NAIROBI EVANGELICAL GRADUATE
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

LOCATIVE CONSTRUCTIONS IN KISWAHILI:
A PRAGMATIC APPROACH

BY
SARAH HELEN CASSON

A Project Submitted to the Graduate School in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts
in Translation Studies

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March, 2003

Student's Declaration

LOCATIVE CONSTRUCTIONS IN KISWAHILI: A PRAGMATIC APPROACH

I declare that this is my original work and has not
been submitted to any other College or University for academic credit.

The views presented herein are not necessarily those of Nairobi Evangelical
Graduate School of Theology or the Examiners.

(Signed) S. H. Casson

Sarah Casson

March 31st, 2003.

ABSTRACT

In Swahili, locative nouns carrying the suffix –ni, and locative applicative constructions both exhibit non-prototypical characteristics from a grammatical perspective. Considered from a pragmatic perspective, we see that both constructions are exploited in the language in certain contexts to show topic or focus. They are manipulated by speakers in such a way as to interact with a hearer's cognitive processes, in order that she arrives at the correct interpretation of an utterance as efficiently as possible. In the case of nouns with the –ni suffix, the exploitation of these constructions in subject position to indicate topic prevents us from drawing conclusions too quickly about their grammatical status. In the case of locative applicatives, we see that Swahili takes advantage of their non-prototypical behaviour in order to express a particular kind of focus. This study makes use of both Lambrecht's study of information structure, and Sperber and Wilson's relevance theory, in an attempt to explain the interaction between these two grammatical constructions and the cognitive processes of interpretation.

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In Swahili, locative nouns carrying the suffix –ni, and locative applicative constructions both exhibit non-prototypical characteristics from a grammatical perspective. Considered from a pragmatic perspective, we see that both constructions are exploited in the language in certain contexts to show topic or focus. They are manipulated by speakers in such a way as to interact with a hearer's cognitive processes, in order that she arrives at the correct interpretation of an utterance as efficiently as possible. In the case of nouns with the –ni suffix, the exploitation of these constructions in subject position to indicate topic prevents us from drawing conclusions too quickly about their grammatical status. In the case of locative applicatives, we see that Swahili takes advantage of their non-prototypical behaviour in order to express a particular kind of focus. This study makes use of both Lambrecht's study of information structure, and Sperber and Wilson's relevance theory, in an attempt to explain the interaction between these two grammatical constructions and the cognitive processes of interpretation.

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ABBREVIATIONS

1	1st person
2	2nd person
3	3rd person
III	subject/object marker for noun class 3
V	subject/object marker for noun class 5
VII	subject/object marker for noun class 7
IX	subject/object marker for noun class 9
X	subject/object marker for noun class 10
XVI	subject marker for noun class 16
XVII	subject marker for noun class 17
app	applicative extension
assoc	associative particle
caus	causative
dem	demonstrative
emph	emphatic
ind	indicative
inf	infinitive
loc	locative
om	object marker
narr	narrative tense/perfective aspect
NCIII	noun class prefix for noun class 3
neg	negative

NP	noun phrase
pass	passive
past	past tense
perf	perfect tense
pl	plural
PP	prepositional phrase
pres	present tense
prog	progressive aspect
rec	reciprocal
rel	relative pronoun
refl	reflexive
s	singular
stat	stative
subjn	subjunctive
syll	syllable filler
temp	temporal marker

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Presentation of the Problem

Locatives, that is, constructions (both nominal and verbal) indicating spatial location[1], represent an intriguing phenomenon in Swahili, as in other Bantu languages. Firstly, the grammatical status of so-called locative nouns is a matter of discussion. Secondly, the precise function of verbal locative applicative constructions raises questions.

The notion of place is frequently expressed in Swahili by nouns themselves, rather than by a locative adposition or the semantic nuance of the verb (cf. Payne 1997, 121-2), as is common in many languages. Swahili has three locative noun classes, classes 16 (specific place), 17 (general place and direction) and 18 (inside) (Maw 1994, 305). So-called locative nouns are in fact nouns which belong to other noun classes, but which become "locative" by the addition of the locative suffix -ni.

The precise grammatical status of nouns carrying the -ni suffix appears to be ambiguous: are they nouns, adpositional phrases, or adverbs? Driever (1976, 59), citing Whiteley, refers to "the unclarity of the syntactic status of locative complements." Ashton (1944, 18) claims that nouns with the suffix -ni have "the status of adverbs," Givón (1969, 12) terms them "prepositional nouns," and Vitale (1981, 49) describes them as noun phrases from one of the locative noun classes. This ambiguity arises from the fact that these constructions manifest some, but not all, of the properties of prototypical nouns, and may also be used as adverbial obliques, whereas other nouns can only function as obliques as part of a prepositional phrase. In short, nouns with the locative suffix represent something of a challenge as far as grammatical categorisation and analysis of function is concerned.

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[1] See chapter II for a more precise definition of locatives.

Moving on to locative applicative constructions, we find that they, too, exhibit non-prototypical characteristics. Swahili verbs may take an applicative, or prepositional, extension, which can express several different semantic roles: beneficiary, goal, purpose, instrument or locative. The latter differs in several ways from the other types of applicative construction in the way it interacts with other sentence constituents. Surprisingly, a number of grammatical analyses of Swahili recognise the beneficiary, goal, purpose and instrument functions of the applicative (see, for example, Driever 1976, 39, and Ashton 1944, 217-221), but appear to ignore the locative applicative, even though it is frequently used in everyday Swahili.

The purpose of this project is to examine both nouns with the -ni suffix, and locative applicative constructions, from the point of view of the pragmatic[2] interpretation of particular sentences; more specifically, from the perspective of topic and focus. The study will consider how these two locative constructions are exploited to communicate topic and focus in particular contexts, and what light, if any, this function throws on their grammatical behaviour. The insights of relevance theory will serve as a basis for understanding topic and focus, and how these phenomena may interact with both types of locatives, while Lambrecht's categories of sentence types will be used to help analyse some of the basic strategies for showing topic and focus in Swahili.

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[2] In this paper I am using the term "pragmatic" to mean that which pertains to speaker meaning and utterance interpretation. This involves the selection by the hearer of a particular context in which to process an utterance, based on the signals given by the speaker via, among other things, the grammar and syntax of sentences.

1.2 Socio-Linguistic Information

Kiswahili, (more commonly known as Swahili in English) is spoken as a first language by approximately five million speakers along the East African coast, from Mogadishu in the north to Mozambique in the south, on the off-shore islands, and increasingly in East African urban centres such as Nairobi. According to Grimes (2000, 142) there are 131, 000 first language speakers in the Coast Province of Kenya. There are around thirty million second language speakers in East Africa in Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Burundi, Somalia and Mozambique. As Maw points out, it is extremely difficult to gauge the exact number of Swahili speakers: estimates vary depending on the criteria used. Since independence in Tanzania in 1961, Swahili has been the country's official and national language. In Kenya, it is recognised as an official language, along with English, and functions as the national language of the country (Maw 1994, 4421-4422).

Swahili is classified as a Bantu language. Its precise classification is as follows: Niger-Congo, Atlantic-Congo, Benue-Congo, Bantoid, Southern, Narrow Bantu, Central, G (Grimes 2000, 142).

There are at least fifteen recognised dialects of Swahili, including Kiunguja spoken in Zanzibar, which was chosen as the standard variety for official use in Tanzania, and Kimvita spoken in the Mombasa area. Although the Tanzanian government has had a deliberate policy of development for Swahili, in other countries the language has been left to develop without official intervention. As a result, there are many different varieties of the language throughout East Africa (Maw 1994, 4422). Mother tongue influence also has a significant role to play in shaping different varieties of Swahili. In a place such as Nairobi, where there are many vernaculars represented, there is considerable variation in the Swahili used, between, for instance, Kikuyu speakers and Kiluyia speakers. These varieties of "second language" Swahili are often quite different from the Swahili of first language speakers at the coast. This study will focus on Swahili usage as observed in Nairobi, rather than on the Swahili of the coast, with data drawn in particular from a Kikuyu speaker. Because of the enormous variety of usage among Nairobians, however, it is often difficult to draw definitive and generalised conclusions about many aspects of usage.

Swahili is a language that is alive and well. The number of speakers in East Africa is growing, especially as urban populations increase and children born in the cities learn it as their first language, rather than the vernaculars of their parents. Except in Uganda, it tends to be viewed positively as an appropriate language of wider communication because of its Bantu base. Historically it was embraced by the independence movements as an African language, as opposed to the European languages of the colonial powers (Maw 1994, 4422).

1.3 Morphology and Syntax

As a Bantu language, Swahili shares many of the typical features of Bantu structure and morphology. As far as constituent order typology is concerned, Swahili can be classified as an SVO language, on the basis of clauses containing full noun phrases. It is also, as we would predict from this classification, a head-first language. It has the Bantu noun class system, with eighteen classes, which function mostly in pairs of singular and plural, and which are largely marked by prefixes. Its verb morphology is highly complex. Verbs may be marked for subject, object, tense, mood, negativity, reflexiveness, and may take relative pronoun markers, as well as causative, passive, stative, applicative, reciprocal and reversive extensions.

1.4 Previous Works on the Subject

Much has been written on Swahili, ranging from Guthrie's seminal comparative study of Bantu languages (1967-71), to formal grammars of the language, such as Ashton's classic work (1944). Studies dealing specifically with locatives in Swahili are less common, although several works have sections which provide useful insights into the the subject. Givón (1969), for example, deals with the Bantu language Chibemba and Bantu grammar in general, while Driever (1976), considers Swahili case grammar, and Vitale (1981) analyses Swahili syntax from a transformational perspective. Whiteley's 1968 study on transitivity raises questions related to changes in valency. Harford (1993), and Bresnan and Moshi (1993), use lexical mapping theory to deal with applicative constructions in the Bantu language Chishona, and comparative Bantu, respectively.

The literature on topic, focus and the pragmatic interpretation of utterances is extensive. Most works are beyond the scope of the present study. This paper does, however, rely upon the insights of relevance theory, first expounded by Sperber and Wilson (1986, 1995), as well as using Lambrecht's categorisation of sentence types (1994).

1.5 Orthography and Glosses

The orthography used in this paper is the standard orthography employed for Swahili across East Africa. This orthography is largely phonemic. In glossing the Swahili material, for the sake of clarity and relevance, I have concentrating on parsing those parts of the sentence which are directly relevant to the point being discussed. Verbs, for instance, are not broken down into all their constituent morphemes except where these morphemes are pertinent to the discussion, although subject prefixes, tense and stem are always indicated.

1.6 Data Sources

The data used in this paper were collected mostly from Mary Wathika Salaon, but checked with other speakers of Nairobi Swahili, in particular, Lillian Awuor, who speaks Swahili as her first language. Mary is twenty-five and has lived in Ngong town all her life, in the vicinity of Nairobi. Although Swahili is her second language (Kikuyu is her mother tongue, while her father is Maasai), she uses it as frequently, if not more frequently, than her mother tongue. She first started learning the language at the age of seven when she went to primary school, and is now a trained teacher of Swahili. The variety of Swahili elicited from Mary is "standard" Swahili, the form used in the Kenyan national media and schools. Mary admits that her knowledge of Swahili differs from that of a mother tongue speaker from, say, the coastal area of Kenya.

Whereas much of the data used in this study was elicited as single sentences, or a series of sentences, some data was also taken from narrative texts produced by Mary, Lillian or other speakers of Swahili living in Nairobi. This narrative data is labelled with the name of the text from which it comes. The texts are found in the appendix. Finally, data was occasionally used from linguistic texts about Swahili, which was then checked for authenticity and naturalness with Mary.

CHAPTER II

LOCATIVE NOUNS AND LOCATIVE APPLICATIVES

2.1 Definition of Locatives

The term "locative" can be used in a number of different ways. Payne (1997, 49, 112, 317 etc.) talks generally in terms of locational constructions in languages, and uses "locative" more specifically to refer to the case marking that occurs on nouns in languages where the grammatical requirements of the verb demand it (Payne 1997, 100). This is not the case in Swahili. Vitale (1981, 48) defines a locative construction in Swahili as "one which contains an NP from one of the locative classes C. 16, C. 17 or C. 18." In this paper I will use "locative" more generally to refer to any construction in Swahili that either predicates location, or expresses that a particular action or event occurred at a particular place. This definition covers applicative constructions with a locative function, as well as nouns with the suffix –ni. In Swahili, some locative constructions may also be used to situate actions and events at particular points in time. For the purposes of this paper, however, I will deal only with locative constructions referring to spatial location.

2.2 Nouns with the Suffix –ni

Traditional classifications divide Swahili nouns into eighteen classes, most of which function in pairs of singular and plural. Although historically these classes seem to have had a semantic basis, only classes 1 and 2 (human beings), 11 and 14 (abstract nouns), 15 (verbal nouns) and 16-18 (locative nouns) now retain their semantic distinctness in any obvious way. The three locative classes reflect different aspects of place: class 16, the pa- class, expresses specific place, class 17, the ku- class, expresses general place or direction, and class 18, the m- class, expresses the idea "inside" (Maw 1994, 305). All noun classes, except for the locative classes, have a prefix which indicates their class (although not all nouns in the class necessarily display this prefix). In addition, every class has a subject prefix which is attached to a verb when a noun of that class functions as subject. Object prefixes also exist but are in most cases not obligatory.

The locative classes differ from other noun classes both semantically and morphosyntactically. On a semantic level, locative nouns (with the exception the noun pahali, or mahali, meaning "place", which belongs to class 16, and place names) are not inherently locative. Instead nouns from other classes are made locative by the addition of the locative suffix –ni. Thus a noun that has the –ni suffix locative typically displays the noun class prefix of its original class, plus the locative suffix –ni. For example,

(1) m- to- ni
NCIII- river- loc
'at/in the river'

On a morphosyntactical level, the locative classes do not possess class prefixes which distinguish them as the other classes do. A noun with the –ni suffix could belong to any of the three locative classes. The classes are distinguished and revealed only by the agreement concords (subject prefixes, possessive prefixes and demonstratives) that the noun in a particular context displays.

2.2.1 Functions of Nouns with the Suffix –ni

Nouns with the suffix –ni are intriguing because of the variety of functions they may have in clauses, as described below.

(A) They may function as the complement of a locative copular verb:

(2) Mama yangu yu- ko soko- ni.
mother my 3s- loc market- loc
'My mother is at the market.'

