i-bakul-*a.*

    9.crocodile as_soon_as 9-hear-SUB noise 9-SEQ-4-gobble-FV

‘As soon as the crocodile heard the noise, it gobbled them up.’

In both examples, the second clause contains the default sequential (SC-*a*-VR-*a*). The difference in immediacy between the two examples is achieved by the choice of conjunction and verb form in the first clause. In the second example above, the verb in the subordinate clause is not a past tense, but the event it expresses is understood with a past time reference in the context. A similar situation holds for the Malila strategy for expressing consecutive events with a subordinate clause followed by a main clause:

Malila (Eaton 2015b:18)

(87) *We bha-a-mu-piny-*a mwi pagali,*

    when 3PL-PFV-1-tie-FV on 5.stretcher

    *basi bha-khand-*a *ku-shuul-*a na=wo *ku-mu-twal-*a *ku sipitaale*

    well 3PL-NARR.start-FV INF-journey-FV COM=3SG INF-3SG-take-FV to 9.hospital

‘When they had tied him to the stretcher, well, they started to journey with him to take him to the hospital.’

The verb form in the subordinate clause is analyzed as a present perfective (SC-*a*-VR-*a*). When it occurs in a main clause, it can be used to locate a situation in the present or immediate past, but not in the far past. When, as in this example, it occurs in a subordinate clause, it can locate a situation in the
far past, because it takes its time reference from the narrative tense of the following clause (bhakhanda ‘they started’) which indicates far past.

Stegen (2011:278) raises the possibility that in Rangi, the choice between two tenses used to narrate consecutive events in main clauses may indicate a difference in how closely the second event follows on from the first. This would therefore be similar to the phenomenon noted above for subordinate clauses in Fuliiru. In Rangi, some data suggests that the narrative (SC-ka-VR-a) is preferred for an event which immediately follows the previous one, whereas the intermediate past (SC-a-VR-a) is preferred if there is a gap before the next event occurs.

When an event is presented out of chronological order, as a flashback, it is usual to use a tense and aspect choice to convey this. In Bena, for example, a far past is used below to show that the second sentence does not represent the next event in the sequence (as would be conveyed by choosing the consecutive), but refers to an event which happened previously:

Bena (Eaton 2015a:29)
(88) Pa kaaye yaakwe ii-kal-ag-a\textsuperscript{30} ni mbwa yaakwe suwe.  
\hspace{1cm} at 9.home 3SG.POSS 3SG.P2-live-IPFV-FV COM 9.dog 9.3SG.POSS just

\textit{Imbwa iyi a-yi-peel-uye ilitaawa Kolandzi.}

\hspace{1cm} 9.dog 9.DEM.PROX 3SG.P2-9-give-ANT 5.name NAME  
‘He lived at home with just his dog. He had given this dog the name Kolandzi.’

5.2.2 Simultaneity

It was noted above that, in Malila, the verb of a subordinate clause can depend for its time reference on the following main clause, in a construction which is used to express consecutive events. A parallel construction expresses simultaneous events by using a present progressive in the subordinate clause. This is understood as having far past time reference in the context of a following far past narrative verb:

Malila (Eaton 2015b:13)
(89) A-kha-vwogol-a. \textit{We a-ku-vwogol-a paala kumo, a-kha-long-ag-a...}  
\hspace{1cm} 3SG-NARR-harvest-FV when 3SG-PRES-harvest-FV there over there 3SG-NARR-say-IPFV-FV  
‘He harvested. As he was harvesting over there, he would say...’

An alternative strategy for expressing simultaneous events can be seen in Makonde. In this language, two independent clauses can be linked by \textit{na} ‘and’ to show that the events described are simultaneous rather than sequential:

Makonde (Leach 2015:41 and 74)
(90) Bai ndege kushanya kw-omb-a na vamadodo va-pit-a pai.  
\hspace{1cm} so aeroplane above NARR-bomb-FV and footsoldiers 3PL-PASS-FV ground  
‘So an aeroplane went overhead dropping bombs, and the infantry went over the ground below.’

5.3 The relative importance of information expressed through tense and aspect

We turn now to how tense and aspect categories are utilized to signal the relative importance of information in the narrative. The languages in the sample below display a great variety in the categories used for this function. In some cases, the category choice can be viewed as non-arbitrary in relation to the function, as in the following Digo example. In the last clause of the first sentence (anaphiya ‘she

\textsuperscript{30}Underlying: a-a-ikal-ag-a 3SG-P2-live-IPFV-FV.
goes’) and the first clause of the second sentence (aredza ‘he comes’), the present tense is used to describe events with a past time reference. Nicolle (2015:22) describes this use of the present tense as giving “heightened vividness” to the events.

Digo (Nicolle 2015:79)

(91) Yuya mchetu waphiya kudzifwitsa-fwitsa, achidzifwitsa-fwitsa, achidzifwitsa-fwitsa, akala akavuka rira lichigo vino anaphiya. Kuratu nyuma simba naye aredza alole yuya ambaye nkuika nyama.

‘The woman followed him secretly, and crossed the fence while she was going [lit. she is going]. There behind the lion also was coming [lit. is coming] to see the man who usually left the meat.’

Similarly, in the same language, the itive marker enda- can be used to show changes in the location of events and at the same time to mark the movement as backgrounded in contrast to the events themselves:

Digo (Nicolle 2015:25)

(92) A-ri-pho-on-a hivyo, a-pig-a mbiru
3PL-PST-16REL-see-FV 8DEMREF 3PL-PST-hit-FV 9horn

a-chi-ih-a atu osi hipo lalo-ni
3PL-CONS-call-FV 2people 2all DEMREF 9area-LOC

na a-ch-enda-mu-endz-a hiko weru-ni
COM 3PL-CONS-ITIVE-3SG-search-FV 17DEMREF 11bush-LOC

‘When they saw that, they blew a horn and called all the people from that area, and they went and searched for him in the bush.’

Instead of foregrounding the movement by expressing it with a full lexical verb and the expected consecutive tense marking, the itive marker backgrounds it in relation to the action of searching. Again, it appears non-arbitrary that a full verb foregrounds the movement and an affix backgrounds it.

In other languages, the connection between form and function seems to be arbitrary. Pyle and Robinson (2015:27) note in Jita a past tense, rather than a narrative tense, sometimes occurs in foreground clauses, but then only in peak episodes.

In Makonde, the default narrative tense (ku-VR-a) contrasts with the consecutive (SC-ka-VR-a). The latter downgrades the importance of the situation it describes and thus gives prominence to the events which follow:

Makonde (Leach 2015:77)

(93) Nae ku-n-nambel-a apalá, a-ka-n-kody-a mwanagwe, a-lipidy-e pa-lyukutu
she NARR-1-search-FV there 3SG-CONS-1-find-FV her_child 3SG-hidden LOC-bush

kutwala ku-uj-a = na = vo kavili na = ko-dyani-a na ntwagwe.
then NARR.return = COM = 3SG again COM = NARR-meet-FV COM husband.3SG.POSS

‘She searched for her child and found him hidden in a bush; then she went back with him and met her husband.’

Leach notes that the theme of the story is a comparison between the mother’s courage and the father’s lack of it, and therefore the act of finding of the child is less important than the mother’s return to her husband, who had not joined in the search for the missing child in the first place.
In contrast to Makonde, Bena and Rangi are analyzed as having verb forms which highlight the situation they express, as opposed to downgrading its importance in relation to what follows. In Bena, neke ‘then’ and the subjunctive (SC-VR(-ag)-e) can combine to signal a thematic development:

Bena (Eaton 2015a:46)

(94) Amadzebele pe ga-a-viye ga-kang-iye, amadege gikw-adz-ag-a ku-liy-a.

Neke umunya mugunda yula a-wuyap-ag-e umuhadiho
then 1.owner 3.field 1.DEM_DIST 3SG-set-IPFV-SUB 3.trap

nu ku-viik-a mu mugunda ugwa madzebele.
COM INF-put-FV in 3.field 3.ASS 6.maize

‘When the maize had ripened, the birds came to eat it. Then the field owner set a trap and put it in the maize field.’

The farmer attempts to solve the problem of his maize being eaten by birds by setting a trap. The setting of the trap (neke... awuyapage 'then... he set') is given prominence as the first significant development in the narrative.

In Rangi, the referential copula noo highlights the event it expresses, in contrast to the default choice of the consecutive (SC-ka-VR-a) for the event-line. The following example shows the original wording of an example on the left, which uses a consecutive (ɨkalooka), and the edited version on the right, which uses the referential copula (noo). The change the author made in the editing process marks the running away of Hare as the climax of the episode.

Rangi (Stegen 2011:271)

(95) maa ntuuju i-ka-look-a noo tiij-a

and_then 9.hare 9-CONS-leave-FV → COP:REF run_away-FV

‘and then Hare left’ → ‘and then that’s running away’

5.4 Variation due to style and register

In some of the languages in the sample, there are indications that variation in tense and aspect can be explained by reference to style and register. Walker (2011:7–8) notes that in some Kabwa texts, the continuous aspect (SC-ra-VR-a) was used instead of the expected consecutive tense (SC-ka-VR-a) in foreground clauses:

Kabwa (Walker 2011:7)

(96) Bha-ra-gamb-a, “Tu-nyooreri esimiti ya oku-hagaj-ir-a.”

Bha-hik-ang-a, iika, esimiti hiyo a-ra-gwat-an-a kya erigina.

‘They said, “We’ve got cement with which to build.” They arrived home, this cement was full of stones.’

In this example, two verbs (bharagamba ‘they are saying’ and aragwatana ‘it is holding together’) use the continuous aspect, even though they occur in foreground clauses referring to past events happening

31Underlying: ga-i-ku-adz-ag-a 6-3SG-CONS-come-IPFV-FV.
in sequence, and therefore would be expected to use the consecutive tense. The texts in which this use of the continuous aspect occurred were given orally and then transcribed without extensive editing. On reading the transcription of the texts, Kabwa speakers commented that using the continuous aspect in this way was not a proper storytelling technique.

A similar phenomenon can be seen in Malila. In this language, texts which were likewise first given orally and then transcribed sometimes used the present perfective (SC-a-VR-a) for narrating foreground material (as in the example below), instead of the usual far past narrative (SC-kha-VR-a). Malila speakers considered this narrative strategy as inappropriate for a written story, but acceptable in an informal story told orally.

Malila (Eaton 2015b:24)

(97) Pe a-tu-lem-a itwe, a-tu-twal-a mu polisi.

then 3SG.PFV-1PL-grab-FV 1pl 3SG.PFV-1PL-take-FV in 9.police

‘Then he grabbed us and took us into the police station.’

5.5 Movement expressions

While some eastern Bantu languages, like Malila, express change of location using only lexical verbs such as ‘go’ and ‘come’ (Eaton 2015b:26), others also have grammaticalized expressions of movement (or lack of movement) including ‘adverbial auxiliaries’ such as -gendit ‘go’, -yiji ‘come’, -hikiri ‘arrive’ and -sigali ‘remain’ in Fuliiru (see Nicolle 2003) and the itive, ventive, switch-locational and distal markers in Rangi (Stegen 2011:290–1) and Digo (Nicolle 2003; 2013:167–173; 2015:25–26), which are verbal prefixes with many of the morphosyntactic properties of tense and aspect markers. Itive markers indicate movement away from the deictic centre and ventive markers indicate movement towards the deictic centre, where the deictic centre is the notional location of the narrator, functioning as a reference point relative to which events in a narrative take place. The use of itive and ventive markers rather than lexical verbs of movement has the effect of backgrounding the change of location whilst allowing the event described in the main verb to be foregrounded.

