# An Analysis of a Noun Phrase in Ichindali

Neema Jangstony Kibona

Department of Languages and Communication Skills, Mbeya University of Science and Technology, P.O. Box 131, Mbeya, Tanzania

*Abstract*—Ichindali is one of the Ethnic Community Languages spoken by an increasing population of the Ndali people in Mbeya region. The Ndali people live in southern Tanzania, Mbeya Region. Ileje District has 124,451 speakers in 2012. Ileje is bordered to the North by Mbeya rural and Rungwe district, to the East by Kyela district. Ndali people live in an area which crosses the Tanzania Malawi border. This paper investigates the way noun phrases are formed in Ichindali and the order of their formation (constituents) in this particular language. Therefore the main objectives of this paper were: i. To find out the Criteria for categorizing noun phrase elements in Ichindali. ii. To examine the various kinds of dependents in Ichindali noun phrase. In arriving at these objectives, the writer posed the following questions as a guide: i. What are the criteria relevant in categorizing the dependents of the noun in Ichindali? ii. What kinds of dependents form a noun phrase in Ichindali? A conclusion has been drawn from this work is that, the structure of a noun phrase in Ichindali is N-Det-Mod. An NP can function as a subject, direct or primary objects which is normally expressed in the accusative case, indirect or secondary object in dative case as well as an object of preposition.

Index Terms-noun phrase, Ichindali, determiners, complements and adjuncts

## I. INTRODUCTION

The phrase is a significant unit of analysis in the grammar of any language. It is not only studied at the syntactic level but also at other levels of analysis-phonology, morphology, semantics, and pragmatics. Different types of phrases have been identified and described in the grammar of English and other languages. However, the noun and verb phrases are the most important and widely described phrases given that the structure of many languages revolves around the noun and the verb word (Ondondo, 2015). A noun phrase is a constituent in a sentence having different functions. Murthy (2006) defines a noun phrase as a group of words which does the work of a noun. Kroeger (2005) defines a noun phrase as a phrasal constituent whose head is a noun. It can also be said that a noun phrase is group of related words without a subject and predicate which function as a noun. In this paper we will discuss various kinds of dependents (non-head constituents) which may appear in NPs in Ichindali. The two most important classes of these are complements and adjuncts which can also be called modifiers. We will also look at possessors, which function as a kind of determiner in English, but as complements or adjuncts in Ichindali, functions of a noun phrase and finally we will discuss possession and recursion in an NP.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

## A structure of noun phrase

A Noun phrase is a group of words which function as a noun and its head word is a noun or pronoun. Noun phrases play an important role in the construction of a sentence. Without knowledge of noun phrases in English, learners could not produce comprehensible sentences. The criteria for establishing the types of elements that can become dependents of the noun in the noun phrase are based on morphological properties, syntactic behaviour, and semantic features. The arrangement of words in a noun phrase differs from one language to another. In most times the language of the same family have a related arrangement. Valin (2004) argues that syntax deals with how sentences are constructed, and users of human language employ a striking variety of possible arrangements of the elements in sentences. One of the most obvious important way in which languages differ is the order of the main elements in a sentence which is made of a subject (noun phrase) and a predicate (verb phrase). Lusekelo (2009) explains that, the two basic techniques used to identify elements in an NP in Nyakyusa and Bantu languages in general include the shape of the noun class prefix of the head noun and the prefix for the concordial agreement in each noun phrase. First, in Bantu languages, noun modifiers reveal somehow the same shape of the affixes of the head noun and show the concordial agreements with head noun. Noun phrase being one of a major part of a sentence its arrangement differs from one language to another. Rijkhoff (2002) supports that, both within and across languages noun phrases vary considerably with respect to their internal organization and complexity.

