

SUGGESTIONS FOR RECORDING A BANTU LANGUAGE IN THE FIELD

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*Introduction*¹

In the first issue of *Tanganyika Notes and Records* there appeared an article by A. Sillery entitled "On learning tribal languages". Since that date, nearly thirty years ago, a good deal has been written on the Bantu languages of East Africa, and many advances made in the techniques for recording and describing them². In view of the current widespread interest in this field and the numbers of people at present in the Territory who would be willing to make linguistic notes if given some guidance, a brief statement of some generally acceptable procedures may prove of value. The problems involved are really of two rather different kinds: those relating to the actual business of working in the field, and those concerning the description of languages of this kind. To strike a balance between the two is not easy, nor can one hope to deal adequately with both in the space of a short article, but some attempt seems worth making.

At the outset there are a number of general questions which need to be posed and answered before work can actually start³. What are the main dialects of the language in question, are the differences between them regarded as great, is any one more widely spoken than any other or recognized as being in any sense a "standard" form, as the Zanzibar dialect is for Swahili? Upon one's answer to such questions depends, in part, the choice of first informant. Clearly one ought to select a speaker who is representative of as large a speech-community as possible, or at least be clear as to which speech-community he belongs: one does not, after all, visit the Yorkshire coalfields to hear Southern English, nor the shores of Lake Victoria to hear coastal Swahili. Secondly, from what age-group or sex should one select this first informant, what standard of education should he possess, and in what language should one carry out the investigation? Younger men, with greater knowledge of Swahili and English are probably less interested in their mother tongue than those of their parents' generation, and more likely to give evidence of contamination in their speech. The Swahili of radio-announcers, for example, often exhibits English intonation patterns. On the other hand, informants over 60 have probably too little education for systematic investigation, though they are often invaluable for casual reference. Women, while they are frequently repositories of folk-lore generally, are commonly less accessible than their menfolk and too busy. Tanganyika is fortunate in that Swahili is widely spoken and understood throughout the country and an investigator who operates the language competently can do his initial work through Swahili, though for more detailed work some knowledge of the language being investigated seems to me to be essential. At present it is both difficult and tedious, in Tanganyika, to try to work entirely through English, mainly because the amount of English available to the majority of the middle-aged—but by no means only such—is extremely limited, and the area of consequent misunderstanding extremely large. From one's first informant one can build up an outline of the language based on his speech, and then submit it to other informants for testing. If one is making a detailed study then account must be taken of other dialects, for example, and it may well be desirable to call on some very sophisticated speaker to elucidate or discuss specific points of difficulty. Finally, it must always be remembered that the eliciting of data from one or more informants only provides, as it were, the initial hypothesis: this must subsequently be tested in the various fields of social life and be supported at all levels by copious texts.

Having made an initial choice of informant one can start work, though one may have to try several, before one finally settles on a person whom one can employ on, say, a monthly basis. It is probably easier to begin in one's own house/hut, since there are fewer distractions, but necessary to remember that those unaccustomed to it find prolonged questioning tiring. The problems of using an informant are considerable, and to my knowledge have been quite inadequately discussed. Even in the early stages, before progressing to questions relating to things other than simple words, one needs to be constantly on guard to ensure that the informant understands clearly what is being asked, and that one does not oneself infer more from an answer than is legitimate. Responses that such-and-such a sentence *can* occur, or that one verb-tense means the same as another are starting points for further work *not* finishing points. One recalls with amusement the case of the man who asked the words for "curly hair" and "straight hair" and wrote down unknowingly "my hair" and "your hair" but the moral is clear.

In the following pages the procedures will be illustrated from notes I made of a language called, usually, Fipa, about which singularly little is known. They were made at the Chama cha Umoja wa Wafipa in Dar es Salaam between March 10th–20th, 1962, and I am chiefly indebted to Mr. D. B. S. Farjallah and Mr. E. Msema kweli. All those with whom I came in contact averred that Fipa is merely the name of the Administrative District. People seem to speak of themselves either as aáSúkúma (Language: ecíSúkúma), as did my two main informants, or as aáKwa: the former living in the high country around Sumbawanga, and the latter living in the valley around L. Rukwa. Clearly the possibilities of a link between them and the Sukuma of Lake Province is intriguing! While I do not, in principle, favour the use of exiles as informants, it was impossible at the time to visit Sumbawanga, and the existence of this Fipa club to which Fipa in the capital gravitated, did give me a reasonable selection of informants. It will, however, be clear that the notes are highly tentative and intended to serve as illustrations of procedures listed—and, of course, reminders of what was *not* recorded—rather than as a reliable outline of the grammar.

It is traditional to divide the description of a language into three parts: phonology, morphology and syntax. Phonology is concerned with the sounds of the language; morphology with its grammatical elements and word-categories; and syntax both with the relationships between members of word-categories and also with larger units such as sentences. Again, it is traditional to start by describing the smallest units—sounds—and proceed gradually to larger units, though since one has to break down larger units to isolate the sounds what is required initially is a body of text of some kind. But what kind of text? It is probably easiest to begin by collecting a word-list on cards—see Appendix for a suggested basic list—but it is of the utmost importance to start collecting samples of connected speech as soon as possible. The informant may be able to dictate short stories direct to the investigator, but this is often unsatisfactory. In the early stages, it is probably best to get the informant to write down stories himself from relatives and then re-tell them very slowly to the investigator. If a tape-recorder is available these and other texts may be recorded and stored for use at a later date. It should be stressed here that such elicited stories are only of linguistic interest and ought not to be served up to an unsuspecting public as examples of oral literature. This can only be obtained by recording direct from accepted reciters on appropriate occasions.

Phonology.

Having collected something to work on, the next problem to be faced is the adoption of an orthography or system of spelling which will serve to identify what has been written beyond any significant doubt. To do this it is an advantage to make use of a concept widely used by linguists over a number of years. This is the "phoneme" ⁴, which may be defined technically as the minimal distinctive unit of

sound, or as the smallest unit of sound which serves to distinguish words. Thus, in Standard Swahili one distinguishes five vowel phonemes on the basis, for example, of their distinctiveness in such verb roots as:—

–pat–, –pit–, –pet–, –pot–, –put

where each root is minimally distinguished by a particular vowel. Similarly, a series of voiced and unvoiced plosive consonants can be distinguished from such series as:—

–bat–/–pat–, –don–/–ton–, –kat–/–tat–
–deu–/–geu–/–teu–/–keu–

Such pairs can be described as ‘minimal’ pairs since they are distinguished by a single feature only. It is generally accepted, I think, that smaller differences, of a ‘phonetic’ rather than a ‘phonemic’ character can be ignored for all practical purposes. There is, for example, no need to differentiate both ‘s’ and ‘sh’ in a language where ‘sh’ only occurs in the middle of words and ‘s’ only at the beginning of words. This fact can be simply stated when setting up one’s inventory of phonemes. By contrast, the orthography of Standard Swahili fails to recognize the phonemic status of aspiration in words like:—

paa, Antelope (Cf. *paa*, Roof) and *kaa*, Crab (Cf. *kaa*, Ember)

and to this extent the orthography is non-phonemic and may even be misleading.

Many Bantu languages, however, have 7 rather than 5 vowel phonemes: there being two ‘e’ and two ‘o’ phonemes (or sometimes two ‘i’ and two ‘u’ phonemes). In such cases the ‘closer’⁵ ‘e’ approximates to the French ‘é’ in ‘été’ and the more ‘open’⁵ sound to the English ‘e’ in ‘bed’. The ‘closer’ ‘o’ is more like the French sound in ‘beau’ while the more ‘open’ ‘o’ approximates to the English ‘o’ in ‘hot’. The problem, however, is not merely to recognize and reproduce these sounds but also to write them. Two systems have been advocated:—

- (i) To use ‘ɛ’ and ‘ɔ’ for the ‘open’ pair of vowels.
- (ii) To use ‘i’ and ‘u’ for the ‘close’ pair, and ‘j’ and ‘y’ for what would otherwise have been written ‘i’ and ‘u’.