Rangi has an itive marker too- derived from -itta ‘go’ which follows a tense or aspect marker:

Rangi (Stegen 2011:290)

(98) va-ka-too-luusa

3PL-CONS-ITIVE-say

‘they went and said’

Digo also has an itive marker, enda-, which occurs in finite clauses following a tense, aspect or infinitive marker:

Digo (Nicolle 2015:54)

(99) Na=y ey uy yu mz ee w a-katik-a m airo k a y a

COM=1.REF 1.DEM_DIST 1.elder 3SG.PST-cut-FV fast 5.home

ku-enda-ih-a aya-e phamwenga na mche-we.

INF-ITIVE-call-FV 2.fellows-2.3SG.POS together COM 1.wife-1.3SG.POS

‘And that old man ran quickly home to go and tell his companions and his wife.’
In addition, Digo has another itive marker, consisting of the prefix *ka-*, which replaces a tense or aspect marker, and the subjunctive suffix -e;\(^\text{32}\) this itive marker occurs in complementary distribution with *enda-*, in non-finite clauses:

Digo (Nicolle 2015:24)

(100) **N-chi-amb-a** *“Aha n’nda-phiy-a n-ka-jit-e** kuko mbere mana
1SG-CONS-say-FV no 1SG-FUT-go-FV 1SG-ITIVE-cook-SUB 17.DEM_REF ahead for

\(\text{na-tak-a ni-fik-e mapema kura kazi-ni n-ka-dzi-tayarish-e.”} \)

1SG PRES-want-FV 1SG-arrive-SUB early 17.DEM_DIST work-LOC 1SG-ITIVE-REFL-prepare-SUB

‘I said, “No, I will go and cook (brew tea) there ahead because I want to arrive at work early to go
and prepare myself.”’

Ventive markers include Rangi joo- derived from *-uja* ‘come’ and Digo edza- which is identical to the
lexical verb meaning ‘come’ but forms part of a single verb group with a lexical verb. As well as
indicating movement towards the deictic centre, edza- may also express immediacy:

Digo (Nicolle 2015:5)

(101) **Kpwweda-u-gut-a** huru mhumambó tu, na=o u-chi-fyuk-a, a-chi-gbwir-w-a.
INF. VENT-14-touch-FV 14.DEM_DIST 3.trap just COM = 3 3-CONS-shut-FV 3SG-CONS-seize-PASS-FV

‘As soon as he touched the trap [lit: Coming to touch that trap] it snapped shut, and he was
trapped.’

Both Rangi and Digo have movement expressions which indicate that an action occurs at a different
location from the deictic centre, but without indicating movement from or towards the deictic centre.
Rangi has a ‘switch-locational’ marker *koo-* that is derived from the noun class 17 locative prefix *ku-*. In
the following example, a father has sent his children to check on a trap; Stegen (2011:291) comments,
“there is a switch in location but neither itive -too- nor ventive -joo- would be appropriate as the
participants doing the sending and the looking are different.”

Rangi (Stegen 2011:360)

(102) **Maa haha aa-ndo-va-tum-a** vaana vaachwe koo-lang-a.
and now 3SG.PST-ITER-2-send-FV 2.children 2.3SG.POSS LOC-look-FV

‘And now he repeatedly sent his children to look there.’

Digo also has a verbal prefix which replaces a tense or aspect marker, termed the ‘distal’ marker,
which indicates that an event occurs at a location other than the deictic centre:

Digo (Nicolle 2015:42)

(103) **“U-chi-fik-a kaya u-si-phiy-e u-chi-mu-ambir-a mche-o…”**
2SG-DEP-arrive-FV 9.home 2SG-NEG-go-sub 2SG-DIST-3SG-tell-FV 1.wife-2SG.POSS

“When you arrive home, do not go and tell your wife (there)...”

Not all movement expressions are as explicit as those described above. Makonde has a construction
in which the comitative marker *na* is prefixed to a verb stem to indicate either the purpose for some
action or the resulting situation; Leach (2015:78–79) terms this ‘purposive’. The purposive may follow a
lexical verb of movement, such as ‘descend’ in the first example below; or it may occur in situations in
which movement is implied, as in the second example:

\(^{32}\)This construction is found in Makonde and various other eastern and southern Bantu languages; for a discussion,
see Botne (1999).
Makonde (Leach 2015:58)
(104) shuni aijá ku-shuluk-a na=ikal-a po pa-ikele munu.
   bird 1.a.DEM_DIST NARR-descend-FV COM=sit-FV LOC LOC-sit.PST 1.person
   ‘that bird descended and sat where the person was sitting.’

Makonde (Leach 2015:52)
(105) Muliduva limo tayali na=kody-a inembo i-ndi-injil-a.
   day one already COM=find-FV 9.elephant 9-ANT-enter-FV
   ‘One day finally he (came and) found that an elephant had fallen in.’

6 Information structure

Information structure concerns the ways in which narrators help hearers/readers to identify new information in a sentence, and then to combine it with information that they already have in order to arrive at a coherent interpretation of a text. Information structure in eastern Bantu narrative texts is primarily expressed through variations in the relative order of subject, verb, object and oblique constituents in a sentence, although intonation, pauses and focus markers also play a role. In this section, I shall describe various combinations of topic and focus (known as ‘sentence articulations’) found in the narrative corpora.

6.1 Fundamental concepts and terminology

The terms ‘topic’ and ‘focus’ are used in the sense of Lambrecht (1994), where the topic of a sentence is what a sentence provides information about, and the focus is information “which cannot be taken for granted at the time of speech” (Lambrecht 1994:207). In this paper, I shall distinguish three types of topic (continued topic, switch topic, and renewed topic33) and three types of focus (sentence focus, predicate focus, and argument focus).

A continued topic is a topic which was also the topic of the previous sentence; that is, the topic of the previous sentence continues to be the topic in the sentence under consideration. A switch topic is a new topic; that is, the topic of the sentence under consideration is different from the topic of the immediately preceding sentence. Switch topics are also called ‘shifted topics’ and ‘links’ (Vallduví 1992:109–10). A renewed topic is a specific kind of switch topic, i.e. one that has functioned as a topic previously in the narrative, but not in the immediately preceding sentence.

Predicate focus arises when non-predictable information is expressed by a verb and (optionally) its complements, or by a copula construction. When a sentence consists of a lexical topic followed by predicate focus, the predicate plus any arguments of the verb other than the topic itself are called the ‘comment’ and the whole construction exhibits what is known as ‘topic-comment’ sentence articulation. With external topics, the comment may exhibit sentence focus.

Sentence focus arises when none of the information in a sentence can be “taken for granted”, and so the whole sentence constitutes the focus. Such topicless sentences are called ‘thetic’ sentences, and are typically found in the orientations of narratives, where the setting and characters are introduced to present new participants and to report events or situations in which neither the action nor the participants can be taken for granted.

Argument focus arises when non-predictable information is expressed by a noun phrase. It is typically found when a certain event or situation is presupposed, but the identity of one of the participants in that event or situation is assumed not to be known by the addressee. When argument

33This is not an exhaustive list. Other possible distinctions, such as between given topics and contrastive topics, will not be discussed.
focus is used to identify an unknown argument in a proposition, the sentence as a whole is said to exhibit ‘identificational’ sentence articulation.

In the following sub-sections, I shall discuss topic-comment sentences, predicate focus with continued topics, thetic sentences (sentence focus), and identificational sentences, before summarizing the major differences in information structure found between eastern Bantu languages.

6.2 Topic-comment sentences

Switch topics and continued topics that occur at points of discontinuity are almost always expressed lexically. The situation described for Jita below is applicable to other eastern Bantu languages as well:

Each time the topic switches or a new paragraph begins, the topic is expressed lexically in the first clause and then with incorporated subject pronouns in later clauses, until the topic switches again.

At that point, the new topic is expressed lexically once again. (Pyle and Robinson 2015:31)

Such topics are typically expressed in a pre-verbal position. With the exception of thetic sentences in certain discourse contexts (see §6.4), the pre-verbal domain is restricted to lexical topics in all of the eastern Bantu languages surveyed except Suba-Simbiti; that is, focused referents may not occur pre-verbally.34

6.2.1 Left dislocation of topics

The topic can be separated from the predicate by a pause or a ‘spacer’ (a non-core element) such as an adverbial phrase or exclamative, and is therefore considered to be ‘left dislocated’. Left dislocation is used in a broad sense (as in Shaer, Cook, Frey and Maienborn 2009) which subsumes both left dislocation proper and topicalization. Left dislocation proper involves a resumptive element. In the first example below, the class 9 object marker i-, coreferential with the topic barabara ‘road’, serves this purpose. Topicalization involves a non-resumptive (‘gap’) construction, as in the second example where there is no object prefix corresponding to the topic pesa.

Digo (Nicolle 2013:237)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC (Object)</th>
<th>COMMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Barabara</em></td>
<td><em>ndipho</em> a-ka-i-rich-a.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9.road then 3SG-SEQ-9.OM-leave-FV

‘The road, then, he left it.’

Digo (Nicolle 2013:228)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC (Object)</th>
<th>COMMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Pesa</em></td>
<td><em>sino</em> hu-na-Ø-hew-a.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10.money us 1PL-PRES-Ø-be.given-FV

‘Money, us we are given.’

The topics in the examples above are the objects of the clause. However, topics are most often subjects, and so such topic-comment constructions conform to the canonical SVO constituent order. Nevertheless, subjects in topic position can be separated from the verb by a spacer, such as *bhuri rusiku* ‘every day’ in the following example:

This may be true for most eastern Bantu languages (see Zerbian 2006; Van der Wal 2009; Yoneda 2011), excepting languages such as Kikuyu [E51], which has a pre-verbal focus marker that is derived historically from a copula construction (see Van der Wal 2014).


