Verbal Marking of Narrative Structures in Ihanzu (Bantu, Tanzania)

Stanislav Beletskiy	Белецкий Станислав Борисович
Higher School of Economics Moscow	Высшая школа экономика (Москва)
stas.beletskiy@gmail.com	stas.beletskiy@gmail.com

This study presents the outcomes of the author's linguistic fieldwork[1] 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).

TAM / Structures	*ayi-*	*Ø-ile*	*Ø-a*	*-ki-*	*-(a)ka-*	*-ika-*	*a-a*	*azi-*	*-o-*	*-e*
	AUX1	PERF	PRST	CONT	NARR1	NARR2	PST	AUX2	FUT	OPT
Orientation	V		V	V						
Triggering event		V			V					
Complicating action					V	V				
Information		V	V	V			V	V	V	V
Climax					V					
Resolution	V	V			V					
Coda					V		V			

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 *a-a* and syntactical or analytical future forms *-o-* and *azi-*. Background actions are introduced with present or continuous markers *Ø-a* and *-ki-*

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　　　**ayɨ**　kihɨmbashuya.

　　　　1CL-HARE AND 10-ELEPHANT **AUX1**　FRIEND

　　　　'Hare and Elephants [long time ago] used to be good friends.'

(2)　　I-nzogu　　　　　n=ɨ　　　　　m-nyangala **ayɨ**　**leza**　i-ma-tanga

　　　　10-ELEPHANT AND=AUG 1CL-HARE **AUX1 EAT** AUG-6CL-VEGETABLE

　　　　mɨ　　　mɨ-gunda　　　w-a　　　　　mɨ-ntɨ.

　　　　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**　　　　mɨ-ng'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-sɨko　　　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

Beletskiy, S., Diyammi, M.P. (2019). A phonological and morphological sketch of Isanzu lect (Bantu, Tanzania). J. Sib. Fed. Univ. Humanit. soc. sci., 12(1).

Labov, W. (1997). Some further steps in narrative analysis. Journal of Narrative & Life History, 7(1-4), 395–415.

Masele Balla F.Y.P. (2001). The linguistic history of SiSuumbwa, KISukuma and KI Nyamwezi in Bantu Zone F: A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Memorial University of Newfoundland, Department of Linguistics, 794.

Ruth A. Berman (1997). Narrative Theory and Narrative Development: The Labovian Impact. In: Journal of Narrative and Life History, Vol. 7, pp. 235-244.

Todorov Tzvetan, Weinstein Arnold. Structural Analysis of Narrative. In: NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction, Vol. 3, No. 1 (Autumn, 1969). Duke University Press, pp. 70-76.

Yazyk afrikanskogo folkloea [Language of African Folklore] (1997). Moscow: Vostochnaya literatura.