GRAMMATICAL RELATIONS IN IKALANGA*

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Although facts about grammatical relations in many Bantu languages have been established since the early 1970s, there are still languages in this family which have not benefited from such studies. One of these is Ikalanga, spoken in Botswana and Zimbabwe. This paper examines the core grammatical relations of Ikalanga, exploring its typological status in terms of double object constructions. In prototypical ditransitive constructions, the Recipient NP has all of the properties of Direct Object, whereas the Theme NP has only some of those features. The conclusion is that Ikalanga is an intermediate language if object symmetry is scalar. However, it is shown that in marked applicative constructions where the Benefactive is non-human and the Theme is human, there is reason to argue for 'split direct-objecthood', reflecting the impact of animacy in the assignment of direct objecthood.

1. Introduction.

One area in which Bantu languages have contributed to the growth of various syntactic theories is grammatical relations. Starting from the 1970s, through the efforts of Relational Grammar, various studies were carried out on the nature of grammatical relations in a number of Bantu languages. Notable among these are Hawkinson & Hyman (1974), Kimenyi (1976), Kisseberth & Abasheikh (1977), Gary (1977), Morolong & Hyman (1977), Hyman & Duranti (1982), Gary & Keenan (1977), and Dryer (1983). This interest in grammatical relations in Bantu languages continued in the 1990s with a focus on establishing a typology of dou-

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ble object constructions, leading to the phenomenon of object asymmetry (Bresnan & Moshi 1993; Alsina & Mchombo 1993).

Despite the impressive coverage of various Bantu languages in the exploration of grammatical relations, there are still languages within this family that have not been studied. Even though there are many generalizations known about the behavior of grammatical relations within the family, some features that may be peculiar to certain languages may not have previously been brought out. This is why we consider it appropriate to study the grammatical relations in Ikalanga, a Bantu language spoken in parts of Botswana and Zimbabwe. Ikalanga belongs to the Shona cluster and in Guthrie (1967-71), it is classified as S.16, putting it in the Area S with other southern Bantu languages (see Mathangwane 1999 for more information on Ikalanga).

The main goal of the paper is to examine grammatical relations in Ikalanga and establish its typological status in terms of the syntactic phenomenon of object symmetry (Bresnan & Moshi 1993).

2. Overview of the Framework.

In this section, we provide an overview of the framework within which the analysis of grammatical relations in Ikalanga is carried out. Concern with grammatical relations came to the fore in the 1970s as a result of work done in Relational Grammar. Over the last three or so decades various studies have been carried out within a variety of theoretical frameworks. However, the approach adopted here goes back to Keenan (1975, 1976) which in recent times has been adopted by Givón as presented in Givón (1995, 1997, 2001).

The approach involves identifying the features that are characteristic of Subjects and Direct Objects based on evidence internal to the language. These properties fall into two categories — overt coding properties and behavioral properties. As Givón (2001: 175) points out, “The overt coding properties of GRs [grammatical relations] are perceptually discernible features of grammatical code, such as morphology, intonation or word-order.” Prominent among these properties are verb agreement, nominal morphology of case marking, and the position of the noun phrase in relation to the verb and other arguments in the sentence. The behavioral properties, referred to by Givón (1997, 2001) as behavior and control properties, are “a list of the syntactic constructions — or ‘processes’ — whose behavior can be governed, at least potentially, by the GRs subject and/or direct-object.” (Givón 2001: 177) Based on Keenan (1976), Givón (2001: 178; also 1997:8) provides the following as examples of syntactic processes “whose be-

havior is most likely to be governed by either the subject or direct-object”: promotion to Direct Object, demotion from Direct Object, passivization, reflexivization, causativization, equi-NP reference in complementation, raising, possessor raising, anaphoric co-reference in chained clauses, relativization, wh-questions, cleft-focus constructions, and participial adverbial clauses. A language may make use of more than one of these properties, but not all of these are likely to be used in every language, or by all the grammatical relations in a language.

3. Properties of Subject and Direct Object.

In this section, we discuss the properties that characterize Subject and Direct Object NPs.

3.1 Word order. The first of the overt coding properties is word order. As in all Bantu languages, the NP in Ikalanga that bears the Subject relation normally precedes the verb, as shown in (1).¹

- (1) a. Nkadzi wa -lob -a nlume
 Woman₁ SM₁/PAST-hit -FV man₁
 ‘The woman hit the man.’
- b. Bge la -khwany -a ng’umba
 stone₅ SM₅/PAST-break -FV house₉
 ‘The stone broke the house.’