6.2.2 Pre-verbal objects and focal prominence

In all of the languages surveyed, pre-verbal objects can be switch topics or continued topics at points of discontinuity (paragraph and episode boundaries). In Makonde, Fuliiru, Mwani, and possibly in other languages, left dislocation of the object can also be used to give prominence to the final constituent of the sentence. In the following example, both the subject ‘you’ and the object ‘me’ are topics (speech participants are inherently available as potential topics), but are semantically ‘redundant’ since subject and object prefixes occur on the verb. However, the inclusion of the object in particular as a topic gives prominence to the verb as the focus of the sentence:

Makonde (Leach 2015:90)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC1</th>
<th>TOPIC2</th>
<th>COMMENT (focal prominence)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>liduva</td>
<td>na liduva</td>
<td>wako nangu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>day and</td>
<td>day you me</td>
<td>2SG-FUT-1SG-eat-FV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td></td>
<td>‘...and one of these days you’ll end up by eating me.’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similarly by moving the object ‘that box’ out of the comment in the example below, prominence is given to the fact that it was laid on the bed:

Fuliiru (Van Otterloo 2011:350)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC1</th>
<th>TOPIC2</th>
<th>COMMENT (focal prominence)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ulya</td>
<td>munyere</td>
<td>kirya kijumba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.that</td>
<td>1.girl</td>
<td>7.that 7.box</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n-a-ki-gwejez-a ku</td>
<td>3SG-SEQ-7-lay-FV</td>
<td>bed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘That girl, that box, she laid it on the bed.’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Fuliiru, the sentence-final position is the location of the dominant focal element (DFE), defined as the part of the comment that is more important than the rest. In speech, the DFE is preceded by a slight pause, even when canonical constituent order is preserved, which suggests that the DFE is right dislocated in Fuliiru (Van Otterloo 2011:336–338). Oliver Kröger (p.c. 15/12/2014) notes that in Koti and several other Makhua languages (P.30), Sena (N.40) and Ngoni (N.10), when two constituents follow the verb, it is the IAV (immediately after verb) position that receives DFE status.

In Digo, however, there is no evidence that a DFE is distinguished structurally (Nicolle 2013:240). However, Digo does have a focus marker, che, which has a similar function to left dislocation of the object in Makonde, Fuliiru and Mwani. It occurs between the topic and the comment and gives prominence to the predicate. Che is a feature of spoken Digo, and in narratives is typically found only in direct speech. A typical example is provided below:

Digo (Nicolle 2015:40)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>COMMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Mino che náriwa ni wivu.”</td>
<td>me FOC I.was.eaten by jealousy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘As for me, I was eaten up by jealousy.’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.2.3 *Internal and external topics*

As well as subjects and objects, other elements may also function as topics. These may be integrated (that is, ‘internal’ topics which are syntactically dependent on the host sentence) as in example (112) below, or non-integrated (that is, ‘external’ topics such as the examples which follow). In example (112), *ribhuyi eryo* ‘that rock’ is the object of a purpose clause, which in turn is the complement of a possessive clause, which is further embedded in an adverbial phrase. (The embedded clauses have been indicted using square brackets, and the glossing has been simplified in this and subsequent examples.)

Jita (Pyle and Robinson 2015:32)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>COMMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Ribhuyi eryo</em></td>
<td><em>neeganirisya muno.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ejire arora [atari na [ja kwasisya Ø ] ] ]</td>
<td>‘That rock, [when he saw [he has nothing [to break (it) ] ], he thought a lot.’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Non-integrated, external topics (also called ‘topic frames’ or ‘themes’35) are illustrated in the examples below. With an external topic, the comment may consist of an embedded topic-comment construction in which the subject is ‘topic2’ and the predicate is ‘comment2’, as in the following example:

Malila (Eaton 2015b:10)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC1</th>
<th>COMMENT1</th>
<th>TOPIC2</th>
<th>COMMENT2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Pe umuntu ula</em></td>
<td><em>zikhanyaama pakhaaya paala.</em></td>
<td><em>ing’ombe ziila</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Then as for that person, those cows gave birth there at home.’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The comment following an external topic may also consist of a topicless clause exhibiting sentence focus, as in the examples below. In practice it is difficult to distinguish between an embedded comment with sentence focus and an embedded comment with topic-comment articulation. Embedded topics are typically already established in the discourse and may be referred to using a demonstrative (as in the example above) whereas the subjects of comments with sentence focus are typically discourse new (as in the examples below). The subject of the comment is often an entity which is grammatically possessed by the external topic (and is thus linked to the discourse context, even though not already established in the discourse), as illustrated in the following two examples:

Digo (Nicolle 2015:29)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>COMMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Mino mkpwazangu karya sima.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>me</td>
<td>my.wife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘As for me, my wife does not eat ugali.’</td>
<td>she.does.not.eat ugali</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.3 Predicate focus with continued and renewed topics

As mentioned above, switch topics and continued topics that occur at points of discontinuity are typically expressed lexically in a pre-verbal position in all of the languages surveyed. The examples provided thus far have been of switch topics. In this section, we will look at continued topics and renewed topics.

6.3.1 Continued topics at points of discontinuity

Continued topics that occur at points of discontinuity in a text include topics that continue across paragraph and episode boundaries, and topics that are repeated when describing events that are narrated out of sequential order, such as elaborations. Continued topics at points of discontinuity exhibit the same formal properties as switch topics. In the following example, the topic remains the man who is mentioned in the first sentence; the sentence after the direct quotation starts a new paragraph, indicated by the use of the past tense in warima ‘he farmed’ as opposed to the consecutive in achiamba ‘he said’ in the previous sentence (see §5.1.1) and starts with the lexical topic yuya bwana ‘that gentleman’ in pre-verbal position:

Digo (Nicolle 2015:65)

(116) Yuya mlume achiamba, “Mino rivyo nchirima tsula n'naphaha, phahi ndarima dza phapha na ko Mwamtsola, ili niphahe vitu vinji vyanjina niguze nigule ng'ombe.”

That man said [CONS], “Me when I farmed a termite mound I was getting (a lot of food), so I shall farm from here to Mwamtsola, so that I will get lots of things to sell so I can buy a cow.”

6.3.2 Obligatory and optional left dislocation of topics

The majority of continued topics do not occur at points of discontinuity in the text, and as most topics are subjects, continued topics are typically expressed using just a subject prefix on the verb. (Since the subject prefix is obligatory, it can be said that there is no overt topic in such clauses). Occasionally, however, a continued topic is expressed lexically even when there is no discontinuity in the text. When this occurs, eastern Bantu languages differ in how such topics are expressed. In some eastern Bantu languages (such as Fuliiru and Jita) topics must occur pre-verbally, whereas in others (such as Digo, Mwani and Rangi) topics in certain discourse contexts may occur post-verbally.

In Jita and Fuliiru, all topics are left dislocated, and any post-verbal element is interpreted as argument focus in Jita or is interpreted as the Dominant Focal Element in Fuliiru (see §6.5). The following examples illustrate left dislocated continued topics in which the topic is a subject (preserving the canonical SV constituent order):
Jita (‘Hare and Hyena’ text, lines 8–10)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>FOCUS</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>FOCUS</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>FOCUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wamembe</td>
<td>nasurumbara,</td>
<td>Wamembe</td>
<td>he.lamented</td>
<td>Wamembe</td>
<td>he.got decision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hyena</td>
<td>hyena</td>
<td>hyena</td>
<td>hyena</td>
<td>hyena</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘Hyena spoke, hyena lamented, hyena made up his mind, he went and cut birdlime (tree sap), (and) he put (it) in his field.’ (Free translation: SN)

Fuliiru (Van Otterloo 2011:541)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>FOCUS (Predicate)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wandare</td>
<td>kwâkola mulirira umwana.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lion</td>
<td>he.heard(SEQ) that it.is.crying.for child</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘Lion heard that it [the cow] is crying for (its) child. Lion told that old man…’

Left dislocated continued topics in Jita and Fuliiru may also be non-subjects. The context of the following example is that the animals have dug a well, but Hare did not help. Hare has repeatedly stolen water, so Tortoise plans to catch Hare and cut off his tail as a punishment. The topic of each clause is oyo ‘that’ referring to Hare. In the first clause this is a non-integrated (external) topic, and in the second clause it is the object (coreferential with the object prefix mu-).

Jita (‘Well’ text, line 33)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>FOCUS (Sentence)</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>FOCUS (Sentence)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oyo</td>
<td>munane era ripanga,</td>
<td>oyo</td>
<td>enimugwata ara.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that_one</td>
<td>give(PL).me just machete</td>
<td>that_one</td>
<td>I.will.him.catch just</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘That one, just give me a machete, that one, I’ll just catch him.’

In Digo, Mwani and Rangi, topics may be right dislocated under certain conditions. Right dislocated topics are distinct from post-verbal subjects which may occur in thetic (presentational and event-reporting) sentences (see §6.4). Right dislocated topics refer to specific, identifiable participants, are often marked as such (for example, they are modified by demonstratives or are proper names), and are separated from the verb by a pause, and sometimes by non-core arguments and spacers. Post-verbal subjects are grammatical subjects in their own right, and are never separated from the verb by a pause or by non-core arguments or spacers.

In Digo and Mwani, continued topics are right dislocated when there is no discontinuity (that is, when events are presented in sequence within a single paragraph). In the following example, there is no change of topic and no discontinuity (note the use of the consecutive tense marker chi- in achinyamala ‘he stayed silent’ indicating a sequential action within a single thematic unit), and so the continued topic mutu yuyu ‘this person’ is right dislocated:

Digo (Nicolle 2015:27–28)

(120) Achidziuza mwakpwe rohoni, “Pho munda, nkauhenda mkpwulu na sikaphaha hata tsere mwenga, kpwani nini?” Lakini achinyamala mutu yuyu wala kayagomba na mutu.

‘He asked himself [CONS] in his heart, “That field, I have made it big and I have not got even a single maize cob, but why?” But he stayed silent [CONS] this man, neither did he speak with anyone.’
In the example below, from Mwani, the topic does not change but is referred to using a noun phrase and proper names in the last clause, presumably for emphasis. There is no discontinuity in the text as the order of events is iconic: they were called and then they came, and so the topic is right dislocated.

Mwani (Floor 2005:10)

(121) *Wakati waifikire sumana yawasikizane, wakitíwa,*

‘When the week that they agreed upon arrived, they were called, they came those two, Anli and Ntendaji.’

In addition, in Mwani renewed topics (topics that are re-activated after an absence) are also right dislocated. The following example shows the difference between a right dislocated renewed topic, *muka ire* ‘that woman’, which was last mentioned two clauses earlier, and a left dislocated switch topic, *vinu vire* ‘those things’, which has not previously functioned as a topic:

Mwani (Floor 2005:10–11)

(122) *Sambi akikála muka ire*

‘Now she sat down that woman and those things she cooked (them) and gave to the people.’

In Rangi, it seems that a switch topic may be right dislocated if it is only temporary (that is, it functions as the topic of a single clause but the topic reverts to the previous topic after this). In the example below, the topic changes from the elder to the boys for one sentence and immediately back to the elder.

Rangi (Stegen 2011:532–3)

(123) *Aho kali kwijáa na moosi umwi, afuma iundii, maa vatavana navo viyokwíja, maa akavasea, “Mpokeri isíri raani.” Maa vakasiíta vara vatavana.*

‘In times of old there was one elder, he came from the field, and the boys and they, they are coming, and he told them, “Carry my hoe.” And they refused, those boys. And that elder said...’

Given the available data, it seems that the majority of the languages surveyed pattern like Jita and Fuliru in that all topics are obligatorily left dislocated. However, as more data becomes available, it is possible that evidence may emerge that other languages allow topics to be right dislocated in certain discourse contexts.
6.4 Thetic sentences

Thetic sentences describe situations or events as a whole, rather than mentioning a topic and then providing information about the topic. As such, thetic sentences are topicless and only express sentence focus. As we have seen, the pre-verbal position is typically reserved for topics in eastern Bantu languages, and so a sentence with canonical SV constituent order will normally be interpreted as expressing topic-comment sentence articulation. To express sentence focus, a lexical subject can either be preceded by an external topic, as described in §6.2.3 or it can be right dislocated, as described below.