The first has the merit of using no diacritic at all, while the latter uses no unusual symbols.

EcíSukúma is such a 7-vowel language, and the second system has been adopted here. It has the additional advantage of representing more nearly the actual sounds of the language, since the ‘i’ is similar to the English ‘i’ of ‘hit’ while the ‘u’ is an ‘open’ variety of ‘y’. The vowels are thus represented as follows:—

i, i, e, o, u, y

and the crucial vowels may be contrasted thus:—

–lul–, Draw with a rake	–lol–, See
–sul–, Forge metal	–sol–, Hunt
–lil, Cry	–lel–, Bear a child
–jt–, Spill	–it–, Call

Vowels may be long or short, and if length is distinctive it must be marked throughout and not merely in those words in which length is distinctive. Long vowels are usually doubled:—

–sek–, Laugh	–seek–, Bear fruit
–lil–, Cry	–liil–, Go round to avoid

Consonants, on the whole, present fewer difficulties than vowels, and provided one makes it clear what convention is being used it does not matter much which symbols are chosen. It is however, clearly more convenient to use those symbols which are readily available on a typewriter, and the symbol ‘ŋ’, known as the ‘long-tailed n’, is so clearly preferable to the clumsy trigraph of the Swahili orthography, ‘ng’, that it is worth while adding it to the keyboard. Similarly it is simpler to use a single symbol

wherever possible, such as 'c' for 'ch', and this is particularly useful for this language where the 'h' is required to indicate an aspirated consonant. The consonant phonemes of EciSukúma are as follows:—

c,f,k,l,m,n,ny,ŋ,p,s,sh,t

to which must be added three aspirated consonants:—

kh,ph, th (contrasted with sh)

A strongly aspirated 's' occurs in the first person singular of one negative tense (see below P 11), and if this proves to be significant then a different symbol for 'sh' will have to be found.

A number of nasal compounds must also be noted:—

mb,nd,ng,nk,ns,nt

In many Bantu languages, including this one, vowels preceding such compounds tend to be long, and hence do not need to be doubled. This also tends to be true for vowels following w-compounds (i.e.cw,fw,kw,mbw) other than those at the end of words.

Particular attention needs to be given to sequences of consonants, especially those in which 'n' is the first component (i.e. n+t, n+l=nd). Care should also be taken to note sequences of consonant/vowel, e.g. olúúsj/ŋgosj, River. See also under verb-tenses below.

Finally there is the all important question of tone. It is probably true that few people intending to learn a Bantu language can hope to master its tonal structure, but equally, no one intending to document such a language can afford to omit the marking of tone and every effort should be made to do so even if one gets no further than marking words in isolation. Just as one recognizes the phoneme as a significant unit of sound, so one must also recognize a tonal phoneme for a significant unit of pitch. One is not concerned with absolute pitch levels but rather with the levels relative to one another within given sequences. As the level of the voice tends to fall during normal unemphatic speech a low tone at the beginning of a sentence may well be absolutely higher than a high tone at the end of it⁶. Most languages have two significant levels of tone, high and low, but some have a third, a mid tone. These tones are commonly marked by accents: (´) for a high tone and (–) for a mid tone. The low tone is commonly left unmarked, though (˘) may be used if a specially low tone is to be marked. Additionally, gliding tones from high to low (Λ) and from low to high (v) commonly occur, especially on long vowels where they can be marked thus (áa,aá). It may be difficult at first to hear the tones, even on single words, but if the informant can be persuaded to whistle the tone-patterns, this may simplify matters considerably. The temptation to give up should be resisted at all costs!

One may well ask, at this point, if Tanganyika's Bantu languages are all tonal, and if so, whether they are all tonal to the same extent. Except for Swahili, Makua and perhaps one or two others, they are. They are tonal to the extent that numbers of words are distinguished from one another only by their tone-pattern, and this includes verb-tenses (i.e. A7,A8,C2,C3). While I did not discover any minimal pair of tonally distinct verb-roots in EciSukúma, the fact that some roots are high-toned while others are low-toned is easily discoverable:—

<i>low-toned</i>	<i>high-toned</i>
–lim–, Cultivate	–fjk–, Arrive
–kal–, Buy	–pón–, Fall
–jtuk–, Run	–sjt–, Like
–um–, Beat	–pít–, Pass
–lel–, Bear a child	–sáán–, Meet, come across

This contrast of tone can be elicited in various contexts: for some languages the simple Imperative is adequate (i.e. fika!, Arrive!, limà! Cultivate!) but for this language the simple 'Perfect' tense is equally suitable:—

alimjle, She has cultivated apónjle, She has fallen
ajsjle, He has spilled something ajsjle, He has arrived

It is often useful to choose verbs with very long roots, since the tones of the second, third and fourth vowels of the root are liable to behave differently in different tenses, and this fact is not brought out if one is working with short roots such as those listed above.

Again, I did not discover any pair of tonally distinct nouns, though it is clear that a number of different patterns do occur and likely that minimal pairs could be found with further work. Consider the following:—

amásúmo, Spears BUT amákomé, Shoulders
amásjina, Names jfjtala, Beds
imjpinj, Handles imjkângá, Tails

Once one has tone-marked the data, then one can sort it into various tonal groups and start watching for overall patterns.⁷

Morphology.

It may be useful at the outset to make a simple division between variable and invariable words. The former operate the grammatical agreements which are so characteristic of these languages, while the latter do not. Again, the former may be divided into those words which operate a relatively short prefix-series, and those which operate a longer, often complete series of such prefixes. The former comprises Nouns⁸; the latter, Adjectives, Possessives, Demonstratives and Verbs, and, as will be noted below, may be even further sub-divided.

Noun-Classes: These are numbered as is customary for Bantu languages:—

Class 1/2 ũm-, ũn, ũ-/aá-, ayá-	ũncémj/aácémj, Herdsman; ũmwána/ ayáána, Small child; ũnSukúma/aáSukúma, A Sukuma;
Class 1a/2a i-, e-/ayáá-	ikásola/ayáákasola, Hunter; ekúusá/ayáá- kuusá, Rat; eSiiwa/ayááS!ííwa ⁹ , A Siiwa (group of people living N. of Sumbawanga); etaatá/ayáátaatá, Father;
Class 3/4 ũm-, ũn-/imj-	ũmpínj/imjpinj, Handle; ũntwe/imjtwe, Head; ũmwâmbá/imjâmbá, Hill
Class 5/6 j-, jj-, ilj-/amá-	jjfjnga/amáfjnga, Stone; jjej/amáyej, Egg; iljiso/amááso, Eye; jjsúmo, amásúmo, Spear; jjkutwj/aámátwj, Ear

There is some evidence that the prefix jj- only occurs preceding a short vowel, while the j- only occurs before long vowels: ilj- only occurs before monosyllabic stems. The plural of the last cited example illustrates a phenomenon to be noted elsewhere in which the initial vowel of the prefix is long when the prefix is monosyllabic but not in all such cases.

Class 7/8 e(é)ci-/j(i)fi-	eéciti/jjfiti, Tree; ecítala/jfjtála, Bed; ecúúnj jfyúúnj, Bird; eécisyu/jjfjsyu, Knife
Class 9/10 eén-/iin-	ěmbúsj/ĩmbúsj, Goat; ěnkhóko/ĩnkhóko, Hen

Two informants made no difference in the vowel quality of the Class 10 prefix while the rest did.

