

Nyokon

Past tense: OV regardless of IS context

- (7) Context: What did you do today? (VP focus)
/ Who did you give the bananas to? (indirect obj focus)

mu pimbótɔ ndaá apé ghó.
SM.1SG bananas give PREP child

'I gave the bananas to the child.'

⇒ OV order in past tense for both broad focus and focus on indirect object

- (8) Context: Where did you buy the bananas? (non-argument focus)

mu (pimbótɔ) káp a konoŋ.
SM.1SG bananas buy A road

'I bought the bananas at the roadside.'

Nyokon

Past tense: OV regardless of IS context

- (9) Context: What did your father do? (VP focus)
/ What did your father kill? (object focus)

itá ángam ghó

father spider kill

'My father killed a spider.'

- (10) Context: What did your father kill? (object focus)

?itá ghó ángam.

father kill spider

'My father killed a spider.'

⇒ SOV in broad focus and narrow focus on object in past tense,
SVO is marginal for narrow focus on object

Nyokon

NB: 1 example in data of VO in past tense with focus on direct object and given indirect obj:

(11) Context: What did you give to the child?

mu nda pimboto vé.

SM.1SG give bananas PRON.3SG

'I gave him bananas.'

RQ2

RQs

RQ2 To what extent do the languages with OV orders differ syntactically from languages with VO orders?

To do:

- Investigate general syntactic profile of language e.g. head-finality in other domains, placement of non-arguments (SOVX vs verb-final SOV)

RQ2: Tunen results

RQs

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Tunen:

- No low subjects allowed (cf subject inversion in other Bantu)
- Imperatives = VO (V-IO-DO)
- N-Mod order
- C-Comp order
- Cop-Compl order
- Adjuncts and locative arguments typically postverbal (SOVX)

→ Patterns with SVO languages vs 'true' verb-final SOV languages

RQ2: Tunen

VO (V-IO-DO) in imperatives:

(12) ίνδίό μῶνά ιμίτ!

indió mō-ná ε-μίτ

give 1-child 7-calabash

'Give the child a calabash!'

[JO 1594]

Head-initiality elsewhere in the syntax, N-Mod order:

(13) τούγε τῶbanána τῶτέῖτέ τῶfítitiə τῶfandε

τούγε τῶ-banána τῶ-têtéá τῶ-fítitiə τῶ-fandε

13.DEM.PROX 13-banana 13-small 13-black 13-two

'These two small black bananas'

[JO 885]

RQ2: Nyokon results

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RQ2: Nyokon results

VO (V-DO-IO) order in imperatives:

- (14) nda manyí ngóm!
 give water PRON.1SG
 ‘Give me water!’

Head-initiality elsewhere in the syntax, N-Mod order:

- (15) pí pimbóto pífu
 dem.prox bananas two
 ‘these two bananas’

RQ2 results

- Both Tunen and Nyokon share syntactic similarities with VO languages despite having (partial) OV syntax
- Expected if recently grammaticalised from VO origin
- However, Tunen OV order is pragmatically neutral (RQ1) and therefore looks to be the base word order for the verb phrase

RQ3

RQs

RQ3 Is OV at the borderlands historical or innovative?

- If historical: need to derive VO in other languages
- If innovative: derive OV via grammaticalisation/contact
 - V > Aux (> TAM)
 - Serial verbs
 - Verbal nouns
 - Infinitival constructions

⇒ If OV is innovative, are such innovations independent or related through shared history / contact?

RQ3: V > Aux

V > Aux (> TAM) grammaticalisation path:

- Do auxiliaries/TAM markers have observable verbal source in Tunen/Nyokon?
- Do Nyokon tense markers differ in syntactic/grammaticalisation status?