6.4.1 Thetic sentences with VS constituent order

The following example from Rangi shows how SV order was changed to VS order during the editing of a text in order to ensure that the sentence received a thetic interpretation. Stegen (2011:244) comments:

This is in the context of the eldest daughter, the main character of this narrative, refusing one suitor after another. Consequently, the subject *wìng* ‘another’ should not be the topic of this clause as he is not really a participant but merely another rejected suitor without any relevance for or further mention in the story.

Rangi (Stegen 2011:244)

first draft (SV) revision (VS)

(124) *W*-ɨɨngɨ *a*-kuuja → *A*-kuuja *w*-ɨɨngɨ kei
1-other 1-CONS:come 1-CONS:come 1-other again

‘Another came → (There) came another again.’

The example above serves to describe an event without reference to an existing topic; this kind of sentence focus is known as event-reporting sentence focus. Other examples of event-reporting thetic sentences are provided below. The purpose of the clause in the first example, from Digo, is to record the fact that a woman had died rather than to introduce the woman, who functions only as a prop in the narrative. The second example, from Jita, introduces a wedding, which is an important event in the development of the story:

Digo (Nicolle 2015:29)

(125) Kumbavi kuku kaya kala ku-ka-fw-a m-chetu
EXCLAMATIVE 17.DEM_PROX 9.home PST.COP 17-SEQ-die-FV 1-woman

‘However, there at home a woman had died…’

Jita (Pyle and Robinson 2015:31)

(126) Rusiku rumwi mu-chaaro cheebhwe omwo nibhubha-mo obhuregesi.
day one in-country their there it.was-in.there wedding

‘One day there in their country, there was a wedding.’

The final example of an event-reporting thetic sentence, also from Jita, occurs part way through a story in which Hare has insulted Chameleon, and Chameleon has just spent a number of days pondering how to exact revenge. Although Hare and Chameleon are established characters in the story, Chameleon has been the sole participant for the past eleven clauses. Rather than treat ‘Chameleon and Hare’ as a joint topic, which would require the NP to occur before the verb, the narrator has chosen to place the NP after the verb to create an event-reporting sentence:

Jita (Pyle and Robinson 2015:49)

(127) Mwejo yendeko mbahhonana Wasongo na Mutuuju.
tomorrow next they.saw.each.other Chameleon and Hare

‘The next day Chameleon and Hare met each other.’
More often in narratives, thetic sentences are used to introduce new participants or other entities into the discourse; this kind of sentence focus is known as presentational sentence focus, as exemplified below (see also Ekoti text line 5a in the appendix).

Kwaya (Odom 2015:29)

(128) *Woori bhunu *saariga *acheeganirisha *mmbe *‘n-aa-j-a *waarukerwe.*

   now while he.was he.still.think so NARR-3SG-come-FV frog

   ‘Now while he was still continuing to think, came a frog.’

Abstract concepts can also be introduced as post-verbal subjects with a verb such as ‘come’ indicating that the thought (illness, shame, etc.) is experienced by someone.

Makonde (Leach 2015:88)

(129) *nae, hashipali *shagwene, *dindimwida *ding’ano

   he there.was.not of.he.should.see they.came.to.him thoughts

   ‘...as for him, he couldn’t think what to do, then thoughts came to him...’ (Free translation: SN)

Verb agreement can either be with the grammatical subject or with one of the locative noun classes. When participants are introduced using existential verbs, the verb agrees with the grammatical subject in Makonde36, Bena, Malila, Jita, Kabwa, Kwaya, Suba-Simbiti and Ekoti, but with a locative in Fuliiru, Digo and Rangi. When participants are introduced using a verb of arrival (‘come’, ‘appear’ etc.), agreement is with the grammatical subject in all languages (see examples above) except Fuliiru. Examples can be found in §4.2.

### 6.4.2 Thetic sentences with SV constituent order

The first sentence of a text naturally contains only new information, and in most of the texts in the various corpora, the first line introduces a new participant. All of the Digo texts begin with a VS clause introducing a participant, as do all of the Jita texts except when the narrator introduces himself in an SV clause, the speaker being an ‘assumed’ participant and therefore inherently topical. Similarly, all of the Kabwa texts begin with a VS sentence introducing a participant, except for one with a pre-verbal subject *Orudara rwa Kirumi ruyo* ‘That [REF] Roman bridge’—presumably, given the use of the referential demonstrative, a bridge that was physically near, or that had been mentioned prior to the start of the narrative. However, a few texts in most of the languages surveyed begin with SV clauses with non-established subjects. Most of the subjects in these SV clauses are either well-known folk-tale or animal characters—as in the example below from Bena—or they refer to non-specific participants, such as ‘children’ in the Kwaya example and ‘one man’ in the Fuliiru example below:

Bena (Eaton 2015a:54)

(130) *Pa vutalilo u-Mbwa nu Duuma vaali nu wunyalumwinda.*

   at start dog and leopard they.were with unity

   ‘In the beginning Dog and Leopard were together.’

---

36Van der Wal (2008) reports that languages that distinguish conjoint and disjoint verb forms (see §6.5) differ concerning which is used in thetic sentences; for example, Sesotho [S32/33] uses a conjoint verb form, whereas Makhuwa [P31] uses a disjoint form. Makonde patterns like Makhuwa and uses a disjoint verb form in thetic sentences.
Kwaya (Odom 2015:60)

(131) *Rusu ku rumwi abhaana mbaja okureebha.*

\begin{align*}
\text{day} & \quad \text{one} & \quad \text{children} & \quad \text{they.came to.} & \quad \text{herd} \\
\text{‘One day children went to herd’}
\end{align*}

Fuliiru (Van Otterloo 2015:104)

(132) *Mushoshi muguma akagira lusiku likulu ha’mwage.*

\begin{align*}
\text{man} & \quad \text{one} & \quad \text{he.held day} & \quad \text{great at.} & \quad \text{home} \\
\text{‘One man had a feast at his house.’}
\end{align*}

One Malila text also uses SV clauses to introduce specific referents, i.e. people who are known to the narrator but not to the audience. Although a non-specific referring expression ‘two people’ is used in the first sentence, the second sentence specifies who these people are. It is possible that the SV constituent order is due to Malila only allowing VS where V is an unaccusative verb, that is, a verb whose subject is affected and thus has the thematic role of ‘theme’. However, ‘talk’ is an unergative verb in which the subject has the thematic role of ‘agent’. On the other hand, it would still be possible to begin the narrative with a locative verb plus existential clitic, followed by the subject as we see in §4.2.2: ‘One day there were two people. These people were talking,…’

Malila (Eaton 2015b:54)

\begin{align*}
\text{S} & \quad \text{V} \\
(133) \text{Isiku limo abhantu bhabhili bhakalongaga bhakhatinji, “Umunaalo uwa pllembo} & \\
\text{day one people two they.were.talking they.were.saying market of at.} & \quad \text{Ilembo} \\
\text{waamala abhaana bhitu abhasakhaala na bhalindu bhaabho bhonti.”} & \text{it.has.finished children our boys and girls their all} \\
\text{S} & \quad \text{V} \\
\text{Ümaama uSakolima akhamubhuzyaga umaayi waani uSankonya} & \\
\text{Grandmother Sakolima she.was.telling.her mother my} & \text{Sankonya} \\
\text{bháamile ku mpungo kwgalukwa.} & \text{they.were at funeral at.Igalukwa} \\
\text{‘One day two people were talking, saying, “Ilembo market has killed [lit. finished] our children, all their boys and girls.” Grandmother Sakolima was telling my mother Sankonya, they were at a funeral at Igalukwa.’}
\end{align*}

In conclusion, then, it seems that at the start of a narrative, where there are no established referents available to be topics, SV constituent order may be used as a rhetorical device to express a thetic sentence, when the subject is known to the audience or is (temporarily) non-specific.

Although VS thetic sentences are the norm in most of the languages surveyed, with SV thetic sentences occurring occasionally at the start of narratives, this is not the case in the Suba-Simbiti text corpus. Only one Suba-Simbiti text starts with a VS thetic sentence (see §4.2.2); two texts start with an explanation of the topic (‘An account of how the Simbiti people came to Mara’ and ‘An account of a person called Birage’) followed by a topic-comment sentence; three texts start with SVO thetic sentences; one with a VO thetic sentence; and one text (in the example below) starts with a subject in a copula construction followed by a past form of the verb *ré* ‘be’:
58

Suba-Simbiti (Masatu 2015:16)

(134) **Musimbëtë na Mohaasha** m=bhaana abha enda ĕmwë **bha-a-rë**.

Musimbëtë and Mohaasha COP=2.children 2.Ass 9.stomach 9.one 3Pl-Pst-be

‘Msimbëtë and Mohaasha were siblings, they were.’

Unusually for an eastern Bantu language, Suba-Simbiti also allows SV thetic sentences outside of the orientation. Two event-reporting thetic sentences from an inciting episode are shown below. The first thetic sentence involves a simple SV construction with the verb ‘come’; in all other languages, ‘come’ precedes the subject in thetic sentences. No buffalo has been mentioned previously in the text, and so a topic-comment reading is ruled out. (Two topic-comment sentences follow, in which the buffalo and then the youth function as topics.) The second thetic sentence contains a cleft construction, which would be expected in an identificational sentence in which it is presupposed that something killed the cow. However, nothing in the context indicates that the father knows that a cow has been killed, and so this must be interpreted as an event-reporting thetic sentence.

Suba-Simbiti (Masatu 2015:44)

(135) **Bhoono hano yaarëësyang urusikö urwöndë,**

now when he.was.herding day another

S V

**eng’era ekaasha** mu-rihisho irya waabho riyo. (Sentence focus)

buffalo it.came in-group of their.place that

Engera iyö ekaktiinania eghaini iyaabho ekhagiita. (Topic-Comment)

buffalo that it.fought.with bull their it.killed.it

Umumura uyö akaghya atëëbhya suwaabho igha, (Topic-Comment)

youth that he.went he.told their.father that

S COP V

“**Taata eng’era nayo yiitirë eng’ombe iyëëtö.”** (Sentence focus)

father buffalo it.is he.has.killed cow our

‘Another day when he was herding, a buffalo came among their herd. That buffalo fought with their bull and killed it. That youth went and told their father, “It was a buffalo that has killed our cow.”

6.5 **Identificational sentences**

Identificational sentences exhibit argument focus; that is, they identify the unknown participant in an event or situation which is known or assumed. Two main strategies are used to express argument focus: first placing the focused argument in sentence final position, and second using a cleft construction. All of the languages surveyed exhibit these strategies, but the distribution of each varies from language to language.

6.5.1 **Post-verbal argument focus**

In all of the eastern Bantu languages surveyed, sentence final constituents receive argument focus. In the example below, the presupposition is that someone will be put by the well to guard it; the focus identifies who that someone is. The occurrence of the “spacer” **woori** ‘now’ indicates that the object is right dislocated:
Jita (Pyle and Robinson 2015:18)

PRESUPPOSITION | FOCUS (Object)
--- | ---
(136) *Mbamuta-ko* **woori** *nyawatare.*
   | they.put.him-there now lion
“Now they put lion there.”