In English an NP is made of determiners + pre-modifier + head word + post modifier. This is also supported by Lees (1961) that it is customary to describe the English nominal as consisting of sequence of constituents: predeterminers, determiners, adjectives, the noun head, and finally certain postnominal modifiers such as relative clauses. The terms 'dependent', 'element', 'modifier', 'determiner' and 'constituent' are used by the different authors cited in this work. Generally, the words mean the word categories, like adjective, possessive, demonstrative, adverb etc. that co-occur with

the head noun in an NP. Numerals, adjectives, demonstratives, genitives, articles and relative clauses are noun modifiers and reveal hierarchical orderings Giván (2001) Specifically, the term 'determiner' is used to refer to word categories that occur close to the head noun and the term 'modifier' refers to the rest of the word categories. An NP plays an important role in the construction of a sentence. Lees (1961) explains that without knowledge of noun phrases in English, learners could not produce comprehensible sentences. The structure of noun phrases can be both basic and complex. Basic noun phrases can be pronouns, numerals or head nouns with different determiners while complex ones include pre-modification, head noun and post-modification. For example:

# a) A man has come

Basic p

b) The widow stayed at home during all the last few days of her problem

complex p

There are three proposition concerning NP in Bantu languages Ichindali being the one. First, some Bantuists propose that Bantu languages do not possess overt articles, like those available in other languages like English (Carstens, 1993). Second, other Bantuists claim that an augment functions as a determiner that indicates definiteness in Bantu languages like Ganda (cf. Hyman & Katamba 1993). Another group of Bantuists hold that the possessive and demonstrative are determiners in Bantu languages and occur close to the head noun (cf. Polom é 1967; Rugemalira 2007) Lusekelo (2009) cited in the mention author. It is also said that several options of the order of elements within a noun phrase are available across Bantu. Studies of the noun in Bantu languages have traditionally concentrated on the morphology of the noun with its elaborate class system and the underlying semantic strands. When treatment of the noun and its dependents is undertaken or mentioned it is usually with special focus on the concord system. May be this is the reason some Bantuists hold that the rules governing the order of elements within a noun phrase in Bantu languages are not water tight.

#### **III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

In this study, qualitative research approach was used. Data were collected through in-depth interviews and focus group discussion. Semi structured interview questions were prepared and administered to both female and male elders in Ichindali ethnic group. The data collected gave out the structure of a Noun Phrase in Ichindali ethnic group. Quota sampling which is under non-probability sampling was used to get a total of 20 respondents who were interviewed. Among them there were two groups of respondents. The first included 10 females and the second group included 10 males who are between fifty and seventy years old. These are more experienced with their culture and contented with the history of the tribe. Purposive sampling technique was used to get two focus groups which were very much potential in giving different information on a Noun phrase

## IV. RESULTS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

In order to meet the objectives of the study, the researcher collected data which will reveal out what really composes the determiner in Ichindali language, the components of an NP in Ichindali and the way these components are arranged to form a NP.

Different NP which reveal the dominant arrangement of NP were found as follows:

1. a) N + Dem	umwana jhula - that child
	abhana bhala - those children
b) N + Poss	umulume gwangu - my husband
	abhalume bhangu - our husband
c) $N + Num$ .	amulisha jhumo - one man
,	abhalisha bhabhili - two men
d) N+Ouant	abhandu bhoshi - all people
e) N + Adj	umukolo umutali - a tall woman
, J -	abhakolo abhatali - tall women
f) $N + Rel$	umuhijhi ujhu afwile - a thief that has died
,	ubhahijhi abha bhafwile - thieves who have died
g) Distr + N	kukuti ugwa sukulu - every student
6/	kukuti abha sululu – the distributor can not agree with plural
h) N + Ass/Gen	ishamba lya bhandu - people's farm
,	amashamba gha bhandu - people's farms

In identifying basic word order in Ichindali, one has to look the above NP and come out with the possible NP structure. From the NP above complex structure can be formed. For example:

2 a) Umwana gwangu umwisa ngani

- N Poss Adj Int
- The very beautiful child of mine

b) Umwana gwangu jhula umwisa ujhu eghite ifilombe

For example 2.

