MICROVARIATION IN NOUN CLASS SYSTEMS: A CASE OF MALAWIAN LANGUAGES

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THE BANTU NOUN CLASS SYSTEM

- The noun class system is one of the prominent features of Bantu languages. Nouns in this group of languages may fall into different noun or gender classes. Reconstructions of a PB noun class system propose that it had 24 classes (Meinhof (1932), Meeussen (1967), Welmers (1973), Maho (1999). None of the present-day Bantu languages use all 24 classes and the number of classes varies among them.

THE BANTU NOUN CLASS SYSTEM

- According to Maho (1999) and others, 21 classes as found in Ganda, seems to be the highest number of classes in modern languages. A high number of noun classes is referred to as a canonical Bantu noun class system and a system with few noun classes is labelled a reduced system.

- Maho (1999) refers to languages that have three or fewer classes as reduced systems and those with seven classes or more as canonical.

- Katamba (2003) uses the term canonical systems for those with six classes paired for singular and plural nouns as well as with about the same number of classes that are not paired in addition.

THE BANTU NOUN CLASS SYSTEM

- Bantu languages with a reduced noun class system are for example Kamo D23 with no noun classes and Kako A93 which only has three classes (cf. Guthrie 1971:42).

PROTO-BANTU NOUN CLASSES (BASED ON MAHO 1999:51)

Noun class	Noun class prefix	Meanings
1	mú	humans
1a	Ø	Kins, proper names, personified animals
2	ßá	Honorific, plural to 1, 1a
2x	ßa, ßo	Honorific, plural to 1a
3	mu	Trees, plants, inanimates
4	mi	Plural to 3
5	li	Miscellaneous, paired things,
6	ma	Liquids, masses, collectetives, plural to 5, 9, 11, 14, 15
7	ki	Inanimates, manner/style, diminutives, augmentatives
8	ßi	Plural to 7

PROTO-BANTU NOUN CLASSES (BASED ON MAHO 1999:51)

Noun class	Noun class prefix	Meanings
10	li-ni	Plural to 9, 11
11	lu	Long and/or thin things, abstracts
12	ka	dimunitives
13	tu	Plural to 12
14	ßu	Abstracts, mass nouns, plural to 12
15	ku	infinitives
16	pa	Locatives, 'remote' or 'explicit'
17	ku	Locatives, remote or general

PROTO-BANTU NOUN CLASSES (BASED ON MAHO 1999:51)

Noun class	Noun class prefix	Meanings
18	mu	Locatives 'inside'
19	pi	dimunitives
20	ɣu	Augmentatives, dimunitives
21	ɣi	Augmentatives, pejoratives
22	ɣa	Plural to 20
23	i	Locative unspecified

BANTU NOUN CLASSES

- The criteria for membership of nouns into the various classes have been a subject of debate but there are indications that some semantic, natural and phonological factors play a role in these groupings.

- Maho (1999) notes that noun classes are distinguished by noun class prefixes, a set of class specific agreement markers as well as to some extent, the particular semantic content of a given class

INTRO TO MICROVARIATION

- As mentioned above, modern day Bantu languages have not taken the full paradigm of the Proto Bantu noun classes. As such, there have been variations.

- In fact variation studies have been the focus of some linguists for the past three decades.

- This includes early work such as Bresnan and Moshi (1990), Beaudoin-Leitz, Nurse and Rose (2004) and Marten, Kula and Thwala (2007). More recent work has also begun to assess micro-variation in closely related language groups and languages in specific areas (e.g. Petzell and Hammarström 2013, de Kind et al 2015, Dom and Bostoen 2015, Aunio 2015, Gibson, Guérois and Marten 2017 and Bloom Ström et al *this volume*).

INTRO TO MICROVARIATION

- In the next few slides, we are going to discuss micro-variation on noun classes with particular focus on Malawian languages although we will be referring to other languages in the process too.

- The Malawian languages that will be the focus will be Cicewa, Citumbuka, Cisena, Cindali, Cinyiha and Ciyao. We can also refer to Citonga and Cilomwe which are the languages for this field methods class.

- Will use Guerois, Marten and Gibson (2017) parameters on nominal class marking systems to guide us

PARAMETERS FOR MICROVARIATION

1. What is the shape of the augment?

2. Does it fulfil a specific grammatical function?

3. What is the shape of the class 5 nominal prefix?

4. How many noun classes are there?

5. Does the infinitive take a noun class prefix?

6. Is the diminutive meaning expressed through the use of noun classes?

7. Is the augmentative meaning expressed through the use of noun classes?

8. Can a noun take a locative class?

SOCIOLINGUISTIC PROFILES

- **Cicewa (N31)**

- Largest number of speakers in Malawi with an estimated 6,500,00 speakers (United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) (2009)).