Makonde, Ekoti, Bena, Malila, Kabwa, Kwaya, Suba-Simbiti and Jita can express argument focus on the subject through right dislocation of the subject (see Ekoti text line 12b in the appendix). In the example below, the addressees believe that one of their number has not arrived safely; however, this person announces that he has in fact arrived. The post-verbal subject *twenti* ‘us all’ expresses argument focus on the subject.

Malila (Eaton 2015b:30)

PRESUPPOSITION | FOCUS (Subject)
--- | ---
(137) “*Mwebheya twafikha twenti.*”
   | friends we.have.arrived us.all
   | “Friends, we have all arrived.”

In Mwani, post-verbal subjects can receive argument focus in response to a question, but when there is no prior question, a cleft construction is used (Floor p.c. 8 April 2014; see also Floor 2005b:9):

Mwani (Floor p.c.)

PRESUPPOSITION FOCUS
--- | ---
(138) “*Kitabu atwarire nani?*” “*Katwala Saidi.*”
   | book 3SG.REL.PST.take who(subject) 3SG.PST.take Saidi
   | “Who took the book?” “Saidi took it.”

Compare:

PRESUPPOSITION FOCUS
--- | ---
(139) *Atwarire ndi Saidi.*
   | 3SG.REL.PST.take COP Saidi
   | “It was Saidi who took it.”

6.5.2 Argument focus in cleft constructions

Argument focus can be expressed in all of the eastern Bantu languages surveyed through the use of cleft constructions. In such constructions, also known as focus-presupposition sentences, the focused element is left dislocated preceding a copula or focus marker; the presupposition then follows, often in the form of a relative clause or verbless predicate.

The following example illustrates argument focus using both right dislocation and clefting in Jita. The first clause uses right dislocation to identify ‘women only’ as those who were living in the land (that the land was inhabited by someone is a presupposition); the second clause uses a cleft construction to identify these women as the ones who had stolen Mariro’s cows, an event of which the audience is already aware.

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37Digo and Fuliiru do not allow post-verbal subjects to receive argument focus. In Digo, post-verbal subjects are interpreted as right dislocated topics (see §6.3.2) or as presentational (see §6.4.1). In transitive clauses, the object must be adjacent to the verb, so VSO clauses are not possible. The situation is reversed in Makonde which does not allow both an object and a right dislocated subject. However, Makonde speakers avoid such constructions by left dislocating the object, leaving a post-verbal subject with argument focus.
In contrast to the other languages for which data is available, Digo and Fuliiru can only express argument focus on the subject using cleft constructions (post-verbal subjects cannot be the focus in Digo and Fuliiru). In Digo, the cleft construction consists of the copula prefix ndi (si in the negative) plus a referential marker; and is typically, although not always, followed by a relative clause:

Digo (Nicolle 2015:55)

(141) Ndipho atu achimanya kukala iye ndi=ye ariyehenda mambo higo.

‘Then people knew that it was her who did those things.’

In Fuliri, the cleft construction takes the form of a ‘focus copula’ which is cliticized to the following verb:

Fuliiru (Van Otterloo 2011:345)

(142) Yàbá bágéni bó=bàgírá yìbì.

‘These guests, they (are the ones who) did these things.’

6.6 Summary

Based on the available data, the following generalizations can be made for narrative texts:

- All of the languages surveyed have left dislocated (pre-verbal) topics, and topic-comment sentence articulation is very common.
- In Fuliiru, Mwani, Makonde and possibly in other languages, left dislocation of the object can also be used to give prominence to the final constituent of the sentence.
- Digo has a focus marker which gives prominence to the predicate.
- Topics must occur pre-verbally in Fuliiru and Jita and possibly in most other languages too.
- When there is no textual discontinuity—episode or paragraph break, non-iconic order of events—continued topics occur post-verbally in Digo and Mwani.
- Renewed topics occur post-verbally in Mwani.
- Temporary topics may occur post-verbally in Rangi.
- VS thetic sentences occur in all languages.
- SV thetic sentences may occur in Fuliiru, Kwaya, Rangi, Bena, Malila, Makonde and possibly in other languages in the orientation.
- SV thetic sentences may occur elsewhere in Suba-Simbiti.
- Argument focus can be expressed in all of the eastern Bantu languages surveyed through the use of cleft constructions.
Sentence final constituents other than the subject may receive argument focus in all languages.

Argument focus on the subject can be expressed through right dislocation of the subject in Jita, Kabwa, Kwaya, Suba-Simbiti, Bena, Malila, Makonde and Ekoti, and possibly also Rangi.

Argument focus on the subject can be expressed only through the use of cleft constructions in Fuliiuru and Digo.

7 Adverbial clauses and relative clauses

7.1 Adverbial clauses

Adverbial clauses are dependent clauses which occur either at the beginning or at the end of a sentence (excluding dependent clauses that function as the complement of a matrix clause). The following example illustrates two adverbial clauses: a temporal clause including the class 16 temporal relative marker pho (a-ri-pho-fik-a 3PL-PST-16.REL-arrive-FV ‘when they arrived’) before the main clause, and a reason adverbial clause including the logical connective mana ‘for’ after the main clause:

Digo (Nicolle 2015:54)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temporal adverbial clause</th>
<th>Main clause</th>
<th>Reason adverbial clause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hinyo atu ariphofika hipo,</td>
<td>atezeka sana</td>
<td>mana asikira sauti za atu airi.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘When those people arrived there, they were astonished, because they heard the voices of two people.’

Adverbial clauses are fairly common in Digo; two typical Digo texts contain a total of thirty-four adverbial clauses, twenty two of which occur before a main clause, and twelve after a main clause. In Digo, most of the adverbial clauses, which occur before the main clause, function as temporal points of departure, whilst adverbial clauses that follow the main clause express manner, temporal overlap, reason, result, and purpose. The situation is similar in Jita, where all adverbial clauses occurring before the main clause function as temporal points of departure, often in tail-head linkage constructions. Adverbial clauses which occur after the main clause express manner, reason, and purpose.

There is less variety in Kwaya; adverbial clauses in the Kwaya text corpus have a fairly restricted distribution, in particular those occurring after the main clause. Only six adverbial clauses occurred after the main clause in all ten Kwaya texts (totaling 1,015 clauses), and all of these adverbial clauses began with the temporal adverbial mpaka (‘until’), which may be borrowed from Swahili. The Kwaya texts had a greater number and variety of adverbial clauses occurring before the main clause, and all of these functioned as temporal points of departure.

In contrast to Digo, Jita and Kwaya—in which adverbial clauses before the main clause almost always function as temporal points of departure—in Fuliiuru, adverbial clauses at the beginning of a sentence express conditionals, concessives and logical relations as well as temporal points of departure. Adverbial clauses after the main clause in Fuliiuru express purpose/result, focus and manner. Adverbial clauses expressing reason are found both before and after the main clause.

Information structure functions within adverbial clauses as it does in main clauses, with topics typically being left dislocated. In the following example, the money, which is introduced into the narrative as the object of the first sentence, becomes the topic of the following adverbial clause. This indicates that the man’s speech will concern the money, which is in fact the case:
Malila (Eaton 2015b:49)
(144) … \textit{akhazyaga inhela zye bháfushiye imandi abhakuulu.}
he.found.it money which they.buried long_ago ancestors

\textbf{Temporal adverbial clause} \hspace{2cm} \textbf{Main clause}

\textit{TOPIC (Object) COMMENT}

\textit{Pe inhela ziila we azyaga ati, “Inhela izi imipimbe bhúlibhúli?”}
then money that when he.found.it he.said money this I.should.carry how
‘...he found money which long ago the ancestors had buried. Then that money, when he had
found it, he said, “How should I carry this money?”’

In contrast, the object of the adverbial clause in the example below (‘that one who told him the
price at which he could buy it’) occurs after the verb, and so is not a topic. This indicates that the
adverbial clause is simply functioning as a temporal point of departure; the main clause ‘he went home’
does not concern this person at all.

Malila (Eaton 2015b:51)
(145) \textit{Pe we aapima ula we amubhuzwa ibeyi ye agakala, aabhala kukhaaya.}
then when he.tested that.one who he.told.him price which he.can.buy he.went home
‘Then after he had tried out that one who told him the price at which he could buy it, he went
home.’

7.2 Relative clauses

Relative clauses are dependent clauses which describe or identify a noun phrase. In this paper I shall be
concerned only with the function of relative clauses in narrative texts; the structure of relative clauses in
the various languages, which do differ, will not be discussed here.

The previous two examples from Malila contain relative clauses. The relative clause in the second
example identifies the person as the one ‘who told him the price at which he could buy it’ thereby
identifying the referent unambiguously. This is a restrictive relative clause, since it restricts the reference
of the NP which it modifies. In the first example—repeated below for convenience—the relative clause
‘which the ancestors buried long ago’ provides additional information about the money rather than
distinguishing this money from other money that had not been buried by the ancestors (since no other
money has been mentioned). This is a descriptive or non-restrictive relative clause:

Malila (Eaton 2015b:49)
(146) \textit{akhazyaga inhela zye bháfushiye imandi abhakuulu.}
he.found.it money which they.buried long_ago ancestors
‘...he found money \textbf{which long ago the ancestors had buried.}’

Only restrictive relative clauses occur in the Jita text corpus, and non-fiction narratives contain
more relative clauses than fictional narratives (Pyle and Robinson 2015:36). Similarly, non-fiction
narratives in Makonde contain more relative clauses than fictional narratives: “all of the real-life stories
in this text corpus have relative clauses in either the first or the second line, attached to thematic
material rather than to the introduction of a participant.” (Leach 2015:5) Six of the eight Makonde texts
also contained relative clauses relating to the theme of the story in the denouement, and the conclusions
of all the non-fiction narratives contain relative clauses which either reiterate the key events of the story
or confirm the authenticity of the story (ibid. 17–18).
Makonde (Leach 2015:19)

(147) *Kanji ni ala mainyo angugwene nimwene na atutandile pamo*

but it is this story that I saw I myself and that we did together

`mulikaja lyapa Lishee mwaka na samanini.`

in village of at Lishee year of eighty

‘But this is a true story: I saw it myself [lit. *that I saw myself*], and took a part in it [lit. *that we did together*], in the village of Lishee, in 1980.’

In Digo, four functions of relative clauses have been identified (Nicolle 2015:33): to describe a participant, to introduce major participants or songs, to identify a participant, and to summarize events as part of an identificational sentence articulation. An example of each function is provided below.

Non-restrictive relative clauses may be used simply to describe a participant, as in the example below:

Digo (Nicolle 2015:49)

(148) *Mwiya wavyalwa ni ise tajiri, na ambaye kala ana ng’ombe nyinji sana*

Mwiya was born with father wealthy and who was he. with cows many very

‘Mwiya was born to a wealthy father, *who had very many cows.*’

More often, a relative clause is used in the orientation to describe an important characteristic of a major participant when that participant is introduced, or to prefigure the theme of the narrative as a whole:

Digo (Nicolle 2015:61)

(149) *Lakini kahi ya hawa atu kala phana m mwenga ambaye kala ana kani*

but among those people was there with one who was he. has stubbornness

‘But among those people there was one *who was stubborn*…’

Outside of the orientation, restrictive relative clauses which identify participants are most common. In the example below, a restrictive relative clause near the end of the peak episode identifies the woman as the person who had put a child in a pit.