N Poss Dem Adj Rel clause

The very beautiful child of mine who took maize

c) Abhandu bhangu bhoshi bho bhali na maluka

N Poss quant Rel clause

My all people who have shops

d) Umulisha jhula ujhu akulisha ingambo pabhushiku

N Dem Rel clause

A boy who sells cigarettes in the night

In the above NP, the head noun occurs at the far most left position hence it precedes its dependents except in few circumstances where a noun is preceded by a distributer. Both the possessive and demonstrative immediately follow the head noun. If there are all in an NP the demonstrative is preceded by a possessive then an Adjective. The associative/connective and relative clauses are in the final position. In Ichindali determiners like demonstratives and possessive are overt except articles. However, we observe that each Bantu language reveals a somehow distinct. For example in Kiswahili, a demonstrative can precede a noun in an NP like:

- 3 a) yule mtoto mzuri
  - b) \*Jhula umwana umwisa
  - c) umwana jhula umwisa
    - That beautiful child

While in Ichindali you can not compose a phrase like in 1.3 b). This helps to come up with a structure of NP in Ichindali with the constituents which occur as N-Det-Mod.

		NP			
		$\land$			
		I		<b>`</b>	
N		Det		Mod	
In Ichindali there are no art	ticles but th	-	efixes	which ma	ark the numbers.
Singular		plural			
U- mulindu u-mutali				i	
pre N Adj	- pre	Ν	Adj		
A tall girl	- the	e tall girls			
U- mukolo u-mwolo	- a-bh	akolo a-bł	nolo		
pre N Adj		N A	dj		
A lazy woman	- Tł	ne lazy wo	men		
U- mulisha umwisa jhuji	no kwisa	- a-bha	lisha a-	bhisa a-b	ho bhakwisa
pre N Adj Rel d	clause	pre	Ν	Adj	Mod
The handsome man who is	coming	- the h	nandsor	ne boys v	who are coming
U-mukolo u-mwolo		- a- bł	nakolo	a-bholo	
pre N Adj		- pre	Ν	Adj	
A lazy woman		- The	e lazy w	/omen	
U-mulumyana umwisa u	ighwa pa	chijhijhi	panu		
pre N Adj	Р	N	Mod/A	Adv	
A handsome boy in this village					
A-bhalumyana abhisa abha pachijhijhi panu					
Pre N Adj P		-			

The handsome boys in this village

The constituent above shows that prefix **'umu'** marks singular and **'abha'** marks plural when affixed to the noun stem (head noun). Also there is no pre-modifier which usually precedes the head noun but there are post-modifiers. Its constituents occur as N-MOD. In the phrase there is concord agreement among the elements which form the constituents.

To have a noun phrase there are word categories that appear around a head noun: which are Determiners (possessives and demonstratives), Modifiers (adjectives, quantifiers, numerals, intensifiers and relative clause). Also, there are relative clauses, distributive as well as associative /genitives

## Determiners

A determiner is a modifying word that determines the kind of reference a noun or noun group has, for example *a*, *the*, an and *every*. Determiners occur close to the head in Ichindali language. Two sets of word categories are under determiner position: (a) possessives and (b) demonstratives. There are loose restrictions on the co-occurrence of the possessive and demonstrative but the two word categories are restricted in the co-occurrences with modifiers like adjectives and numerals as it is explained in 1.1.3. In Ichindali the possessives are likely to occur immediately after the head nouns. This is different from what is happening in English where the possessives must occur before a noun (head). Demonstratives are characterized with a feature that they are used to indicate proximity and non-proximity of location

of the referent in relation to the speaker and hearer's position. Another function of the demonstrative is to indicate the referentiality in the language. Generally, demonstratives change morphologically depending on the noun class of the head noun. For example:

a) abhana bha-bho bha-la Children 3<sup>rd</sup>ppl-their pl-dem-those
b) umwana gwabho jhula a child 3<sup>rd</sup>psg sg-dem-that
c) umundu gwangu ujhu person 1<sup>st</sup>psg-my sg-dem-this

In the example 1.1 the demonstratives change depending to the noun, when the noun is plural it is **bhala** but when is singular it is **jhula** to make the agreement to the noun.