(B) They may function as an oblique indicating location in a clause with an intransitive verb:

(3) A- na- lala nyumba- ni.
3s- pres- sleep house- loc
'He's sleeping at home.'

(C) They may function as an oblique indicating the location of the action of a transitive verb:

(4) Juma a- na- ji- funza Kiswahili shule- ni.
Juma 3s- pres- reflex- learn Kiswahili school-loc
'Juma is learning Swahili at school.'

(D) Whiteley (1968, 40) also analyses -ni suffix nouns as objects in clauses with certain types of verbs, typically verbs of movement which may also be used intransitively:

(5) Sarah a- me- fika kanisa- ni.
Sarah 3s- perf- arrive church- loc
'Sarah has arrived at church.'

This analysis is based on the fact that these kinds of clauses can be reversed so that the noun plus -ni becomes the grammatical subject, and the subject the grammatical object:

(6) Kanisa- ni ku- me- fika Sarah.
church- loc XVII- perf- arrive Sarah
'Sarah has arrived at church.'

The grammatical status of kanisani as subject is indicated here by the locative subject prefix on the verb.

In fact, according to data collected for this project, it is not only with verbs of movement such as the example in (5) that a clause may be reversed so that the noun with the suffix -ni becomes the grammatical subject. The following sentence:

(7) Watu wawili wa- na- ishi nyumba- ni hu- ku.
people two they- pres- live house- loc dem- XVII
'Two people live at/in this house.'

can be reversed in the following way:

(8) Nyumba- ni hu- ku ku- na- ishi watu wawili.
house- loc dem- XVII XVII- pres- live people two
'In/at this house live two people.'

(The English free translation is misleading here, because the verb agrees with the noun plus -ni, not with 'people'. A more literal translation would be "the place of this house (i.e. this home) lives two people.")

(E) From examples (6) and (7) above, then, we see that nouns with the suffix –ni may function as grammatical subjects of verbs.

(F) Nouns with the locative suffix may also function as the subject of passive verbs, which may also suggest object status (see Murrell 2000, 10):

(9) Nyumba- ni pa- li- pik- w- a.
house- loc XVI- past- cook- pass- ind
'At home it is cooked/there is cooking.'

Again, in this example the subject prefix agrees with the locative noun, indicating its status as grammatical subject.

Despite Whiteley's analysis, however, and the evidence of the examples above, questions need to be raised about the status of the noun plus -ni as a true object in examples such (5) above. This is because a noun with the suffix -ni cannot take an object prefix on the verb:

(10) * Sarah a- me- ku- fika kanisa- ni.
Sarah 3s- perf- 3s.loc.om arrive church- loc
'Sarah arrived at church.'

With prototypical objects, on the other hand, the object marker is always possible, though not always obligatory:

(11) Musa a- me- li- safisha kanisa.
Musa 3s- perf- V.om- clean church
'Musa has cleaned the church.'

The incompatibility of the object marker with a noun plus -ni occurring in object position leads Driever (1976, 60) to conclude that "the locative complement is not treated like other direct objects (in unmarked cases), but might be under certain conditions which have to be explored by further research."

In the light of the above data, none of the three following analyses of the function of nouns with the suffix -ni quite fits.

(A) There are problems with analysing them as oblique adverbial phrases, since they may also be made the grammatical subject of clauses (example 6), a fundamental property of prototypical nouns.

(B) There are problems with analysing them as nouns which function as the object of a restricted group of verbs (verbs of movement), since we find examples where they appear to function as quasi-objects with verbs that are not verbs of movement (example (7)).

(C) There are more fundamental problems with analysing them as nouns at all, since they do not seem to function as prototypical objects of verbs: they cannot take a verbal object marker, which is one of the prototypical characteristics of an object (see Murrell 2000, 10). On the other hand, they do appear to display one of the prototypical characteristics of nouns in as far as they may function as the grammatical subject of both passive and active verbs.

We have assumed that the fact that a noun with the locative suffix -ni may be subjectivised, as in (6), is an indication of the nominal status of the construction. In fact, however, nouns are not the only constituents that may be subjectivised in this way. The same is true, for example, of prepositional phrases:

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Chakula	ki-	li-	pik-	w-	a	nje	ya	nyumba.
food	VII-	past-	cook-	pass-	ind	outside	of	house

'Food is being cooked outside the house.'

may be reversed:

(13)

Nje	ya	nyumba	pa-	na-	pik-	w-	a	chakula.
outside	of	house	XVI-	pres-	cook-	pass-	ind	food

'Outside the house there is being cooked food.'

Similarly, an intransitive clause such as the following:

(14)

Wanfanyikazi	wa-	me-	fika	nje	ya	ofisi
workers	3pl-	perf-	arrive	outside	of	office

'The workers have arrived outside the office.'

may be reversed:

(15)

Nje	ya	ofisi	pa-	me-	fika	wafanyikazi.
outside	of	office	XVII-	perf-	arrive	workers

'Outside the office there have arrived workers.'

In examples (13) and (15), the locative subject prefix on the verb indicates that the prepositional phrases are functioning as grammatical subjects. This evidence suggests that the fact that a constituent may be made the subject of a verb is not necessarily an indication that the constituent is a noun or noun phrase, since prepositional phrases are clearly not noun phrases, even when they function as grammatical subjects. We need to look elsewhere, then, for an explanation of the fact that both nouns with locative suffixes, and prepositional phrases, may function as grammatical subjects of clauses.

2.3 Applicative Constructions

2.3.1 Beneficiary, Goal and Instrument Roles

In Swahili a verb stem may be made "applicative" or "prepositional" by the addition of the morpheme /i/ (which is sometimes expressed by the allomorphs /e/, /ili/ or /ele/ based on vowel harmony and morphophonemic changes), suffixed to the stem. The basic function of the applicative is to bring an oblique noun phrase into grammatical relation with the verb by promoting it to the status of object. The applied objects that result have various semantic roles. Most generally recognized in grammar sketches are the roles of beneficiary, goal and instrument. The following examples are taken from Murrell (2000, 22).

Beneficiary:

(16) Mtoto a- li- mw- imb- i- a mwalimu nyimbo
child 3s- past- 3s.om- sing- app- ind teacher songs
'The child sang songs for the teacher.'

Goal:

(17) Ongez-e- a chapati chumvi.
add- app- ind chapati salt.
'Add salt to the chapatis.'

Instrument:

(18) Wanafunzi wa- na- vunj- i a kiti nyundo.
students 3pl- pres- break- app- ind chair hammer
'The students are breaking the chair with a hammer.'

In the case of the semantic roles of beneficiary and goal, the applied object occupies the object slot immediately after the verb, while the secondary object[3] occurs in the position following this. In the case of the instrument role, however, the non-applied object occupies the slot immediately after the verb, while the applied object occurs after this.

We should note that with the semantic roles of beneficiary, goal and instrument there may sometimes be differences of semantic nuance between the applicative and non-applicative versions of sentences.

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[3] Here I am following Harford (1993, 94), who uses "secondary object" to refer to "the original object of the base verb."

2.3.2 Locative Applicatives

In the case of locative applicatives, a locative construction (typically a locative noun phrase) functions together with an applicative verb as a result of the addition of an applicative extension to the verb stem:

(19) Wa- li- omb- e- a mlima- ni.
3pl- past- pray- app- ind mountain- loc
'They are praying on the mountain.'

(20) A- li- i- andik- i- a barua chini ya mti.
3s- past- IX.om write- app- ind letter under of tree.
'He wrote the letter under a tree.'

(21) Baba yangu a- na- fany- i- a kazi Mombasa.
father my 3s- pres- do- app- ind work Mombasa
'My father works in Mombasa.'

(22) A- li- pik- i- a chakula nje ya nyumba.
3s- past- cook- app- ind food outside of house
'She cooked food outside the house.'

From these examples we can observe several differences between locative applicatives and the other semantic roles described above. Firstly, the order of objects for locative applicatives is the same as that for applicatives with instrument role, rather than beneficiary and goal; that is, that the applied object occurs after the secondary object, where the latter occurs. Secondly, we see from (20) that if the verb takes an object marker in a locative applicative construction, this marker agrees with the secondary object, not with the applied locative phrase, in contrast to the agreement with the applied object which occurs with the beneficiary and goal roles.

A third way in which locative applicatives differ fundamentally from the other roles is with respect to the use of prepositions. We have already said that in the case of the semantic roles of beneficiary, goal and instrument, the applicative serves to "draw in" the oblique beneficiary, goal, or instrument phrase, which is normally governed by a preposition. Such a preposition is no longer needed in an applicative construction, because the applied noun phrase is no longer in oblique relationship with the verb. Applicative clauses expressing beneficiary, goal or instrument roles therefore drop the preposition that occurs in their equivalent non-applicative counterparts in order to draw the oblique prepositional phrase into grammatical relation with the verb: compare examples (23), (24) and (25) below with (16), (17) and (18) above (the prepositions are put in bold in the following three examples):

Non-applicative clause with beneficiary role:

(23) Mtoto a- li- imba nyimbo **kwa** mwalimu.
child 3s- past- sang song for teacher
'The child sang songs for the teacher.'

Non-applicative clause with goal role:

(24) Ongeza chumvi **kwa** chapatis.
add salt to chapatis.
'Add salt to the chapatis.'

Non-applicative clause with instrument role:

(25) Wanafunzi wa- li- vunja kiti **kwa** nyundo.
students 3pl- past- break chair with hammer
'The students broke the chair with a hammer.'

In locative applicative phrases, on the other hand, no such preposition (if it occurs) is dropped. Compare (26), (27) and (28), non-applicative sentences, with their applicative counterparts (19),(21) and (22) above.

Non-applicative clause with locative construction:

(26) Wa- li- omba mlima- ni.
they- past- pray mountain- loc
'They prayed on the mountain.'

(27) Baba yangu a- na- fanya kazi Mombasa.
father my 3s- pres- do work Mombasa.
'My father works in Mombasa.'

(28)	A-	li-	ki-	pik-	a	chakula	nje	ya
	3s-	past-	VII.om-	cook-	ind	food	outside	of

nyumba.
house
'She cooked food outside the house.'

A comparison of these examples shows that the applicative and non-applicative versions of the sentences are identical in form except for the applicative vowel attached to the verb stem.

Moreover, in the case of applicative locatives, not only proper nouns that are inherently locative (for example, Mombasa), and nouns with the suffix –ni, may enter into relationship with an applicative verb, but also prepositional phrases:

(29)	A-	li-	ki-	pik-	i-	a	mkate	huu	nje	ya
	3s-	past-	VII.om-	cook-	app-	ind	bread	this	outside	of

nyumba
house
'He cooked this bread outside the house.'

(30)	Ni-	na-	som-	e-	a	katika	nyumba.
	1s-	pres-	read-	app-	ind	at	house

'I am reading in the house.'

Finally, with beneficiary, goal and instrument applicatives there is no indication of the precise semantic role involved, which must be inferred instead from the context. With locative applicatives, on the other hand, there is always an indication of the semantic role involved, because the locative phrase must retain its marker of location, (whether that is the suffix –ni, a preposition, or the fact that the noun is inherently locative, as with place names).

These various non-prototypical characteristics of the locative applicative construction, in particular the unusual behaviour of the applied locative phrase, raise questions about the status of applied locative phrases as primary objects of applicative verbs.

2.3.3 Questions Arising from the Non-Prototypical Characteristics of Locative Applicatives

Is it possible to explain the reason for these non-prototypical characteristics of the locative applicative construction? As we have seen above, two of its non-protoypical characteristics (the position of the applied object, and the lack of object marker agreement) are shared with the instrumental applicative role. Consequently, it has been proposed that these differences can be explained by a thematic hierarchy of semantic roles, (see for example, Bresnan and Moshi 1993, 72). Murrell (2000, 32) has modified such a thematic hierarchy, with specific reference to applied objects in Swahili, as follows:

Ben/Goal > Pat/Theme > Instrument/Location

This hierarchy specifies the "likelihood of an object to be a primary object" (Murrell 2000, 32) depending on its semantic role. The further to the left on the hierarchy a semantic role is, the more likely it is to function as a primary object. The fact that the instrumental and locative roles are lower down on the hierarchy may well explain why they do not occur in primary object position immediately following the verb in applicative constructions, and also why they do not take object markers on the verb.

Indeed, the fact that the locative semantic role occupies the lowest place on the hierarchy might also account for the other differences between locative applicatives and the other semantic roles (i.e. the maintenance of the preposition or another element indicating the semantic role in the applicative version of the sentence).

Whatever the underlying grammatical reason for the non-prototypical behaviour of the locative applicative, in this study I would like to explore how this construction, with its non-prototypical characteristics, is exploited in the language. What precisely constitutes the difference in function between a locative applicative, and its non-applicative counterpart? Can we predict when an applicative as opposed to a non-applicative locative construction will occur?

From data collected for this project, some clues are given to us as to the different functions of applicative and non-applicative locative constructions in the following examples. Example (31) below contains a non-applicative verb:

(31)	Ni-	na-	ji-	funz-	a	(Kijerumani)	darasa-	ni.
	1s-	pres-	refl-	teach-	ind	(German)	classroom-	loc

'I am learning (German) in the classroom.'

According to the speaker who supplied this data, in this sentence the stress is on the verb, and an implied object is understood. This sentence might answer the question:

(32)	U-	na-	fany-	a	nini	darasa-	ni
	2s-	pres-	do-	ind	what	classroom-	loc

What are you doing in the classroom?

The following example, on the other hand, contains an applicative verb and stresses the place where the action happened:

(33)	Ni-	na-	ji-	funz-	i-	a	darasa-	ni.
	1s-	pres-	refl-	teach-	app-	ind	classroom-	loc

'I'm learning in the classroom.'

This sentence answers the question:

(34)	U-	na-	ji-	funz-	i-	a	wapi?
	2s-	pres-	refl-	learn-	app-	ind	where

'Where are you learning?'

This data suggests that a locative applicative has the particular function of highlighting the place at which the action happened. We will consider these nuances of meaning in more detail in subsequent chapters. At this point we simply need to be aware of the fact that the phenomenon of focus, seem to have some role to play in the choice between the use of an applicative and a non-applicative locative construction. Harford (1993, 108) touches upon this possible function of the locative applicative construction in Chishona, another Bantu language, but does not develop the idea.

