This study presents the outcomes of the author’s linguistic fieldwork on the Bantu lect Isanzu (F31B) that is spoken in the north central Tanzania. According to the Ethnologue database Isanzu is a threatened language (6b) because of the relatively small number of speakers (26 000) and the low intergenerational transmission. Data collection aimed at basic description of phonetics and morphology. Method used to achieve this goal consisted in translational elicitation of the 207-item Swadesh list, H. Batibo’s questionnaire on Bantu morphosyntax as well as of recording and transcribing narratives (fairy tales and Pear story).

The analyses of topical (Todorov/Weinstein, 1969) and narrative (Labov, 1997; Berman, 1997) organization of Isanzu oral texts as well as its morphological analyses (Masele, 2001; Beletskiy/Diyammi, 2019; Yazyk afrikanskogo folklora, 1997) showed that Isanzu uses the following TAM1/2 combinations to form predicate complexes which constitute the main structures within a traditional narrative (fairy tale).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TAM Structures</th>
<th>ayi-</th>
<th>ø-ile</th>
<th>ø-a</th>
<th>-ki-</th>
<th>-(a)ka-</th>
<th>-ika-</th>
<th>ø-a</th>
<th>azi-</th>
<th>ø</th>
<th>-e</th>
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<tr>
<td>AUX1</td>
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<td>PRST</td>
<td>CONT</td>
<td>NARR1</td>
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Table 1: Verbal Marking of Narrative Structures in Isanzu

The consecutive forms which constitute the chronological order of events are marked with the infix -(a)ka-. Its allomorph (?) -ika- is used to mark microsituation within a given situation. Both orientation and resolution are marked with past discontinuous auxiliary verb ayi- to situate the whole story in the remote (mystical) past. The perfective introduces the triggering event as well as the last event in the resolution sequence. Information clauses being a subtype of commentary clauses are opposed to consecutive and orientational clauses and use all other TAM except for -(a)ka-/ika- and ayi-. Retrospective shifts (past, future) are accomplished through the use of past form ø-a and syntactical or analytical future forms ø- and azi-. Background actions are introduced with present or continuous markers ø-a and -ki-

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1 The research was supported by the Endangered Language Fund through Language Legacies program 2021.
respectively. Coda can be perceived both as the last action in the story (and marked with -aka-) or a completed action in the storyteller’s and listeners’ world and marked with the past form a-a. It is interesting to note that the climax (the most reportable event) has no special marking.

Old equilibrium is marked with discontinuous past:

(1) M-nyangala ni i-nzogu ayi kihumbashuya.
   1CL-HARE AND 10-ELEPHANT AUX1 FRIEND
   ‘Hare and Elephants [long time ago] used to be good friends.’

(2) I-nzogu n=umu m-nyangala ayi leza i Ma-tanga
   10-ELEPHANT AND=1HARE AUX1 EAT AUG-6CL-VEGETABLE
   m[u] mu-gunda w-a mu-ntu.
   16CL 3CL-FIELD 1CL-GEN 1CL-HUMAN
   Elephants and Hare used to eat [together] vegetables from the farer’s field.

Collapse of the old equilibrium is marked with perfective form:

(3) M-nyangala na=e w-end-ile mu-n’wanso w-aka-hang-a
   1CL-HARE AND=HE 3SG-GO-PFTV 1CL-THAT 3SG-PST-GET-FV
   i-n karanga.
   AUG-10CL-PEANUT
   ‘Once Hare went [there] alone to find peanuts.’

New equilibrium is marked with habitual forms:

(4) Yeyo n-suko i-n-kanga i-tul-a
   CL9_THIS 9CL-REASO AUG-9-GUINEAFOWL 9CL-LAY_EGGS-FV
   i-kipasu du.
   9CL-DRY-SEASON ONLY
   ‘This is why Guineafowl lays eggs only during the dry season.’

Literature