In these examples *nkadzi* ‘woman’ in (1a) and *bge* ‘rock’ (1b) are the Subject NPs by virtue of their syntactic position.

The NP that bears the Direct Object relation immediately occurs after the verb. So in (1a) and (1b), the Direct Object NPs are *nlume* ‘man’ and *ng’umba* ‘house’, respectively. In Ikalanga the assignment of the immediate post-verbal position to the Direct Object NP is so strong that not even an adverbial can come between the verb and the NP. As shown in (2a), when the immediate post-verbal position is occupied by an adverbial, it results in an ungrammatical sentence. Instead, the Direct Object NP must be immediately after the verb (2b).

¹ The following abbreviations have been used in the paper: APPL (Applicative); FV (Final Vowel); OM (Object Marker); PASS (Passive); REL (Relative Agreement); RP (Remote Past); SM (Subject Marker).

- (2) a. *Nkadzi wa -ka -lob -a madekwe nlume
 woman₁ SM₁ -RP -hit -FV yesterday man₁
 *‘The woman hit yesterday the man.’
- b. Nkadzi wa -ka -lob -a nlume madekwe
 woman₁ SM₁ -RP -hit -FV man₁ yesterday
 ‘The woman hit the man yesterday.’

3.2 Verb agreement. The second overt coding property is verb agreement. In Ikalanga, the verb agrees with the Subject NP. This means that under normal circumstances, the Subject is indexed on the verb even when the full Subject NP is present, as illustrated in (3a) and (3b).²

- (3) a. Mbga₉ ya -lum -a mbisana
 dog SM₉/PAST -bite -FV boy₁
 ‘The dog bit the boy.’
- b. Ikuni cha -bhay -a mbisana
 stick₇ SM₇/PAST -pierce -FV boy₁
 ‘The stick pierced the boy.’

3.3 Pronominalization. In Ikalanga the subject agreement marker³ on the verb also functions as the default pronominal marker in the absence of the full Subject

² As pointed out by one reviewer, in Ikalanga the verb can agree with any NP that is in the pre-verbal position, except topicalized NPs. This means that in the case of a front-shifted object, both the Subject and the object WH phrase (in the case of questions, for example) would be indexed on the verb. For instance, in the following sentence, the verb agrees with the Subject as well as with the fronted-shifted question word which stands for the Direct Object:

Ndiipo nlume ya -a -ka -loba
 Which_(SG) man₁ WH_{AGR(SG)} -SM₁ -PAST-beat
 ‘Which (one) did the man beat?’

An issue that arises regarding such constructions is whether they express afterthoughts or questions. This needs to be explored further in future studies.

³ It should be noted that what we are calling pronominal markers in Ikalanga have recently been analyzed as agreement morphology. See Letsholo (2004).

NP. Replacing the Subject NP in (1a) and (3a) by pronominal forms gives (4a) and (4b), respectively.

- (4) a. Wa -lob -a nlume
 SM₁/PAST -hit -FV man₁
 ‘She hit the man.’
- b. Ya -lum -a mbisana
 SM₉/PAST -bite -FV boy₁
 ‘It bit the boy.’

The pronominal Direct Object appears on the verb after the subject agreement marker.

- (5) a. Nkadzi wa -lob -a nlume
 woman₁ SM₁/PAST-hit -FV man₁
 ‘The woman hit the man.’
- b. Nkadzi wa -n -lob -a
 woman₁ SM₁/PAST -OM₁ -hit -FV
 ‘The woman hit him.’

In Ikalanga, as in some other Bantu languages such as Chichewa and Kichaga (Bresnan & Moshi 1993), the object marker (OM) appears on the verb only if the full NP is not expressed. In effect, the OM and the full Direct Object NP are in complementary distribution.⁴ Compare ungrammatical (6a) and (6b) with grammatical (7a) and (7b).

- (6) a. *Nkadzi wa -n -lob -a nlume
 woman₁ SM₁/PAST -OM₁ -hit -FV man₁
 ‘The woman hit the man.’

⁴ Contrary to our observation that in Ikalanga the full object NP and the Object Marker are in complementary distribution, one reviewer indicated that the two can co-occur, with the full NP assuming adjunct status. We maintain that in basic affirmative constructions, the idea of complementarity holds. In our view, the limited case where both the OM and the full NP can co-occur is when pauses and tonal changes are introduced to turn the construction into a question.