- The national language of Malawi and, along with English, serves as the official language.

- Used in official capacities, in the media and in education.

- Spoken as a first language (L1) by most Malawians but is also widely used as an L2.

- Also spoken in parts of Mozambique (especially the provinces of Tete and Niassa), Zambia (where it is referred to as Nyanja, especially in Eastern Province) and Zimbabwe.

- **Citumbuka (N21)**

- lingua franca of the northern region of Malawi.

- It is also spoken in Zambia and Zimbabwe.

- There are an estimated 1,180,000 speakers of Citumbuka (Ethnologue).

- During the colonial period, Citumbuka was used as medium of instruction in the early years of primary school in the northern region but this policy was dropped after independence.

- In 1996, Citumbuka was reintroduced into state media and there are now news broadcasts, as well as private radio stations that operate in Citumbuka..

SOCIOLINGUISTIC PROFILES

- **Cisena (N44)**

- Approximately 468,000 speakers of Cisena in Malawi (Ethnologue2020).

- Spoken in the Chikhwawa and Nsanje Districts in Malawi.

- It is not taught in schools

- In 1996 there was a directive that Cisena and other local languages should be used on public radio, and there are currently news broadcasts in Cisena by the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation. There are also some radio stations that are broadcast in Cisena in Malawi,

- **Cindali (M301)**

- Minority language spoken by an estimated 70,000 people in Malawi. It is used in the northern region of the country, specifically in Chitipa District in the Misuku Hills, parts of Traditional Authority Kameme and parts of the Karonga District.

- Also spoken in the northern part of the Karonga District and in parts of southern Tanzania, namely in the Ileje District and some in Rungwe and Mbozi Districts.

# SOCIOLINGUISTIC PROFILES

- **Cinyiha/Cinyika (M23)**

- Chinyiha/Chinyika is also a minority language in Malawi and is spoken by approximately 10,000 people.

- Spoken in Chitipa district in Traditional authorities Kameme, Mwaulambya and Mweneweya. Cinyiha is also spoken in Tanzania.

- Cinyiha/Cinyika, unlike Cicewa, Citumbuka and Cisena, is not available on the state broadcasting station in Malawi. There is however a radio station in Zambia that broadcasts in Cinyiha/Cinyika to which the population in Malawi listens.

- The names Cinyiha and Cinyika are used to refer to the same language.

- **Ciyao (P21)**

Spoken in Malawi, Mozambique and Tanzania. The language has 1,760,000 speakers in Malawi (Eberhard et al 2020) where it is spoken in the Eastern part of the country in Zomba, Balaka, Chiradzulu, Machinga, Mangochi and Salima Districts.

In 1996, it was introduced onto state radio and there are some teaching materials and dictionaries on the language available.

LANGUAGE MAP OF MALAWI
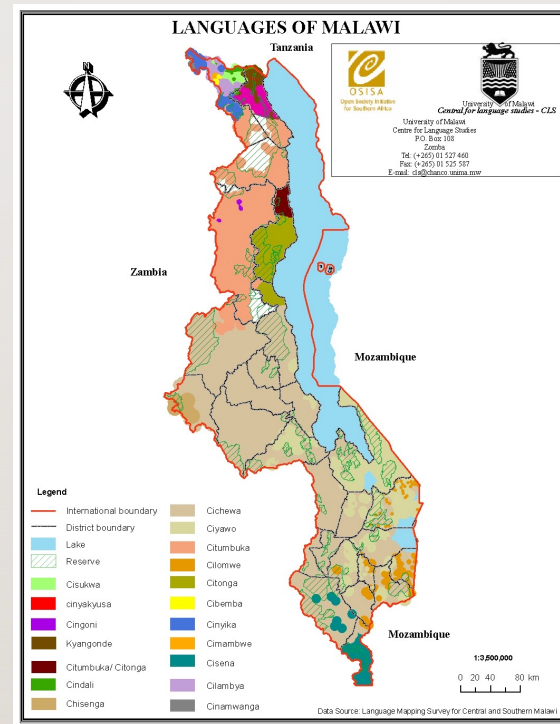
WHETHER THE LANGUAGE HAS AN AUGMENT AND WHAT IS THE SHAPE OF THE AUGMENT?