RQ3: Tunen

Marker	Gloss	Time point
-ηɔ	FUT	future from tomorrow onwards
ʻndɔ	PRES	present, immediate future
-nɔ	PAST1	recent past, just an instant ago
-ná	PAST2	a few hours ago (same day)
-ka/- ^h ná	PAST3	yesterday and before
-lɛ	PAST4	far past; many years ago, before birth

Table: Tunen tense markers

RQ3: OV/VO grammaticalisation

Nyokon

label	schema	TAM marker	verb stem	OV	remarks
Subjunctive	StrngH VH	-		Y	subject pronoun obligatory
Recent past	HV	-		Y	
Far past	VH	-		Y	
Remote past	VHk	-	k	Y	built on Far past
Perfect	VH	nóó níkú		N	built on Far past
Present Continuous	V+T	ná	no k	N	built on Present; < no COP
Conditional	V+T	ná	no k	Y	built on Present continuous
Past Imperfective	S mbíí S (O) V (Pst?) (O)			Y	
Past Imperfective 2	S mbíí ku V/PAST (O)	mbíí ku		N	
Background	S mbíí V (Pst?) (O)	mbíí		N	
Background_Past_R	S mbíí V (O)	mbíí		N	
Background Moment	S mbíí S (O) V (O)			Y	
Future	mí-Síma V/PAST (O)			N	
Narrative	pí (+ ká - ká) + V	pí		Y	
Present Subject Focus	Compl INF-V-á' (O)			N	
Recent Past Subject Focus	Compl nóó/níkú V/PA (O)	nóó níkú		N	
Far Past Subject Focus	Compl Verb/PA (O)			N	
Remote Past Subject Focus	Compl Verb-K/PA (O)			N	
Procedural	(O) INF-MB-VH* Obl			Y	obl
Procedural2	(O) mbíí INF-VH* Obl			Y	obl
Negative General Present	S sí VH (O) other á	sí		N	
Negative Present	S ná-níkú-káq (O) á	ná níkú káq		N	
Negative Background	S mbíí V (O) á	mbíí		N	
Negative Past	S mbíí V/PAST (O) á	mbíí		N	

Source: Mous (submitted)

RQ3 results

- Tunen + Nyokon TAM marker appears with SM separate from the verb (S-TAM-OV/VO)
- No clear verbal source for Tunen/Nyokon TAM markers
- Surprisingly little overlap between Tunen and Nyokon TAM system

RQ3: Infinitival path

Infinitival grammaticalisation path:

- Proposed by Mous (2005) for Tunen

“There is no example of Object-Infinitive order in the limited Nyokon (A45) data.”

“[...] Nen (A44):

LOC O V (argument)

LOC V ‘O’ (circumstantial)

Nyokon (A45):

a V O”

(Mous 2005:12)

i.e. OV order is first derived from infinitival constructions

Tunen

- Preposition and infinitive marker are homophonous, *ɔ*
- Multiple instances of *ɔ* in embedded clauses:

(16) *míndɔ siə ɔ mənífé ɔ ɔnyá.*

mé-ndɔ siə ɔ ma-nífé ɔ ɔ-nyá

SM.1SG-PRES want PREP 6-water PREP INF-drink

'I want to drink water.'

(17) *miɔkó alé ɔso ɔ beɲgwete (ɔ) ɔbáta.*

miɔkó a-lé óso ɔ be-ɲgwete ɔ ɔ-báta

chicken SM.1-NEG can PREP 8-potato PREP INF-collect

'The chicken wasn't able to collect up her potatoes.'

- *ɔ* used elsewhere as preposition (e.g. *o nioní* 'to the market') and left-peripheral topic marker (e.g. *ɔ béεεβε beláβónéá béεεβε, ...* 'As for this food here, ...')

Infinitival constructions

Multiple marking of locative preposition/infinitival prefix also found in Nyokon with marker *a*, with VO syntax:

- (18) Vivianə (nə) yár a náám a kəndáf
 Vivianne COP want A cook A pork
 ‘Vivianne wants to cook pork.’

OV syntax with finite embedded clause:

- (19) Vivianə yár usáá Roger kú a kəndáf náám
 Vivianne want SM.1-say Roger TAM A pork cook
 ‘Vivianne wants Roger to cook the pork.’

Infinitival constructions

- Infinitival constructions alternative grammaticalisation scenario for Tunen and Nyokon
- Nyokon retains VO in embedded non-finite clauses but has OV in finite example; Tunen has OV consistently

RQ4

RQs

RQ4 What can we reconstruct syntactically for an intermediary stage between Proto-Bantu and Proto-Niger-Congo?

- Are OV patterns independent innovations?
- Is there influence of contact?
- Do we see other OV patterns in the borderlands region, and how do they compare with Tunen and Nyokon?