# Complements and adjuncts of a noun (Modifiers)

Nouns can take complements and adjuncts of various categories. Adjuncts to an NP are often referred to as modifiers which are adjectives and PP modifiers. Adjectives describe the quality of nouns. The proper sense of the usage of the term adjective here should be semantic adjective as it is explained by Dryer (2007) who states that semantic adjectives denote a set of words on the basis of their meaning, regardless of their grammatical properties in a particular language. He states that such words denote properties like size and colour and meanings that corresponding to e.g. big, red, long, good and fast. Radford (1992) argues that terms like complement and adjunct denote grammatical functions or relations, and thus have the same status as terms like subject and object. Some semantic adjectives exhibit nominal properties and they occur with a noun class prefix. The following phrases are examples of adjuncts in an NP:

- 1) umulongoshi ugwa chisa
  - a leader with sympathy
  - b) abhapina abha maghauni amelu
    - the orphans with white dresses

The prepositional phrase **ugwa chisa** and **abha maghauni amelu** are examples '**a**' and '**b**' respectively, function as adjuncts; they are not selected by the head noun, but may be freely added to any number of NPs, subject to semantic and pragmatic plausibility. As shown in the following constituent:

- 2. a) umughanga ugwa chisa
  - a doctor with sympathy
  - b) abhakilisiti abha maghauni amelu
    - Christians with white addresses

In English and in Ichindali a PP may also function as a complement within NP whereby it is lexically specified. It only occurs with certain specific head nouns and not with others. For example,

- 3 a) ugwasukulu ijha mikota
  - a student of medicine

This NP contains the PP '**ijha mikota'** '**of medicine'** which has been determined by the noun. This is because the noun **student** can take a complement of this type, while other head nouns like a girl 'umulindu', mother 'umama', cannot. For the case of grammar one can say '**umama ugwa mikota'** but semantically it will bring a different concept from the origin meaning which meant one who learns medicine and comes to be a mother who like traditional medicine. When a given NP contains both a complement PP and an adjunct PP, the complement must always precede the adjunct. For example:

- 4 a) ugwasukulu ijha mikota ugwa lighauni ilyelu
  - a student of medicine with a white dress

The constituent shows that an adjunct may not separate the complement PP from its head N, as shown above.

## **Other modifiers**

1

2

Other modifiers found in Ichindali NP are categories that occur beyond determiners. Those modifiers are quantifiers, numerals, intensifiers and relative clauses. Three lexical words functioning as quantifier found in Ichindali are **–oshi** 'all' **-nandi** 'few/little' **-ingi** 'many/a lot of Quantifiers are made distinct from numerals in that quantifiers are indefinite and functions to indicate indefiniteness. The noun prefix is copied by the quantifiers; therefore, it is the noun prefix that determines the shape of the quantifier's prefix. For example, some shapes of the Ichindali quantifier **– oosa** 'all' are in

- a) **abhana bhoshi** 'all children'
  - b) ingumbe shoshi 'all ports'
  - c) **ifitengu fyoshi** 'all chairs'
  - d) umupunga ghoshi 'all rice'
  - c) ichisu choshi ' all countries'

Numerals that are cardinals and ordinals carry noun class prefixes of the head noun they co-occur with in a construction. They display freedom of co-occurrence in Ichindali. For example:

a) abhoshigwa bhabhili abha bhakwimba mwa tembeli

Christians two who sing in the church

b) Injuni shibhili sho shili mukakokwe

- birds two which are on a tree
- c) abhoshigwa abhakwanda bhabhili abha bhakwimba mwa tembeli
- Christians the first two who sing in the church
- d) Umwana ugwa bhutatu ujhu aghite akapombo
- A child third who taken basket

In (1.2) both the numeral **bhabili and ishibhili** 'two', ordinal **abhakwanda** 'first' and **ugwabhutatu** 'third' occur immediately after the head noun **abhoshigwa** 'christians', 'Injuni' and 'umwana'. Intensifiers are adverbs that denote degree. An Adverb may premodify an adjective and most commonly, the modifying adverb is an intensifier Quirk & Greenbaum (2005). In English the common intensifiers is 'very', other words are extremely, really, unbelievably, quite, etc. In Ichindali are words like:

3 a) **ngani** 'very'

b) lukulu 'very'

c) leka 'very'

b) panandi 'little / somehow

Note that the intensifier modifies a word category (specifically an adjective) that immediately precedes it. For example, using 1.3.a) above the intensifier ngani 'very' gives intensification feature to the adjective umwisa 'beautiful' and 'poor' in the following phrase:

