

Afranaph Development Workshop 3

NRT

Actual Clauses

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Abstract

Baker, Safir & Sikuku (afranaph technical report 5), demonstrate the existence of the so called actual clause in Lubukusu (Bantu, Luhya). However, to the best of our knowledge, the presence of this clause has not robustly been tested in other languages. This project is therefore an attempt to probe for the existence of the actual clause in African languages. Essentially, the actual clause entails that the utterer is committed not only to the truth described by the clause but that the event in the proposition cannot be unrealized at the time of the utterance. Using a questionnaire to be completed by native speaker linguists of different African languages, the study will first seek to establish the existence of the actual clause in the target language. Languages commonly mark the ‘actuality entailment’ by a special verb (1), a special adverb or a continuation attached to the sentence (2) or by a special clause which has distinct morphological marking (3).

- 1) Aya managed to eat the fish
- 2) Aya told Mary to eat the fish (and she did eat the fish)
- 3) Aya a-li-mw-amb-ia Marya a-ka-m-la samaki
 Aya SM1-PST-OM1-tell-FV Mary SM1-ACT-OM1-eat 9fish
 Aya told Mary to eat fish (and she did eat fish) **[Kiswahili]**

The presence of a special clause such as that in (3) to show the realization of the event in the proposition will form part of the evidence for the presence of actual clauses. Secondly, the questionnaire will probe for the morphological properties of the actual clause. In our preliminary investigation of three Kenyan languages¹ (Ekegusi (Bantu, Western), Kiswahili, and Keiyo (Southern Nilotic)), the actual clause is realized by a prefix on the lower verb indicated in bold in (4), (5) and (6) respectively.

- 4) Obuchi a-ga-tem-a o-mw-ana a-**ka**-gend-a e-yunibasiti
 Obuchi SM1-PST-try-FV C1-C1-child SM1-ACT-go-FV C23-university
 Obuchi tried for the child to go to the university (and he did go) **[Ekegusi]**
- 5) Juma a-li-jitahidi m-toto a-**ka**-end-a chuo ki-kuu

¹ Data for Ekegusi were provided by Dr. Samuel Obuchi, a linguist at Moi University, Kiswahili data were provided by the second author, and verified by several linguists at the University of Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania. The Keiyo data were provided by Andrew Chelimo, a PhD student at Moi University and a native speaker of Keiyo. The first author provided the Lubukusu data.

Juma SM1-PST-try C1-child SM1-ACT-go-FV C7institution C7-big
Juma tried for the child to go to the university (and he did go) [**Kiswahili**]

- 6) Ki-ikil-kei Juma **ak**-ko-am samakyat
PST-try-RFM Juma ACT-FOC-eat fish
Juma tried to eat fish (and he did eat fish) [**Keiyo**]

Baker, Safir & Sikuku (afranaph technical report 5) report that in Lubukusu, the actual clause is tenseless as it co-occurs with verbs that may be incompatible with indicative clauses. This property will also be tested with the clauses identified in different languages. Thirdly, this study will seek to determine whether the actual clause can itself be a matrix clause as shown for Lubukusu in (7).

- 7) Wafula a-ch-a ba-ba-ana ba-sangal-a
Wafula SM1-go-FV C2-C2-child SM2-rejoice
Wafula did go and the children rejoiced [**Lubukusu**]

Lastly, the questionnaire will test for the semantic distinction of the actual clause with other clause types such as the infinitive and the subjunctive. Following Kiparsky and Kiparsky (1970), we shall determine whether actual clauses occur as complements of factive or non-factive verbs. In Lubukusu, actual clauses are compatible with non-factive verbs (Baker, Safir & Sikuku, afranaph technical report 5:4). Kiswahili has a similar distribution as shown in the difference in judgement between (8a) and (8b).

- 8) a) *Juma a-li-sikitika Peter a-ka-mu-oa Marya
Juma SM1-PST-regret Peter SM1-ACT-OM1-marry Mary
Juma regretted that Peter married Mary
- b) ?Juma a-li-amini Peter a-ka-mu-oa Marya
Juma SM1-PST-believe Peter SM1-ACT-OM1-marry Mary
Juma believed that Peter married Mary [**Kiswahili**]

The mere prospect of the existence of the actual clause in a number of languages, some of which belong to different language families, holds promise for a complete characterization of the clause and the subsequent expansion of the inventory of clauses in world languages. This project hopes to contribute to this expansion.

References

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