

Locatives in Mashi

Aron Finholt

Department of Linguistics, University of Kansas
finhola@ku.edu, www.aronfinholt.com

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Introduction

Like many Bantu languages, Mashi (JD53; Maho 2009) exhibits extensive locative morphology in the nominal domain.

So-called locative noun class prefixes, e.g., NC 17 *ku-*/NC 18 *mu-*, generally appear prefixed to bare NPs and can control agreement on the verb, just like non-locative noun class prefixes (Meeussen, 1967; Maho, 1999; Marten, 2010).

- (1) *abaana ba-li o-mu-nyumpa*
2.child 2SM-be AUG-18LOC-9.house
'(The) children are in the house'
- (2) *o-mu-nyumpa mu-li abaana*
AUG-18LOC-9.house 18SM-be 2.child
'In the house are (the) children'
- (3) *o-ku-nyumpa ku-li abaana*
AUG-17LOC-9.house 17SM-be 2.child
'On the house are (the) children'

Unlike traditional noun class prefixes however, locative prefixes in Mashi may precede elements assumed to be larger than NP, e.g., demonstrative + N, *and still control agreement on the verb*.

(4) *Bare NP*: [LOC [_{NP} N]]

(5) *Intervening element*: [LOC [_{XP} DEM [_{NP} N]]]

Relatively few Bantu languages allow for a demonstrative to intervene between a locative prefix and root noun at all, and even fewer — if any — allow for the locative to still control agreement in such a configuration (Marten, 2010).

In this talk, I will present novel locative data from Mashi and discuss some possible ways to account for the basic ordering and agreement facts. I will conclude with a discussion of additional locative data that further complicate a potential analysis.

Locatives background

Locatives background

In the nominal domain, Bantu locative prefixes are traditionally treated as noun class morphology as they control subject-verb agreement in locative inversion (LI) in the same way that non-locative noun class markers control agreement.

(6) *Non-LI subject agreement*

òvâ-ndù **v-á-hítì** **mó-ngándá**
2-people 2SM-PST-enter 18LOC-9.house
'The guests entered the house'

(7) *LI subject agreement*

mó-ngándá **mw-á-hítì** **òvâ-ndù**
18LOC-9.house 18SM-PST-enter 2-people
'Into the house entered (the) people'

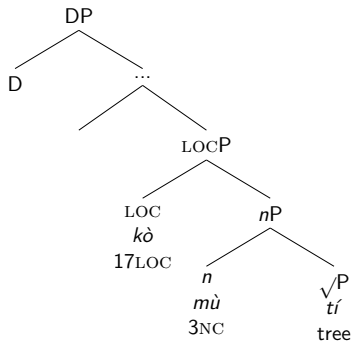
Otjiherero (R30), (Marten, 2006, 98)

Locatives background

Since locatives control subject agreement like other noun class prefixes, they are assumed to be situated within DP (Marten, 2010; Fuchs and van der Wal, 2022).

- LOC heads a DP-internal locative phrase and selects an NP complement (Bresnan and Kanerva, 1989; Marten, 2006).

(8) a. *Locative DP*



b. *kò-mù-tí*
17LOC-3-tree
'In the tree'

Otjiherero (R30), (Marten, 2006, 113)

Locatives background

That said, locative prefixes do not always behave like other noun class prefixes in all Bantu languages.

Marten (2010) argues that locative prefixes in siSwati (S43) behave more like independent prepositions than true noun class markers, as they never control agreement (9), and may precede a full DP, e.g., DEM+N (10).