- b. *Ikuni cha -m -bhay -a mbisana
 stick₇ SM₇/PAST -OM₁ -pierce -FV boy₁
 'The stick pierced the boy.'

- (7) a. Nkadzi wa -n -lob -a
 woman₁ SM₁/PAST -OM₁ -hit -FV
 'The woman hit him.'

- b. Ikuni cha -n -bhay -a
 stick₇ SM₇/PAST -OM₁ -pierce -FV
 'The stick pierced him.'

3.4 Passivization. In Ikalanga, the passive requires the addition of the morpheme *-w-/-iw-* to the verb. The Subject NP of the active sentence is also demoted to an Oblique position introduced by the particle *ne*, or it is deleted. At the same time, the Direct Object NP of the active sentence is promoted to become the Subject of the passive. This means that promotion to Subject position through passivization is one of the features of NPs that function as Direct Object, a fact that has long been established for Bantu languages. This is illustrated in (8a) and (8b).

- (8) a. Ikuni cha -bhay -a mbisana
 Stick₇ SM₇/PAST -pierce -FV boy₁
 'The stick pierced the boy.'
- b. Mbisana wa -bhay -iw -a ne ikuni
 boy₁ SM₁/PAST -pierce -PASS -FV by stick₇
 'The boy was pierced by the stick.'
- c. Mbisana wa -bhay -iw -a
 boy₁ SM₁/PAST -pierce -PASS -FV
 'The boy was pierced.'

3.5 Relativization. In Ikalanga, relativization applies differently to Subject and Direct Object NPs. The difference is in the morphological structure of the verb complex as well as in the tonal composition of the whole utterance. Since the tonal dimension of relativization is influenced by a wide range of factors such as the syllable structure of the verb, tense/aspect, and the class of the participating nouns, it will not be dealt with here in any considerable detail. Our concentration

will be on the morphological variation. Examples (9b) and (9c) represent the relativization of the Subject and Direct Object NPs, respectively, of (9a).⁵

- (9) a. Nkádzi wá -lòb -à mbgá
 woman₁ SM₁/PAST -hit -FV dog₉
 'The woman hit the dog.'
- b. Nkádzi wá -lób -á mbgá ú -nó -j -á
 woman₁ SM₁/PAST -hit -FV dog₉ SM₁ -PRES -eat -FV
 'The woman who hit the dog is eating.'
- c. Mbgá nkádzi yá -á -lób -á í -nó -tízh -à
 dog₉ woman₁ REL₉-SM₁/PAST-hit -FV SM₉-PRES -run -FV
 'The dog which the woman hit is running.'

When we compare (9b) and (9c) we find that in both cases when there is relativization, the tones of the verb complex change into high tones on each syllable (at least for this verb). In the morphology, when the Subject is relativized (9b) only the subject marker appears on the verb. Notice that the Direct Object NP cannot be indexed on the verb because the full NP is available. When the Direct Object is relativized it requires both a relative agreement marker (REL, *ya* in this case) and the subject marker to appear on the verb, in that order (9c).

4. Symmetry of Ikalanga Objects.

One area where Bantu languages are considered important to cross-linguistic studies on grammatical relations is the situation where more than one NP competes for access to Direct Objecthood. Based on current knowledge of what occurs in various Bantu languages, Bresnan & Moshi (1993) propose the labels asymmetrical and symmetrical languages:

While Bantu languages quite generally allow more than one post-verbal NP object, they split into two broad types according to the behavior of the objects. In what we will call the *asymmetrical type* language only one of the postverbal NPs exhibits 'primary object' syntactic properties of passivizability, object agreement, adjacency to the verbs, and the like. . . . In the *symmetrical type* language, more than one NP can display 'primary object' syntactic properties. [p. 47]

⁵ Throughout the paper we mark tones only where we illustrate relativization.

For the remainder of the paper, we will explore the typological status of Ikalanga — whether it is a symmetrical or an asymmetrical language. We first examine constructions in which prototypical ditransitive verbs are used, where two post-verbal arguments are required, then the applicative construction in which the presence of the applicative allows the verb to take on another post-verbal NP argument.

4.1 Ditransitive constructions. These are constructions in which the verb permits three arguments without the presence of the applicative. Examples of relevant verbs for Ikalanga are *pa* ‘give’, *diya* ‘teach’, *lakidza* ‘show’. The sentences in (10) illustrate ditransitive constructions.