Class 11/10a olú-, uú-/jn-	olúcéto/ĩncéto, Arrow; uúlapwa/ĩndapwa, Bow; olúúsj/ĩngosj, River
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Class 12/8 or 13	a(á)ká-/jǐǐ-	OR	u(ú)tú-	akáfǐnga/utúfǐnga OR jǐfǐnga ¹⁰ , Small stone, pebble; akákhóko/utúkhóko, Small chicken; aákasyu/uútúsyu, Small knife;
Class 14(6)	/uú-/(ama-)			uúsiifu, Goodness; uúyiifu, Badness (a general term for physical or mental quality)
Class 15	ukú-			ukúsǐta, Looking for
Class 16	apá-			apánthu, Place (definite)
Class 17	ukú-			ukúnthu, Place(indefinite)

These last two prefixes may be prefixed to nouns in any other Class. In this language there are no members of Class 18 (Sw. *mwahali*; Yao. *mucindu*, Place within) nor of Class 19(*gu-*) which often comprises augmentatives.

It will be noted that the prefix often comprises vowel/consonant/vowel, with the second vowel high-toned, and that where the prefix is a single short vowel, i.e. Cl.1a,5 the high tone occurs on the first vowel of the stem. In this language the initial vowel of the prefix appears to occur in all contexts except the following:—

- (i) Following *-sǐ*, Is not
cisǐ cisyu, It is not a knife
yasǐ másúmo, They are not spears
- (ii) Following *ukú-*, *apá-*
ukúnanda, To the house
apásila, On the path
- (iii) Following the possessive *-á*
áána(ayáána) yâncemǐ, The herdsman's children; *áána yáyácemǐ*, The herdsmen's children; *ǐsǐná lyámwâmbá*, The name of the hill; *ũswa wíkátaanǐ*, The friend's spoon; *ímǐswa yíkátaanǐ*, The friend's spoons
- (iv) Following *na*, With
jǐfisyu fǐli na mǐpínǐ, The knives have handles
eécisyu cisǐ na mpínǐ, The knife has no handle

Experience from other Bantu languages suggests that the occurrence and non-occurrence of this initial vowel may be a matter for detailed investigation. For example, from my notes on this language it is clear that the behaviour of the initial vowel in kinship terms needs further investigation.

Further work on the noun-classes might be directed towards the problems of unusual class-pairings such as Cl.7/4 *eécíti/imíti*, Tree, or the membership of single classes such as *amáásǐ* (Cl.6), Water. Some work on the meaning of the Classes might also be undertaken.

Adjectives: Prefixes of the same shape as those discussed above also occur with a majority of adjective stems, which may be said to differ from nouns in that they tend to be associated with most, if not all the prefixes, whereas nouns are usually associated with a much smaller number, commonly not more than four or five:

ũmwánacǐ ũntalǐ/ayáánacǐ aátálǐ, Tall woman/women
eécisyu ecíkúlu/jǐfisyu jǐfíkúlu, Large knife/knives
ěnk hóko ěnséefu/ĩnk hóko ĩnséefu, Fine hen(s)

The initial vowel occurs, and does not occur, as for nouns:—

jǐsúmo lílye lisǐ jkúlu, That knife is not big
apánkúlu, At the big one (house)
ũpínǐ wacítálǐ, The handle of the long one (knife)

but an adjective following a noun not associated with an initial vowel appears to retain it, though information is deficient on this point:—

ukúnanda ěnkúlu, To the big house

Other long-series prefix words: A prefix series slightly different in shape occurs with Demonstratives, Possessives, some Adjectives (including numerals) and Verbs. They may in general be referred to as verbal-prefixes. They are not, in general, associated with an initial vowel.

A. Demonstratives. There are four main stems, as follows:—

- (1) Zero, This here. Prefix low-toned
Cl.1/2(and 1a/2a) wj/ya; Cl.3/4 (w) u/(y)i; Cl.5/6 lj/ya; Cl.7/8 ci/fj;
Cl.9/10 yi/sj; Cl.11/10a lu/sj; Cl.12/13 ka/tu; Cl.14 (w)u; Cl.15 ku; Cl.16 pa;
Cl.17 ku
- (2) -lya, That—near at hand. Prefix low-toned
Cl.1/2(1a/2a) wjlya/yalya and then as for (1) above
- (3) -lye, That—further off. Prefix low-toned
Cl.1/2(1a/2a) wjlye/yalya and then as for (1) above.
- (4) -o, That—above-mentioned. Prefix high toned
Cl.1/2(1a/2a) wjo/yáo and then as for (1) above

All these Demonstratives follow the noun or adjective with which they are associated. Where they occur in isolation, however, they may be associated with an initial vowel:—

ayálya, It is those(Cl.6) olú, It is this (Cl.11)

It will be noted that in this case the high tone re-appears on the second vowel of the prefix.

Note should also be made of the special forms which occur preceding nouns:—

aláwj ũmwénj, This is a stranger
aláu ũmwâmbá, This is a hill
aláwj asj mwénj, This is not a stranger
aláwj asj(OR usj) mwâmbá, This is not a hill

furthermore, where the other demonstratives occur in such a context they all have a final high tone:—

wjlyá ũnSukúma, That is a Sukuma

None of the so-called 'Impersonal' demonstratives i.e. it (tree); them (handles), was recorded.

B. Possessives. There are six stems:—

-ne, My	-jtɔ, Our
-ko, Your (Sing.)	-jnɔ, Your (Pl.)
-kwe, His, her	-o, Their

These are prefixed by a low-toned prefix series in association with the possessive element -a:—

Cl./2(1a/2a) wa-/ya-; Cl.3/4 wa-/ya-; Cl.5/6 lya-/ya-; Cl.7⁵8 ca-/fya-;
Cl.9/10 ya-/sya-; Cl.11/10a lwa-/sya-; Cl.12/13 ka-/twa-; Cl.14 wa-;
Cl.15 kwa-; Cl.16 pa-; Cl. 17 kwa-

Where this series prefixes a noun it is high-toned, and there may be concomitant tonal changes on the noun:—

ũmpínj wácisyú/imípínj yáfjisyú, Handle(s) of knife/knives
jsjíná lyámwamba/amásjína yámjamba, Name(s) of hill(s)

Where the possessive occurs in isolation it may be associated with an initial vowel:—
eyáne, It is mine (Cl.9) ifjítɔ, They are ours (Cl.8)

None of the 'Impersonal' possessives i.e. It's handle (an axe's) was recorded.

C. Adjectives. Including the stem *-oósj*, All, and the numerals 1 *-onga*; 2 *-ili*
3 *-tatu*; 4 *-ni*; 5 *-saano*; 6 *thánthátu*:—

jjsúmo lyonga, One spear
amásúmo yaili, Two spears
amásúmo yatatu, Three spears
amásúmo yathánthátu, Six spears

Again an initial vowel may occur when the word is in isolation.

It should be made clear that the members of the various sub-divisions of the category 'long-series words' cited above represent no more than a sample: one would normally make a complete inventory but lack of time—and thought—precluded that in this case. One should, however, watch out for the various stems for 'other', 'self' and 'alone' and for any unusual tones in the prefixes of these and numeral stems.

D. Verbs. Verbs commonly comprise a root or radical, together with a number of affixes. The radical may be simple or extended and it is usually associated with at least a verbal-prefix, a tense sign and a suffix. The main affixes of which account must be taken are as follows:—

- (1) The verbal-prefix
- (2) The negative sign
- (3) The tense-sign
- (4) The object-infix
- (5) The suffix
- (6) The post-suffix

These will be dealt with in turn:—

(1) The verbal-prefix is in general of the same shape as those discussed above, but additional prefixes occur for Classes 1/2:—

<i>n-</i> , I	<i>tú-</i> , We
<i>ú-u-</i> , You	<i>mú-</i> , You (Pl.)
<i>a-</i> , He, she	<i>yá-</i> , They

For most positive tenses the prefix is high-toned for all Classes except 1c ('He'), 4, 9. An initial vowel only occurs in relative tenses, for which see below.