2.4 Hypothesis

From the above discussion, we see that both kinds of locative construction discussed represent variations from the norm of how such constructions might typically be expected to behave: syntactically, we might not expect locative constructions (both those with the suffix -ni, and prepositional phrases) to be subjectivised, nor locative applicative clauses to be identical, except for the applicative extension, with their non-applicative counterparts, retaining prepositions and the locative suffix even when applied. It is the hypothesis of this paper that both of these phenomena are used in Swahili as means of signalling to the hearer that she should process a particular utterance in a certain way, interpreting certain parts of the utterance as of particular significance, and other parts as providing necessary "background"[4] information. In other words, these locative constructions are used by speakers to facilitate a hearer's processing of an utterance or sequence of utterances. In relevance theory terms, the use of a noun with locative suffix functioning as subject rather than as object/complement, or of a locative applicative rather than its non-applicative counterpart, guides the hearer to process the utterance in such a way as to gain one specific set of contextual effects from it, rather than another.

In addition, the two locative constructions we have been considering may be combined, as we can see from examples (19) and (33) above. If our hypothesis is correct, then we should also expect to be able to analyse a combination of the two constructions likewise in terms of differences in pragmatic effect.

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[4] See chapter III for a fuller explanation of this term.

CHAPTER III

TOPIC, FOCUS AND RELEVANCE THEORY

3.1 Pragmatics and Propositional Form

In the previous chapter, I put forward the hypothesis that both the behaviour of nouns with the locative suffix –ni in certain contexts, and the use of locative applicative constructions, can be explained in terms of topic and focus, that is, in terms of pragmatic function, signalling to a hearer how she should process particular constituents of a sentence in terms of their significance or information value. Topic and focus have to do with the influence that context has on the particular way the propositional form of a sentence is expressed. Since these phenomena are determined by context in this way, we can describe them as pragmatic phenomena.

Pragmatics is commonly defined as the study of speaker meaning, as opposed to the study of linguistic meaning, which is the focus of semantics. Pragmatics has to do with the interpretation of speaker meaning, taking account of the context in which an utterance is spoken. Depending on the context of an utterance, information may be organised in sentences in different ways, so that one propositional form may be expressed by a number of different utterances which differ from each other in linguistic structure, but which have the same truth conditions. As a result, constituents in different versions of one propositional form assume different "pragmatic statuses" (Payne 1997, 261). Take for example the following English sentences:

(35) I went to *town* on Saturday.

(36) I went to town on *Saturday*.

(37) On *Saturday* I went to town.

(38) On Saturday *I* went to town.

(39) On Saturday I went to *town*.

(40) *I* went to town on Saturday.

All of the above utterances share an identical propositional form, but each differs from the next either in terms of word order, or of phonological stress. Linguists have handled such pragmatic differences in a variety of ways, using a wealth of different terminology, such as theme/rheme, focus/presupposition, and topic/comment.

3.2 Lambrecht's Approach

Lambrecht's detailed study, "Information Structure and Sentence Form" (1994), uses the terms "topic" and "focus" in his analysis of the kind of phenomena we see in operation in the sentences above. His definitions and analysis have been influential in this field, and I will make use of them here. Central to Lambrecht's approach is his theory of "information structure", which he defines in the following way: "That component of sentence grammar in which propositions as conceptual representations of states of affairs are paired with lexicogrammatical structures in accordance with mental states of interlocutors who use and interpret these structures as units of information in given discourse contexts." (Lambrecht 1994, 5). In other words, Lambrecht maintains that between the basic linguistic structure of a sentence, and its conceptual, propositional form, there is an intermediate level of information which represents the "pragmatic structuring" of a proposition and which is itself expressed through lexicogrammatical structures.

Lambrecht explains that in a typical utterance, some information is assumed by the speaker to be already given in the hearer's mind, in other words, it is presupposed, while other information is "non-presupposed". When the non-presupposed information is added to the presupposed so that a relation is established between them, the combination which results is the "assertion" of the sentence. He defines focus as the "semantic component of a pragmatically structured proposition whereby the assertion differs from the proposition"; in other words, the focus represents the part of an assertion that is "new", that is not already "given" in a hearer's mind. (Lambrecht 1994, 57). Topic, on the other hand, is the referent which a proposition is construed to be about. The proposition expresses information which is relevant to, and increases the hearer's knowledge of this topic. (1994, 127). Topic in this sense is related to the traditional grammatical category of subject, although the subject of a sentence may not always be its topic, as we shall see.

3.2.1 Lambrecht's Sentence Types

Based on his notion of a grammar of information structure, Lambrecht identifies three basic sentences types which correspond to different kinds of pragmatic structuring of propositions. Each type can be looked at from the perspective of topic or the perspective of focus, and in each type both the focus and the topic are different. Firstly, he identifies "topic-comment" or "predicate-focus" sentences, which are pragmatically unmarked (i.e. they represent the "default" sentence type). In these, the subject of the sentence is the topic, what the sentence is about, while the predicate represents the focus, the non-presupposed information in the hearer's mind. The sentence "I went to town on Saturday", given in answer to the question, "What did you do?" is an example of this sentence type. The topic is the subject "I", while the entire predicate, the comment "went to town on Saturday" provides the new element of the assertion. In English phonological stress falls on an element of the predicate, typically the last element, "Saturday". This would then be what Sperber and Wilson (1995, 203) call the "focally stressed constituent". This focally stressed constituent may either represent a unique focus or serve to highlight the larger focused constituent of which it is a part.

The categorisation of this sentence type as unmarked makes good sense in cognitive terms. As Sperber and Wilson point out in their explanation of the cognitive processes involved in interpretation, it is natural for presupposed information (the topic) to be mentioned first in a sentence, and non-presupposed information to fall last. This is because it allows the hearer to process the utterance in the most efficient way possible. Presenting the presupposed, or "background" information first allows the hearer to make anticipatory hypotheses about the overall logical structure of a sentence, which help her in the process of disambiguating information, and prepare her for the efficient processing of non-presupposed, foreground information (Sperber and Wilson 1995, 211).

The second type Lambrecht describes are identificational sentences. Here a particular argument is in focus, so from the perspective of focus they are known as argument-focus sentences. This kind of sentence would typically be given in response to a wh-word question such as "Who went to town on Saturday?", "Where did you go on Saturday?" or "When did you go to town?" The respective answers, "*I* went to town on Saturday" "On Saturday I went *to town*", and "I went to town on *Saturday*" are all marked in their focus. In "*I* went to town on Saturday" the subject of the sentence functions as the focused element rather than the topic, in "On Saturday I went *to town*" the locative phrase is in focus rather than the entire predicate, since the fact of going somewhere on Saturday is presupposed. In "I went to town on *Saturday*", the temporal phrase is in focus rather than the entire predicate; here the fact of going to town at a particular time is presupposed.

Lambrecht's third category is event-reporting or sentence-focus sentences. The only presupposed information in such sentences is that "something happened". The whole of the sentence is thus in focus in that it represents newly asserted information. A sentence such as "I went to town on Saturday" answering the question, "What happened?" is an example of this type. In such sentences topic and focus may coincide, since the sentence is "about" a referent which is at the same time being introduced as newly asserted information. "Presentational" sentences which present a new referent for the first time, where the topic is simultaneously the focus, represent a particular sub-type of this category. An example of this would be "There was a woman who went to town on Saturday." Here "woman" is both the topic and the focus of the first clause.

3.3 A Relevance Theoretic Approach

Lambrecht's categories serve as useful tools for identifying different kinds of topic and focus in a particular language. Sperber and Wilson, the authors of relevance theory, argue, however, that an understanding of such categories as representing a universal intermediate structure between grammar and cognitive processes is flawed. In their view it imposes an unnecessary artificial structure on languages (Sperber and Wilson 1995, 204). Relevance theory seeks instead to explain pragmatic differences between sentences such as those just discussed entirely in terms of the speaker exploiting linguistic structures (i.e. the grammar of a language) directly, in order to help the hearer process an utterance as efficiently as possible according to the appropriate context. The strength of this approach is that it provides an explanatory theory for *why* so many languages display the basic sentence types that Lambrecht identifies.

3.3.1 The Principle of Relevance

Relevance theory takes as its fundamental tenet the assumption that all communication is guided by the "principle of relevance". Simply put, this means that the speaker guarantees that what she says will be optimally relevant to the hearer. "Optimally relevant" means that the utterance will be of some value or significance to the hearer, "worth her attention", (in relevance theoretic terms, it will produce "contextual effects") and that the effects that it offers to the hearer will cost her as little processing effort as possible. It further argues that, based on this principle of relevance, the hearer chooses the most appropriate context for the interpretation of the utterance from a range of possible contexts available to her.

Since the speaker has the responsibility of making her utterance as relevant as possible at minimum processing effort to the hearer, she must choose appropriate linguistic structures and forms which will facilitate the hearer's task of reaching the intended interpretation (although, of course, interpretation does not simply consist in decoding linguistic forms but in drawing inferences from them together with the chosen context).

3.3.2 Stylistic Effects

Linguistic structure does more than simply provide the starting point for understanding the basic propositional form of utterances, however. As we have seen above, it also has an important role to play in the pragmatic status of propositional forms. Sperber and Wilson (1995, 202) use the term "stylistic effects" to describe pragmatic phenomena such as topic and focus.[5] In their view, topic and focus can be explained in terms of contextual effects and processing effort. Two utterances with the same propositional form but with access to different contexts will produce different effects on the hearer and demand varying amounts of effort in order to be understood. The speaker manipulates all the linguistic tools available, word order, phonological stress and morphosyntactic devices, adapting what she says to fit with human cognitive processes, so that her utterance may be interpreted with a minimum of processing effort for a maximum of contextual effects.

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[5] We should perhaps note that this use of "stylistic" is different from the more traditional use of the term to refer to literary devices.

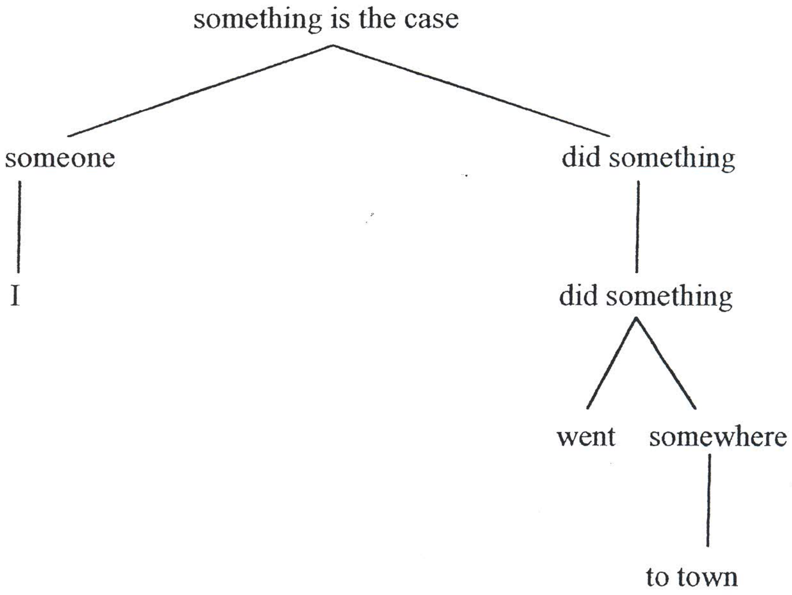
In each of the English sentences given above, the linguistic phenomena of word order and stress are employed to facilitate easy access to the appropriate context and to derive the contextual effects which are relevant for the hearer in a particular situation. Relevance theory argues that such linguistic phenomena contribute directly to a hearer's thought processes in interpretation, and can be explained as means by which the speaker achieves optimal relevance in her utterances. The differences arise as the speaker adapts the linguistic structure in order to produce the particular effects she intends in the most cost-efficient way. The following summary of the relevance theoretic explanation of propositional effects and style is based on Sperber and Wilson's discussion in "Relevance: Communication and Cognition" (1995), pages 202-217.

3.3.3 Topic and Focus

Topic, in relevance theoretic terms, is understood as information which is usually presupposed, readily identifiable to the hearer from the context. Its function is to provide access to necessary contextual, encyclopaedic information which enables the hearer to reach the intended interpretation. Because it provides background information, it generally occurs first in a sentence. Focus, on the other hand, is information that is added to the presupposed, background information which causes the hearer to draw inferences and thus gain fresh cognitive effects. Focus is not limited to a single constituent in a sentence, but may be broader or narrower in scope, especially if the focally stressed constituent occurs sentence finally. In this case, the stressed constituent, the entire predicate, or the sentence as a whole may all be the focus of the sentence.

3.3.4 Propositional Form and Logical Entailments

In order to understand the way focus interacts with cognitive processes, we need to understand something of the logical forms behind propositions. Propositions, represented by utterances, carry a series of logical entailments or implications which are grammatically specified and which can be uncovered by replacing a syntactic constituent in a sentence with a logical pro-form label. The series of logical entailments for a sentence corresponds to its underlying syntactic tree structure. For example, the sentence "I went to town" would have the following series of entailments:



"Something is the case", "someone did something", "I did something", "I went somewhere", "someone went somewhere" etc. are thus all entailed by the sentence "I went to town". For any propositional form, some of its entailments will be taken as foreground information, while others will be background, with some background entailments more prominent than others, depending on the context. In other words, not all the entailments will be relevant in the same way. The background entailments provide information about the context in which the hearer should process the utterance, making accessible the relevant context, while the foreground entailments represent the information that is to be added to background, "presupposed" entailments in order to yield the whole proposition, which will yield direct contextual effects for the hearer. (Blass 1990, 137). Foreground entailments are thus the elements in focus in a particular proposition. For example, if the entailment "I went somewhere" is taken as the main background entailment to the proposition "I went to town", the hearer will understand the specific place I went to as particularly relevant and will process the proposition accordingly. The foreground entailment would then be "I went *to town*". On the other hand, the main background entailment might be "Someone went to town". In this case, the hearer would process the utterance in a context where the identity of the person who did the action is relevant. In this case the foreground entailment would be "*I* went to town", with the subject the element in focus.