- The presence of the augment (also known as the pre-prefix, or initial vowel) is widespread across the Bantu languages (for example Lubukusu, Otjiherero, isiZulu).

- Although the augment has been reconstructed for Proto-Bantu, not all present-day Bantu languages have an augment. For example, Kiswahili and Kimatuumbi do not exhibit the augment.

- In Malawi, there are languages with augments and those that do not. Languages with augments include Cindali, Cinyiha, Cisukwa, Cilambya

WHETHER THE LANGUAGE HAS AN AUGMENT AND WHAT IS THE SHAPE OF THE AUGMENT?

- Consider Cindali and Cinyiha examples

(1) **Cindali**

i-mi-tu
AUG-4-head
'heads'

a-ma-fumbi
AUG-6-egg
'eggs'

u-lu-limi
AUG-11-tongue
'tongue'

Cinyiha

i-shi-papa
AUG-7-skin
'skin'

a-ma-fupa
AUG-6-bone
'bones'

u-lu-zota
AUG-11-star
'star'

WHETHER THE LANGUAGE HAS AN AUGMENT AND WHAT IS THE SHAPE OF THE AUGMENT?

- In these two languages, the augment is a V shape (in some languages it can also have a CV shape) and the effects of vowel harmony can be observed in the choice of the augment vowel.

- The augment appears as *u-, a-,* or *i-* when the prefix vowel is also */u/, /a/* or */i/*. For instance, in the Cindali word *ululimi,* the prefix *-lu-* has the vowel /u/ so the augment is also /u/, as in (1) above.

WHETHER THE LANGUAGE HAS AN AUGMENT AND WHAT IS THE SHAPE OF THE AUGMENT?

- Cicewa, Citumbuka, Cisena and Ciyao do not have an augment. Citonga and Cilomwe too. Examples of nouns from these languages can be seen below:

Cicewa	Citumbuka	Cisena	Ciyao
mu-tu	*mu-bwezi*	*m-lomo*	*mi-twe*
3-head	1-friend	3-mouth	4-head
'head'	'friend'	'mouth'	'heads'
ci-soti	*li-zgo*	*mw-ezi*	*li-laka*
7-hat	5-word	3-moon	5-tongue
'hat'	'word'	'tongue'	'tongue'

- The nouns in (2) all appear without an augment. For instance, *cisoti* 'hat' in Cicewa only has the prefix *ci-* and the noun stem *soti* without the augment. Similarly, *lilaka* 'tongue' in Ciyao only occurs with prefix *li-* and the augment is not attested.

DOES THE AUGMENT FULFIL A SPECIFIC GRAMMATICAL FUNCTION?

- There has been extensive discussion in the literature on whether the augment performs a grammatical function (cf. De Blois 1970, Maho 1999, Batibo 1985, Katamba and Hyman 1993, Bloom-Ström and Miestamo this volume). Maho (1999) notes that in some Bantu languages, the augment does not have any apparent meaning or else it has lost a previously well-defined meaning. He quotes Sommer and Vossen (1995) who argue that the grammatical function of the augment in the Ngamiland dialect of Siyeyi is no longer clear.

DOES THE AUGMENT FULFIL A SPECIFIC GRAMMATICAL FUNCTION?

- De Blois (1970) notes that the function of the augment in Bantu languages can be divided into three categories based on the functions that they perform. The categories are as follows: i) languages in which the use of the augment is dependent on formal grammatical conditions (the augment is normally used except in specific grammatical conditions); ii) languages in which the augment has a definable semantic function and iii) languages in which the augment has special functions (for example stylistic or to show redundancy – there are indications in some languages such as Tonga that the augment is only used after pauses or hesitations and now-coding speech (newly created utterances)).

DOES THE AUGMENT FULFIL A SPECIFIC GRAMMATICAL FUNCTION?

- In terms Cindali and Cinyiha, there is need for further analysis of discourse and/or texts to ascertain the intricacies of the functions of the augment. However, for Cindali, although Botne (2008) does not analyse the grammatical functions of the augment, he discusses the areas where the feature does not appear in the language. These include the following:

DOES THE AUGMENT FULFIL A SPECIFIC GRAMMATICAL FUNCTION?

i. When a locative prefix is attached to the noun.

ii. When the noun follows the connective linker -*aa*.

iii. When the noun follows any form of the verb 'be', i.e. -*ba* or -*li*.

iv. When the noun follows the conjunction *ngáti* 'like'.

v. When the noun follows the complementizer *ukúti* 'that'.

vi. When the noun follows the defective verb -*ti* 'say'.