(2) The negative sign, which follows the verbal-prefix, is *-tá(á)-* and occurs in all negative tenses except one (P11).

(3) Tense signs are few in number and are commonly mono-syllabic, thus:—
-luu-, *-an-*, *-á-*, *-a-*, *súú-*

They are discussed in greater detail below.

(4) The object-infix series is listed below: it is high toned for all Classes except Cl.1 and in all tenses except C3 (See below) where it is low-toned throughout:—

Cl.1/2 *-n-*, *-u-*, *-n-* / *-tú-*, *-mú-*, *-yá-*; Cl.3/4 *-ú-* / *-í-*; Cl.5/6 *-lí-* / *-yá-*; Cl.7/8 *-cí-* / *-fj-*; Cl.9/10 *-í-* / *-sj-*; Cl.11/10 *-lú-* / *-sj-*; Cl.12/13 *-ka-* / *-tú-*; Cl.14 *-ú-*; Cl.15 *-kú-*; Cl.16 *-pá-*; Cl.17 *-kú-*

(5) The suffix may be *-a-*, *-e-*, *-jle*. Tenses formed with the last-mentioned are associated with special changes in the final consonant of the root, or, in some cases, there is a quite distinct form. These changes may be summarized as follows:—

Where the final consonant is *k, l, t, ng, nd, nth* it is realized as *-s(jle)*.

Where the final vowel/consonant is *-e/il-* it is realized as *-jjle*

Where the final vowel/consonant is *-ek-/uk-* it is realized as *-jjke/-wjjke*

Where the final vowel/consonant is *-aan-* it is realized as *-jjne*

Where the final vowel/consonant is *-ish-/isy-* it is realized as *-isjjshe/-isjjsye*.

The following examples may be noted:—

–kal–, Buy, –kasjle; –sýt–, Look for, –sjsjle; –sék–, Laugh, –sesjle; –kúnd–, Like someone, –kuusjle; –pelúk–, Return, –pelwjke; –písy; Allow to pass, –pisjjsye

There are also a number of eccentric forms:—

–fyál–, Give birth(non-humans), –fjile; –lól–, See, –wjine; –nyw–, Drink, –nyjile

(6) Only one post-suffix has been recorded, which has the connotation of 'continuity' but is restricted to tenses A2, A6, A7, A8.

The classification of tenses: The problem of classifying tenses is a difficult one in many Bantu languages, partly because of their numbers, and partly—following on from this—because their range of meaning seldom coincides with any simple label. A simple label may be convenient, but speciously so when one discovers its limitations. Alternatively, if one wishes to classify tenses by their shape, i.e. by tense-sign and suffix the result is often extremely cumbersome; for example some negative tenses have no positive counterpart, i.e. the negative –ku– tense in Swahili, or P10, P11 below: again, many positive tenses have no negative counterpart, again the Swahili –li– tense is a good example, or A4 below.

However, in the early stages of an investigation, in particular, before one has sorted out the range of meaning for each tense, or indeed satisfactorily established the identity of specific tenses, a classification by shape is less misleading than any other. Each positive tense can be given a capital letter to designate its suffix, and a number to designate its tense-sign, thus:—

A7 tense-sign –luu–(7), suffix –a(A) B1 tense sign –Zero–(1), suffix –e(B).

This simply provides one with a list of tenses, and is, of course, a personal preference. Other schemes may be equally useful¹¹, but adopting it here we have the following synopsis of the tenses so far discovered for EcíSúkúma.

First, positive one-word tenses—that is those with a single root involved—

A1	–Zero–	–á
A2	–á–	–a
A3	–á– First vowel of all roots high toned	–a
A4	–án– See examples below for Cl.1c pattern	–a
A5	–kúlúú–	–a
A6	–kúu– (with high-toned roots) First vowel of all roots high-toned	–a
	–kúú– (with low-toned roots)	
A7	–lúú– (Classes 1c,4,9) First vowel of all roots high-toned	–á
	–lúu– (all other Classes)	
A8	–luu–	–á
B1	–Zero– First vowel of all roots high-toned, except where an object infix of Cl.1c occurs when tonal-reversal takes place: i.e. túléme, Let us beat; tûndemé, Let us beat him	–e
B9	–ká– First vowel of all roots high-toned	–é
C1	–Zero– Low-toned roots: first vowel low toned in Cl.1c,4,9	–jle
	first vowel high-toned in other Classes	–jle
	High-toned roots: Classes 1c,4,9	–jle
	other Classes	–jlé
C2	–á– (with Classes 1c,4,9)	–fle
	–á– (other Classes) First vowel of all roots high-toned	–jlé
C3	–a–	–jlé

The negative tenses may be similarly listed:—

P7	–(tá) lúu–	–a
P8	–(tá) lúu–	–á
P10	–(táá) kú– First vowel of all roots high-toned	–a
P11	–súú– First vowel of all roots high-toned	–a
(?)Q1	–(tá)Zero–	–e
R2	–(tá)á– First vowel of all roots low-toned	–jlé
R3	–(tá)á– First vowel of all roots high-toned	–jlé

In addition to these one-word tenses, four two-word tenses—that is involving more than one root—were recorded: two positive and two negative:—

A3/B1	-á-	lí	+ B1
A3/A3	-á-úl-	á	+ A3
Q1/B1	-táá-	li	+ B1
Q1/B1	-táá-	céle	+ B1

Some words of explanation to this synopsis are called for here. While it seems reasonable to use the figure '1' for a 'Zero' tense sign wherever this occurs, I am not sure that one can justify the use of '2' and '3' in this way and further work needs to be done. Again, the references to the Classes relate to the verbal-prefixes which it did not seem worth listing here. Finally, low-toned and high-toned roots retain their basic distinctions except in the tenses listed, i.e. A3, A6, A7, B1, B9, C2, P10, P11, R2, R3.

It will also be noted that certain tenses, A7 and A8, C2, and C3 and R3 and R2 are distinguished from one another only by their tone-pattern. This fact could be indicated by labelling them thus, A7/1, A7/2; C2/1, C2/2 and again this is a matter for personal choice.¹²

Some examples of these tenses are appended:—

- A1 pano túlúya úkúcaálo tuyásáaná ayáanacj yalúúlíma, When we go to the farm
refind women cultivating.
- A2 ũmwánacj wáwéésjle úkũñandá weéléka ícúulyá walya wandaala, The woman
returned to the house, cooked food, ate it, and went to sleep.
Cf. twâkalá, We've finished buying, and, twápóná, We're actually falling
From the evidence recorded it is not yet clear what the relation between these
last two examples and the first is.
- A3 nde wáfjka sŵwá ukúndóla, If you arrive early you'll see him.
The negative of this tense is a two-word tense A3/A1:—
nde waúla úfjka sŵwa usúndóla, If you fail to arrive early you'll not see him
- A4 ũmwánacj wándima ukúcaálo, The woman is going to cultivate in the garden
(during today or tomorrow). Cf. wándima, You will cultivate.
ũnswa wampóna, The spoon is going to fall
ímjswa yámp!óna, The spoons are going to fall (and thus for Classes 1c and 9)
The negative of this tense is P11:—
ũmwánacj asúúlíma kailj, The woman will not cultivate again
- A5 ũmwánacj akúúlíma ukúcaálo, The woman generally cultivates in the garden
The negative of this tense is P10:—
ũmwánacj atáákúúlíma ukúcaálo, The woman doesn't generally cultivate in her
garden
- A6 nde wáfjka sŵwá ukúndóla, If you arrive early you'll see him (a general 'near'
future only recorded in such conditional sentences).
ũnswa úkúupóna, The spoon will fall
ímjswa ikúupóna, The spoons will fall
- A7 ũmwánacj aluúlíma kasáláka, At this moment the woman is cultivating
ũnswa úlúupóna kasáláka, At this moment the spoon is falling
ímjswa iluúupóna kasáláka, At this moment spoons are falling
ěmbúsj iluúupóna kasáláka, At this moment the goat is falling
Ímbúsj sjlúupóna kasáláka, At this moment the goats are falling
The negative of this tense is P7:—
ũmwánacj atálúulima ukúcaálo, The woman is not cultivating in the garden

A8 ũmwánacj aluulimá ukú cáálo, The woman will cultivate (tomorrow and subsequently) in the garden.

