



1983

Advancements to direct object in Chi-Mwi:ni

Donald G. Frantz
SIL-UND

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.und.edu/sil-work-papers>



Part of the [Linguistics Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Frantz, Donald G. (1983) "Advancements to direct object in Chi-Mwi:ni," *Work Papers of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, University of North Dakota Session*: Vol. 27 , Article 4.

DOI: 10.31356/silwp.vol27.04

Available at: <https://commons.und.edu/sil-work-papers/vol27/iss1/4>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by UND Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Work Papers of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, University of North Dakota Session by an authorized editor of UND Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact und.common@library.und.edu.

ADVANCEMENTS TO DIRECT OBJECT IN CHI-MWI:NI

Donald G. Frantz

0. Introduction
1. Direct Object Properties
2. Double Object Clauses
3. The Applied Verb
 - 3.1 Benefactive Advancement
 - 3.2 Goal Advancement
 - 3.3 Instrument Advancement
4. Summary

0. Introduction¹

In an excellent description of certain clauses of Chi-Mwi:ni, Kisseberth and Abasheikh (1977) have provided just the data necessary for a restatement of their description within relational grammar. Their conclusions that in many clauses object properties do not 'converge' on a single nominal, and that the notion of 'principal object' is not discrete, will be shown to be indicative of the need for different rules of instrument advancement, and for a revision of the Chomeur Law as proposed by Perlmutter and Postal (1983).

Because the Kisseberth and Abasheikh (1977) article (henceforth K&A) is readily accessible, a minimum of data will be presented here. All examples are from K&A. I have included their numbering for examples in square brackets.

1. Direct Object Properties

The following examples illustrate properties of clear cases of final direct objects (henceforth final 2's):²

- (1) [7a] Wake wa-mw-osheze mwa:na.
women c.2-c.1-wash child
'The women washed the child.'
- (2) [14] Wa:na wa-zi-bozele zibu:ku.
children c.2-c.8-steal books
'The children stole the books.'

Observe the immediate post-verbal position of 'child' and 'books', lack of preposition or other marker of grammatical relation in these

3. The Applied Verb

The vast majority of double object clauses involve verb stems which contain the so-called applied suffix (which has several variant forms which are apparently predictable according to complex morpho-phonemic rules). In all cases, I will say that this suffix registers the advancement of a nominal to 2.

3.1 Benefactive Advancement

While Benefactives (Ben) in Chi-Mwi:ni apparently never are final obliques (marked by a preposition) as they often are in some Bantu languages, the syntax of clauses involving a notional Benefactive is accounted for nicely by an analysis in which the principal object, i.e. final 2, is an initial oblique, the necessary advancement of which puts an initial 2 en chomage. Thus in a clause such as (9) (compare (8) which lacks a Ben), 'children' has all of the final 2 properties, including potential advancement to 1 as seen in (10).

(8) [27a] Hamadi \emptyset -pishiṭe cha:kuja.
H. c.1-cook food

'Hamadi cooked food.'

(9) [27b] Hamadi \emptyset -wa-pikilile wa:na cha:kuja.
H. c.1-c.2-cook:appl children food

'Hamadi cooked food for the children.'

(10) [31] Wa:na wa-pikilila cha:kuja na Hamadi.
children c.2-cook:appl:pass food by H.

'The children had food cooked for them by Hamadi.'

As K&A demonstrate, the initial 2 in (9) and (10) has no final 2 properties; it is a final Cho.

3.2 Goal Advancement

Some verbs allow what is apparently an oblique marked by preposition ka, as seen in (11).

(11) [53] A:sha \emptyset -andishiṭe: xati ka Nu:ru.
A. c.1-write letter to N.

'Asha wrote a letter to Nuru.'

In such cases, the single unmarked nominal following the verb is the final (and initial) 2, so it has the object properties discussed in section 1.

- (12) [54a] A:sha \emptyset -y-andishiḽe: xati ka Nu:ru.
A. c.1-c.5-write letter to N.

'Asha wrote the letter to Nuru.'

- (13) [54b] Xati y-andishila ka Nu:ru na A:sha.
letter c.5-write:pass to N. by A.

'The letter was written to Nuru by Asha.'