4.a) umulindu umwisa ngani

N Adj Int A very beautiful girl b) umunyambala umupina ngani N Adj Int

a very poor man

While the intensifier 'lukulu' gives intensification feature to the adjective mung'wamu 'big' in the following phrase: 5. a) umupiki umung'wamu lukulu

N Adj Int A big very

Relative Clauses are also found in Ichindali NP. Quirk & greenbaum (2005) explains that relative clause shows the agreement with the head and indicates its status as an element in the relative clause structure. In Ichindali the agreement is on the basis of two terms personal and non- personal. For example:

6 a) ichisu **ichi** tukwikala

- the country in which we leave
- b) imyende **gyo** bhibhite
- the clothes which were stolen
- a) ung'ina **ujhu** ishile
- her mother who has come
- b) abhano **bho** bhakwelite
- the children who have passed

## Functions of a noun phrase

A noun phrase is a very important part in a sentence as it can show the grammatical relation as a subject, primary or direct object, secondary or indirect object, and objects of prepositions and it carries different semantic roles too. For example:

1 a) [ <u>Umughanga</u> ]	amupile [[	umunu	ing'una]	[ gwan	<u>igu]]</u> [[	imikot	<u>a] [imisa]]</u>
S	V	N Adj			Ν	J	Adj
NP		NP				NP	
Umughanga /	amupile / u	munun	g'una gw	/angu	imikota	imisa	
S		Oi			Od		
Actor					Unde	rgoer	
Agent		Recip	ient		Them	e	
Ergative case		Dative	case		Accus	ative of	case
A doctor has g		0		0			
b) [[ Umulume]	[gwangu]]	amwuli	le [ ighaı	ւոi] [[ա	ng'ina]	[ uson	go]]
NP			NP		NP		
Ν	Adj	V	Ν		N	Adj	
Umulume gy	wangu / am	wulile	/ ighaun	i /	ung'in	a uson	go
S		V	Od			Oi	
Actor			Undergo	ber	Re	ecipier	ıt
Agent			Theme		Da	tive ca	se
Ergative case Accusative case							
My husband has bought his elder mother a dress							

c) [Umuhijhi]	aghonite [	[mu]	[chitengele]]
NP		P	P
Ν		Р	Ν
Umuhijhi / :	aghonite / 1	mu chi	tengele
S	V		
Theme		Loca	tion
A thief sle	pt in the fo	rest	

In Ichindali and other languages like English, subject, direct object and indirect object which are functions of a noun phrase can be expressed in different ways using the same word with regard to their semantic roles. For example if one wants to report the state of affairs in example **1.a** that a doctor has given my young sister good medicine. In Ichindali, umughanga amupile umunung'una gwangu imikota imisa. **Umughanga** is an actor, agent the doer of action, the giver and it is grammatically called a subject. **Imikota imisa** is the undergoer, theme, the given, it is in accusative case, is a thing affected by an action, and it is grammatically referred as a direct object. While **umunung'una gwangu** is a recipient, one who is given to, in dative case and it is grammatically referred to as an indirect object or secondary object.

## **Possession and recursion**

Most languages allow a Noun Phrase to contain another NP which names the possessor of the head noun. This phrase is called a "possessor" because it can always be used to express the concept of possession or ownership. For example, the phrase **inyumba jhangu** which is **my house** can be used to indicate that I am the owner of the house (I bought it), I am the creator of the house (I built it), or I am the subject of the house (it shows my likeness). Similarly, phrases like **John's wife**, **John's shop**, or **John's education** indicate various kinds of association between the possessor (John) and the head noun. In English, a possessor phrase functions as a kind of determiner as it cannot occur with other determiners in the same NP. For examples:

1 a) the new car

b) Atu's new car

c)\*Atu's the new motorcycle

d)\*the Atu's new motorcycle

The examples (c) and (d) indicates that if a possessor exist with a determiner the Noun phrase produced is wrong because there is no agreement between the words.

In Ichindali possessor phrases may co-occur with demonstratives as it is explained above in determiner 1.1. The possessor words are like- gwangu 'my-', gwako / gwinyu 'yours', gwitu 'our', gwabho 'their', gwake 'his / her.