3.3.5 Anticipatory Hypotheses

Sperber and Wilson argue that a hearer processes an utterance by way of anticipatory hypotheses about what will come next in the utterance, based on what she already knows from the context. These anticipatory hypotheses will run along the same lines as the entailments discussed above. In other words, the hearer will posit possible entailments based on the available context. This context will be made up of linguistic information, such as syntactic patterns in the language, the immediately preceding context of the utterance, perception of her environment, and her encylopaedic knowledge of the world. Thus if she hears the pronoun "I", she will start to hypothesise that it will be followed by a verb phrase, based on her knowledge of the syntax of the language. She will posit the hypothesis "The speaker did something". Her thought processes will be preparing for the process of disambiguation and reference assignment by anticipating in advance what the verb might be, based on the contexts she has accessible to her. For example, if the hearer has just asked the speaker what she did on Saturday, she will have a limited range of probable activities already accessible in her mind, partly on the basis of her question (the immediate context), and partly on the basis of her encyclopaedic knowledge of the speaker's Saturday activities. For example, she will not expect the speaker to say "I flew to the moon." As the speaker continues her utterance, adding the verb "went", she will posit the hypothesis, "The speaker went somewhere", and the range of interpretations available to the hearer will be narrowed down further based on the semantics of "went", her knowledge of the kinds of places the speaker might have gone to etc. She will make an anticipatory hypothesis about where the speaker might have gone, selecting the hypothesis that is most relevant in the particular context in which she is interpreting. Thus when the speaker finishes the utterance with "to town", it will fall into place in the hearer's mind, being processed with a minimum of effort, because it has already been prepared for and anticipated.

As a hearer processes an utterance, then, she will go through a series of anticipatory hypotheses based on the utterance as it unfolds. These hypotheses will be logically related to one another. For our example above, the anticipatory hypotheses will be as follows:

(A) The speaker did something. This is either directly relevant to the hearer, or raises the question "What did the speaker do?" This is then answered by

(B) The speaker went somewhere, which is either directly relevant to the speaker, or raises the question "Where did the speaker go?" This is then in turn answered by

(C) The speaker went to town. If this utterance is relevant for the hearer, yielding contextual effects for her, no more questions will be raised in her mind. If not, another question will need to be asked such as "Why did the speaker go to town?", and the dialogue will continue until the hearer has received all the information needed for her to gain relevant contextual effects.

The anticipatory hypotheses thus follow the pattern of the relevant subset of entailments of a particular proposition, and form a logical scale, in which each hypothesis is implied or entailed by the hypothesis which follows it in the sequence. Each implication provides a context in which the next implication can be processed, until the final implication is reached, which yields direct contextual effects. The scale thus provides a framework which facilitates the hearer's process of interpretation.

3.3.6 Focus

If the focus of an utterance falls on the last constituent, as is the case for sentences that have unmarked focus (that is, focus which occurs in the default position), then the focus coincides with the scale of logical anticipatory hypotheses. In other words, the focus falls on the element of the sentence that the hearer's logical processes will naturally expect to bear the contextual effects. This explains why the default position for focal stress is the end of an utterance. How is it, then, that non-final elements in an utterance are sometimes in focus?

3.3.6.1 Focus in Marked Position

When focal stress falls on an element in a sentence other than the final one, it may still be explained according to the principle of relevance. If, for instance, the element in focus in a sentence occurs sentence initially, then the background information necessary for processing according to the relevant context will already be accessible to the hearer, making it unnecessary for this information to be provided at the beginning of the utterance. This would be the case if the immediate context had already made highly accessible the necessary background information, perhaps in the form of a question. For example, if the question "who went to town on Saturday?" was asked, then the subject of the answer would be the element in focus: "*I* did". When the necessary background entailments are already accessible, the principle of relevance dictates that the hearer will automatically make use of them as the most easily available context for interpretation, and they will not need to be repeated; to do so would violate the principle of relevance by causing more processing effort.

In the sentence "On *Saturday* I went to town" the fact that stress is placed on the constituent "on Saturday" signals to the hearer that this element is of direct relevance to the hearer, offering contextual effects by answering a question she has, or perhaps eliminating a previous assumption. Again, the reason the focused element appears at the beginning of the utterance is that the necessary background information needed to access the relevant context is already available to the hearer. This sentence has the effect of modifying the range of possible interpretations open to the hearer. Whereas the sentence "I went to town on *Saturday*" could be understood as answering any of the following questions: "When did you go to town?", "What did you do?", or "What happened?", the sentence "On *Saturday* I went to town" could typically only answer the question, "When did you go to town?" This modification of the range of interpretation can be seen as a special effect produced by the marked focus pattern. Sperber and Wilson argue that sentences in which stress falls on a non-final element demand slightly more processing effort than those which follow the unmarked pattern, but because they produce special effects which offset the effort involved, such sentences are still in accordance with the principle of relevance.

CHAPTER IV

TOPIC AND FOCUS STRATEGIES IN SWAHILI

4.1 Aims of the Chapter

In Chapter III I outlined both Lambrecht's and Sperber and Wilson's approaches to the pragmatic phenomena of topic and focus. In this chapter I will attempt to apply their insights to Swahili, examining the various ways in which topic and focus are expressed in the language, with a view to analysing locative constructions from a pragmatic perspective. I will use Lambrecht's categorisation of sentence types as a heuristic framework for identifying different surface expressions of topic and focus in Swahili, concentrating on those devices which throw light on the use of nouns with the suffix –ni, and locative applicatives. I will use relevance theory to attempt to explain the cognitive reasons for these differing expressions.

4.2 Topic

4.2.1 Unmarked Topic

In Swahili the unmarked (default) position for topic is immediately preceding the verb, in subject position. An unmarked topic-comment/predicate-focus sentence (in which both topic and focus fall in the default, or typical position) has SVO order. The subject is the topic of the sentence while the entire predicate represents the constituent in focus.

(41) Ni- na- pika ugali nyumba- ni.
1s- pres- cook ugali house- loc
'I'm cooking ugali at home.'

In example (41) the main background entailment is "I am doing something", while the predicate "cooking ugali at home" is in focus.

(42)	sungura	a-	ka-	enda	a-	ka-	ficha	mama	yake
	hare	3s-	narr-	go	3s-	narr-	hide	mother	his

	msitu-	ni.
	forest-	loc

'Hare went and hid his mother in the forest.' (sungura na fisi text, 10)

Example (42) has as its main background entailment "Hare did something". It is taken from the sungura na fisi narrative (see appendix). The subject of the verb, sungura, is the topic. The referent is readily identifiable to the hearer, having already been introduced in the narrative, and functioning as the protagonist. As the necessary context for interpreting the rest of the sentence, the hearer accesses all the encyclopaedic information she has available about the hare from the previous discourse as well as from her general background, cultural assumptions about the stereotypical role of a hare in a story. Having heard sungura at the beginning of the utterance, she comes up with the anticipatory hypothesis, "Hare did something". Since this entailment alone is not relevant to her, she then anticipates the rest of the sentence with the question, "What did hare do?" When she hears, "Hare went and hid," she is already beginning to narrow down the possible range of interpretations to the one that is relevant in the context of the narrative. The background implication, "What did hare go and hide?" then arises. The progress of the narrative (i.e. the discourse context) leads the hearer to expect that hare will be doing something to his mother, so when she hears the noun "his mother", she is already prepared. The proposition, "Hare went and hid his mother." implies another question: "Where?" When the answer to this is given with the final word of the utterance, the utterance is relevant for the hearer, achieving contextual effects, for which the hearer is already prepared. We can identify the entire predicate as the constituent in focus, because within the context of the narrative, it is the predicate rather than any of its smaller constituents which is added to the background information represented by the topic, to create a new assertion.

4.2.2 Presentational Sentences

The subject of a sentence does not always function as its topic, however. At the beginning of a discourse in particular, the subject of a verb may be a newly introduced referent. In this case, the subject referent represents non-presupposed, non-background information but is simultaneously what the sentence is "about". In Swahili a change in word order is used to signal this type of newly introduced subject. The subject occupies the post-verbal slot, instead of preceding the verb. The verbal subject prefix agrees with the post-verbal subject. The word order is thus VS:

(43)	Hapo	mwanzo	a-	li-	ondoka	simba	na	kititi	na
	There	beginning	3s-	past-	arise	lion	with	hare	and

	fisi
	hyena.

'Once upon a time the lion arose, with the hare and the hyena.' (kititi na fisi text, 1)

In such a case, according to Lambrecht, the referent is a "topic referent" (in other words, the sentence is "about" this referent), but has a focus relation to the proposition expressed (it represents the new information which is added to the background to form a new assertion with contextual effects) and so is a "focus expression" which occupies the unmarked focus slot at the end of the sentence.

Alternatively, the subject may occupy the post-verbal slot while the verb takes a locative subject prefix:

(44)	Pa-	li-	ondok-	e-	a	maskini	mmoja	a-	ka-	jenga
	XVI-	past-	arise-	app-	ind	poor.person	one	3s-	narr-	build

	nyumba	a-	ka-	kaa.
	house	3s-	narr-	stay

'There arose a poor man. He built a house and stayed in it.' (Maw 1992, sentence 1, 47).

Here the locative subject prefix appears to function as a dummy subject, in much the same way as "there" in English (e.g. "There was once a man . . ."). These two alternative ways of presenting a new topic appear to be interchangeable. Both have the effect of allowing the newly introduced subject to occur in unmarked focus position.

(45)	Hapo	zamani	za	kale	ku-	li-	kuwa	na	sungura
	There	time	of	antiquity	3s.loc-	past-	be	with	hare

	pamoja	na	fisi.
	together	with	hyena

'Once upon a time there was a hare and a hyena.' (sungura na fisi text, 1).

Lambrecht calls this type of sentence "presentational". Its function is "to call to the attention of the addressee the hitherto unnoticed presence of some person or thing in the speech setting" (1994, 39). Attention is called to this particular referent usually in order to "make it available for predication in subsequent discourse." (1994, 177) Since the main background entailment of this kind of sentence is no more specific than "something is the case", it belongs to the category of sentence-focus sentences.

In relevance-theoretic terms, we can suggest that the marked word order, that is, the missing pre-verb subject, signals to the hearer that there is something non-prototypical about the subject in this sentence, i.e. it is not a typical topic subject which represents background information. If such a sentence occurs at the beginning of a discourse (as it would, typically) the only background information or entailment the hearer has accessible is "something is the case". She then hears the verb preceded by no subject, and as a result makes an anticipatory hypothesis such as "someone of special significance arose" or "someone of special relevance existed at a particular time". Verbs that occur in this construction are typically intransitive verbs such as "be", "arise", "come". This type of verb, without a subject preceding it, prompts the hearer to hypothesise a proposition which asserts the significance of a particular argument at the moment it is introduced. The suspense of waiting to hear what the subject is causes the hearer to focus on it with particular attention. She waits for the missing information about who the person of particular relevance is. When the subject is uttered after the verb, it falls into the already anticipated slot, and the hearer is immediately able to draw the appropriate contextual effects about the importance of this subject. Its marked position causes her to recognise and process it as a topic which will produce many contextual effects in the following discourse. The marked word order may momentarily increase processing effort because the hearer is given no background information at the start of the sentence as a springboard for her processing. Overall, however, the word order facilitates processing by signalling to the hearer that she should process the subject in a special way, keeping it accessible as an argument which will produce additional contextual effects in the following discourse. At the same time, in terms of fresh, relevant, non-presupposed information gained, the entire presentational sentence is in focus, because no part of it represents background information already assumed by the hearer before the sentence was uttered.

Where a locative prefix functions as a dummy subject in these presentational constructions, we can suggest that it has the function of alerting the hearer, even before the verb is uttered, to the fact that she must process the following subject as specially relevant. In this respect the locative prefix is a kind of "scene-setter", setting the scene in the hearer's mind for important information which will follow. It takes away any ambiguity which might arise in a sentence such as (43) above, where the usual third person personal subject prefix is used. The personal subject prefix is usually anaphoric, referring to an already accessible referent. To hear such a prefix before the referent has been introduced, as in (43), might cause confusion, leading the hearer to wonder whether she should already be able to access the subject of the verb from the contexts available. The use of the locative prefix, in contrast, is less likely to suggest that the subject is a previously introduced referent that the hearer should access, partly because the range of referents to which this prefix could possibly refer is very restricted, and partly simply because locative prefixes are consistently used with this particular function in Swahili, and a speaker of Swahili would immediately know to process them as such.

4.2.3 Scene-Setting Expressions

Constructions also occur which begin with a temporal or locative adverbial phrase, which have been described as a "point of departure" by Chafe (1976). These function as scene-setting expressions:

(46)	Siku	moja	kobe	a-	li-	alik-	w-	a	kw-	enda
	day	one	tortoise	3s-	past-	invite-	pass-	ind	inf-	go
	nchi	ya	mbali	na	mahali	ambapo	a-	li-	kuwa	
	country	of	far	assoc.	place	where	3s-	past-	be	
	a-	na-	ishi							
	3s-	pres-	live							

'One day tortoise was invited to go to a party in a country far from the place where he was living.' (kobe text, 5).

In the sentence above, taken from a narrative, the phrase siku moja, 'one day', sets the scene for the rest of the utterance. Lambrecht (1994, 118) appears undecided about whether such phrases should be classified as topics or not. In relevance-theoretic terms, this sort of phrase can be understood as information which facilitates processing effort by providing additional background, contextual information which allows the hearer to arrive at the main foreground implication more easily. Such a phrase means that the hearer is able to situate the foreground entailment at a particular time or place and consequently can draw better informed inferences about the precise relevance of the utterance. This particular phrase also signals to the hearer that a fresh stage is beginning in the narrative. If the phrase siku moja was left out, the sentence would be more difficult to process. The hearer would be uncertain about whether the utterance as a whole constituted additional scene-setting information contributing to the picture of who the tortoise was, or whether the utterance represented a step forward in the story. The phrase siku moja itself is not foreground information. It belongs to the main background entailment, “One day something happened to tortoise”. It contributes indirectly to the relevance of the sentence just as the topic “tortoise” does. In this sense both the topic “tortoise”, and the scene-setting phrase “one day”, have a similar function, although the utterance cannot be said to be “about” the referent “one day” in the same way that it is “about” the already identifiable referent “tortoise”.

Locative phrases may also function as “scene-setters” in a similar way.

(47)	Nje	ya	nyumba	chakula	ki-	li-	pik-	w-	a.
	outside	of	house	food	VII-	past-	cook-	pass-	ind

‘Outside the house food was cooked.’