(9) *e-ndl-ini* *ku-ya-shisa*.
LOC-9.house-LOC 17SM-PRES-be.hot
'In the house it is hot'

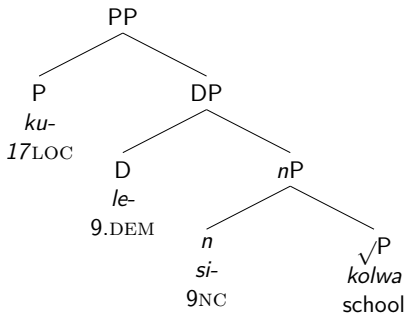
(10) *ku-le-si-kolwa*
17LOC-7.DEM-7-school
'At this school'

siSwati (S43) (Marten, 2010, 8)

Locatives background

- (11) a. ***ku-le-si-kolwa***
17LOC-7.DEM-7-school
'At this school'

- b. *Locative nouns as PPs*



Adapted from Marten (2010)

Locatives background

Main point: Bantu languages differ in how they treat locative nouns; some treat them as DPs, others treat them as PPs (Marten, 2010; Fuchs and van der Wal, 2022).

<i>Observation</i>	<i>Locative type</i>	
	<i>DP-internal (NC-like)</i>	<i>DP-external (P-like)</i>
LOC controls verb agreement	✓	✗
material between LOC and noun	✗	✓

I will show that locative prefixes in at least one Great Lakes Bantu language — Mashi (JD53) — exhibit properties of both types of locative, as they may precede a demonstrative and still control subject-verb agreement.

Mashi Data

In Mashi, we find a broadly similar pattern to what is described of locative prefixes in other Bantu languages; locative prefixes tend to appear on a bare NP, and obligatorily control agreement in cases of locative inversion.

(12) *Base word order*

enkafu *zi-li* ***mu-bulambo***
10.cow 10SM-be 18LOC-14.pasture
'The cows are in the pasture'

(13) *Locative inversion*

mu-bulambo ***mu-li*** *enkafu*
18LOC-14.pasture 18SM-be 10.cow
'In the pasture are the cows'

Importantly, locative inversion in Mashi is not limited to non-verbal predication. Unlike some Bantu languages (Bresnan and Kanerva, 1989; Bresnan, 1994; Van der Wal, 2022), locative inversion is possible with some stative, unergative verbs:

(14) *omurhabana a-tamire o-ku-ncingo*
1.boy 1SM-sit AUG-17LOC-9.bed
'A/the boy sits on the bed'

(15) *o-ku-ncingo ku-tamire omurhabana*
AUG-17LOC-9.bed 17SM-sit 1.boy
'On the bed sits a/the boy'

Though locative prefixes in Mashi tend to appear on bare NPs as in other Bantu languages, they are not limited to this position alone.

Much like the prepositional locatives in siSwati (Marten, 2010), a demonstrative may intervene between the locative and noun in Mashi. Unlike siSwati however, the locative still controls subject agreement in this configuration in Mashi:

(16) *LI, full form demonstrative*

o-ku-eriya *ncingo* *ku-tamire* *omurhabana*
AUG-17LOC-9.DEM 9.bed 17SM-sit 1.boy
'On that bed sits a/the boy'

(17) *LI, short form demonstrative*

mu-go-mugani *mu-li* *amigirizo*
18LOC-3.DEM-3.example 18SM-be 4.lessons
'In this example are lessons'

The same pattern holds for fronted temporal locatives as well:

(18) *Base word order*

ntiganano e-li ha-budufu
9.meeting 9SM-be 16LOC-14.night
'The meeting is at night'

(19) *Standard LI*

ha-budufu ha-li ntiganano
16LOC-14.night 16SM-be 9.meeting
'At night is the meeting'

(20) *LI + demonstrative*

mu-buno budufu mu-li ntiganano
18LOC-14DEM 14.night 18SM-be 9.meeting
'On this night is the meeting'

Discussion

From a typological perspective, the Mashi facts are difficult to explain.

- On the one hand, the locative prefixes in Mashi pattern like traditional Bantu noun class prefixes; they control subject-verb agreement in cases of LI.
- On the other hand, the Mashi locatives distribute like the DP-external prepositions observed in siSwati, but still control agreement on the verb.