Digo (Nicolle 2015:55)

(150) *Hiye mchetu ariyentiya yuya mwanache dibwani*

that woman who had put him that child in pit

`wagbwirwa ni mchecheta achigbwa.`
she was seized by panic she fell down

‘That woman *who had put the child in the pit*, she was seized by panic and fell down.’

In the next sentence of the text, at the end of the peak episode, the woman is again identified as the person who had put the child in a pit, but this time the relative clause occurs as part of a cleft construction in an identificational sentence (see §6.5.2).

Digo (Nicolle 2015:55)

(151) *Ndipho atu achimanya kukala iye ndiye ariyehenda mambo higo.***

then people they knew that she it was she who did things those

‘Then people knew that she it was who did those things.’
8 Reported speech

8.1 Functions of direct and indirect speech

In general, when the speech and even the thoughts of participants in a narrative are reported, direct speech is used all or most of the time. In some languages this is very obvious: there is no indirect speech in any of the Makonde or Kabwa texts, one instance of indirect speech in the Bena and Kabwa texts, and two in the Malila texts. In Digo, on the other hand, some texts contain far more direct speech than indirect speech—including reporting the inner thoughts of a participant—whereas other texts contain hardly any direct speech at all. In Fuliiru, direct and indirect speech are functionally distinct: indirect speech tends to occur in background material and direct speech in foreground (event-line) material.

8.2 Speech orienters

A ‘speech orienter’ is a clause that identifies the speaker and/or addressee, and optionally may also describe the manner in which the speaker speaks. A speech orienter may contain one or more ‘speech introducers’: a speech verb and/or a quotative marker. A quotative marker may be a lexical verb, a reduced verb (i.e. one which takes limited inflection and may be phonologically reduced), or fully grammaticalized (i.e. an invariable particle which does not inflect). Some quotative markers are also general complementizers which are able to introduce the complements of both speech and (some/all) non-speech verbs. Speech orienters in the eastern Bantu languages surveyed always occur before the speech itself, but languages differ with respect to the distribution and formal properties of the speech introducers, specifically:

- the variety of speech verbs that may function as speech introducers,
- whether a speech verb is obligatory or optional in a speech orienter,
- the number of quotative markers in the language (ranging from zero to five),
- the morphological characteristics of the quotative marker,
- whether a quotative marker (if it exists) is obligatory or optional in a speech orienter,
- whether or not the (default) quotative marker also functions as a general complementizer.

In the remainder of this section, I shall describe the speech verbs and quotative markers used in ten of the languages surveyed.

Rangi (Stegen 2011:343–534)

There is no quotative marker in Rangi. The verb sea ‘say’ (or ‘tell’ with an object prefix) occurs as the speech verb 273 times. Other speech verbs are ʉrya ‘ask’ (twenty four occurrences), wiira ‘tell’ (thirteen occurrences), imba ‘sing’ (nine occurrences), kemera ‘call’ (four occurrences), itika ‘answer’ and anda/anza ‘start’ (three occurrences each). There was only one instance of sea combined with a complementizer (kati), and this was in one of the very rare cases of indirect speech.

Digo (Nicolle 2015:35–37)

Digo has no quotative marker. The speech verb amba ‘say’ occurs in almost all speech orienters and is fully inflected. It usually occurs alone but is occasionally preceded by another verb. The only other speech verbs which can occur without amba are iha ‘call’ and uza ‘ask’, but these are rare; in one Digo text, amba occurred twenty one times and iha and uza just once each. Amba combines with a complementizer kukala before fewer than half of the occurrences of indirect speech, and never before direct speech. The following example (Nicolle 2015:36) shows the speech orienters in a conversation between a man and a lion; the actual speech has been ignored:
(152) Yuyu mutu achiamba, “…”
this person he.said [consecutive tense]

Anaambwa ni hiye simba, “…”
he.is.told [continuous aspect, passive] by that lion

Anaamba, “…”
he.says [continuous aspect, subject is the person]

Anaambwa, “…”
he.is.told [continuous aspect, passive, subject is the person]

Bena (Eaton 2015a:39–40)
The speech verb tigila ‘say’ occurs in almost all speech orienters and is fully inflected. It occurs either
alone or following another speech verb, and never combines with a complementizer. However, the
infinitive form ukutigila functions as a complementizer which can be used with matrix verbs including
‘hear’, ‘realize’ and ‘know’, and also with ‘tell’ where the complement is indirect speech (Eaton
2015a:24):

(153) U-Ndandadzi ihelelaga kwa muhindza uyo kumulongela ukutigila vagelanidze inoolani.
Spider went to girl that to.tell.her COMP they.arrange wedding
‘Spider went to that girl to tell her that they should arrange a wedding.’

Malila (Eaton 2015b:33–35)
The verb -ti ‘say’ is an obligatory part of all speech orienters, usually occurring alone but occasionally
following another speech verb either with the same inflection as the previous verb or in the infinitive. It
is phonologically reduced (i.e. it has a monosyllabic stem and does not end in the usual final vowel a)
and grammatically ‘defective’ (i.e. it takes inflectional prefixes and suffixes but the stem is invariable and
does not take derivational suffixes). The infinitive form kuti functions as a complementizer with non-
speech verbs such as ‘plan’. Examples of -ti functioning as a speech introducer (inflected for subject and
tense) and as a complementizer (in the infinitive) are provided below. In example (156) the infinitive
form kuti can be interpreted either as a speech verb or as a complementizer; this illustrates the kind
of ‘critical context’ (Diewald 2002:103) in which the complementizer use could have developed:

(Eaton 2015b:56)
(154) ɄSankonya akhatoneela akhati, “…”
Sankonya she.interrupted [NARR] she.said [NARR]

(ibid. 69)
(155) Abhalindu bhakhati, “…”
girls they.said [NARR]

(156) Bhamu bhakhalinga kumubhuziizlya kuti, “…”
others they.tried to.ask.him saying/COMP

(ibid. 71)
(157) bhakhalola kuti atali…
they.saw COMP he.was.not.there

Jita (Pyle and Robinson 2015:39–41)
Speech orienters in Jita almost always consist of an invariable quotative marker (the complementizer ati)
proceeded by an optional speech verb. Occasionally ati may be omitted before indirect speech or when
the speech verb includes an object marker: ’naamubhwira ‘he told him’, ’naamfumati ‘he insulted him like
this’, ‘naamuganyaga ‘he was preventing him’, ‘naamubhusya ‘he asked him’ and ‘naakabhusya ‘he asked it’. Jita has a distinct lexical verb ika ‘say’ which co-occurs with ati (e.g. ‘naayika ati ‘he said that’). The following conversation (Pyle and Robinson 2015:47) illustrates the use of ati as a quotative marker following a speech verb before direct speech, as a sentence-initial interpretive use marker (Sperber and Wilson 1986:224–254), as a quotative marker without a preceding speech verb, and as a complementizer introducing indirect speech (within a direct quotation):

(158) Wasongo ‘nabhuusya Mutuuju ati “Ati owayika kutiki goowu?”’
        Chameleon he.asked Hare COMP INTERPRETIVE_USE you.say how mister

Mutuuju ati “Naayika ati nikukirire bhuri chiinu.”
        Hare COMP I.have.said COMP I.have.surpassed.you every thing
‘Chameleon asked Hare, “What exactly are you saying mister?” Hare (said), “I said that I am better than you at everything.”’

Suba-Simbiti (Masatu 2015:29–30)
Most speech orienters in Suba-Simbiti consist of a speech verb and an invariable quotative marker (the complementizer igha). Speech verbs can occur without igha and igha can occasionally occur without a speech verb, although this is rare. Suba-Simbiti has a distinct lexical verb ghamba ‘say’ which may occur without igha or with igha, as in the example below (Masatu 2015:44):

(159) Omoghaaka uyö akamohonshora igha “…”
        old.man that he.answered.him COMP
‘That old man answered him, “…”’

Kwaya (Odom 2015:35–39)
Speech orienters in Kwaya consist of an optional invariable quotative marker (the complementizer ati) preceded by an optional speech verb. There is considerable variation between texts over the use of ati; some texts introduce almost every direct quote with ati (optionally preceded by a speech verb) and other texts introduce most direct quotes with just a verb, or sometimes with no speech orienter at all. Kwaya has a distinct lexical verb ika ‘say’ which usually co-occurs with ati. The first conversation below shows the quotative marker ati with and without speech verbs, and the second conversation shows speech verbs without a quotative marker:

(Odom 2015:72)
(160) ‘Naabhabhwira ati “Munaane amanji gaani.”
        he.told.them COMP you.give.me water my

Ati “Kitari nago, kyetira.”
        COMP we.are.not with.it we.have.poured.it

‘Naabhabhwira ati “Munaane gimaro.”
        he.told.them COMP you.give.me knives
‘He told them, “Give me my water.” They (said), “We don’t have it, we have poured it away.” He told them, “Give me knives.”’
Kimwi mbamubhwira, “Utakugenda awe omwene…”

So they told her, you not go you yourself.

Anu: bhaakingire mu-njira omugaya uyo ‘naasabha omuyara uyo emyenda,

there when they arrived in path servant that she asked girl that clothes

“Naanako omwenda gwawo gunu niirenge.”

I request clothes your these I try them on.

’Soo they told her, “You are not going by yourself…” When they came to the path that servant asked that girl for clothes (saying), “I am requesting your clothes, I should try them on.”’

Fuliiru (Van Otterloo 2015:60–63)

Fuliiru uses various (optional) speech verbs (deta ‘speak’, bwira ‘say’, buuza ‘ask’, ganuula ‘chat’, komeereza ‘insist’, lahira ‘disagree’, longoola ‘discuss’, naaka ‘argue’, shuvya ‘answer’, tendeera ‘beg’, yemeera ‘agree’, yidodomba ‘murmur’ etc.), and various (optional) quotative markers. The default quotative marker with direct speech is ti; it can occur alone without an accompanying speech verb, but is not obligatory, especially in conversations. The quotative marker kwokwo (or kwokuno) ‘thus’ is used for emphasis, for example near the peak of a narrative. Three complementizers also function as quotative markers: kwo is used to introduce indirect speech, and mbu and ngu occur very occasionally. Van Otterloo (2011:489) comments, “Basically mbu and ngu function in just the same way as ti, but are used much less frequently.” Ideophones are often introduced with ti, mbu or ngu.