The negative is P8:—

ũmwánacj atálúulimá ukú cáálo, The woman will not cultivate in the garden

B1 túleme olúuse lu, Let us grasp this rope

Cf. tûndemé ũnthu wj, Let us grasp (him) this man

túulemé ũns wa wu, Let us grasp this spoon

B9 túkákale ecínthu, Let us go and buy something

C1 ũmwánacj alimjle ukú cáálo, The woman has cultivated in the garden

Cf. túlimjle ukú cáálo, We have cultivated in the garden

ũns wa úpónjle, The spoon (Cl.3) has fallen

ímjswa ipónjle, The spoons (Cl.4) have fallen.

The negative of this tense is the two-word tense Q1/B1:—

ũmwánacj atáácélé álime ukú cáálo, The woman hasn't yet started to cultivate in the garden.

C2 ũmwánacj wálímjle íúlu, The woman cultivated yesterday

Cf. twálímjle, We cultivated yesterday

ũns wa wápónjle, The spoon fell

ímjswa yapónjle, The spoons fell

The negative of this tense is R2:—

ũmwánacj atáálímjle íúlu, The woman didn't cultivate yesterday

C3 ũmwánacj walímjle mwacjsw, The woman cultivated last year

Cf. twálimjle, We cultivated (some time ago)

ũns wa wápónjle, The spoon fell

ímjswa yapónjle, The spoons fell

Two two-word tenses should now be noted:—

A3/B1 nde twáli túfjke swá twáli tûndolé, If we were to arrive early we would see him.

The negative of this tense is Q1/B1:—

nde utááli úfjke swá utááli ûndolé, If you were not to arrive early you would not see him.

It is possible that this tense also occurs in sentences with a past implication, 'If we had not ' and thus for the positive tense.

From experience with other Bantu languages it seems likely that there are still a considerable number of tenses unrecorded. For example, no record was made of tenses meaning 'still', 'no longer', 'although', 'doing something before something else' nor of any strong imperatives used in curses or blessings.

As the work progresses and more tenses are discovered, perhaps only slightly different from one another, more questions have to be asked, not merely to identify one's more recent discoveries, but also to fill out one's initial bald list of tenses. Thus, one has to ask, does the tense only occur in questions or in responses; is it restricted to narrative or conversation or to a specific social group; can it occur by itself as a complete sentence or does it need some other word—or verb, as in conditionals—to go with it; is it a member of a pair of tenses, perhaps only tonally distinguished from its fellow, with some connotation of emphasis; can time words, such as 'today, tomorrow' occur with it; what other tenses can keep it company? The answers can only be reached by prolonged and careful investigation, isolating one feature at a time and constantly referring back one's provisional answers to larger contexts.

Something must now be said about relative sentences. These may contain a pre-verbal word -no, with a low-toned prefix and followed by the appropriate tense:—

ánthu yano yaluupilúká yaluueetá amáási, The folk who will return will bring the water.

On the other this pre-verbal word may not occur, in which case the verb has a double verbal prefix, high-toned for all Classes:—

ĩmbúsj ĵľluupántha isyáne, The goats which are kicking are mine

Four relative tenses were recorded: A7, A8, C1, C2. In A7 the tense-sign is low-toned in low-toned roots but a high tone occurs on the first vowel of the root in Cl. 1c, 4 and 9. Thus:—

ũnthu úúluulíma etááta, The man who is cultivating is my father

ǎnthu áyáluulima ayáátaata, The men who are cultivating are my fathers.

In high-toned roots the tense sign is low-toned in all Classes except Cl. 1c, 4, 9, where both it and the first-vowel of the root have a 'slipped' (See fn.9) high-tone:—

ěmbúsj éél!úúpóna eyáne, The goat which is falling is mine

ĩmbúsj ĵsľluupóna isyáne, The goats which are falling are mine.

In A8 the tense-sign is -lúu- and the first vowel of the root high-toned for low-toned roots:—

ǎnthu áyálúusóla ayáátaata, The men who are hunting are my fathers

but the tense-sign is low-toned for all high-toned roots, with a high-toned suffix:—

amáfjnga áyáluupóná amákúlu, The spears which will fall are long

In C1, the first vowel of high-toned roots is low-toned and the suffix ĵs -jle for Classes 1c, 4 and 9, and -jle for all other Classes:—

ũmwánacj úúkasjle ĵnyenyj emááma, The woman who has bought vegetables is my mother

ayáánacj áyákasjle ĵnyenyj ayáámaama, The women.

ũnswa úúpónjle uwáne, The spoon which has fallen is mine

In C2, which occurs for all events in the past, the tense-sign is low-toned and the suffix -jle for all roots, similarly the first vowel of all roots is high-toned:—

ayáánacj áyáalímjle ayaamaama, The women who cultivated are my mothers

ímiswa iyapónjle iyáne, The spoons which fell are mine

In the negative relative(P7, P8, R2, Q1/B1) the pre-verbal word no appears to occur always, and the tone-patterns do not differ from the non-relative forms except in R2 where the 'general' past relative has a low-toned suffix and a high tone on the first vowel of the root:—

ayáánacj yano yatáálímjle íulu yáájle ukúsokonj, The women who didn't cultivate yesterday went to the market.

Similar to relative sentences are those introduced by pano, When:—

pano wafjľle ukúńanda wǎndya, When he arrived at the house he ate

pano ndúúya kwawalúkú lwáne sáána yaakátááni, When I go to my brother's I meet friends

pano túlúúya ukúcáálo tuyásáána ayáánacj yálúúlíma, When we go to the farm we find women cultivating.

It will have been noted that all the examples cited above are examples of the 'subject' relative, i.e. the subject of the sentence is the subject of the relative verb. Account has also to be taken of the 'object' relative, e.g. the goat which I tied, and of any special relative constructions e.g. 'how'.

There will probably be a number of roots which occur with only a limited number of even these tenses, and such roots must be documented: in this language there are, for example, roots like -li, Be, become; -jsi, Get to know, know(?); -kasj, Want. Some typical 'place' questions should be noted:—

ili kwí? Where is it(Cl. 5)

apá/ukú/apó/akúo, Here/there

sjlí pa, It is not here

Note also the form followed by na, and its occurrence in past time:—

ali nǐfjľsyu fjľľj, He has two knives

taata wali/atááli ũmwéne, Father was/was not chief

The root *-w-* occurs in future time contexts:—

tataléésj akúuwa ūmwéne, My brother will be chief.