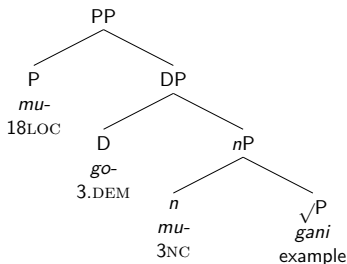
Need to account for the agreement facts — assume that a DP is projected

Need to account for the ordering facts — if DEM is D or moved to Spec, DP, then where is LOC?

Possible accounts - DP-external LOC

Treating the locatives in Mashi as prepositions accounts for the ordering facts and the derivational nature of locative noun classes, i.e., prefix stacking. (Marten, 2010)

(21) a. *Locative nouns as PPs*



b. ***mu-go-mu-gani***
18LOC-3.DEM-3-example
'In this example'

That said, this analysis has nothing to say about agreement.

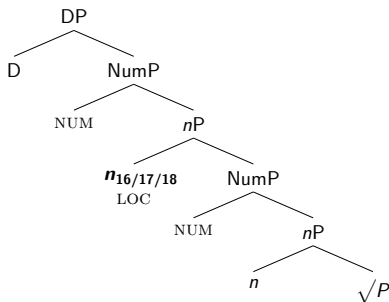
- *To account for the agreement facts, we must assume that the constituent containing the locative prefix is DP-internal.*

Possible accounts - DP-internal LOC

LOC heads second little *n* layer and selects NumP as its complement (Fuchs and van der Wal, 2022).

- derivational nature (prefix stacking) ✓
- agreement (LOC is DP-internal) ✓
- ordering (LOC-DEM-N possible) ✓... but with a caveat

(22) *DP internal structure*

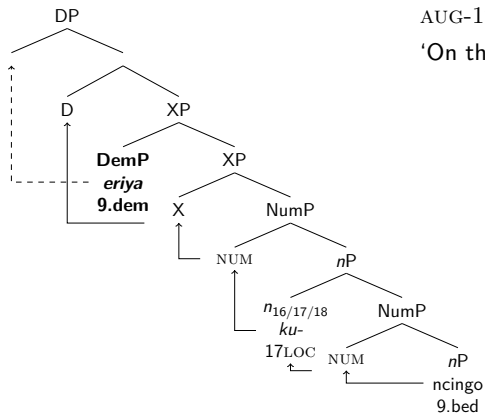


(Fuchs and van der Wal, 2022, 12)

Demonstratives in Bantu are assumed to be adjuncts base-generated above NumP. DEM-N order derived via N-to-D head-movement and then movement of DemP to Spec, DP (Carstens, 1997, 2011).

Assuming that n_{LOC} strictly takes a NumP complement, DemP must be base-generated high, making the order LOC-DEM-N impossible.

(23) a. *Locative heads nP*

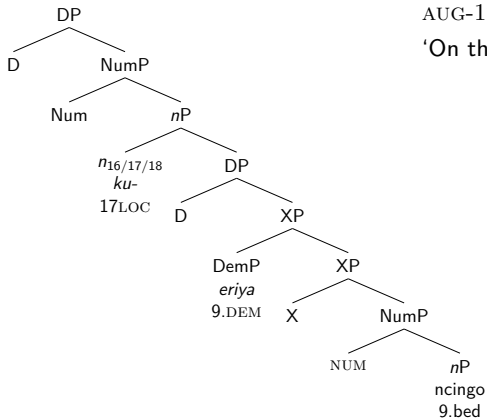


b. *o-ku-eriya* *ncingo*
 AUG-17LOC-9.DEM 9.bed
 'On that bed'

That said, if n_{LOC} can take complements of different sizes, then the layered $n\text{P}$ analysis can feasibly account for the ordering facts in Mashi.

Fuchs and van der Wal (2022) show that Kwanyama (R21) allows the augment to intervene between LOC and N , suggesting that n_{LOC} may take a DP complement.