Thus in (12) 'letter' can trigger verb agreement and may advance to 1 as in (13). However, if the verb of such a clause has the applied suffix, the initial oblique is principal object, i.e. final 2, and the initial 2 is en chomage and lacks properties of a final 2:

- (14) [51b] A:sha \emptyset -mw-andikilile Nu:ru xati.
A. c.1-c.1-write:appl N. letter

'Asha wrote a letter to Nuru.'

- (15) [51c] Nu:ru \emptyset -andikilila: xati na A:sha.
N. c.1-write:appl:pass letter by A.

'Nuru had letter written (to him) by Asha.'

- (16) [51d] *Xati y-andikilila Nu:ru na A:sha.
letter c.5-write:appl:pass N. by A.

'The letter was written to Nuru by Asha.'

3.3 Instrument Advancement

The most complex, and also the most interesting, advancement to 2 is that in which the advancee is an initial Instrument. As clearly demonstrated by K&A, the Instrument in such cases must be a topic. Compare (17) and (18):

- (17) [59a] Nu:ru \emptyset -tiḽanziḽe: nama ka: chisu.
N. c.1-cut meat with knife

'Nuru cut the meat with a knife.'

- (18) [59b] Chisu, Nu:ru \emptyset -tiḽangilile: nama.
knife, N. c.1-cut:appl meat

'The knife, Nuru cut meat with (it).'

An advanced Instrument does not have immediate post-verbal position, as

a consequence of its topicality. But it can advance to 1, as seen in (19):

- (19) [85] Chisu sh-tiḷangilila: nama na Nu:ru.
knife c.7-cut:appl:pass meat by N.

'The knife was used to cut the meat by Nuru.'

Advanced Instruments as final 2 do not trigger agreement as do other final 2's; see e.g.(18). This apparently needs to be stated as an ad hoc constraint on final 2's which are initial Instruments.

Next we consider cases in which the initial 2 is animate, as in (20).

- (20) [87b] Si:ndanu, Aḷi ø-m-durilile Hamadi.
needle A. c.Ṭ-c.1-prick:appl H.

'The needle, Ali pricked Hamadi with (it).'

Note that an animate initial 2 can trigger verb agreement even though the initial Instrument is a final 2. I propose to explain this as follows: Perlmutter and Postal (1983) and Johnson and Postal (1981) propose a revision of the Chomeur Law to permit retreat of a nominal that would otherwise be put en chomage. The clearest cases where such weakening of the law seems to be necessary involve Instrument advancement. In such cases, the initial 2 is a final 3 rather than a chomeur. I propose that the initial 2 of (20), Hamadi, is a final 3. We need to add to agreement rules for Chi-Mwi:ni that such final 3's can trigger object agreement. (This may not be true if the Instrument advances to final 1. None of the examples provided by K&A show any object agreement when the initial Instrument is final 1, and they do not mention whether or not it is possible. If such agreement is not possible, it is not clear whether this should be accounted for by a constraint that an advancing Instrument which is final 1 must put a 2 en chomage, or whether a surface constraint blocks agreement of passive verbs with an object.)

If the initial 2 is human, as in (20), it may advance to 1 as in (21), though in such cases the final 1 is post-verbal. This linear order is a consequence of the requirement that advanced Instruments must be the topic. If the Instrument nominal is outside the clause, e.g. as Head of a relative clause, then the final 1 can occur in preverbal position, as in (22).

- (21) [92c] Si:ndanu, ø-durilila Hamadi na Aḷi.
needle c.Ṭ-prick:appl:pass H. by A.

'The needle, Hamadi was pricked with (it) by Ali.'

- (22) [107c] Li:kopi luti la mwi:zi \emptyset -bigili:lá ?
 where stick RM thief c.1-hit:appl:pass

'Where is the stick that the thief was hit with?'

This is the only situation in which an initial 2 may advance to 1 if there is a non-initial 2. As indicated above, if the 2-advancee is other than Instrument, the initial 2 lacks all final object properties.

Instrument advancement to 2 is possible in clauses in which another nominal is also a 2 advancee. In such cases, everything we have said above holds true. The initial 2, put en chomage by the non-instrumental advancee, has no final 2 properties. The non-initial 2, if inanimate, will be put en chomage by the Instrument advancement; however if the non-initial 2 is animate it will retreat to 3. Thus (23) has the strata indicated in (24):

- (23) [116] Sa:buni, muke \emptyset -wa-fulile wa:na nguwo.
 soap woman c.1-c.2-wash:appl children clothes

'The soap, the woman washed clothes for the children with (it).'