WHAT IS THE SHAPE OF THE CLASS 5 NOMINAL PREFIX?

- There is variation among the Bantu languages concerning the presence of noun class 5 and the way in which class 5 is marked. Guérois et al. (2017) provide the following possible values in the parameter concerning the class 5 prefix;

i)　　　　no class 5 prefix

ii)　　　　class 5 is always zero marked,

iii)　　　　the shape of the class 5 prefix is a V which possibly alternates with zero-marking

iv)　　　　the class 5 prefix is CV shape which possibly alternates with zero-marking.

PROTO BANTU RECONSTRUCTION OF CLASS PREFIX

Scholar	Proto-Bantu reconstruction
Bleek (1869)	*di- or *li-
Meinhof (1899)	*di-, i-
Guthrie (1967):	*i-
Meusseen (1967):	*li-
Maho (1999);	*li-

WHAT IS THE SHAPE OF THE CLASS 5 NOMINAL PREFIX?

- Ngunga and Mathangwane (2015) analyse Cicewa (Nyanja as language that deletes the prefix without leaving any trace of it in the noun structure evidence is seen in the agreement marker. Mchombo (2004) and Bentley and Kulemeka (2001) also provide analyses along those lines. This can be seen in the words *khutu* 'ear', *khosi* 'neck', *duwa* 'flower' which are all class 5 nouns but do not bear an overt nominal class prefix.

WHAT IS THE SHAPE OF THE CLASS 5 NOMINAL PREFIX?

- Remnants of the class 5 prefix *li*- in Cicewa which have undergone processes of phonological change and have developed into *dzi*. This can be seen in the words below:
- *dzi-anja*
- 5-hand
- 'hand'

  - *dzi-ino*
  - 5-tooth
  - 'tooth'
- c. *dzi-iko*
- 5-country
- 'country' (Chichewa, author field notes)

WHAT IS THE SHAPE OF THE CLASS 5 NOMINAL PREFIX?

- In Cicewa, class 5 forms its plural in class 6 which has the prefix *ma-*. The proposal that the prefix *dzi-* in the examples in (7) is the noun class prefix is due to the observation that the nouns in class 5 that have the prefix *dzi-* all have the class prefix *ma-* when they appear in class 6, like all other nouns that belong to this class (this is addition to evidence from agreement marking). In other words, *dzi-* is replaced by *ma-* as can be seen in the grammatical forms in (8) below. To argue that *dzi* is not a noun class prefix would mean that it should be possible for *dzi-* to co-occur with *ma-*. However, such forms are ungrammatical as can also be seen in (8) below.

WHAT IS THE SHAPE OF THE CLASS 5 NOMINAL PREFIX?

- Citumbuka has three variants of the class 5 prefix: *li-*, *ji-* and a zero prefix. According to Vail (1971), *li-* occurs infrequently and follows no conditioned pattern. The prefix also occurs as a zero morpheme.

- a.   *li-zgo*
  - 5-word
  - 'word'
  b.   *li-loto*
  - 5-dream
  - 'dream' (Citumbuka, Vail (1971))
- c.   Ø-khuto
- 5-ear
- 'ear'
- d.   Ø-singo
- 5-neck
- 'neck'

WHAT IS THE SHAPE OF THE CLASS 5 NOMINAL PREFIX?

- The variant *ji-* (/*dʒi*/) occurs infrequently and appears before a vowel-initial stem. Consider the example below.

- (10)   a. *ji-ino*
  - 5-tooth
    - 'tooth'
    - (Citumbuka, Vail (1971))
  -

WHAT IS THE SHAPE OF THE CLASS 5 NOMINAL PREFIX?

- For Cisena, Ngunga and Manthangwane (2015) observe that Cisena is in the group of languages that have lost both the augment and the prefix and consequently, the initial consonant of the noun has undergone glottal constriction (aspiration).

- Torrend (1900) observes that *di-* is used as the noun class prefix

- However, current Malawian Cisena indicates that the prefix for this class is either zero or *ji-* although some speakers have *dzi-* as the prefix. It is possible that a phonological process has occurred which changed /d/ to /dʒ/ in this language. For cases with the variant /dz/, the change from /d/ to /dz/ may be the result of contact with Cicewa which has a similar prefix for this class

WHAT IS THE SHAPE OF THE CLASS 5 NOMINAL PREFIX?