- (10) a. Nlimi wa -ka -p -a nzhuzha ng’wanadi
 farmer₁ SM₁ -RP -give -FV man₁ woman₁
 ‘The farmer gave the man a woman.’
- b. Nkadzi wa -diy -a bana limbo
 woman₁ SM₁/PAST -teach -FV children₂ song₁₁
 ‘The woman taught the children the song.’
- c. Nlume wa -lakidz -a mbisana mbudzi
 man₁ SM₁/PAST -show -FV boy₁ goat₉
 ‘The man showed the child the goat.’

In each sentence in (10), there are two post-verbal NPs. The question that arises is: which of these NPs is Direct Object, or are both Direct Objects? To deal with this, we need to apply the tests for Direct Objecthood as discussed in Section 3. From that discussion, we established that a noun phrase which bears the object relation should:

- a. occur in the immediate post-verbal position,
- b. under pronominalization, and in the absence of the full NP, occur on the verb as an object marker (OM),
- c. be promoted to Subject position through passivization, and
- d. be relativizable.

5. Direct Objecthood of Recipient and Theme NPs.

5.1 Word order. Since the Recipient NP in (10a) *nzhuzha* ‘man’ comes directly after the verb, it assumes the Direct Object relation. Placing the Theme NP in (10a), *ng’wanadi* ‘woman’, in the immediate post-verbal position results in sentence (11).

- (11) a. Nlimi wa -ka -p -a ng’wanadi nzhuzha
 farmer₁ SM₁ -RP -give -FV woman₁ man₁
 ‘The farmer gave the woman a man.’
- b. Nkadzi wa -ka -p -a mbisana nyama
 woman₁ SM₁ -RP -give -FV boy₁ meat₉
 ‘The woman gave the boy meat.’
- c. Nkadzi wa -ka -p -a nyama mbisana
 woman₁ SM₁ -RP -give -FV meat₉ boy₁
 *‘The woman gave the boy the meat.’
 ‘The woman gave the meat the boy.’

As can be seen from the English gloss (in 11a compared with 10a), with the change in the positions of the post-verbal NPs, the meaning of the sentence changes from ‘The farmer gave the man a woman’ to ‘The farmer gave the woman a man.’ This means that switching the positions of *nzhuzha* ‘man’ and *ng’wanadi* ‘woman’ automatically switches their semantic roles. Examples (11b) and (11c) further illustrate the point. Just as in (10a) and (11a), when the order of *nyama* ‘meat’ and *mbisana* ‘boy’ is switched, it results in a change in their semantic roles. On the basis of the position test, therefore, we conclude that in Ikalanga ditransitive constructions, the NP occurring immediately after the verb is assigned the Recipient role.

5.2 Pronominalization. In Section 3.3, we indicated that, under pronominalization, the NP that bears the Direct Object relation occurs on the verb in complementary distribution with the full lexical NP. Applying this test to the Recipient and Theme NPs of (12a) gives us the sentences in (12b) and (12c), respectively.

- (12) a. Nkadzi wa -ka -p -a mbisana nyama
 woman₁ SM₁ -RP -give -FV boy₁ meat₉
 'The woman gave the boy meat.'
- b. Nkadzi wa -ka -m -p -a nyama
 woman₁ SM₁ -RP -OM₉ -give -FV meat₉
 'The woman gave him meat.'
- c. Nkadzi wa -ka -i -p -a mbisana
 woman₁ SM₁ -RP -OM₁ -give -FV boy₁
 'The woman gave it to the boy'

As (12a) and (12b) show, in the absence of their respective full NPs, the Recipient and Theme NPs are pronominalized and the pro-forms occur on the verb as object markers. Given this evidence, we conclude that in this case both Recipient and Theme NPs can be Direct Objects in Ikalanga.

However, the competition for direct-objecthood between the Recipient and Theme NPs gets more decisive when both NPs are pronominalized at the same time, in the absence of their respective full NPs, as illustrated in (13) and (14).

- (13) a. *Nkadzi wa -ka -i -m -p -a
 woman₁ SM₁ -RP -OM₉ -OM₁ -give -FV
 'The woman gave it to him.'
- b. *Nkadzi wa -ka -m -i -p -a
 woman₁ SM₁ -RP -OM₁ -OM₉ -give -FV
 'The woman gave him to it.'
- (14) a. Nkadzi wa -ka -i -p -a iiye
 woman₁ SM₁ -RP -OM₉ -give -FV him₁
 *'The woman gave it to him (lit. The woman gave him it).'
 The woman gave him to it (lit. The woman gave it him).
- b. Nkadzi wa -ka -m -p -a iiyo
 woman₁ SM₁ -RP -OM₁ -give -FV it₉
 'The woman gave it to him (lit. The woman gave him it).'