The ordering patterns of the elements are monitored by both the orderings of the elements, the shape of the elements, and the semantics of the resulting NP. Recursive rules in English allow one PP to be embedded within another. It also allows PP to be nested one inside another for as long as the speaker's breath holds out. For example:

2 a) injuni ijhi jhili pa mupiki mu mughunda gwa mukolo jhula

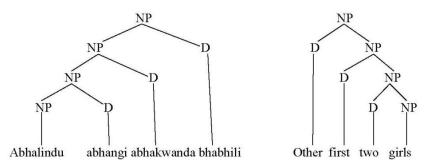
a bird which is on the tree in the farm of that woman

b) umulindu ugwa mahelu mu chijhijhi icha mubhwando mwa mukalembo

a girl of abusive language in the village in the valley of Kalembo

Also recursive rule is seen when NP occurs on both the left hand and the right hand side of the arrow in both Ichindali and English. That one can generate NPs containing multiple determiners (infact, NPs containing indefinitely many determiners). In Ichindali the recursion is marked only after a head noun which is not happening in English. For example:

3 a) Abhalindu abhangi abhakwanda bhabhili = NP → NP D Other first two girls = NP → D NP



These determiners can be added to meet the needs of communication. Radford (1992:170) explains that it is obvious that we can go on recursively re-applying the same rule to produce an NP structure containing not just three determiners but four, five, six to the infinite number. Despite this freedom, there is considerable variation in the ordering of items in the modifier position.

In English pre-modifiers are arranged according to the characteristics which determine their position in an NP while in Ichindali post modifiers are arranged with regard to the characteristics. In Ichindali there are post modifiers and determiners preceded by a noun. The table below shows modifiers arrangement to form an NP in Ichindali.

Noun (head)			Origion	Material				
(neau)	subjectal	size	weight	sha pe	age	colour	-	
umwana child	umwisa beautiful	-	-	-	umukeke young	umwelu white	umundali ndali	-
ighaini dress	-	itali long	ilipepe light	-	ilipya new	ilikesefu red	ilya tanzania tanzanian	ilya pamba
umupiki tree	umupimba short	umugw'am u big	-	um ubh ulu nge rou nd	ugwalijholo ancient	-	umulingoti tree	-
ichipale gourd	ichisa beautiful	iching'wamu big	ichishito heavy			ichititu black		
umulisha man	umwisa handsome			um ubh ulu nge <b>rou</b> nd	usongo elder	umwelu white	umunyachusa nyakusa	

# V. CONCLUSION

Therefore the structure of a noun phrase in Ichindali is N-Det-Mod. An NP can function as a subject, direct or primary objects which is normally expressed in the accusative case, indirect or secondary object in dative case as well as an object of preposition. It is recursive and very important in the language as it carries different grammatical relations and semantic roles. Since its arrangement is not random, It would appear that the relative clause normally comes last of all modifiers on account of its syntactic complexity, which lends support to the principle of end weight.

# APPENDIX

List of Abbreviations				
N	. Noun			
P				
NP	Noun phrase			
Dem	Demonstrative			
Det	Determiner			
Adj	Adjectives			
Poss	Possession			
Num	Number			
Quant	Quantity			
Distr	Distributor			
Int				
Ass/ Gen	Associative genitive			
Mod				
PP	Preposition			
S				
Oi	Indirect object			
	Direct object			
3 <sup>rd</sup> psg	Third person singular			
3 <sup>rd</sup> ppl	Third person plural			
	Second person plural			

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**Neema J. Kibona** was born at mabatini street in Mbeya district Tanzania in 1975. She holds Master of Arts in Linguistics attained at the University of Dodoma (UDOM) in Tanzania in 2013 and Bachelor of Education Languages attained at the University of Teofilo Kisanji (TEKU) in Mbeya Tanzania in 2009.

She is currently an Assistant Lecturer in Linguistics and Communication skills at Mbeya University of Science and Technology (MUST) in Mbeya Tanzania in the Department of Language and Communication skills. Before this work she was a teacher at Iwalanje Secondary School and later a Tutorial Assistant at Teofilo Kisanji University. She has good research background attained from her lecturers from the University of Dodoma and Teofilo Kisanji University.

Being at Mbeya University of Science and Technology she has supervised undergraduate research studies. She has also published a research paper on Naming System and Gender Construction.