- As was also seen in Cicewa, *ji-* and *dzi-* in Cisena are remnants of *li-*. Some class 5 nouns however take a zero prefix (11a).

- (11)   a. *Ø-khutu*

        5-ear

        'ear'

- b.   *dʒ-ino*

    5-tooth

    'tooth'

- c. *dʒ-anja*

- 5-hand

- 'hand'

WHAT IS THE SHAPE OF THE CLASS 5 NOMINAL PREFIX?

- In Cindali and Cinyiha, the prefix has the CV structure *li-* preceded by the augment, but this can also alternate with a zero prefix. For instance, the word *i-lí-kutu* 'ear' in both languages can appear as *i-kutu*, with only the augment present. Additional examples include the words *i-lí-βele* 'breast' and *í-li-fupa* 'bone' which can appear as *i-βele* and *í-fupa* respectively.

WHAT IS THE SHAPE OF THE CLASS 5 NOMINAL PREFIX?

- Ngunga (1997) notes three variants of the class 5 prefix for Mozambican Ciyao. There is *i*- which occurs optionally after locatives when noun stems are consonant-initial and at least bimoraic. There is also the variant *dii*- which requires that the noun stem be bimoraic while monomoraic *di*- occurs elsewhere. In Malawian Ciyao (specifically the variety spoken in Zomba District, the class 5 prefix is always *li*- and does not alternate with a zero prefix. The prefix *li*- is used in words such as *litanda* 'egg', *liwupa* 'bone', *likosi* 'neck' and *liwele* 'breast'.

WHAT IS THE SHAPE OF THE CLASS 5 NOMINAL PREFIX?

Language	Class 5 prefix
Cicewa	zero, dzi- (remnant of Proto-Bantu *li- according to Meeussen 1967 and Maho 1999)
Citumbuka	li-, zero, ji-
Cisena	zero, ji-/dzi-
Cindali	li- alternating with zero
Cinyiha/Cinyika	li- alternating with zero
Ciyao (Zomba dialect)	li- does not alternate with zero

HOW MANY NOUN CLASSES ARE THERE, INCLUDING LOCATIVE NOUN CLASSES?

- Reconstructions propose that there were 23 noun classes in the Proto-Bantu system (Meinhof 1932, Meeussen 1967, Welmers 1973, Maho 1999). However, the number of noun classes found in present-day varieties of Bantu languages varies (Miti 2006:161).

- According to Maho (1999), Luganda seems to have the highest number of noun classes with 21 classes. Under the approach adopted by Maho (1999), a system with seven noun classes or more is referred to as a 'canonical' Bantu noun class system, while a system with three or fewer classes is considered to represent a 'reduced' system.

HOW MANY NOUN CLASSES ARE THERE INCLUDING LOCATIVE NOUN CLASSES?

- **Language**   **No. of noun classes**
- Cicewa   17
- Citumbuka   18
- Cindali   19
- Cinyiha   18
- Cisena   17
- Ciyao   18

- All languages in Malawi have a canonical noun class system

HOW MANY NOUN CLASSES ARE THERE INCLUDING LOCATIVE NOUN CLASSES?

- Cisena nor Cicewa have class 11 but that this class is attested in all the other languages.

- Cindali has an additional class 21 which others do not have

DOES THE INFINITIVE TAKE A NOUN CLASS PREFIX?

- All six of the languages of the study have the infinitive expressed in class 15 where it is marked by the prefix *ku-*. Including Citonga and Cilomwe. In Cindali and Cinyiha this infinitival marker is also preceded by the augment.

DOES THE INFINITIVE TAKE A NOUN CLASS PREFIX?

- **Cicewa**
  - *kuvina*   'to dance'
  - *kulemba*   'to write'
  -
- **(Citumbuka**
  - *kupa*   'to give'
  - *kutimba*   'to strike'
  -
- **Cindali**
  - *ukulya*   'to eat'
  - *ukulila*   'to cry'
  -
- (14) **Cinyiha**
  - *ukumanya*   'to know'
  - *ukusaβa*   'to swim'
  -
- (15)

DOES THE INFINITIVE TAKE A NOUN CLASS PREFIX?