In (13a) and (13b) we find that when the pronominal form of both the Recipient and Theme NPs occur on the verb as object markers, an ungrammatical sentence results. The reason for this is that in Ikalanga, as in some other Bantu languages such as Shona and Chichewa, there is only one slot on the verb for an OM. Consequently, multiple objects cannot be indexed on the verb as object markers — a situation that contrasts with that in languages such as Kichaga and Haya (Bresnan & Moshi 1993).

This restriction on the OM slot means that only one of the Recipient and Theme pro-forms can be expressed on the verb. In (14a) the Recipient appears on the verb and the Theme NP is realized as a post-verbal independent pronoun. This sentence does not mean *‘‘The woman gave it to him’’, rather, it means ‘‘The woman gave him to it’’. This is not the meaning we expect from attempting to pronominalization the second post-verbal NP in (12a), which is the Theme. In (14b), we find the Recipient NP marked on the verb and the Theme NP occurring in the post-verbal position as an independent pronoun. This sentence, glossed as ‘‘The woman gave it to him’’, is the correspondent of the meaning of (12a) where the two post-verbal NPs have been pronominalized. This means that in Ikalanga when both Recipient and Theme NPs are pronominalized, only the Recipient NP can be expressed on the verb as an object marker.⁶ Consequently, the Recipient NP, not the Theme NP, is assigned the Direct Object relation.

5.3 Subjectization through passivization. The third test is that in an active sentence the Direct Object relation should be promotable to Subject through passivization. Applying the subject-of-passive test to the post-verbal NPs in (12a) gives us (15a) and (15b).

- (15) a. Mbisana wa -ka -p -iw -a nyama ne nkadzi
 boy₁ SM₁-RP -give -PASS -FV meat₉ by woman₁
 ‘The boy was given the meat by the woman.’
- b. Nyama ya -ka -p -iw -a mbisana ne nkadzi
 meat₉ SM₉-RP -give -PASS -FV boy₁ by woman₁
 ‘The meat was given to the boy by the woman.’

⁶ Contrary to the view of one reviewer, we are of the opinion that example (14a) is not ambiguous. Other native speakers did not confirm that this sentence is ambiguous.

5.4 Relativization. The last property of Direct Objects to be considered is relativization. As shown in Section 3.5, a noun phrase that is the exponent of the Direct Object relation in a simple sentence in Ikalanga can be relativized. When we apply this to the post-verbal NPs in (12a), repeated here as (16a), the result is as shown in (16b) and (16c).

- In (16b) and (16c), we have the relativization of Recipient and Theme NPs. The verb complex of the relativized clause which is of interest here has the relativized NP appearing on the verb as a resumptive OM followed by the subject marker. This is what we discovered in 4.5 regarding how Direct Object NPs are relativized. In effect, in prototypical ditransitive constructions as in (10a-c) and (16a), the two post-verbal NPs have access to relativization. From this evidence, we conclude that both NPs behave like the Direct Object NP with regard to relativization.

5.5 Summary. In the preceding sections, we have focused on trying to ascertain the Direct Object status of Recipient and Theme NPs in ditransitive constructions in Ikalanga. The question we have been dealing with is: in ditransitive constructions in Ikalanga, are both post-verbal NPs Direct Objects, making the language a symmetrical one, or is only one of the NPs a Direct Object, thereby putting Ikalanga in the asymmetrical language category?

Our approach in making this determination has involved subjecting the Recipient and Patient NPs to the tests for Direct Objecthood. In other words, we have tried to establish which of the properties of Direct Object in a simplex sentence are applicable to each of the two post-verbal NPs in a prototypical ditransitive construction. The result of the testing is that in terms of word order, it is the Recipient NP that is proximal to the verb. It is this NP that also gets marked on the verb in the form of an OM. Regarding the Direct Object properties of subjectization through passivization and relativization, both Recipient and Theme NPs qualify to be treated as Direct Objects.

On the basis of the evidence presented, we see that even though only one of the post-verbal NPs (the Recipient NP) in a ditransitive construction exhibits all the features of Direct Objecthood, the second NP (Theme NP) shares in some of the features. We therefore propose (following Dryer 1986) to adopt the label ‘primary object’ for the Recipient NP and ‘secondary object’ for the Theme NP.