Up till now attention has been centred on verbs with simple roots. A number of extended roots also occur and these are usually referred to (See the Swahili grammars) as the 'derived forms of the verb'. Six of these were recorded, but others, possibly of less widespread occurrence, undoubtedly occur:—

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| (1) <i>-i/el-</i> The 'Applied' or 'Prepositional' | C tense suffix <i>-jje</i> |
| <i>Note</i> ; where the immediately preceding root vowel is <i>j,i,a,u,u</i> , the extension is <i>-il-</i> ; where it is <i>e,o</i> , the extension is <i>-el-</i> . Also for (3) (6) below. | |
| <i>-pítíl-</i> , Pass by | |
| <i>-sékel-</i> , Laugh at | |
| (2) <i>-sh-, -sy-</i> The 'Causative' | C tense suffix <i>-jjsh/sye</i> |
| <i>-fjk-/ -fjsh-</i> , Cause to arrive | C tenses <i>-fjsjshe</i> |
| <i>-pjt-/ -pish-</i> , Allow to pass | C tenses <i>-pisjshe</i> |
| <i>-pjsy-</i> , Make to pass round | C tenses <i>-pisjsye</i> |
| <i>-suul-/ -suush-</i> , Fill | C tenses <i>-suusjshe</i> |
| (3) <i>-ik-/ -ek-</i> The 'Stative' | C tense suffix <i>-jje</i> |
| <i>-laakálik-</i> , Be angry | |
| <i>-fúnik-</i> , Be covered | |
| (4) <i>-aan-</i> The 'Reciprocal' | C tense suffix <i>-jjne</i> |
| <i>-lékaan-</i> , Leave one another | |
| (5) <i>-u-</i> The 'Passive' | C tense suffix <i>-jlwe</i> |
| <i>-umū-</i> , Be beaten | |
| <i>-sítu-</i> , Be liked | |
| (6) <i>-ul-/ -ol</i> The 'Reversive' | C tense suffix <i>-usjle</i> |
| <i>-yaal-</i> , Close | <i>-yuul-</i> , Open |
| <i>-koos-</i> , Roll up | <i>-koosolol-</i> , Unroll |
| <i>-fundik-</i> , Stop up | <i>-fundul-</i> , Unstop |
| <i>-sijat-</i> , Close eyes | <i>-sijul-</i> , Open eyes |

Note: the tones of these last were not recorded.

The above extensions may be combined with one another to give a very large number of compound extensions, whose precise meaning is often difficult to gauge without a large number of examples. It must also be borne in mind that there are a large number of roots which appear to be extended, but which must be regarded as simple if no simpler form can be found for them, e.g. *-eelek-*, Cook; *-púlik-*, hear

Finally, a few examples should be noted of the post-suffix *-nga* to which reference was made earlier:—

A2 *twálimanga kuu Tabora*, We used to cultivate at Tabora.

A8 *ūmwánacj aluulimángá ukúcaálo*, The woman will be cultivating in the garden.

This concludes the enumeration of the main variable word-categories. There remains the listing of invariable words, that is those which do not participate in the system of grammatical agreement. One can list them arbitrarily into several groups which one may wish to re-define as work proceeds:—

- (1) Pronominals or Pronouns
- (2) Numerals
- (3) Interrogatives (i.e. kwi? Where?)
- (4) 'Time' words i.e. íúlu, Tomorrow, yesterday.
- (5) 'Manner' words i.e. kaili, Again.
- (6) Connectors i.e. na, And, also
- (7) Miscellaneous

In this language the pronominals are as follows:—

enéné, I	eswéswe, We
uwééwe, You	umwémwe, You (Pl.)
uwiiwi, He, she	ayááyá, They

The invariable numerals (2) are:—

sembe 7
cénáánj 8
kenda 9

No detailed lists of the other categories were collected.

From such an outline as has been presented above, bare though it must necessarily have been, it is, I believe relatively easy to proceed to a more detailed account of a Bantu language. There will, of course, be differences in the extent to which a particular feature is or is not significant for a particular language, but the main structure is likely to be the same. One point is perhaps worth stressing in conclusion: the investigator is making explicit, regularities and patterns inherent in the language he is describing; his own linguistic background may heighten his awareness of differences and illuminate his data but it should, under no circumstances, be imposed upon it.

Footnotes:

(1) I should like to express my appreciation of many comments and criticisms from friends and colleagues: especially from Mrs. Hazel Carter of the School of Oriental and African Studies, London; Dr. A. E. Meeussen of the Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale, Tervuren, Belgium; and Dr. J. C. Sharman of Nairobi.

The collection of the data was made during a year's study leave from the School of Oriental and African Studies, London, to whom I should also like to express my thanks.

(2) There are, perhaps, three main approaches to the description of the Bantu languages. Firstly, there is the work in South Africa and elsewhere of those associated with the teaching and methods of C. M. Doke (See especially his *Bantu Linguistic Terminology*, London, 1935). His *Outline of Bantu Grammar*, J'burg, 1943, though it is difficult to obtain, may prove useful for some. This approach is followed in L. Harries's *Grammar of Mwera*, Witwatersrand, 1950, and the work of G. Fortune, *An Analytical Grammar of Shona*, Longmans, 1955 and D. Cole, *An Introduction to Tswana Grammar*, Longmans, 1955 might also be consulted.

A second approach is associated with the work of M. Guthrie in London. I have given a list of the works of those who follow his methods in my 'Shape and Meaning in Yao Nominal Classes' *African Language Studies*, II (School of Oriental and African Studies), London, 1961. See footnote 3.

A third approach is associated with the views and teaching of A. E. Meeussen in Tervuren, Belgium, and the works of Meeussen, Coupez and Vansina can all be obtained from the Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale at Tervuren. Reference

should also be made to the work of J. C. Sharman: 'The Representation of Structural Tones (with special reference to the tonal behaviour of the verb in Bemba, N. Rhodesia)' (with A. E. Meeussen) *AFRICAN*, XXV/4, 1955.

A reasonably full bibliography of such general material and its availability is given in *A Linguistic Bibliography of East Africa*, A. E. Gutkind and W. H. Whiteley, 2nd. Ed. (with Supp. to 1960), 1958, East African Institute of Social Research, Kampala.

(3) Much useful information on linguistic groupings and general features can be found in:— *Bantu (Modern grammatical, phonological and lexicographical studies since 1860)*, C. M. Doke, International African Institute, 1948; *The Classification of the Bantu Languages*, M. Guthrie, International African Institute, 1948. There is also the more recent survey of M. A. Bryan *The Bantu Languages of Africa* (Handbook of African Languages), O.U.P. (for International African Institute), 1959.

(4) There is an extensive bibliography on phonemic theory, much of it in technical language, but the principles are clearly stated in most linguistic textbooks. Two which can be particularly recommended are H. A. Gleason's *An Introduction to Descriptive Linguistics*, New York, Rev. Ed. 1961; and C. F. Hockett's *A Course in Modern Linguistics*, New York, 1958.

(5) A clear explanation of such terms as 'open' and 'close' can be found in D. Westermann and I. Ward, *Practical Phonetics for Students of African Languages*, O.U.P., 1949.

(6) This phenomenon, technically known as 'down-drift' is not by any means confined to Bantu languages. See A. N. Tucker and J. T. O. Mpaayei, London, 1955.

(7) See, for example, I. Richardson's *The Role of Tone in the structure of Sukuma* School of Oriental and African Studies, 1959.

(8) For a detailed study of noun-classes in Yao see my op. cit. (1961).

(9) The symbol! is used to indicate that the following tone is heard as a mid-tone. For the purposes of analysis, however, it may be necessary to regard it as a high-tone which has 'slipped', the phenomenon being regarded as 'tone-slip' and explicable according to definite rules. See also examples of Tense A4.

(10) The anomalous tone on the stem may be an error in recording.

(11) See for example J. C. Sharman's 'The Tabulation of tenses in a Bantu Language of Northern Rhodesia', *AFRICA*, XXVI/1, 1956. It should be realised, however, that the technique adopted there was only possible after a prolonged period of field-work.

(12) At this stage of the work it was not thought desirable to attempt any formulation of general tonal principles.