- **Cisena**
  - *kumwa*   'to drink'
  - *kuluma*   'to bite'
  -

- **Ciyao**
- *kutama*   'to sit'
- *kumwa*   'to drink'

IS DIMINUTIVE MEANING EXPRESSED THROUGH THE USE OF NOUN CLASSES?

- Chichewa uses class 12 which is marked by the prefix *ka-* and class 13 which is marked by the prefix *ti-* to indicate diminution.

- Examples include the words *kamtengo* 'small tree', *kamutu* 'small head' and their plurals *timitengo* 'small trees' and *timitu* 'small heads'.

- It should be noted that the class 12 and 13 prefixes occur with the original prefixes of the noun. For example, the noun *ka-mu-tu* occurs with the class 12 prefix *ka-* and the prefix *mu-* for noun class 3. This property where two affixes are attached to a stem is known as multiple prefixation (Kavari and Marten 2009).

IS DIMINUTIVE MEANING EXPRESSED THROUGH THE USE OF NOUN CLASSES?

- This can also be observed in Cisena and Ciyao but occurs only optionally in Citumbuka, Cindali and Cinyiha, representing an instance of micro-variation among the languages. This micro-variation is not captured by reference to the parameters of Guérois et al. (2017) which ask only whether diminutive meaning is expressed through the use of noun classes, not whether the noun class prefix occurs in addition to the 'original' noun class prefix.

IS DIMINUTIVE MEANING EXPRESSED THROUGH THE USE OF NOUN CLASSES?

Cisena also uses classes 12 and 13 to show diminution. In Cisena, as in Cicewa, the class 12 and 13 prefixes co-occur with the original prefix of the noun, as can be seen in the examples below where it appears with the class 3 prefix.
*

* **Cisena**
  * a. *ka-mu-ti*
    * 12-3-tree
    * 'small tree'
  * b. *ka-mw-ezi*
    * 12-3-moon
    * 'small moon'

* While Torrend (1900) describes *pi-* as the prefix for class 13 for Cisena, I observe that the prefix for this class in the language is *ti-*.

IS DIMINUTIVE MEANING EXPRESSED THROUGH THE USE OF NOUN CLASSES?

- Ciyao also uses classes 12 and 13 to express diminution and examples include *kangwena* 'small crocodile', *kalisiimba* 'small lion', *kambwa* 'small dog' for class 12 and *tingwena* 'small crocodiles', *timasimba* 'small lions' and *timbwa* 'small dogs' for class 13.

- Ciyao exhibits the same pattern as Cicewa and Cisena where the class 12 and 13 prefixes can co-occur with the original prefix. In the word *timbwa* 'small dogs' for instance, *ti-* is the class 13 prefix and the nasal *m-* is a class 9 prefix but they appear together.

IS DIMINUTIVE MEANING EXPRESSED THROUGH THE USE OF NOUN CLASSES?

- Cindali also uses classes 12 and 13 to show diminution and the classes also have the prefixes *ka-* and *tu-* respectively. Consider the examples below.

Nouns in class 12	Nouns in class 13	Original class of noun
a. *a-ká-na*	*u-tw-ana*	*u-mu-ana*
AUG-12-child	AUG-13-child	AUG-1-child
'small child'	'small children'	'child' (class 1)
b. *u-ka-lindu*	*u-tu-lindu*	*u-mu-lindu*
AUG-12-girl	AUG-13-girl	AUG-1-girl
'small girl'	'small girls'	'girl' (class 1)
c. *a-ká-kuku*	*u-tu-kuku*	*i-n-guku*
AUG-12-chicken	AUG-13-chicken	AUG-9-chicken
'small chicken'	'small chickens'	'chicken (class 9)

IS DIMINUTIVE MEANING EXPRESSED THROUGH THE USE OF NOUN CLASSES?

- Unlike in Cicewa, Cisena and Ciyao, where it was noted that class 12 and 13 prefixes co-occur with the original prefixes, this does not happen in Cindali. As seen in (20) above, the class 12 or 13 prefixes, *ka-* and *tu-* respectively appear instead of any other nominal prefixes. This can be seen in *a-ka-na* 'small child', for example where the original prefix *mu-* from the word *umw-ana* 'child' is omitted.

IS DIMINUTIVE MEANING EXPRESSED THROUGH THE USE OF NOUN CLASSES?

- Cinyiha also uses classes 12 and 13 marked by *ha-* and *tu-* 13 respectively.