Makonde (Leach 2015:97–105)

Most speech orienters in Makonde contain an optional speech verb and an optional quotative marker. Various speech verbs occur, and there are five quotative markers, all of which are forms of doni ‘thus’. The three most common are: kudo, which introduces new direct speech or a change of direction in a conversation or monologue; the longer form kudoni, which is used to introduce rejections; and the short form do, which is used where there is continuity such as responses and speeches that connect with the previous action. Speeches introduced with do usually start with a vocative, an interjection or the connector ba, and do introduces almost all ideophones. When there is a change of speaker part way through a closed conversation, it is possible to have no speech orienter when the following conditions apply: “Any speech without a speech introducer always starts with an interjection, a negative/positive particle, or a vocative; as these almost always occur in utterance-initial position, their presence eliminates any doubt as to where one speech begins and another ends.” (Leach 2015:101)

The following example (Leach 2015:100) illustrates the use of the quotative marker kudo to introduce a new direct speech—actually an expression of the speaker’s thoughts, as there is no interlocutor present—and a change of direction in the speaker’s thoughts:

Litunu aaloka kundila kulola kudo: “Inyama aba! I jo nyangu aju?”

Hyena he coming on road looked quote meat exclam it is not that my friend this

Kudo: “Um nyangu hanava doni.”

Quote no my friend he is not thus

‘When Hyena was on the road he looked and exclaimed, “My goodness, meat! But isn’t this my friend?” (Then he said,) “Definitely not, my friend doesn’t look like this.”’

For a detailed account of the quotative marker ti in Shona and other Bantu languages, arguing for an origin in a lexical verb meaning ‘be/do thus’, see Güldemann (2002).
Kabwa (Walker 2011:39–40)
Various speech verbs occur in speech orienters in Kabwa. A speech verb is obligatory and an invariant quotative marker (the complementizer ega) occurs in about half of all speech orienters.

8.3 A proposed linguistic cycle for speech orienters

The speech orienters described in §8.2 reflect what I believe to be different stages in a ‘linguistic cycle’ (Hodge 1970) in which quotative markers develop from speech verbs and are then lost and replaced by new quotative markers derived from different speech verbs, and so on. The stages of this proposed linguistic cycle are described below, with representative languages listed in parenthesis.

- **Stage A**: Various lexical verbs are used to introduce speech with one verb with a general meaning of ‘say, tell’ predominating; a verb is the sole speech orienter, since there is no quotative. (Rangi)
- **Stage B**: One lexical verb with a general meaning of ‘say’ occurs in almost all speech orienters, either as the only verb of speech or in combination with other speech verbs, and does not require the support of a quotative marker or complementizer. (Digo)
- **Stage C1**: As in Stage B, but the infinitive form of the verb ‘say’ functions as a complementizer not just with speech verbs but also with verbs of perception, cognition and/or intention. (Bena)
- **Stage C2**: As in Stage C1, but the verb becomes phonologically reduced and ‘defective’. (Malila)
- **Stage D**: The original verb ‘say’ (or a specific form of it) develops into a quotative marker or complementizer which is (almost) obligatory in every speech orienter; other speech verbs (possibly including a new lexical verb ‘say’) may precede the new quotative marker, but cannot occur without it. (Jita)
- **Stage E1**: The quotative marker or complementizer becomes optional and may be preceded by a variety of speech verbs (possibly including a new lexical verb ‘say’) which may occur with or without the quotative marker. (Suba-Simbiti, Kwaya)
- **Stage E2**: Various optional quotative markers occur, optionally preceded by a variety of speech verbs. (Fuliiru and Makonde)
- **Stage F**: The quotative marker or complementizer can no longer function alone as a speech orienter; a lexical speech verb is obligatory (except in closed conversations) and the quotative marker or complementizer becomes less frequent. (Kabwa, some Kwaya texts)
- **Stage A’**: A quotative marker or complementizer no longer occurs before direct speech, leaving various lexical verbs as the sole speech orienters, with one verb (with a general meaning of ‘say, tell’) predominating. (Rangi)

9 Conclusion

Narrative texts from twelve eastern Bantu languages were studied. The main findings of this study are summarized below.

9.1 Structure of eastern Bantu narrative texts

In all of the climactic eastern Bantu narrative texts it is possible to identify the orientation, inciting episode, developmental episodes, peak episode, denouement and conclusion. In Kwaya and Digo, songs—often containing nonsense words, archaic language or another language entirely—are sometimes sung by a major participant who is in trouble at places where important developments occur in the story.

In all eastern Bantu languages, many paragraph divisions are marked by points of departure with temporal points of departure predominating. Most languages make use of tail-head linkage to maintain continuity at various points in a narrative, and in many texts tail-head linkage has the additional function of highlighting the following event. Tail-head linkage in Jita does not signal discontinuities and thus do not indicate paragraph breaks.
Thematic development markers do not occur in Digo, Jita and Kwaya. In other languages they take various forms such as connectives, as in Ekoti, Suba-Simbiti, Bena, Malila; demonstratives, as in Fuliiru and Makonde; and locative demonstratives, as in Kabwa.

9.2 Connectives

The variety of connectives used differs between languages, ranging from nine intersentential connectives in Suba-Simbiti to five in Bena and Malila, of which all but two are very infrequent. Cognate connectives do not necessarily have the same discourse functions; for example, the class 16 relative pronoun pe in Bena introduces temporal relative clauses (glossed as ‘when, after’) but the cognate form in the closely related language Malila introduces main clauses (glossed as ‘then’) whilst it is the class 14 relative pronoun we that introduces temporal relative clauses.

The comitative marker na (‘and, with’) or a cognate form occurs in all of the languages surveyed, but is extremely rare inter-clausally and inter-sententially. When it does occur, it typically serves one of the following three functions: 1) it connects non-sequential events, 2) it introduces the most important event in a sequence of events, or gives prominence to a whole conjunct, or 3) it indicates contrast between participants in conjoined clauses.

Adversatives and concessives are extremely rare, and are often borrowed words. Suba-Simbiti has just kasi (‘but’) which occurs in only three texts, indicating either a contrast between participants or that the following clause contains surprising or unexpected events. The largest inventory of adversatives and concessives is found in Jita, but this still only amounts to three expressions, one of which is borrowed from Swahili.

Text-structuring connectives, which signal some kind of discontinuity within the text and often indicate paragraph breaks, were found in Digo, Jita, Kabwa, Malila and Makonde. The most common function of text-structuring connectives in the languages surveyed is to resume the event-line after background information, extended direct speech or a song.

9.3 Participant reference

Participant reference in eastern Bantu narrative texts is characterized by specific presentational constructions involving post-verbal subjects or obliques, extensive use of subject and object prefixes on verbs for continued reference to participants, and a variety of uses of demonstratives (usually in combination with a noun phrase). Independent pronominal forms occur far less frequently than demonstratives. Although cognate independent pronominal forms in different languages do not always have the same functions, three categories of independent pronouns were identified: ‘basic’ pronouns, which often indicate contrast and can function as external topics; ‘additive’ pronouns, which consist of a pronominal element cliticized to a connective of some kind and which indicate that a situation is similar to a previously mentioned situation involving another participant; and ‘exclusive’ or ‘emphatic’ pronouns, which function as adjectives and indicate that a certain participant and no other is intended.

All of the eastern Bantu languages have at least three demonstrative series, but the two series that occur most frequently in narrative texts are referential and distal. When used to refer to entities that are physically present (spatial-deictic use), referential demonstratives indicate proximity to the addressee and distal demonstratives indicate distance from both the speaker and the addressee. In narrative texts, however, demonstratives have a number of different functions. In addition to the typologically common narrative uses of demonstratives noted by Himmelmann (1996), different eastern Bantu languages exhibit four other narrative functions: activation status, agency, text structuring, and thematic development.

- In activation status, demonstratives indicate whether participants remain activated (mentioned or involved in the previous event) or are reactivated after an absence. Referential demonstratives consistently refer to activated participants in Jita, Kwaya, Kabwa and Malila, but only in Jita and Kwaya do distal demonstratives consistently refer to participants which are reactivated after an absence. In Suba-Simbiti referential demonstratives tend to refer to activated participants and distal demonstratives to reactivated participants, but in Rangi this is reversed.
• Agency operates in Bena. Participants referred to using distal demonstratives are agents whilst participants referred to using referential demonstratives are non-agents (experiencers and patients), while proximal demonstratives only refer to non-agents in background clauses.

• Text structuring operates in Digo. From the inciting episode to the peak episode, major participants—and in particular protagonists and primary major participants—are usually referred to using distal demonstratives, although proximal demonstratives may occur in the inciting episode. In the orientation and the denouement, major participants can be referred to with referential demonstratives. There seems to be limited text structuring use of demonstratives in Makonde as well: proximal demonstratives occur in the orientation and referential demonstratives are restricted to minor participants and props.

• Thematic development through demonstratives occurs in Makonde and Fuliiru. In Makonde, distal demonstratives refer to major participants and function as thematic development markers indicating important developments in the narrative. In Fuliiru, all referential and distal demonstratives function as thematic development markers; and in some texts, referential demonstratives indicate regular developments whilst distal demonstratives indicate major developments.

9.4 Tense, aspect and movement

The eastern Bantu languages exhibit a variety of tenses and aspects in event-line clauses. The default verb forms used in event-line clauses in the languages surveyed here are: (1) narrative tenses, which are not dependent on a previous tense marker and can therefore initiate a sequence of events; (2) consecutive tenses, which are dependent on a prior past tense and so cannot initiate a sequence of events; and (3) far pasts. Elsewhere, other tenses or aspects can be used, depending on various factors such as recent time reference (e.g. Malila uses a different consecutive form if the narrative is set in the recent past), whether the events being described are highlighted or occur in the peak episode (e.g. Mwani uses the perfect aspect in clauses at the peak), in speech clauses (e.g. Kwaya and Digo often use the present tense), and in informal registers. In addition, Fuliiru, Rangi and Digo make extensive use of itive, ventive and distal markers which indicate the deictic centre of the narrative and express change of location in a less prominent way than events described in main verbs.

9.5 Information structure

The eastern Bantu languages are characterized by left-dislocation of topics, VS thetic sentences, and the use of cleft constructions to express argument focus. There is, however, considerable variation among these languages in the expression of information structure, much of which only becomes apparent when discourse considerations are taken into account. In Fuliiru and Jita, topics must be pre-verbal, but some other languages allow post-verbal topics under certain conditions: continued topics, where there is no textual discontinuity as in Digo, and Mwani; renewed topics that have functioned as topics previously, but not in the immediately preceding sentence as in Mwani; and temporary topics functioning as topics of a single clause before the previous topic is resumed as in Rangi.

Thetic (topicless) sentences with VS constituent order occur in all the languages surveyed, but in most languages thetic sentences with SV constituent order occur in the orientation sections of some narratives. In Suba-Simbiti, SV thetic sentences are unexpectedly found outside of the orientation sections of narratives as well.

Variation also occurs in the expression of argument focus. In all of the languages surveyed argument focus can be expressed both through the use of cleft constructions and through the right dislocation of constituents other than the subject. However, while argument focus on the subject can be expressed through right dislocation of the subject in most of the languages surveyed, it can be expressed only through the use of cleft constructions in Fuliiru and Digo. This appears to be a grammatical constraint, and is not tied to specific discourse contexts.
9.6 Adverbial clauses and relative clauses

Adverbial and relative clauses have fairly restricted distributions in eastern Bantu narrative texts. Adverbial clauses before the main clause often function as temporal points of departure, but may additionally express conditionals, concessives and logical relations in some languages, such as Fuliiru. Adverbial clauses which occur after the main clause express manner, reason and purpose in most languages, plus additional types of information is some languages.