(13) I should be very glad to answer any queries arising out of this short article, or, indeed, any queries arising from field-work generally. I can usually be reached c/o School of Oriental and African Studies, Malet St., London, W.C.I.

APPENDIX

OUTLINE VOCABULARY FOR AFRICAN LANGUAGES

A.—NOUNS

- | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| A. 1. affair | C.14. voice | E. 1. work |
| A. 2. place | C.15. chin | E. 2. garden |
| A. 3. side | C.16. beard | E. 3. hoe |
| A. 4. front | C.17. neck | E. 4. basket |
| A. 5. back | C.18. shoulder | E. 5. hamper |
| A. 6. top | C.19. chest | E. 6. cooking pot |
| A. 7. bottom | C.20. breast (female) | E. 7. water pot |
| A. 8. inside | C.21. heart | E. 8. calabash |
| A. 9. outside | C.22. side | E. 9. firewood |
| A.10. end | C.23. rib | E.10. fire |
| A.11. point, tip | C.24. back | E.11. smoke |
| A.12. thing | C.25. kidney | E.12. charcoal |
| A.13. half | C.26. arm | E.13. ashes |
| A.14. nothing | C.27. left hand | E.14. mortar |
| A.15. sign | C.28. right hand | E.15. pestle |
| A.16. shadow | C.29. palm | E.16. plate |
| A.17. spot, speckle | C.30. finger | E.17. knife |
| A.18. sort | C.31. fingernail | E.18. broom |
| A.19. name | C.32. abdomen | E.19. axe |
| A.20. time, period | C.33. intestines | E.20. matchet |
| A.21. time(s) | C.34. buttocks | E.21. rope |
| A.22. number | C.35. leg | E.22. knot |
| A.23. crowd | C.36. thigh | E.23. whitewash |
| A.24. line, row | C.37. knee | E.24. hammer |
| | C.38. foot | E.25. iron |
| B. 1. person | C.39. heel | E.26. bellows |
| B. 2. baby | C.40. saliva | E.27. spear |
| B. 3. child | C.41. tear | E.28. gun |
| B. 4. youth | C.42. bile | E.29. bow |
| B. 5. unmarried girl | C.43. excreta | E.30. arrow |
| B. 6. adult | C.44. urine | E.31. hunting net |
| B. 7. elder | C.45. pus | E.32. fishhook |
| B. 8. man | C.46. wound | E.33. market |
| B. 9. woman | C.47. scar | E.34. money |
| B.10. barren woman | C.48. blood | E.35. drum |
| B.11. father | C.49. corpse | E.36. dance |
| B.12. mother | C.50. bone | E.37. song |
| B.13. brother | C.51. flesh | E.38. war |
| B.14. sister | C.52. skin | E.39. shield |
| B.15. grandparent | | E.40. journey |
| B.16. husband | D. 1. fence | E.41. load |
| B.17. wife | D. 2. enclosure | E.42. headpad |
| B.18. twin | D. 3. house | E.43. stumbling block |
| B.19. chief | D. 4. door | E.44. canoe |
| B.20. whiteman | D. 5. doorway | E.45. paddle |
| B.21. owner | D. 6. wall | E.46. sleep |
| B.22. slave | D. 7. roof | E.47. dream |
| B.23. friend | D. 8. plank | E.48. letter |
| B.24. stranger | D. 9. courtyard | |
| B.25. tribe | D.10. cookhouse | F. 1. day (24 hrs.) |
| B.26. family | D.11. fireplace | F. 2. night |
| | D.12. cooking-stone | F. 3. daytime |
| C. 1. body | D.13. well | F. 4. morning |
| C. 2. head | D.14. bed | F. 5. evening |
| C. 3. brain | D.15. stool | F. 6. week |
| C. 4. eye | D.16. mat | F. 7. year |
| C. 5. face | D.17. box | F. 8. yesterday |
| C. 6. ear | D.18. lamp | F. 9. today |
| C. 7. hair | D.19. mirror | F.10. tomorrow |
| C. 8. cheek | D.20. bottle | |
| C. 9. nose | D.21. bell | G. 1. sky |
| C.10. mouth | D.22. cloth | G. 2. sun |
| C.11. lip | D.23. hat | G. 3. moon |
| C.12. tooth | D.24. shoe | G. 4. star |
| C.13. tongue | D.25. bag | |
| | D.26. bundle | |

APPENDIX

- G. 5. sunlight
- G. 6. cloud
- G. 7. wind
- G. 8. rain
- G. 9. lightning
- G.10. thunder
- G.11. land
- G.12. mountain, hill
- G.13. valley
- G.14. forest
- G.15. plain
- G.16. path
- G.17. village
- G.18. boundary
- G.19. grave
- G.20. pit, hole
- G.21. cave
- G.22. shore
- G.23. river
- G.24. stream
- G.25. pool, pond
- G.26. well
- G.27. island
- G.28. sand
- G.29. rock
- G.30. mud
- G.31. soil
- G.32. water

- H. 1. animal
- H. 2. tail
- H. 3. horn
- H. 4. fur, hair
- H. 5. dog
- H. 6. goat
- H. 7. cattle
- H. 8. sheep
- H. 9. pig
- H.10. chicken
- H.11. elephant
- H.12. hippopotamus
- H.13. leopard
- H.14. lion
- H.15. buffalo
- H.16. hyena
- H.17. crocodile
- H.18. snake
- H.19. monkey
- H.20. tortoise
- H.21. rat
- H.22. frog
- H.23. scorpion
- H.24. snail
- H.25. jigger
- H.26. tick
- H.27. louse
- H.28. spider
- H.29. house fly
- H.30. honey bee
- H.31. mosquito
- H.32. fruit-bat
- H.33. bird
- H.34. wing
- H.35. feather
- H.36. fish
- H.37. vulture
- H.38. hawk
- H.39. parrot
- H.40. pigeon
- H.41. guinea fowl

- K. 1. tree
- K. 2. base of trunk
- K. 3. branch
- K. 4. thorn
- K. 5. leaf
- K. 6. flower
- K. 7. fruit
- K. 8. root
- K. 9. grass
- K.10. palm-tree
- K.11. palm nut
- K.12. orange
- K.13. banana
- K.14. kola nut
- K.15. cassava
- K.16. mushroom
- K.17. pumpkin
- K.18. potato
- K.19. yam
- K.20. groundnut
- K.21. sugarcane
- K.22. millet
- K.23. kaffircorn
- K.24. maize
- K.25. rice
- K.26. flour
- K.27. pepper
- K.28. egg
- K.29. milk
- K.30. beer
- K.31. oil
- K.32. honey
- K.33. salt

- L. 1. conversation
- L. 2. tale
- L. 3. news
- L. 4. law
- L. 5. lawsuit
- L. 6. oath
- L. 7. lie
- L. 8. truth
- L. 9. quarrel
- L.10. slap
- L.11. promise
- L.12. gift
- L.13. marriage
- L.14. debt

- M. 1. joy
- M. 2. sorrow
- M. 3. anger
- M. 4. doubt
- M. 5. fear
- M. 6. shame
- M. 7. desire
- M. 8. hunger
- M. 9. thirst
- M.10. pain
- M.11. speed
- M.12. wisdom
- M.13. mercy
- M.14. stupidity
- M.15. force
- M.16. life
- M.17. death
- M.18. depth
- M.19. weight
- M.20. bitterness
- M.21. sweetness

- M.22. cold
- M.23. heat
- M.24. dirt
- M.25. darkness
- M.26. smell
- M.27. noise