- **Nouns in class 12**   **Nouns in class 13**   **Original noun class**

- *a-ha-yumba*   *u-tu-yumba*   *i-ny-umba*

- AUG-12-house   AUG-13-house   AUG-9-house
- 'small house'   'small houses'   'house'   (class 9)
-
- *a-ha-ana*   *u-tw-ana*   *u-mu-ana*
- AUG-12-child   AUG-13-child   AUG-1-child
- 'small child'   'small children'   'child'   (class 1)

IS DIMINUTIVE MEANING EXPRESSED THROUGH THE USE OF NOUN CLASSES?

- As in Cindali, in Cinyiha the class 12 and 13 prefixes do not appear along with the original prefix. This can be observed in *ahana* 'small child', which appears with the class 12 prefix *ha* and without the 'original' class prefix *mu-*.

- It should be noted though that in Cindali and Cinyiha, there is also the option of retaining the inherent prefix. As such, in Cindali, *akamwáana* 'small child' and *akanguku* 'small chicken' with the class 1 prefix *mu-* and the class 9 prefix *N-* are possible. In this forms, it is the secondary prefix that controls agreement, hence the phrase 'my child' is *akámwana kaangu* with the class 12 agreement *-ka-* (the retained prefix) and not *akámwana waangu* with *-u-* of the inherent prefix. However, in terms of distribution, this option appears to be rarely used.

IS DIMINUTIVE MEANING EXPRESSED THROUGH THE USE OF NOUN CLASSES?

- Citumbuka also uses the class 12 *ka-* and class 13 *tu-* to show diminution. This can be seen in the words *kamunthu* 'small person' and *kamwana* 'small child' (class 12) and their class 13 plurals *tubanthu* 'small people' and *tubana* 'small children'. I

- In Citumbuka, the class 12 and 13 prefixes occur with the original prefix of the noun. For instance, in the word *kamunthu* 'small person', the class 12 prefix *ka-* appears alongside the class 1 prefix *mu-*.

- However, Citumbuka can also drops the original prefix, as in Cindali and Cinyiha hence words such as *kamwáana* 'small child' with the original prefix (*mu-*) are attested, the same word *káana* without the original prefix is also possible.

IS AUGMENTATIVE MEANING EXPRESSED THROUGH THE USE OF NOUN CLASSES?

- Augmentation can be expressed through the use of noun classes in many Bantu languages (see Maho 1999).

- Bantu reconstruction for the noun classes also show classes whose semantic meanings denote augmentation, specifically classes 5, 6, 7 and 8 (see Meinhof 1932, Meusseen 1967). Cicewa, Citumbuka, Cisena, Ciyao Cindali and Cinyiha all use noun classes to show augmentation. The classes used for this purpose are classes 7 and 8, as seen in the examples below.

IS AUGMENTATIVE MEANING EXPRESSED THROUGH THE USE OF NOUN CLASSES?

- **Class 7**
- **Cicewa**   **Citumbuka**
  - *ci-mu-nthu*   *ci-mu-nthu*
  - 7-1-person   7-1-person
  - 'big person'   'big person'
  -
- **Cindali**   **Cinyiha**
  - *i-ci-kuku*   *i-shi-zota*
  - AUG-7-chicken   AUG-7-star
  - 'big chicken'   'big star'
  -
- **Ciyao**   **Cisena**
  - *ci-n-guku*   *ci-khutu*
  - 7-9-chicken   7-ø-ear
  - 'big chicken'   'big ear'

IS AUGMENTATIVE MEANING EXPRESSED THROUGH THE USE OF NOUN CLASSES?

- **Class 8**
- **Cicewa**
  - *zi-a-nthu*
  - 8-1-person
  - 'big person'

- **Cindali**
  - *i-fi-kuku*
  - AUG-8-chicken
  - 'big chicken'

- **Ciyao**
  - *n-guku*
  - 8-9-chicken
  - 'big chickens'

Citumbuka
vi-ßa-nthu
8-1-person
'big person'

Cinyiha
i-vi-zota
AUG-8-star
'big star'

Cisena
zi-ma-khutu
8-6-ear
'big ears'

IS AUGMENTATIVE MEANING EXPRESSED THROUGH THE USE OF NOUN CLASSES?