In the above example, in a particular speech context we might say that the sentence is “about” food, i.e. food is the topic, while the phrase “outside the house” provides contextual information which contributes to the overall relevance of the sentence. The locative phrase allows the hearer to access relevant contextual assumptions as soon as she hears it, which will aid her in processing the rest of the utterance and working out what its contextual effects are. It represents information that is already accessible, as part of the background implication or entailment, “Something happened to food outside the house”. Such an utterance would arise in a situation where the location “outside the house” and the topic “food” were already “given” or “assumed” information. Alternatively, sentence (47) might arise in a speech situation where only the location “outside the house” was already accessible information. In this case, the rest of the utterance, “food was cooked”, would represent the non-presupposed information. The topic would then best be analysed as “outside the house”, since only this phrase would be part of the main background entailment, "Outside the house something was done/happened." We can conclude, then, that sentence initial locative and temporal adverbial phrases may function either as "scene-setters", or as topics, depending on the main background entailment of the utterance. Either way, their function in relevance theoretic terms is to make accessible relevant contextual information which enables the hearer to process the utterance efficiently and understand its overall relevance to herself.

4.3 Focus

4.3.1 Unmarked Focus

As already discussed, the unmarked position in Swahili for a constituent in focus is sentence final. The scope of focus varies: it may include only one NP or adverbial phrase, the whole predicate, or the entire sentence, but in each case the constituents representing the focus of the utterance will be as near to the end of the sentence as possible. In chapter III a relevance theoretic cognitive explanation for this phenomenon was given.

4.3.2 Argument-Focus Sentences

An argument-focus (identificational) sentence is one in which a non-predicating expression is in focus (Lambrecht 1994, 224), either the subject, the object, a secondary object, or an oblique phrase. When the constituent in focus is the subject, the focus falls in marked, utterance initial position.

(48)

Katika	ukumbusho	wa	siku	yangu	ya	ku-	zali-	w-	a
on	remembering	of	day	my	of	inf-	bear-	pass-	ind

ni-	li-	kuwa	ni-	ki-	tumaini	ku-	pata	wageni	wengi.
1s-	past-	be	1s-	prog-	hope	inf-	get	guests	many

Kwanza	Mary	a-	li-	kuja	kwangu.	Halafu	Rahab
first	Mary	3s-	past-	come	my place	then	Rahab

a-	ka-	ja.
3s-	narr-	come

'On my birthday I was hoping to have lots of visitors. First Mary came to my place. Then Rahab came round.'

In the second and third sentences of example (48), the element in focus each time is the person who came, which is marked in each case by phonological stress. "Mary" and "Rahab" are thus non-topical subjects. The first sentence of (48) provides the necessary contextual information that someone would come: it makes clear that the main background entailment of the second and third sentences is "someone will come to visit." The hearer then processes these sentences against this contextual information. As a consequence, as soon as she hears the name "Mary" with its phonological stress, she makes the anticipatory hypothesis that Mary was the one who came. Because the background entailment is already highly accessible from the context, the non-presupposed information can be supplied sentence initially. (In other contexts this information might be more efficiently supplied last with a construction such as (49):

(49)

Mtu	wa	kwanza	a-	li-	ye-	kuja	ku-	ni-
person	of	first	3s-	past-	rel-	come	to-	1s

ona	a-	li-	kuwa	Mary.
see	is	past-	be	Mary

'The first person who came to see me was Mary.')

Other examples of argument focus include sentences where the object is in focus, or an adverbial phrase is in focus. In such cases, the constituent in focus falls in unmarked position at the end of the sentence:

(50) Leo mwalimu a- li- m- pig- a mtoto.
today teacher 1s- past- 3s.om- beat- ind child
'Today the teacher beat the child.'

Sentence (50) answers the question, "Who did the teacher beat today?" In other words, the main implication or entailment is "the teacher beat someone today", and the object alone, "child", which bears phonological stress, is in focus, providing the relevant information. In (51), on the other hand, the oblique locative phrase is in focus:

(51) Leo mwalimu a- li- m- pig- i- a mtoto
today teacher 3s- past- 3s.om- beat- app- ind child
ofisi- ni.
office- loc
'Today the teacher beat the child in the office.'

Sentence (51) answers the question, "Where did the teacher beat the child?", having as its main background implication, "Today the teacher beat the child somewhere." The relevant focused constituent is the locative phrase alone. (Notice here the applicative extension on the verb stem. We shall discuss its function fully in such sentences in chapter V).

4.3.3 Sentence-Focus Sentences

Finally, Lambrecht talks about sentence-focus sentences, also known as event-reporting utterances. In this type, no part of the lexicogrammatical representation of the sentence represents presupposed or background information, so the entire utterance is in focus. Here the main background implication is simply "something happened", or "something is the case". Presentational constructions, discussed above, are examples of this type of sentence.

(52) A- li- po- kuwa kobe a- me- shikilia mti yule
3s past- temp be tortoise3s- perf- hold stick that

ndege mmoja a- li- mw- ongelesha.
bird one 3s- past- 3s.om- make.talk
'When tortoise was holding the stick, one bird made him talk.' (kobe text, 34)

The main clause of sentence (52) above is also a sentence-focus utterance. It is taken from the climax of the kobe narrative. The subordinate clause which begins the sentence provides background, contextual information, setting the scene for the main clause, which reports what happened to the tortoise. It situates the event of the main clause at a particular point in time. The main clause has the background implication, "Something happened when tortoise was holding the stick." The only presupposition involved in the main clause is that the event it describes happened when tortoise was holding the stick. Even the fact of tortoise's participation in the main clause is not presupposed: the fact that tortoise is the topic of the scene-setting clause does not mean that he must be a participant in the main clause. In relevance theory terms, however, the scene-setting clause makes the tortoise highly salient in the hearer's mind, and encourages her to anticipate, from the context of the story, what might be going to happen to him. Within the context of the narrative, the event of the birds making the tortoise talk is highly relevant, yielding significant contextual effects because it represents the climax of the story, the moment when the birds get their own back on the selfish tortoise.

4.3.4 Verb-Focus Sentences

Lambrecht does not mention sentences in which the verb alone is in focus. Nevertheless, such sentences exist in Swahili, for example, (53B) below:

(53A) U- li- pika chapati?
2s- past- cook chapati
'Did you cook the chapatis?

(53B) Hapana, ni- li- zi- nunua.
No 1s- past- X.om- buy
'No, I bought them.'

The immediately preceding context represented by the question in (53A) tells us that the background implication to (53B) is "you did something in connection with the chapatis." Thus the relevant information in (53B) is the verb alone. The object NP is omitted as superfluous because the hearer already assumes it as background information. Instead, an object marker is used which precedes the verb stem and thus allows the verb stem itself to fall in sentence final position, the preferred position for an element in focus.

4.3.5 Passivisation

4.3.5.1 Passivisation As a Verb-Focus Strategy

Swahili at times uses the strategy of passivisation in order to guide the hearer to interpret the verb alone as the relevant foreground information in a sentence. Consider the following sentence:

(54) Mtoto a- na- pig- w- a.
child 3s- pres- beat- pass- ind
'The child is being beaten.'

If the background entailment to this utterance is "something is happening to the child", then the verb alone represents the constituent in focus. Since "the child" is the topic, representing background information, the speaker manipulates the linguistic structure of the sentence so as to place this background information in initial position in the sentence in order to ease processing (as explained above). The patient of the sentence thus occurs in subject position. As a result, the verb falls in final position, the unmarked slot for focus. The hearer is able to prepare for this relevant foreground information by building upon the context accessed by the topic referent "child".

4.3.5.2 Other Functions of the Passive Construction

The passive may also be used in Swahili in other ways to encourage the hearer to process certain constituents as more or less prominent, and thus more or less directly relevant in terms of contextual effects. In the second sentence of (55) below, both the subject NP and the verb together are in focus:

(55)

Jana	ni-	li-	enda	nyumba-	ni	kwa	rafiki	yangu.
yesterday	1s-	past-	go	house-	loc	of	friend	my

Nje	ya	nyumba	chakula	ki-	li-	kuwa
outside	of	house	food	VII-	past-	be

ki-	na-	pik-	w-	a
VII-	pres-	cook-	pass-	ind

'Yesterday I went to my friend's house. Outside the house food was being cooked.'

The first sentence provides the necessary contextual background information which sets the scene for the following sentence. The hearer makes a bridging assumption between the first and second sentences: she assumes from her encyclopaedic knowledge of the world that if the speaker visits a friend's home she has gone to a house. The "outside" of this house is then referred to at the beginning of the second sentence without prior introduction into the discourse because of this bridging assumption. The phrase "outside the house" represents background, scene-setting information, the main background entailment of the second sentence being "something was happening outside the house". The subject NP and the verb phrase together represent the foreground, relevant information.

Why, then, did the speaker not simply use an active verb, with the patient chakula falling in final position, since we have seen above that such a word order is consistent with predicate focus? The use of the passive here enables the speaker to bring the verb (with its patient, chakula) into focus as non-presupposed information while minimising the importance of the agent of the verb. The identity of the agent is not relevant. The relevant point of the foreground information is a description of what was happening, not the identification of the agent. To identify the agent in this context would create unwanted, irrelevant contextual effects, according to the speaker's intention, increasing processing effort on the part of the hearer for no good reason. In this example, then, the passive not only brings the verb into focus (along with the patient), but also prevents the agent from being identified. In cognitive terms, however, it is not until the hearer hears the passive marker on the verb, -w, that she is able to process chakula as the patient rather than the agent of the sentence. This passive sentence demands more processing effort than an active version: the hearer may have been anticipating a full utterance in which "food" was the subject of an active verb (although the inanimate nature of food means that the range of roles anticipated for it would be much more limited than with an animate subject). When she hears the passive marker she has to adjust her anticipatory hypothesis. Nevertheless, the slightly higher processing cost is offset by the effect of minimising the importance of the agent. This contextual effect contributes to the relevance of this sentence within the discourse as a whole, and thus to the overall coherence of the discourse. The passive construction makes this sentence into a relevant answer to the background question raised by the previous sentence i.e. to the question, "What was happening at your friend's house?"

We can say, then, that the passive has a range of pragmatic functions in Swahili, guiding hearers to process various sentence constituents as more or less relevant. The speaker uses it as a device to facilitate the hearer's interpretation of her intended meaning with its particular contextual effects.

4.4 Summary

In summary, we have seen that there are a number of lexicogrammatical devices available in Swahili which a speaker may employ to guide the hearer in reaching the intended interpretation of an utterance. Strategies such as changes in word order, use of dummy locative subject prefixes, of object markers and of passive constructions, as well as phonological stress, are all ways of adapting the linguistic structure to the hearer's natural cognitive processes in order to make utterance processing as cost-effective as possible, for the optimum number of contextual effects. The following chapter will examine in detail how the locative constructions presented in chapters I and II are manipulated by speakers to achieve these kinds of pragmatic effects.

CHAPTER V

LOCATIVE CONSTRUCTIONS AND PRAGMATIC EFFECTS

Having explored how lexicogrammatical features are used in Swahili to facilitate a hearer's cognitive processes so that particular information values may be achieved, we are now ready to investigate what role, if any, locative constructions play in this.

5.1 Subjectivised Locative NPs, and PPs, as Indicators of Topic

In chapter II I considered various examples in which a noun with the locative suffix -ni occurred in sentence initial position, functioning as the grammatical subject of the sentence, which was indicated by the subject prefix marking on the verb. I gave a brief description of some of the ways in which these constructions have been analysed grammatically. Debate centres on the question of their nominal status, which seems to be confirmed by the fact that these phrases function as subjects. On the other hand, we saw that prepositional phrases may also function as grammatical subjects, yet there can be little doubt that these phrases are not nouns (they consist of a NP governed by a preposition; in other words, they are prepositional phrases).

The discussion of strategies for indicating topic and focus in Swahili sheds some light on this confusing situation. In particular, the insight that background information is processed most effectively when it occurs sentence initially is illuminating here, as is the principle that foreground information typically occurs at the end of sentence, which represents the unmarked position for the focused element. This is important to our understanding of the difference between sentences (7) and (8), cited again below:

(7) Watu wawili wa- na- ishi nyumba- ni hu- ku.

people two they- pres- live house- loc dem- XVII
'Two people live at/in this house.'

Here, depending on the immediate context, the main background entailment might be "two people live somewhere" (argument-focus with the focus on the locative phrase), "two people do something" (predicate-focus), or even "something is the case" (sentence-focus). The background information may be the subject plus the verb, or the subject alone, or there may be no background information if it is an event reporting, sentence-focus utterance. Example (8), on the other hand, is different:

(8)	Nyumba-	ni	hu-	ku	ku-	na-	ishi	watu	wawili.
	house-	loc	dem-	XVII	XVII-	pres-	live	people	two

'In/at this house live two people.'

Here the position of the locative phrase at the beginning of the sentence clearly signals that this is background, contextual information which is important so that the hearer can process the utterance effectively according to the appropriate context. The locative phrase may represent the topic, i.e. the sentence may be about "this home", in which case the main background entailment would be "in this house something is the case" or "in this house something happened". On the other hand the topic may in fact be the logical subject, watu wawili, which functions as a focus expression because it is newly introduced, and thus as yet inaccessible to the hearer. In this case the strategy of fronting the locative phrase would essentially be the strategy described above for presentational constructions. The locative phrase occurs sentence initially as background information with a locative prefix on the verb, while the logical subject is placed after the verb. This unusual word order alerts the hearer to the fact that the delayed subject is of special significance, either because it will function as topic in the following discourse, or because the assertion of its existence or action is of special relevance to the hearer in the context.

In such a construction, the use of the locative subject prefix has the pragmatic function of alerting the hearer to the fact the logical subject is non-prototypical in that it represents foreground information. It allows the hearer to prepare for this significant subject, anticipating it and its possible effects in advance in order to cut down on processing time.

Exactly the same pragmatic effect may be achieved with prepositional phrases or temporal phrases, as we see in example (15), cited again below:

(15) Nje ya ofisi pa- me- fika wafanyikazi.
outside of office XVII- perf- arrive workers
'Outside the office there have arrived workers.'

Here a prepositional phrase provides the necessary background, contextual information, while the locative subject prefix alerts the hearer to the unusually relevant nature of the delayed subject.

In the case of example (45), the formulaic temporal phrase sets the scene, providing the necessary contextual information that a folktale is to follow:

(45) Hapo zamani za kale ku- li- kuwa na sungura
There time of antiquity 3s.loc- past- be with hare

pamoja na fisi.
together with hyena
'Once upon a time there was a hare and a hyena.' (sungura na fisi text, 1).