(24)

Instr	Ben	2	1
Instr	2	Cho	1
2	3	Cho	1

One might question whether or not the Instrument of (23) has advanced at all. In support of the final termhood of the Instrument in (23), observe that a final Instrument cannot be the shared nominal in a relative clause, as shown in (25), but must be an advancee as in (26):

- (25) [118] *chisu cha Nu:ru \emptyset -tiłanziło: nama ka: chò
 knife RM N. c.1-cut meat with it

'the knife that Nuru cut the meat with'

- (26) [119] chisu cha Nu:ru \emptyset -tiłangililo: namá
 knife RM N. c.1-cut:appl meat

'the knife that Nuru cut the meat with'

- (27) [120] sabuni za: muke \emptyset -wa-fulilo wa:na nguwo
 soap RM woman c.1-c.2-wash:appl children clothes

'the soap that the woman washed the clothes for the children with'

The relative clause with 'soap' as Head corresponding to (23) is well-formed, as shown in (27); this supports my claim that 'soap' is a

final 2 in (23). Furthermore, there is a sentence (28) corresponding to (23) in which the initial Instrument is final 1. However, as mentioned above, it seems that passive clauses never show verb agreement with a final 3:

- (28) [115] Sa:buni s-fulila wa:no nguwo na:muke
 soap c.8-wash:appl:pass children clothes by woman
 'The soap was used to wash the clothes for the children
 by the woman.'

4. Summary

Certain oblique nominals may advance to 2, including apparent Benefactives and what K&A call 'indirectives' (possibly initial 3's). In the case of Ben, the advancement is necessary; i.e. there are no final Ben's. Most verbs register advancement to 2 by the 'applied' suffix on the verb. A few verbs, such as bozole 'steal' (see (4)), do not register this advancement; presumably the advancement is not optional for any such verbs.

An Instrument may advance to 2 if it is also the topic. In such cases, if the initial 2 is animate it retreats to 3 rather than being put en chomage. Such 3's may advance to 1 if human.

Verbs agree with final 1's, and may agree with final 2's unless the nominal as final 2 is an initial Instrument. Final 3's may trigger verb agreement (though there may be a constraint against agreement of passive verbs with final 3's).

Footnotes

¹I am grateful for very helpful critical comments on an earlier draft by Nanci Fisher Erkert and Pam Simons.

²Abbreviations used in glosses include pass = passive, and appl = applicative. Verb prefixes are glossed according to the noun classes they reflect; thus 'c.1' is noun class 1. Other abbreviations used in this paper include 1 = subject, 2 = direct object, 3 = indirect object, Cho = chomeur, Ben = Benefactive, Instr = Instrument, RM = relative clause marker. \emptyset - is the significant absence of a prefix.

³There are apparently no clear cases of final 3's in Chi-Mwi:ni which are flagged by prepositions, so there are no facts other than agreement of which I am aware which support the hypothesized final 3-hood of the initial 2 in cases of Instrument advancement.

⁴Either of the following analyses of sentences such as (21) accounts for the data available:

(i)

Instr	2	1
2	3	1
2	1	Cho

(ii)

Instr	2	1
2	1	Cho

Of more than passing interest is that both of these analyses have transitive final strata for passive clauses (though only (ii) meets the strict definition of passive in Perlmutter and Postal (1977)).

References

- Cole, Peter and Jerrold Sadock, eds. 1977. *Syntax and Semantics 8: Grammatical Relations*. Academic Press.
- Doke, C.M. 1938. *Text Book of Lamba Grammar: Witwaterstrand University Press*. Johannesburg.
- Johnson, David and Paul Postal. 1981. *Arc Pair Grammar*. Princeton University Press.
- Kisseberth, Charles and Mohammad Abasheikh. 1977. The object relationship in Chi-Mwi:ni, a Bantu language. In Cole and Sadock, eds.
- Perlmutter, David and Paul Postal. 1977. Toward a universal characterization of passivization. BLS 3. (Reprinted in Perlmutter (ed), *Studies in Relational Grammar 1*. (1983).)
- _____. 1983. Some proposed laws of basic clause structure. In Perlmutter, D. (ed.) *Studies in Relation Grammar 1*. University of Chicago Press.