Relative clauses are often restrictive and may describe participants, introduce major participants or songs, identify participants, and summarize events or reiterate the theme of the story in the denouement or conclusion.

9.7 Reported speech

Direct speech is far more frequent than indirect speech in most of the eastern Bantu narrative texts, but there is considerable variation regarding the ways in which direct speech is introduced. The languages surveyed differ concerning the verbs that may occur in speech introducers, whether a speech verb is obligatory or optional, the number of quotatives (ranging from zero to five), whether quotatives inflect or not and are obligatory or optional, and whether the quotative also functions as a general complementizer. This variation reflects an ongoing linguistic cycle in which successive speech verbs develop into quotatives.

9.8 Prospects

The eastern Bantu languages surveyed here are grammatically closely related and embody similar storytelling traditions, and yet striking differences have been observed in discourse structure. This has a number of implications. At a practical level, translation between Bantu languages should not be done automatically; for example, translating every demonstrative with a cognate form will not guarantee that a corresponding meaning will be conveyed. Similarly, the development of written styles should be done with an eye on natural oral style rather than merely attempting to mimic a language of wider communication, such as Swahili. At a theoretical level, studying grammatical constructions in the context of extended narrative texts reveals patterns that may not otherwise be apparent. For example, some differences in word order are due to information structural constraints that only operate in the context of extended discourse. Similarly, the full range of functions associated with tense and aspect can not be ascertained through analysis of isolated fragments of language.

This study was limited in a two main respects. First, just twelve languages were sampled, and data from some of these was extremely limited. Studying narrative text corpora from other languages may reveal additional parameters of variation, and some features that are unique within this study may be shown to be more widespread. Second, only narrative texts were studied. The study of other genres, such as hortatory, expository and procedural texts, will almost certainly reveal further variation, notably, I expect, in the use of connectives and in additional functions of tense and aspect.
### Appendix  Ekoti Text (Lyndon and Lyndon 2004)

Hantisi, folktale in Ekoti (P30. Mozambique); told and transcribed by Nunes de Sousa April 1999, revised by Selemane March 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref</th>
<th>Con</th>
<th>Pre-Nuclear</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Object/Complement</th>
<th>Post-Nuclear</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Hantisi ya Siipa na mwanawe na Namarokolo</em> story of lion with daughter.his with hare</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sikhu moote, day one</td>
<td>POSTPOSED</td>
<td>aari was</td>
<td>Siipa-nnu na mwanawe na Namarokolo. (S) lion-HON with daughter.his with hare</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3a</td>
<td>Siipa-nnu lion-HON</td>
<td>aari na had (was with) mwanawe wa mwaari [REL.CL:3b] daughter.his of virgin oraliwa. to.be.married</td>
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<tr>
<td>3b</td>
<td></td>
<td>aari ontakhela that.he.was wanting</td>
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<tr>
<td>4a</td>
<td>Mwanawe otu daughter.his this [ohitakhi ottakhulana] not.wanting.to.speak.with</td>
<td>khu-sala ojeela oraliwa became(CONS) failing.to.manage to.be.married attu akina people other</td>
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<td>4b</td>
<td></td>
<td>mwaasa wa [4b] because of mwaasa wa ophuzi. because of rudeness</td>
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<td>5a</td>
<td>Mpakha until sikhu kina day other</td>
<td>POSTPOSED</td>
<td>khu-ta came(CONS) nlude [aari otakhaaye oolola] (S), man that.was wanting to.marry Siipa-nnu lion-hon</td>
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<td>5b</td>
<td></td>
<td>khu-nvekela he.asked.him(CONS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5c</td>
<td>“Siipa-nnu (voc) lion-HON”</td>
<td>--- araka: saying mwanenu.” daughter.your</td>
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<tr>
<td>5d</td>
<td></td>
<td>kintakha onrala I.want to.marry.her</td>
<td>mwanenu.” daughter.your</td>
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<tr>
<td>6a</td>
<td>Aphano then “Mwanaka (O) daughter.my”</td>
<td>Siipa-nnu lion-HON</td>
<td>aipwaka khu-ri: replying said(CONS) [O PREPOSED] otule anwahaaye onttakhusa ye na khu-jipu.” that.one who.is.able to.make.her.speak her &amp; reply(CON)</td>
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<td>6b</td>
<td></td>
<td>kininloza I.marry.her.to</td>
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</table>

1. The story of Lion, his daughter and Hare. 2. Once there lived Lion, his daughter and Hare. 3. Lion had a daughter who was a virgin and he was wanting her to get married. 4. (But) that child wasn't getting married because she didn't wish to speak with other people, because of rudeness. 5. One day a man arrived who was wanting to marry her, and he asked Lion, “Mr. Lion, I want to marry your daughter.” 6. In reply, Lion said, “I will give my daughter in marriage to that man who manages to speak with her and get her to reply.”
7. That man went to speak with the girl, but he failed, and any man who came failed to get her to speak. 8. When Hare heard about these things, he said to himself, “I am Hare. I’m astute. I’d like to see whether that girl won’t speak and marry me.” 9. Having said that, he quickly got up, dressed very well and went to Lion’s house.
10. On finding Lion, he asked him, “Mr. Lion, I hear it said that your Honour has a virgin daughter, who isn’t married because she doesn’t want to speak with people. I for my part have come to ask you to let me marry your daughter.” 11. “Many intelligent people have arrived here and returned without getting her to speak, so how will a tiny chap like you manage?” 12. It was Lion who was asking Hare. 13. “I give you permission to marry my daughter. As soon as you manage to speak with her and get her to reply, she will be yours.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref</th>
<th>Con</th>
<th>Pre-Nuclear</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Object/Complement</th>
<th>Post-Nuclear</th>
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<tr>
<td>14a</td>
<td>ila but</td>
<td>Namarokolo Hare mwaari virgin</td>
<td>alawiy watermark went(p2) to meet with khu-hijipu didn’t reply(CONS)</td>
<td>mwaari virgin hatha etthu moote. not one thing one</td>
<td>yooriantakhalane; that he speak with her</td>
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<td>15a</td>
<td>Mpakha until</td>
<td>sikhu kiina themeya day other another</td>
<td>Siipa-nnu lion-HON</td>
<td>khu-lankha got up(CONS)</td>
<td>na ajamaze with family. his</td>
<td>onthamo na mwaari otule together with virgin that yoori alawaze akheye mvuka. that he go plant rice</td>
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<tr>
<td>16a</td>
<td>[Paata after]</td>
<td>Namarokolo hare</td>
<td>yoosila elupiwaka having heard be spoken khu-nvekela asked him(CONS) kintakha wulottani I want to accompany you kokholiseni I pick up</td>
<td>khaazi yoomashapa] work of field Siipa-nnu lion-HON</td>
<td>yoori: [16c-d] that omashapa at field</td>
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<td>16b</td>
<td>“Namiyo I also”</td>
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<td>16c</td>
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<td>16d</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Aphano then</td>
<td>khweeli really</td>
<td>Namarokolo hare</td>
<td>khu-nlotta accompanied him(CONS)</td>
<td>Siipa-nnu lion-HON</td>
<td>omashapa. at field</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>19a</td>
<td>masi but</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>Khu-sala apiya became(CONS) held nalelo khaari ottakhula. still wasn’t speaking</td>
<td>mwaasa conversation</td>
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<td>19b</td>
<td></td>
<td>mwaari virgin</td>
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14. Hare went and met the girl to speak with her, but the girl replied nothing. 15. On a certain day, Lion left with his relations together with the girl to go and plant rice. 16. When Hare heard speak of field work, he asked Lion, saying: “I also want to accompany you there to the field, to go and help you.” 17. Then Hare really did accompany Lion to the field. 18. When they arrived there, they all started to plant rice. 19. Everyone was conversing, but the girl was still staying nothing.
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<tr>
<td>20a</td>
<td></td>
<td>[Mmana</td>
<td>[a]thu ooshi</td>
<td>akheyazaka</td>
<td>mvuka woozukuliseliwa mathapa [otulu],</td>
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<td>20b</td>
<td>then</td>
<td>when</td>
<td>people all Namarokolo hare</td>
<td>(were) planting aari ozukulisela was turning</td>
<td>rice being.turned leaves upwards mathapa vathi</td>
<td>leaves downwards mitathari vatulu. roots upwards</td>
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<tr>
<td>21a</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mwaari</td>
<td>khu-sala avira</td>
<td>became(CONS) passed oonaka</td>
<td>nhali [aari oviraamo Namarokolo] at.place that.was passing hare mvuka woovirikanisiwa</td>
<td>rice being.turned</td>
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<td>21b</td>
<td></td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>seeing akhulaka na akheyaka opheya; digging &amp; planting again</td>
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<td>21c</td>
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<tr>
<td>22a</td>
<td>but</td>
<td>Namarokolo hare</td>
<td>akhanyarelaka ovirikanisa; insisting.on turning khw-aaza began(CONS)</td>
<td>onyonyeya na ojittakhulela vathi-vathi. to.become.annoyed and to.speak.to.herself under.breath</td>
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<td>22b</td>
<td>mpakha</td>
<td>mwaari virgin</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>finally</td>
<td>Namarokolo hare</td>
<td>aari oretta ansiilaka was doing hearing.her</td>
<td>mwaari ottakhula vattithi-vattithi. virgin speaking under.breath</td>
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<td>24a</td>
<td>Naye also.he na and</td>
<td>[IN CONNECTIVE] khu-sala atepa became(CONS) be.worse ajinkhaka pretending</td>
<td>ovirikanisa mvuka turning rice ohisiti. to.not.hear</td>
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</table>

20. While they were planting rice in the proper way, Hare was turning them upside down, with the leaves downwards and the roots upwards. 21. The girl happened to pass where Hare was planting, saw the rice planted wrong, and started removing it and planting it again. 22. Nevertheless, Hare kept on insisting on planting it wrong, until the girl started to get annoyed and mutter under her breath. 23. In the end, Hare could hear the girl muttering under her breath. 24. Yet kept on planting the rice even worse, pretending not to hear anything.
25. Then the girl, totally frustrated because of those things that Hare was doing, began to call Hare, saying, “Listen, Mr. Hare, this rice isn’t planted like that; you are turning it upside down, with the down part upwards and the up part downwards. It is the roots that are to point downwards and the leaves that are to point upwards, understood?” 26. The girl’s father and relatives were hearing her speaking with Hare. 27. At that moment everyone was amazed at Hare for the way he had managed to get the girl to speak.
28. So Lion called Hare, the girl and his relatives and said, “Now I am completely convinced in my heart that your intelligence is more than mine. Since it is thus, from this moment my daughter is yours; I give her to you, marry her.” 29. Hare got up and went home to make the preparations. 30. When everything was ready, they got married. 31. It was in this way that the story of Mr. Lion, his daughter and Hare ended.
References


Floor, Sebastian J. 2005b. Marked word-order and focus in KiMwani. Unpublished manuscript.