Here the locative prefix again alerts the reader to prepare for special contextual effects from the logical subject. The temporal nature of the scene-setting phrase (although it does contain a fossilised locative, hapo, "there") is an indication that the locative subject prefixes in this type of construction function as a dummy subject rather than having any real semantic significance. This in turn suggests that the sentence initial phrases, be they locative NPs (nyumbani), prepositional phrases (nje ya nyumba), or temporal-locative phrases (hapo zamani za kale) serve not so much as subjects, but rather as scene-setting phrases (i.e. background contextual information) followed by the dummy subject prefix which simply fills the subject slot required by the grammar of the language. Meanwhile, the post-verbal subject remains the logical subject. All this weakens the evidence for the position that locative NPs with the suffix -ni must be analysed as nouns with full nominal status simply based on their ability to function as the subjects of sentences.

5.1.1 Sentence Initial Locative Phrases As Scene-Setters

Locative phrases may equally well be used as "scene-setting" phrases, as discussed under section 4.2.3 above. In this case, the locative phrase is not subjectivised but occurs sentence initially before the subject of the verb. In example (47), repeated below, if the background implication is "outside the house something happened to food", the scene-setting locative phrase "outside the house" represents extra contextual information, while the subject chakula, 'food', also already accessible, represents the topic. If, on the other hand, the background implication is "outside the house something happened", with the locative phrase alone representing already accessible information, then it is perhaps best to analyse "outside the house" as the topic, even though it is not the subject of the verb:

(47)	Nje	ya	nyumba	chakula	ki-	li-	pik-	w-	a.
	outside	of	house	food	VII-	past-	cook-	pass-	ind

'Outside the house food was cooked.'

Either way, the sentence initial locative phrase communicates readily accessible contextual information, but it does not, in this case, function as the subject of the verb.

5.1.2 Subjectivised Locative Phrases, and Passive Verbs

The combination of an initial locative phrase with locative subject prefix, plus a passive verb, yields slightly different effects. As with the sentences above, the locative phrase begins the utterance in order to fulfil its role of providing necessary contextual information. It represents readily accessible information, and may or may not represent the topic, depending on the immediate context.

(13)	Nyumba-	ni	pa-	na-	pik-	w-	a	chakula.
	house-	loc	XVI-	pres-	cook-	pass-	ind	food

‘At home there is being cooked food/At home food is being cooked.’

In (13), either the whole predicate, (answering the question, “What is happening at home?”) or the patient alone (answering the question, “What is being cooked at home?”) is to be taken as the foreground information. This needs to be determined from the immediate context. If the background implication was “at home something is happening”, then nyumbani could conceivably function as topic, i.e. the sentence would be about “home, the place where something is happening”. If the background implication was “at home something is being cooked”, on the other hand, the topic would be harder to identify. Whether or not we call it the topic, in both cases, nyumbani has the same essential function in cognitive terms, namely to signal to hearer what contextual information she must access in order to process the rest of the sentence.

In this sentence, beginning as it does with the locative phrase and dummy subject prefix, the passive marker on the verb, combined with the fact that the verb is transitive, has the effect of signalling to the hearer that she should anticipate a patient subject following the verb, not a non-patient subject, which would be the default anticipatory hypothesis, following the pattern of prototypical presentational sentences (see 4.2.2). This in turn suggests to the hearer that the post-verb subject will probably be of less significance in the following discourse than the non-patient subject more typically found in presentational constructions. A passive transitive verb following a locative phrase thus signals to the hearer that she should not anticipate a prototypical presentational sentence i.e. one that introduces a new referent which yields considerable contextual effects, or will do so in the following discourse. This is true even if the patient alone is the element in focus, i.e. even if the patient provides the main contextual effects, answering the question, "What was cooked at home?" A true presentational sentence only answers the question, "What is/was the case?"

5.1.3 Conclusions Concerning Subjectivised Locative Phrases

The phenomena of locative constructions with the suffix -ni functioning as subjects of both active and passive verbs can thus be well explained in pragmatic terms. A speaker may manipulate the word order of her utterance, fronting such a phrase, to help the hearer identify the directly relevant information in anutterance and to process it as easily as possible. The locative subject prefix is an adaptable tool[6] which is manipulated by the speaker, not only fulfilling the requirements of the grammar for a verbal subject prefix, but also, as has been suggested above, signalling to the hearer what she should anticipate in the rest of the utterance.

5.2 Locative Applicatives As Indicators of Argument-Focus

Speaker strategies for signalling relevance also enable us to understand the function of the locative applicative constructions discussed in chapter II. As discussed in that chapter, in the case of locative applicatives, the only difference between a non-applicative and applicative sentence is the presence of the applicative marker on the verb. No preposition or other locative marker is dropped from the applicative version of the sentence when the oblique locative phrase is drawn into the verb.

Since the applicative marker on its own does not change the semantics, that is, the propositional form of a sentence, the applicative and non-applicative versions of a single sentence appear to be identical semantically and propositionally. Because on its own the applicative marker does not alter the semantic nuance of a sentence, it is available for exploitation at the level of the pragmatic intepretation of a sentence.

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[6] This is perhaps because of the vagueness of its meaning which is largely determined by context: it has become virtually grammaticalised in certain contexts, e.g. existential constructions, in much the same way as English "there".

Let us consider the following examples:

(56)	Leo	mwalimu	a-	li-	m-	pig-	a	mtoto	ofisi-
	today	teacher	1s-	past-	3s.om-	beat-	ind	child	office-

	ni.
	loc

‘Today the teacher beat the child in the office.’

Depending on the context, the focused element in the non-applicative sentence (56) might be the predicate (which has the background implication: “What did the teacher do today?”), the entire sentence apart from the scene-setting time phrase leo (with the background implication: “What happened today?”), or the object alone (with the background implication: “Who did the teacher beat today?”).

In example (51), however (repeated below), the verb is applicative, and the only possible focused constituent is the locative phrase ofisini:

(51)	Leo	mwalimu	a-	li-	m-	pig-	i-	a	mtoto
	today	teacher	3s-	past-	3s.om-	beat-	app-	ind	child
	ofisi-	ni.							
	office-	loc							

‘Today the teacher beat the child in the office.’

Here the background implication can only be “where did the teacher beat the child today?” The applicative extension on the verb stem alerts the hearer to the fact that an oblique phrase will be drawn into the verb phrase as the utterance continues, which she needs to identify. When she hears the noun mtoto, she makes the anticipatory hypothesis that this is the applied object in a beneficiary or goal role. (“The teacher hit for the child something.”) As the utterance proceeds, however, her hypothesis is invalidated by the locative phrase which follows, and she has to revise her hypothesis in order to arrive at a meaningful interpretation. She therefore decides that mtoto is in fact the non-applied object, while the locative phrase represents the applied phrase and the focused constituent. Special attention has thus been drawn to this locative phrase by the very fact that it has taken her extra effort to process it, because she has had to revise her hypothesis. The locative applicative construction, then, creates more processing effort for the hearer, but in the end it yields extra contextual effects by highlighting a locative phrase as the focused constituent in a sentence. The applicative extension in a locative applicative construction is thus a marker of a particular kind of argument-focus, namely focus on a locative phrase.

The locative applicative not only signals that a locative noun with the –ni suffix is in focus, but also that a locative prepositional phrase is the focused constituent in sentence. Whereas in (57) the focus is on the object, with the background implication "what are you doing outside the classroom?":

(57)	Ni-	na-	ji-	funza	Kifaransa	nje	ya	darasa
	1s-	pres-	refl-	teach	French	outside	of	classroom

'I'm learning French outside the classroom.'

and in (58) the focus is on the predicate with the background implication "what are you doing outside the classroom?":

(58)	Ni-	na-	ji-	funza	Kifaransa	nje	ya	darasa
	1s-	pres-	refl-	teach	French	outside	of	classroom

'I'm learning French outside the classroom.'

in (59) the focused element is the locative phrase:

(59)	Ni-	na-	ji-	funz-	i-	a	Kifaransa	nje	ya	darasa.
	1s-	pres-	refl-	teach-	app-	ind	French	outside	of	classroom.

'I'm learning French outside the classroom.'

5.2.1 Passive Locative Applicatives

An applicative extension to the verb stem may be combined with a passive extension to yield a passive locative applicative, which is also manipulated by the speaker to help the hearer process the particular relevance of various constituents. A passive non-applicative allows a predicate to be in focus while minimising the importance of the agent, (as discussed above), as in example (60B) below, where the foreground information is that food was cooked:

(60A)	Nyumba-	ni	pa-	li-	fany-	w-	a	nini?
	house-	loc	XVI-	past-	do-	pass-	ind	what

‘What was done at home?’

(60B)	Nyumba-	ni	pa-	li-	pik-	w-	a	chakula.
	house-	loc	XVI-	past-	cook-	pass-	ind	food

‘Food was cooked at home.’

A passive applicative, on the other hand, has a different function. It allows the speaker both to demote the agent, and at the same time to signal that the locative phrase represents the foreground information, just as the active applicative locative does.

(61A)	Chakula	ki-	li-	pik-	i-	w-	a	wapi?
	food	VII-	past-	cook-	app-	pass-	ind	where

‘Where was food cooked?’

(61B)	Chakula	ki-	li-	pik-	i-	w-	a	nyumba-	ni.
	food	VII-	past-	cook-	app-	pass-	ind	house-	loc

‘Food was cooked at home.’

In (61A), the applicative extension signals to the hearer that she should prepare to process an oblique phrase as part of the verb phrase, in other words as an applied object. The passive extension, meanwhile, informs her that she should not process the subject of the verb as an agent. The interrogative at the end of the sentence tells her that the applied object will be a locative phrase, and that it represents the missing, foreground, “desirable” information that the speaker needs the hearer to give her. In (61B), therefore, the background information is that food was cooked, and the foreground information is “at home”. The agent of the cooking is not relevant at all; the identity of the agent is thus superfluous information. The passive construction allows the speaker to leave out this irrelevant information, which, if included, would add to processing cost without yielding contextual effects. The applicative, on the other hand, facilitates the hearer's processing of the locative phrase as the focus of the sentence.

5.2.2 Combination of Passive Locative Applicatives and Subjectivised Locative NPs

Both fronted nouns with the –ni suffix and locative applicative constructions, then, have specific functions in terms of aiding a hearer to process information in a sentence as more or less relevant. In addition, the two strategies may be combined along with a passive verb to create still other combinations of foreground and background information. Whereas in a sentence such as (61B), the locative phrase which occurs at the end of the sentence is in focus, if it is fronted as in (62), it guides the hearer to process it in a different way:

(62)	Nyumba-	ni	pa-	li-	pik-	i-	w-	a	chakula.
	house-	loc	XVI-	past-	cook-	app-	pass-	ind	food

‘At home, food was cooked.’

Here the fronted locative phrase appears to function both as readily accessible contextual information, in other words, as the topic of the sentence, and at the same time as part of the information that yields contextual effects. The background implication is “what is happening *at home*?” In other words, the locative phrase does not represent new information for the hearer, but, together with the new information, it represents information that yields contextual effects.

We can see this function more clearly if we look at data within a wider discourse context. Consider the following exchange:

(63A)	Pa-	na	nini	kanisa-	ni?
	XVI-	with	what	church-	loc

‘What is going on at church?’

(63B)	Kanisa-	ni	pa-	na	kelele	kwa	sababu	pa-	na-	imb-
	church-	loc	XVI-	with	noise	for	reason	XVI-	pres-	sing-

i-	w-	a	nyimbo	na	watoto	Pia
app-	pass-	ind	songs	by	children.	also

pa-	na-	imb-	i-	w-	a	nyimbo	tofauti.
XVI-	pres-	sing-	app-	pass-	ind	songs	different

'At church there is singing of songs by children, there is noise. Also at church there is singing of different songs.'

In this example, the locative phrase kanisani represents the topic of the whole discourse, in the sense that the whole exchange is about the place, church. The applicative extension appears to highlight the fact that this topic is not simply a point of departure but instead needs to be processed as a topic which will have continuing importance and relevance throughout the exchange. The hearer needs to interpret all the information in the discourse bearing in mind that the location, church, is relevant and significant.

Similarly, in the example below, the locative applicative helps to signal that a topic should be processed as particularly relevant:

(64A)	Kwa	nini	ku-	na	watu	wengi	kanisa-	ni?
	for	what	XVII-	with	people	many	church-	loc

'Why are there lots of people at church?'

(64B)	Kwa	sababu	ku-	na-	uz-	w-	a	matunda.
	for	reason	XVII-	pres-	sell-	pass-	ind	fruit

'Because there fruit is being sold.'

(64C)	Kanisa-	ni	ku-	na-	uz-	i-	w-	a	matunda?
	church-	loc	XVII-	pres-	sell-	app-	pass-	ind	fruit

'They're selling fruit *at church*?'

In (64C) the locative phrase represents background, readily accessible information: the exchange is about what is happening at church. Nevertheless this information is also relevant, because if confirmed as true, together with the predicate it will have significant contextual effects for the hearer, causing great surprise.

A fronted locative phrase and an locative applicative verb thus seem to work together to indicate that a topic is especially relevant, that is, that it represents part of the sentence yielding direct contextual effects. In such cases, the topic appears to represent both background, contextual information, and foreground, directly relevant information.

5.2.3 Conclusions Concerning Locative Applicatives

To sum up, we see, then, that Swahili exploits pragmatically the fact that non-applicative and applicative locative constructions are identical on a semantic level. The language makes use of this construction to indicate a specific kind of argument-focus, namely focus on a locative phrase. When combined with a passive verb, the construction creates additional pragmatic effects. When combined with a subjectivised locative phrase, the construction appears to indicate a specially relevant topic.

Furthermore, we can conclude that both locative nouns with the -ni suffix and prepositional phrases can be brought into some kind of relationship with an applicative verb. This fact, however, does not allow us to draw detailed conclusions about the primary object status, or otherwise, of these applied locative phrases. The fact that the nominal status of locative nouns with the -ni suffix is ambiguous further complicates the picture.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Conclusions Concerning Locative Constructions

Locative nouns with the -ni suffix and locative applicative constructions, although linked by the general notion of location, bear little similarity to each other grammatically. Both constructions, however, are non-prototypical in their properties and behaviour. Whatever the reasons for their non-prototypical characteristics, these characteristics are exploited by Swahili speakers to guide hearers to process utterances as having specific pragmatic interpretations.

This study has perhaps brought us no nearer to an unambiguous grammatical classification of nouns taking the -ni suffix as nouns rather than prepositional phrases, although it has shown that the fact that a locative construction with the -ni suffix may be subjectivised in Swahili is not proof that these constructions *must* be nouns, since prepositional phrases may behave in the same way. Similarly, the study has not left us better able to conclude whether applied locative phrases have true object status or not. (We did, however, see in chapter II that the position of applied locative phrases i.e. non-adjacent to the verb, and the lack of object marking with these applied locative phrases, do not in themselves constitute definitive evidence for concluding that locative phrases are not true primary objects, since these characteristics may be attributed to the position of the locative thematic role on the thematic hierarchy).