- N. 1. god
- N. 2. spirit
- N. 3. fetish
- N. 4. taboo
- N. 5. witch doctor
- N. 6. medicine
- N. 7. witchcraft
- X. 1. good
- X. 2. bad
- X. 3. big
- X. 4. small
- X. 5. long
- X. 6. short
- X. 7. old
- X. 8. new
- X. 9. white
- X.10. black
- X.11. hard
- X.12. soft
- X.13. all
- X.14. many
- X.15. some
- X.16. other
- X.17. only
- X.18. alone
- X.19. very
- X.20. self
- X.21. same
- X.22. different
- X.23. I
- X.24. thou
- X.25. he
- X.26. us
- X.27. you
- X.28. they

B. VERBS

- A. 1. go
- A. 2. come
- A. 3. go up
- A. 4. put up
- A. 5. go down
- A. 6. put down
- A. 7. go in
- A. 8. put in
- A. 9. go out
- A.10. put out
- A.11. go by
- A.12. arrive
- A.13. go near
- A.14. run away
- A.15. go away
- A.16. take away
- A.17. come from
- A.18. go back
- A.19. take back
- A.20. wade
- A.21. pull
- A.22. push
- A.24. carry
- A.25. throw
- A.26. throw away

APPENDIX

- A.27. pick up
 A.28. hang up
 A.29. heap up
 A.30. poke in
 A.31. bring
 A.32. leave
 A.33. put
 A.34. put down
 A.35. turn round *neut.*
 A.36. turn round *act.*
 A.37. turn over *neut*
 A.38. turn over *act.*
 A.39. remain
 A.40. chase away
 A.41. send
 A.42. shake *neut.*
 A.43. shake *act.*
 A.44. fall
 A.45. lift
 A.46. run
 A.47. jump
 A.48. fly
 A.49. slip
 A.50. sink
 A.51. surround
 A.52. drip
 A.53. pour
 A.54. sprinkle
- B. 1. hit
 B. 2. break, snap
 B. 3. break *neut.*
 B. 4. smash
 B. 5. be smashed
 B. 6. cut
 B. 7. join by tying
 B. 8. separate
 B. 9. pierce
 B.10. tear
 B.11. split *act.*
 B.12. split *neut*
 B.13. wring
 B.14. twist
 B.15. bend
 B.16. be bent
 B.17. lean *act.*
 B.18. lean *neut.*
 B.19. spread
 B.20. straighten
 B.21. trample
 B.22. mix
 B.23. tie up
 B.24. untie
 B.25. bind
 B.26. stick *act*
 B.27. stick *neut.*
 B.28. shut
 B.29. open
 B.30. cover
 B.31. uncover
 B.32. rub
 B.33. scrape
 B.34. do
 B.35. take
 B.36. give
 B.37. hide *act.*
 B.38. hide *neut*
 B.39. seek
 B.40. find
 B.41. look at
- B.42. see
 B.43. appear
 B.44. show
 B.45. hear
 B.46. divide
 B.47. give away
 B.48. look after
 B.49. choose
 B.50. refuse
 B.51. try
 B.52. begin
 B.53. finish *act.*
 B.54. finish *neut.*
 B.55. lack
 B.56. get, receive
 B.57. touch
- C. 1. be, become
 C. 2. dwell
 C. 3. bear
 C. 4. be born
 C. 5. grow up
 C. 6. bring up
 C. 7. get hurt
 C. 8. wound
 C. 9. fall ill
 C.10. vomit
 C.11. get thin
 C.12. shiver
 C.13. be cured
 C.14. cure
 C.15. die
 C.16. bury
 C.17. stand up
 C.18. walk
 C.19. sit down
 C.20. lie down
 C.21. sleep
 C.22. dream
 C.23. snore
 C.24. awake
 C.25. wait
 C.26. eat
 C.27. drink
 C.28. suck
 C.29. swallow
 C.30. abstain
 C.31. be satiated
 C.32. get drunk
 C.33. breathe
 C.34. sweat
 C.35. spit
 C.36. urinate
 C.37. defecate
 C.38. cough
 C.39. wash
 C.40. bathe
 C.41. warm self
 C.42. comb
 C.43. wear
 C.44. take off
 C.45. laugh
 C.46. cry
 C.47. shout
 C.48. sing
 C.49. know
 C.50. think
- C.51. remember
 C.52. learn
 C.53. forget
 C.54. take care
 C.55. love
 C.56. hate
 C.57. rejoice
 C.58. be angry
 C.59. be astonished
 C.60. fear
 C.61. be able
 C.62. fail
 C.63. be tired
- D. 1. work
 D. 2. hoe, cultivate
 D. 3. sow seed
 D. 4. plant
 D. 5. uproot
 D. 6. harvest
 D. 7. dig (hole)
 D. 8. draw (water)
 D. 9. pound
 D.10. grind
 D.11. sift
 D.12. boil up *neut.*
 D.13. boil *act.*
 D.14. cook
 D.15. strain liquid
 D.16. be burnt
 D.17. burn up
 D.18. melt
 D.19. roast
 D.20. fry
 D.21. build
 D.22. sell
 D.23. buy
 D.24. exchange
 D.25. pay
 D.26. hunt
 D.27. shoot
 D.28. kill
 D.29. fish
 D.30. fight
 D.31. play
 D.32. dance
 D.33. journey
 D.34. rest
 D.35. be lost
 D.36. lose
 D.37. paddle
 D.38. kindle
 D.39. be kindled
 D.40. extinguish
 D.41. be extinguished
 D.42. sweep
 D.43. gather up
 D.44. wash (things)
 D.45. dry *act.*
 D.46. dry *neut.*
 D.47. forge
 D.48. mould (pottery)
 D.49. carve
 D.50. write
 D.51. read
 D.52. sew
- E. 1. assemble
 E. 2. disperse
 E. 3. meet with
 E. 4. speak
 E. 5. answer

APPENDIX

E. 6. chat	E.28. divine	G14. make black
E. 7. tell	F. 1. plead case	G.15. be cool
E. 8. teach	F. 2. accuse	G.16. make cool
E. 9. explain	F. 3. testify	G.17. be quiet
E.10. permit	F. 4. admit guilt	G.18. be sharp
E.11. forbid	F. 5. give judgment	G.19. sharpen
E.12. command	F. 6. punish	G.20. be blunt
E.13. obey	G. 1. be sufficient	G.21. be equal
E.14. call	G. 2. make sufficient	G.22. surpass
E.15. follow	G. 3. be suitable	G.23. measure
E.16. help	G. 4. make suitable	G.24. count
E.17. deny	G. 5. be spoilt	G.25. be numerous
E.18. agree	G. 6. spoil	H. 1. blow (wind)
E.19. ask question	G. 7. be full	H. 2. rain
E.20. ask for	G. 8. fill	H. 3. thunder
E.21. marry	G. 9. be rotten	H. 4. dawn
E.22. annoy	G.10. make rotten	H. 5. shine
E.23. quarrel	G.11. stink	H. 6. sprout
E.24. steal	G.12. swell	H. 7. ripen <i>neut.</i>
E.25. deceive	G.13. be black	H. 8. bite
E.26. curse		H. 9. gnaw
E.27. bewitch		

This basic vocabulary was prepared by Prof. M. Guthrie of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

A similar vocabulary, prepared by Dr. J. H. Greenberg, may be obtained, free of charge from Dr. A. E. Meeussen, Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale, Tervuren, Belgium.

ERRATA

p.19 delete NOTES and substitute

p.4 line 17 for *ingosi* read *ǎngosi*

p.5 line 50 for *incéto* read *ǎncéto*

p.10 line 29 for *wandima* read *wǎndima*

p.10 line 32 for *yamp'óna* read *yǎmp'óna*

p.11 line 51 for *anthu* read *ǎnthu*

p.12 line 8 for *anthu* read *ǎnthu*

p.12 line 14 for *anthu* read *ǎnthu*

p.12 line 34 for *wandya* read *wǎndya*