(24) a. *Structure of Mashi locative*



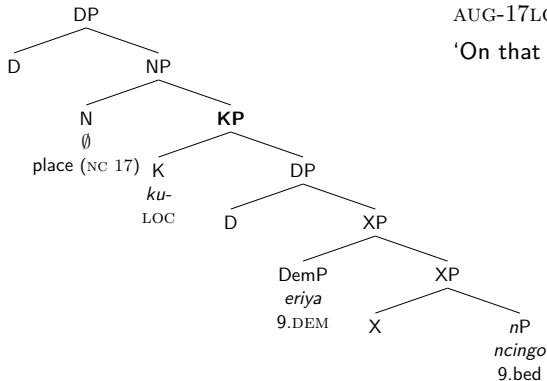
b. *o-ku-eriya* *ncingo*
 AUG-17LOC-9.DEM 9.bed
 'On that bed'

Possible Accounts - covert “place” noun

An alternate analysis that seemingly accounts for the ordering facts in Mashi is the covert “place” noun approach presented in Carstens (1997).

- locative prefixes are case markers (K) that take full DP complements
- a null “place” noun bearing φ -features selects agreeing KP as its complement

(25) a. *Locative heads KP*



b. *o-ku-eriya* *ncingo*
AUG-17LOC-9.DEM 9.bed
'On that bed'

Adapted from Carstens (1997)

Both the layered nP analysis (Fuchs and van der Wal, 2022) and the covert place noun analysis (Carstens, 1997) can account for the Mashi data.

Challenges:

- nP analysis: n_{LOC} must be able to select a complement larger than NumP
- place noun analysis: independent motivation for a null “place” noun

In both analyses it is crucial that the locative head — whether K or n_{LOC} — is situated within DP and may select a DP complement.

Other Issues

The distribution of the locative prefix in Mashi is further complicated by the fact that it may also be “left behind” by a fronted locative DP.

Interpretively, examples like (27) are identical to standard LI, however the locative prefix does not front along with the locative noun.

(26) *Base word order*

enkafu *zi-li* *o-mu-bulambo*
10.cow 10SM-be AUG-18LOC-14.pasture

‘(The) cows are in the pasture’

(27) *Fronted noun, low locative prefix*

obulambo *bu-li* *mu* *enkafu*
14.pasture 14SM-be 18LOC 10.cow

‘In the pasture are the cows’

Just as a locative noun may front alone, the locative prefix may 'front' and appear prefixed to the preverbal (non-locative) subject but still be interpreted low.

(28) *Base word order*

enkafu *zi-li* *o-mu-bulambo*
10.cow 10SM-be AUG-18LOC-14.pasture
'(The) cows are in the pasture'

(29) *Fronted locative prefix*

mu-enkafu *mu-li* *bulambo*
18LOC-10.cow 18SM-be 14.pasture
'The cows are in the pasture' (#'in the cows is the pasture')

Issues to be addressed:

- Where is the locative base-generated, and what does it take as its complement?
- Can the locative move alone?
- Why/how does it still control agreement?

Conclusion

Locative prefixes in Mashi exhibit properties of traditional noun class prefixes and DP-external prepositions; a demonstrative may intervene between the locative and noun, but the locative still controls subject-verb agreement.

There are multiple potential analyses for the ordering/agreement facts:

- layered *nP* analysis (Fuchs and van der Wal, 2022)
- covert “place” noun analysis (Carstens, 1997)

The full distribution of the locative — including its ability to ‘front’ without the locative noun — poses other complex questions that need to be addressed by these accounts/future work.

Thank you!

Special thanks to Mitima Burhungane for his time and for sharing his knowledge of Mashi with me. Thanks as well to my advisor, John Gluckman, and the other members of the syntax/semantics seminar (RiFFL) and the Bantu reading and research group at the University of Kansas (KUBantu).

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That said, the locative prefix may not always appear in a postverbal position; it is sensitive to the semantic properties of the subject and/or predication relation:

(30) enyumba e-li **mu** irange

9.house 9SM-be 18LOC color

'Inside the house is painted/colored'

(31) bulambo bu-li **mu** ✓enkafu/#Johne/#mulume

14.pasture 14SM-be 18LOC 9.cow/1.John/1.man

'In the pasture is a cow/John/a man'