What we are able to draw conclusions about, however, is the function of these locative constructions. We have seen that their non-prototypical features are made good use of in Swahili by speakers in order to facilitate the hearer's process of interpretation.

They are not simply ambiguous grammatical phenomena, but rather parts of the grammar of the language which are exploited to make the communication process more efficient. They are manipulated by the speaker in such a way as to interact with the hearer's natural processes of thought to yield maximum contextual effects i.e. significant, relevant information, for minimal processing cost. Locative nouns with the suffix -ni may be "subjectivised", or fronted, in order to indicate that a location is part of the background contextual information against which a hearer must process the rest of an utterance. That is to say, locative nouns may be fronted by a speaker to indicate what Lambrecht calls topic. Locative applicative constructions, on the other hand, are used to indicate that a locative phrase represents foreground information in an utterance. In Lambrecht's terms, then, the applicative extension which draws a locative phrase into relation with the verb signals that this phrase is the focus of the sentence, and that the sentence has argument-focus. When the two constructions are combined (together with a passive verb which makes the combination possible), the result is a locative topic which is simultaneously indicated as foreground information, in other words, as part of the focus of the sentence.

6.2 Conclusions Relating to Pragmatic Theories

These conclusions support the contention of relevance theory that a speaker directly manipulates the grammatical structure of a language in order to signal what the part of the utterance is that promises most contextual effects, in other words, what the directly relevant part of the sentence is. There is thus no need to posit an intermediate level of "information structure" in languages, which would mediate between grammatical structure on the one hand, and cognitive processes on the other, allowing the hearer to identify the information of the various constituents of a sentence. While Lambrecht's sentence types are a useful tool for beginning to categorise various kinds of topic and focus in a language, it is unnecessary to posit them as universals which will always be encoded in the grammars of languages. A language may have examples of grammatical encoding of particular combinations of topic and focus that do not fit precisely any of these types. We might analyse our examples where the fronted locative noun and the locative applicative are combined to produce highly relevant topics, or "focused topics" ((63B) and (64C) above) in this way.

6.3 Application to Bible Translation

The issues of topic and focus, and of the pragmatic interpretation of sentences are highly relevant for the task of Bible translation. In the past there has been a tendency to ignore the importance of the role of topic and focus in effective communication. As a result, many Bible translations, including widely used English translations, appear unnatural and awkward to readers who are unfamiliar with "Biblese", because the Hebrew and Greek strategies for indicating topic and focus have been uncritically reduplicated in the receptor language, while the receptor language's own strategies have been ignored. These translations increase the processing effort involved in reading and understanding the Bible, thereby lessening its relevance for readers. Understanding and using the receptor language's manipulation of grammar, phonological stress etc. to communicate topic and focus is vital for the production of a translation which communicates the message of the Bible with all the naturalness and "punch" of the original. It is only a translation which takes information value seriously that will be optimally relevant to the reader.

6.4 Suggestions For Further Research

It has been beyond the scope of this paper to consider the relationship between the use of the locative applicative construction and the semantics of the particular verbs used in the construction. Although in general both transitive and intransitive verbs may participate in locative applicative constructions, there appear to be certain restrictions on the use of the locative applicative to indicate foreground information, depending on the particular verb used. In the case of verbs which only occur in the applicative form, and of certain transitive verbs which must be used in the applicative form together with a locative phrase, the applicative form may not be used to indicate focus on the locative phrase. These restrictions need further research.

It has not been possible for the purposes of this paper to examine in detail applicative constructions with beneficiary, goal and instrument roles. In the light of the conclusions reached about locative applicatives, however, more research into the other roles could usefully be done to ascertain whether focus also has any part to play in their use. With some examples of beneficiary, goal and instrument roles, there appears to be a semantic difference between the applicative and non-applicative versions of the sentences, so that there is a semantic motivation for using one version of the sentence over the other. In other cases, however, there is no perceivable semantic distinction between the applicative and non-applicative versions. Whether or not there is a distinction appears to depend on a combination of the semantics of the verb, the animacy or non-animacy of the objects involved, and the potential meanings of the preposition involved in the non-applicative version. For those examples where there is no perceivable semantic difference, further research needs to be undertaken to ascertain whether the two versions are manipulated by speakers in order to achieve differences in topic and focus.

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APPENDIX

Sungura na Fisi Narrative

1.	Hapo	zamani	za	kale	ku-	li-	ku-	w-	a	na
	There	time	of	antiquity	3s-	past-	syll-	be-	ind	with

sungura	pamoja	na	fisi.
hare	together	with	hyena.

‘Once upon a time, there lived hare and hyena.’

2.	Wa-	li-	ku-	w-	a	marafiki	wakubwa	sana.
	3pl-	past-	syll-	be-	ind	friends	great	very

‘They were very great friends.’

3.	Siku	moja	wa-	li-	po-	ku-	w-	a	wa-	ki-	tembe-
	day	one	3pl-	past-	temp-	syll-	be-	ind	3pl-	prog-	walk-
	ind										

a	sungura	a-	li-	mw-	ambi-	a	fisi	“Rafiki
ind	hare	3s-	past-	3s-	tell-	ind	hyena	friend
my								

yangu	tu-me-	kaa	hapa	na	hawa	wamama	wetu	na
my	1pl-perf	live	here	with	these	mothers	our	and

wa-	na-	tu-	sumbu-	a	sana.
3pl-	pres-	1pl-	disturb-	ind	very

‘One day, while they were walking, hare told hyena, “My friend, we have lived here with these mothers of ours, and they are a big burden to us.”’

4.	Wa-	na-	tu-	cho-	sh-	a.
	3pl-	pres-	1pl-	tire-	caus-	ind

‘They wear us out.’

5.	Kila	wakati	tu-	na-	end-	a	ku-	wa-	tafut-	i-	a
	each	time	1pl-	pres-	go-	ind	inf-	3pl-	find-	app-	ind

chakula.
food

‘All the time we go looking for food for them.’

6.

Ha-	tu-	wez-	i	ku-	w-	a	na	raha.
neg-	1pl-	be.able-	neg.pres	inf-	be-	ind	with	peace.

'We have no peace.'

7.

Lazima	tu-	wa-	u-	e	wote.
necessity	1pl-	3pl-	kill-	subjn	all

'We must kill them both.'

8.

Halafu	wa-	ka-	anz-	a	ku-	pang-	a	mpango.
Then	3pl-	narr-	begin-	ind	inf-	plan-	ind	plan

'Then they began to make a plan.'

9.

Wa-	li-	pang-	a	kwamba	wa-	end-	e	wa-	chuku-
3pl-	past	plan-	ind	that	3pl-	go-	subjn	3pl-	take-

e	wamama	wao	wa-	wa-	tup-	e	kwa	mto
subjn	mothers	their	3pl-	3pl-	throw-	subjn	in	river

mto	mkubwa	sana.
river	big	very

'They planned that they would go and take their mothers and throw them in the river, a very big river.'

10.

Sasa,	sungura	a-	ka-	end-	a	a-	ka-	fich-	a
Now	hare	3s-	narr-	go-	ind	3s-	narr-	hide-	ind

mama	yake	msitu-ni	na	a-	ka-	end-	a	a-	ka-
mother	his	forest-loc	and	he-	narr-	go-	ind	he-	narr-

fung-	a	nguo	a-	ka-	let-	a	na	ku-	ya-	tup-
tie-	ind	rags	3s-	narr-	bring-	ind	and	inf-	3pl-	throw-

a	kwa	maji.
ind	in	water

'Now hare, he went and hid his mother in the forest and he went and tied up some rags and took them and threw them in the water.'

11.

Lakini	fisi	a-	ka-	end-	a	ku-	chuku-	a	mama yake
but	hyena	3s-	narr-	go-	ind	inf-	take-	ind	mother his

na	ku-ku- ja	na	ku-	m- tup-	a	kwa	maji.
and	inf-syll-come	and	inf-	3s-throw-	ind	in	water

'But hyena, he went and took his mother and came and threw her in the water.'

12. Mama fisi a- li- anz- a ku- pig- a makelele
mother hyena 3- past- begin- ind inf- hit- ind shouts

na ku- li- a a- ka- sem- a “Oo! Wana-
and inf- cry- ind 3s- narr- say- ind “Oh! Children-

ngu ni- saidi- eni, wana- ngu ni- saidi-
my 1s- help- impv.2pl children- my 1s- help-

eni ni- na- ku- f- a, ni- na- zam- a.
impv.2pl 1s- pres- inf- die- ind 1s-pres- drown-ind

‘Mother hyena, she began to give a shout and she cried, she said, “Oh my children, help me, my children help me, I am dying, I am drowning.”’

13. Lakini watoto wake ha- wa- ku- m- saidi- a.
But children her neg- 3pl- neg.past- 3s- help- ind

‘But her children did not help her.’

14. Lakini mama sungura naye ha- ku- pig- a
But mother hare contr. 3s.neg- neg.past hit- ind

makelele.
shouts

‘But mother hare, she didn’t shout.’

15. Fisi a- ka- uliz- a “Kwa nini mama yako ha- li-
hyena 3s- narr- ask- ind “Why mother your 3s.neg- cry-

i?
neg.pres

‘Hyena asked, “Why isn’t your mother crying?”’

16. Halafu sungura a- ka- jibu a- ka- sem- a
Then hare 3s- narr- answer 3s- narr- say- ind

‘Then hare answered and said,

17.

"Mimi	ni-	me-	u-	a	mama	yangu	tayari	ndio	
1s.emph	1s-	perf-	kill-	ind	mother	my	ready	indeed	cause

(maana)u-	na-	on-	a	ha-	li-	i	lakini	huyu
2s-	pres-	see-	ind	3s.neg-	cry-	neg.pres	but	this

wako	bado	yu-	ko	hai."
your	still	3s-	loc	alive

'"I have already killed my mother; that is why you see she is not crying, but this one of yours is still alive."'

18.

Mama	fisi	a-	li-	endele-	a	ku-	li-	a	mpaka
mother	hyena	3s-	past-	continue-	ind	inf-	cry-	ind	until

a-	ka-	f-	a	mpaka	a-	ka-	zam-	a	kwa	maji.
3s-	narr-	die-	ind	until	3s-	narr-	drown-	ind	in	water

'Mother hyena continued to cry until she died, until she drowned in the water.'

19.

Hiyo	ndiyo	mwisho	wa	hadithi	yangu.
This	emph	end	of	story	my

'This indeed is the end of my story.'

Kobe Narrative

1.

U-	me-	wahi	ku-	ju-	a	kwa	nini	kobe	a-
2s-	perf-	be.ready	inf-	know-	ind	for	what	tortoise	3s-

na	viraka	kwa	mwili?
with	patches	on	body

'Do you know why the tortoise has patches on its body?'

2.

Hadithi	yangu	i-	na-	amhusu	kobe	na	ndege.
story	my	IX-	pres-	is.about	tortoise	and	birds

'My story is about the tortoise and some birds.'

3.

Hapo	zamani	za	kale,	ku-	li-	kuw-	a	na
there	time	of	antiquity	XVII-	past-	be-	ind	with

mnyama	a-	li-	ye-	it-	w-	a	kobe.
animal	3s-	past-	rel-	call-	pass-	ind	tortoise

'Once upon a time there was an animal who was called tortoise.'

4.

Huyu	kobe	a-	li-	kuw-	a	na	marafiki	wake
this	tortoise	3s-	past-	be-	ind	with	friends	his

ambao	wa-	li-	kuw-	a	ni	ndege.
who	3pl-	past-	be-	ind	be	birds

‘This tortoise had his friends who were birds.’

5.

Siku	moja	kobe	a-	li-	alik-	w-	a	kw-	end-
day	one	tortoise	3s-	past-	invite-	pass-	ind	inf-	go-

a	karamu-	ni	nchi	ya	mbali	na	mahali	ambapo
ind	party-	loc	country	assoc	far	assoc	place	where

a-	li-	kuw-	a	a-	na-	ishi.
3s-	past-	be-	ind	3s-	pres-	live

‘One day tortoise was invited to go to a party in a country far from the place where he was living.’

6.

Basi	kobe	a-	li-	fikiri-	a	a-	ta-	fanya-	je
so	tortoise	3s-	past-	think-	ind	3s-	fut-	do-	how

kwani	mwendo	wake	ha-	u-	wez-	i
because	speed	his	3s.neg-	III.om-	be.able-	neg.pres

ku-	m-	ruhusu	ku-	fik-	a	hadi	karamu-	ni	kwa
inf-	3s.om-	allow	inf-	arrive-	ind	until	party-	loc	in

siku	moja.
day	one

‘So tortoise thought what he would do because his speed could not permit him to get to the party in one day.’

7.

Kobe	a-	li-	ka-	a	chini	na	a-	ka-	fikiri-
tortoise	3s-	past-	sit.down-	ind	down	and	3s-	narr-	think-

a	na	a-	ka-	amu-	a	kw-	end-	a	ku-	wa-
ind	and	3s-	narr-	decide-	ind	inf-	go-	ind	inf-	3pl.om

ambi-	a	ndege	wa	m-	saidie.
tell	ind	birds	3pl-	3s.om	help

‘Tortoise sat down and he thought and decided to go to tell the birds to help him.’

8.	A-	li-	ondokamoja		kwa	moja	a-	ka-	end-	a
	he-	past-	left	straight away			3s-	narr-	go-	ind

	hadi	ndege	wa-	li-	po-	kuw-	a	wa-	na-	ishi.
	until	birds	3pl-	past-	rel	be-	ind	3pl-	pres-	live

'He left, he went straight to the place where the birds were living.

9.	A-	ka-	wa-	uliz-	a	"Rafiki	zangu	ni-	ko	na
	3s-	narr-	3pl.om	ask-	ind	friends	my	1s-	loc	with

	shida.
	problem

'He asked them, "My friends, I have a problem."

10.	Tafadhali	m-	na-	wez-	a	ku-	ni-	saidi-	a?"
	please	3pl-	pres-	be.able-	ind	inf-	1s.om-	help-	ind

' "Please can you help me?"'