- As with the diminutives, the augmentative classes in Cicewa, Ciyao and Cisena maintain the original class prefix. For instance, example (30) for Cisena, has the word *zimakutu*, in which the class 8 prefix *zi-* co-occurs with the original prefix *ma-*. In Cindali and Cinyiha, the original class prefix is omitted. For instance, in Cinyiha the word for star *is uluzota* and it has the class 11 prefix *lu-*. However, in (26) the word has the augmentative prefix *shi-*. This prefix does not co-occur with the class 11 prefix, resulting in *ishizota* and not *ishiluzota*.

IS AUGMENTATIVE MEANING EXPRESSED THROUGH THE USE OF NOUN CLASSES?

- In Citumbuka, although the data in (28) shows multiple prefixation with the prefixes *vi-* and *mu-*, forms where the original prefix is dropped are also possible. For example, *chimwáana* 'big child' can also appear as *cáana*.

CAN A NOUN TAKE A LOCATIVE CLASS PREFIX?

- The expression of locatives varies across Bantu languages (cf. Grégoire 1975, Maho 1999). Maho (1999) notes that there are some languages where the locative classes 16, 17 and 18 appear with their noun prefixes.

- Some of these languages exhibit the concords associated with the classes together with the noun classes, for example iciBemba and Tshivenda (Maho 1999 citing Van Sambeek (1955) and Poulos (1990)).

CAN A NOUN TAKE A LOCATIVE CLASS PREFIX?

- In contrast, languages such as Kiswahili have lost the locative prefixes and instead use the suffix *-ni* to form locatives but the concords of classes 16, 17 and 18 are maintained.

- Maho (1999) further notes that in the group of languages that use suffixation, there are some languages such as Kamba which have lost the locative prefixes and in which there are no dedicated locative prefixes.

- Then there are some languages such as Kesukuma and Setswana where the locative concords have merged into a single set. For instance, in Setswana, Cole ((1955/1975) as cited in Maho (1999)) observes that the locative concord *go-* for class 17 is used for all classes (see also Marten (2010) and Grégoire (1975)).

CAN A NOUN TAKE A LOCATIVE CLASS PREFIX?

- **Cicewa**
- a. *pa-ny-umba*   b. *mu-ny-umba* c.   *ku-ny-umba*
- 16-9-house   18-9-house   17-9-house

  'at the house'   'in the house'   'at/to the house'
  -
- **Citumbuka**
-   *pa-ny-umba*   *mu-ny-umba*   *ku   ny-umba*

-   16-9-house   18-9-house   17-9-house
-   'at the house'   'in the house'   'at/to the house'
  -
- **Cindali**
- *pa-lw-ingilo*   *mu-lu-soko*   *ku-kaya*
  16-11-courtyard   18-11-river   17-village
  'on the courtyard'   'In the river'   'at the village'

- **Cinyiha**
- a*pa-ma-dala*   *mu-lw-anda*   *ku-kaya*
  16-6-road   18-11-stomach   17-village
  'At the roads'   'In the stomach'   'At/to the village'
  -
- **Cisena**
- *pa-mu-ji*   *mu-mu-ji*   *ku-mu-ji*

  16-3-village   18-3-village   17-3-village
  'at the village'   'in the village'   'at/to village'

  Ciyao
  pa- mu-ji   *mu-mu-ji*   *ku-mu-ji*
  16-3-village   18-3-village   17-3-village
  'at the village'   'in the village'   'at/to the village'

CONCLUSION

1.	**What is the shape of the augment?**	**Some variation observed. Augments (of the same shape) in Cindali and Cinyiha. No augment in Cicewa, Citumbuka, Cisena or Ciyao.**
1.	**Does the augment fulfil a specific grammatical function?**	The study did not identify a specific function(s) for the augment (when present).
1.	**What is the shape of the class 5 nominal prefix?**	Variation in form exhibited across the six languages.
1.	**How many noun classes are there?**	All six languages have canonical noun class systems.
1.	**Does the infinitive take a noun class prefix?**	The infinitives in all six languages take noun class prefixes.
1.	**Is the diminutive meaning expressed through the use of noun classes?**	Yes, all languages express diminution through noun classes
1.	**Is the augmentative meaning expressed through the use of noun classes?**	Yes, all languages express augmentation through noun classes
1.	**Can a noun take a locative class?**	Yes, the nouns in all languages can take a locative class.

CONCLUSION

- The notes for the lecture were adapted from a paper to appear by Mtenje-Mkochi, A. A.

- Details are as follows:

- Micro-variation in the Noun class systems of Malawian languages," in L. Marten, H. Gibson, E. Ström (Eds). Morpho-syntactic variation in Bantu languages. Oxford University Press.

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