11.	Kwa	vile	ndege	wa-	li-	kuw-	a	rafiki	za	kobe.
	because		birds	3pl-	past-	be-	ind	friends	of	tortoise

	wa-	li-	mw-	ambi-	a	"Ndio	rafiki	yetu	tu-
	3s-	past-	3s.om-	tell-	ind	yes	friend	our	1pl-

	na-	wez-	a	ku-	ku-	saidi-	a."
	pres-	be.able-	ind	inf-	2s.om-	help-	ind

'Because the birds were tortoise's friends, they told him, "Yes, our friend, we can help you."'

12.	Basi	kobe	a-	li-	wa-	elez-	e-	a	kuwa
	so	tortoise	3s-	past-	3pl.om	explain-	app-	ind	that

	a-	li-	kuw-	a	a-	me-	alik-	w-	a	katika
	3s-	past-	be-	ind	3s-	perf-	invite-	pass-	ind	on

	safari	ya	mbali	kwenye	karamu	na	ha-	nge-
	journey	assoc	far	to	party	and	3s.neg-	cond-

	wez-	a	ku-	fik-	a	kwani	ha-	kuw-	a
	be.able-	ind	inf-	arrive-	ind	because	3s.neg-	be-	ind

	a-	na-	end-	a	a-	na-	weza	kw-	end-	a
	3s-	pres-	go-	ind	3s-	pres-	be.able	inf-	go-	ind

mwendo	wa	haraka.
speed	of	fast

'So tortoise explained to them that he had been invited on a distant journey to a party and he would not be able to arrive because he was not able to go fast.'

13.

Basi	kobe	a-	li-	wa-	uliz-	a	ndege	wa-	m-
so	tortoise	3s-	past-	3pl-	ask-	ind	birds	3pl-	3s.om

saidi-	e	mabawa	zao	ili	a-	wez-	e	ku-	fika
help-	subjn	wings	their	so.that	3s-	be.able	subjn	inf-	arrive

kwenye	karamu	hiyo.
at	party	this

'So tortoise asked the birds to help him with their wings so that he could arrive at the party.'

14.

Ndege	wa-	li-	mw-	ambi-	a	"Kama	u-	na-	wez-
birds	3pl-	past-	3s.om-	tell-	ind	if	2s-	pres-	be.able-

a	kw-	enda	na	sisi	basi	tu-	ta-	ku-	gawi-	a
ind	inf-	go	with	us	then	we-	fut-	2s.om	give-	ind
ind										

mabawa	zetu	na	tw-	end-	e	na	wewe.
wings	our	and	1pl-	go-	subjn	with	you

'The birds told him, "If you can go with us then we will give you our wings and go with you."'

15.

Basi	kobe	a-	li-	wa-	ambi-	a	"Sasa
so	tortoise	3s-	past-	3pl.om-	tell-	ind	now

m-	ta-	fanya-	je	ili	m-	wez-	e	ku-	wek
2pl-	fut-	do-	how	so.that	2pl-	be.able-	subjn	inf-	put

a	mabawa	ili	tu-	wez-	e	kw-	end-	a
ind	wings	so.that	1pl-	be.able-	subjn	inf-	go-	ind

zote?
all

'So tortoise told them, "Now what will you do so that you can put on the wings so that we can all go together?"'

16.

Ndege	wa-	li-	mw-	ambi-	a	“Vile	tu-	ta-	ka-
birds	3pl-	past-	3s.om-	tell-	ind	like.this	1pl-	fut-	narr-

vyo-	fany-	a,	tu-	ta-	to-	a	sisi	kila
like.this-	do-	ind	1pl-	fut-	remove-	ind	we	each

mtu	wa-	ta-	to-	a	mabawa	mbili
person	3pl-	fut-	remove-	ind	wings	two

na	tu-	ta-	ku-	wek-	e-	a	na	u-	ta-
and	1pl-	fut-	2s.om	put-	app-	ind	and	2s-	fut-

wez-	a	ku-	ruk-	a	anga-	ni.”
be.able	ind	inf-	fly-	ind	sky-	loc

‘The birds told him, “We will do it like this, we will remove two wings from each of us and we will fix them to you and you will be able to fly to the sky.”’

17.

A-	li-	furahi	a-	li-	po-	siki-	a	hivyo
3s-	past-	be.happy	3s-	past-	temp-	hear-	ind	like.this

na	a-	ka-	on-	a	kuwa	a-	ta-	wez-	a
and	3s-	narr-	see-	ind	that	3s-	fut-	be.able	ind

ku-	fika	karamu-	ni.
inf-	arrive	party-	loc

‘He was happy when he heard this, and saw that he would be able to get to the party.’

18.

I-	li-	po-	fik-	a	siku	ya	kw-	enda
IX-	past-	temp-	arrive-	ind	day	of	inf-	go

karamu-	ni	kobe	a-	li-	end-	e-	a	ndege
party-	loc	tortoise	3s-	past-	go-	app-	ind	birds

wa-	ka-	m-	wek-	e-	a	kila	mtu	mabawa
3pl-	narr-	3s.om	put-	app-	ind	each	person	wings

mawili.
two

‘When the day arrived for going to the party, tortoise went to the birds and they fixed two wings each to him.’

19.

Hapo	wa-	ka-	ondok-	a	wa-	ka-	pang-	a
there	3pl-	narr-	leave-	ind	3pl-	narr-	arrange-	ind

safari.
journey

‘Then they left, they planned their journey.’

20.

Ndege	wa-	li-	amu-	a	ku-	chukua	mti	na
birds	3pl-	past-	decide-	ind	inf-	take	stick	and

wa-	i-	shik-	e	ili	kobe	a-	wez-	e
3pl-	IX.om-	hold-	subjn	so.that	tortoise	3s-	be.able-	subjn

ku-	i-	shikilia	kwa	mdomo	na	wa-	wez-
inf-	IX.om-	hold	with	mouth	and	3pl-	be.able-

e	kw-	enda	na	yeye	pamoja.
subjn	inf-	go	with	him	together

‘The birds decided to take a stick and to hold it so that tortoise could hold it with his mouth and they could go together.’

21.

Basi	kobe	a-	li-	furahi	a-	ka-	sem-	a
so	tortoise	3s-	past-	be.happy	3s-	narr-	say-	ind

kuwa	ha-	wez-	i	sasa	ku-	anguka
that	3s.neg-	be.able-	neg.pres	now	inf-	fall

kwani	ha-	kuw-	a	na	uhakika	kama	mabawa
because	3s.neg-	be-	ind	with	certainty	if	wings

hayo	ya-	na-	wez-	a	ku-	m-	fik-	ish-	a
these	VI-	pres-	be.able-	ind	inf-	3s.om-	arrive-	caus-	ind

bila	yeye	ku-	anguka.
without	he	inf-	fall

‘Then tortoise was happy. He said that now he would not be able to fall, because he wasn’t sure if the wings could enable him to arrive without falling.’

22.

Wa-	li-	chuku-	a	mti	mmoja	mrefu	na	kobe
3s-	past-	take-	ind	stick	one	long	and	tortoise

a-	ka-	i-	shikili-	a	kwa	mdomo	wake	ndege	pia
3s-	narr-	IX.om-	hold-	ind	with	mouth	his	birds	also

wa-	ka-	shikili-	a	mmoja	upande	mwingine	na
3pl-	narr-	hold-	ind	one	side	some	and

mwingine	upande	ule	mwingine	wa-	li-	ondok-	a
other	side	that	other	3s-	past-	leave-	ind

na	wa-	ka-	m-	pelek-	a	kobe	hadi
and	3pl-	narr-	3s.om	take-	ind	tortoise	until

a-	li-	po-	kuw-	a	a-	me-	alik-	w-	a
3s-	past-	rel-	be-	ind	3s-	perf-	invite-	pass-	ind

karamu-	ni.
party-	loc

'They took a long stick and tortoise held it with his mouth. The birds also held some one side and others the other side. They left and they took tortoise up to the place where he was invited to the party.'

23.

Wa-	li-	po-	fik-	a	huko	kobe
3pl-	past-	temp-	arrive-	ind	there	tortoise

a-	li-	wa-	ambi-	a	kila	mtu	a-	na-	tak-
3s-	past-	3pl.om-	tell-	ind	each	person	3s-	pres-	want-

ik-	an-	a	a-	w-	e	na	jina	ndiyo	chakula
stat-	rec-	ind	3s-	be-	subjn	with	name	emph	food

i-	taka-	po-	kuj-	a	tu-	wez-	e	ku-	jua
IX-	fut-	tem	come-	ind	1pl-	be.able-	subjn	inf-	know

tu-	wez-	e	ku-	wa-	ambi-	a	vile
1pl-	be.able-	subjn	inf-	3pl.om-tell-		ind	how

wa-	taka-	vyo-	tu-	let-	a.
3pl-	fut-	this.way-	1pl-	bring-	ind

'When they arrived there, tortoise told them, "Each person is supposed to have a name, so that when the food comes, we will be able to know, we will know what to tell them to bring.'

24.

Kobe	a-	li-	sem-	a	yeye	a-	ta-	it-	w-
tortoise	3s-	past-	say-	ind	he	3s-	fut-	call-	pass-

nyinyi	nyote.
you	all

'Tortoise said that he would be called "All-of-you".'

25.

Basi	ndege	hawa-	ku-	ju-	a	ni	nini	kobe
so	birds	3pl.neg-	neg.past-	know-	ind	is	what	tortoise

a-	me-	pang-	a
3s-	perf-	arrange-	ind

'So the birds didn't know what tortoise was planning.'

26.

Wa-	li-	po-	let-	ew-	a	chakula	kobe
3pl-	past-	temp-	bring-	pass-	ind	food	tortoise

a-	li-	mw-	uliz-	a	a-	li-	ye-	let-	a
3s-	past-	3s.om-	ask-	ind	3s-	past-	rel-	bring-	ind
hiki	chakula		ni	cha	nani?				
this	food		is	for	who				

'When the food was brought, tortoise asked the person who brought it, "Who is this food for?"

27.

Yule	a-	li-	ye-	let-	a	chakula
the.one	3s-	past-	rel-	bring-	ind	food

a-	li-	mw-	ambi-	a	ni	ya	nyinyi	nyote.
3s-	past-	3s.om-	tell-	ind	is	of	you	all

'The person who brought the food told him, "It's for all of you!"

28.

Basi	kobe	a-	li-	wa-	ambi-	a	ndege	chakula	hiki
then	tortoise	3s-	past-	3pl.om	tell-	ind	birds	food	this

ni	changu	peke	yangu.
is	mine	own	my

'Then tortoise told the birds, "This food is for me alone."

29.

Kobe	a-	li-	amu-	a	ku-	kula	peke	yake	ndege
tortoise	3s-	past-	decide-	ind	inf-	eat	own	his	birds

a-	li-	mw-	angali-	a.
3s-	past-	3s.om-	watch-	ind

'Tortoise decided to eat the food on his own and the birds watched him.'

30.

Ndege	wa-	li-	pang-	a	mpango	wa	ku-	mw-
birds	3pl-	past-	arrange-	ind	plan	of	inf-	3s.om

umiz-	a	kobe.
hurt-	ind	tortoise

'The birds made a plan to hurt tortoise.'

31.	Wa-	li-	po-	maliz-	a	karamu	ndege	wa-	li-	kuw-	
	3pl-	past-	temp-	finish-	ind	party	birds	3pl-	past-	be	
	a	na	njaa	sana	kwa	vile	wa-	me-	onj-	a	
	ind	with	hunger	very	because		3pl-	perf-	taste-	ind	
	chochote.										
	anything										

'When the party finished, the birds were very hungry because they had not tasted anything.'

32.	Wa-	li-	amu-	a	wa-	rudi	nyumba-	ni.
	3pl-	past-	decide-	ind	3pl-	return	home-	loc

'They decided to return home.'

33.	Wa-	li-	m-	dangany-	a	kobe	wa-	li-	po-
	3pl-	past-	3s.om-	trick-	ind	tortoise	3pl-	past-	temp-
	wa-	ki-	elek-	e-	a	nyumba-	ni.		
	3pl-	prog-	direct.towards	app-	ind	house-	loc		

'They tricked the tortoised when they were going home.'

34.	A-	li-	po-	kuw-	a	a-	me-	shikili-	a	mti	ule	
	3s-	past-	temp	be-	ind	3s-	perf-	hold-	ind	stick	that	
	ndege	mmoja	a-	li-	mw-	onge-	lesh-	a				
	bird	one	3s-	past-	3s.om-	talk-	caus-	ind				
	a-	ka-	mw-	uliz-	a	kwa	nini	u-	me-	kul-	a	
	3s-	narr-	3s.om-	ask-	ind	for	what	2s-	perf-	eat-	ind	
	chakula	peke	yako?									
	food	own	your									

'When he was holding the stick one bird made him talk. He asked him, "Why did you eat the food on your own?"

35.	Kobe	a-	li-	po-	kuw-	a	a-	na-	tak-	a	
	tortoise	3s-	past-	temp-	be-	ind	3s-	pres-	want-	ind	
	ku-	sema	kuwa	yeye	wote	wa-	li-	kuw-	a	na	jina
	inf-	say	that	he	all	3pl-	past-	be-	ind	with	name
	na	yeye	ndiye	a-	li-	ye-	it-	w-	a	nyinyi	nyote
	and	he	emph	3s-	past-	rel-	call-	pass-	ind	you	all

kobe	a-	li-	fungu-	a	mdomo	na
tortoise	3s-	past-	open-	ind	mouth	and

a-	ka-	achili-	a	ile	mti	na	a-	ka-	anguk-
3s-	narr-	release-	ind	that	stick	and	3-	narr-	fall

a.
ind

'When tortoise wanted to say that he, everyone had a name and he was the one who was called All-of-you, he opened his mouth and released the stick and he fell.'

36.

Ndege	hawa-	ku-	mw-	on-	e-	a	huruma.
birds	3pl.neg-	neg.past	3s.om-	see-	app-	ind	mercy

'The birds showed him no mercy.'

37.

Wa-	li-	angu-	sh-	a	huo	mti	na
3pl-	past-	fall-	caus-	ind	that	stick	and

wa-	ka-	endele-	a	na	safari	yao.
3pl-	narr-	continue-	ind	with	journey	their

'They dropped the stick and continued with their journey.'

38.

Ndiyo	maana	siku	hizi	tu-	na-	on-	a	a-	ko
indeed	reason	days	these	1pl-	pres-	see-	ind	3s-	loc

na	alama	migongo-	ni	vipande	vipande.
with	marks	back-	loc	broken pieces	

'That is why these days we see he has marks, broken pieces on his back.'

VITA

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