The facts of Ikalanga make it difficult for the language to fit neatly into the symmetrical/asymmetrical dichotomy put forward by Bresnan & Moshi (1993). Consequently, instead of seeing the phenomenon of object symmetry as an either-or concept, it may be more helpful to treat it as a scalar one. This way, Ikalanga (and languages that behave like it) would be located along the scale rather than being forced into a polarized classification system.

6. Applied Object.

In Bantu languages, the Applicative is an affix on the verb (resulting in the ‘applied verb’) which facilitates the taking on of an additional argument by the verb. In Ikalanga, as in Shona (Harford 1993), arguments of the verb introduced through the presence of the applicative bear various semantic roles. The most frequent of these is the Benefactive role. In (17a) and (18a), we have simplex sentences; but in (17b) and (18b), the verbs have the applicative affix, making it possible to introduce an extra argument into each sentence.

- (17) a. Mbisana wa -bhabh-a ng'wana
 boy₁ SM₁/PAST -carry -FV child₁
 'The boy carried the child.'
- b. Mbisana wa -bhabh-il -a nkadzi ng'wana
 boy₁ SM₁/PAST -carry -APPL -FV woman₁ child₁
 'The boy carried the child for the woman.'
- (18) a. Ng'wanadi wa -teng-a mpanga
 girl₁ SM₁/PAST -buy -FV knife₁
 'The girl bought the knife.'
- b. Ng'wanadi wa -teng-el -a nlume mpanga
 girl₁ SM₁/PAST -buy -APPL -FV man₁ knife₃
 'The girl bought the knife for the man.'

The extra arguments introduced into (17b) and (18b) are what are referred to as "applied objects" in Bantu studies. In (17b) and (18b) the applied objects bear the semantic role of Benefactive.⁷ Our goal in this section is to examine which of the two NPs that occur after the applied verb is Direct Object.

6.1 Word order. Our approach in determining the Direct Object status of the post-applied verb NPs is to apply the tests of objecthood in section 3 to these NPs. In (17b) (repeated here as 19a) the Benefactive NP occurs in the immediate post-verbal position, with the Theme NP occurring after it. When the positions are reversed, the meaning of the sentence changes as exemplified in (19b).

- (19) a. Mbisana wa -bhabh-il -a nkadzi ng'wana
 boy₁ SM₁/PAST -carry -APPL -FV woman₁ child₁
 'The boy carried the child for the woman.'
- b. Mbisana wa -bhabh-il -a ng'wana nkadzi
 boy₁ SM₁/PAST -carry -APPL -FV child₁ woman₁
 'The boy carried the woman for the child.'

⁷ In Ikalanga, as in Shona (Harford 1993), other semantic roles that could be borne by applied objects are Locative, Motive, Goal, and Maleficiary. A semantic role that cannot be introduced by the applicative construction in Ikalanga is the Instrument.

By occurring directly after the verb, the NP *ng'wana* 'child' changes from being the Theme in (19a) to being the Benefactive in (19b); and *nkadzi* 'woman' becomes the Theme in (19b), as against being the Benefactive in (19a). In the context of an applied verb, therefore, the Benefactive is the NP that occurs immediately after the verb.

This fact holds even if the Benefactive NP is non-human and the Theme NP is human. It is relevant to stress this especially so since the object relations in some Bantu languages are influenced by animacy (Hawkinson & Hyman 1974, Morolong & Hyman 1977, Hyman & Duranti 1982). In (20a) the Benefactive NP *danga* 'cattlepost', a non-human entity, occurs directly after the verb, followed by the Theme NP *nlisa* 'caretaker', a human entity. When we reverse their positions, their semantic roles change as in (20b).

- (20) a. Nlimi wa -wan -il -a danga nlisa
 farmer₁ SM₁/PAST -find -APPL -FV cattlepost₅ caretaker₁
 'The farmer found a caretaker for the cattlepost.'
- b. Nlimi wa -wan -il -a nlisa danga
 farmer₁ SM₁/PAST -find -APPL -FV caretaker₁ cattlepost₅
 'The farmer found a cattlepost for the caretaker.'

On the evidence of word order, then, we conclude that the NP which realizes the Benefactive role is the Direct Object, in the context of an applied verb.

6.2 Pronominalization. When both Benefactive and Theme NPs are pronominalized, only the Benefactive pro-form occurs on the verb as an OM. Sentence (21) results from applying pronominalization to (17b).

- (21) Mbisana wa -m -bhabh-il -a iye
 boy₁ SM₁/PAST -OM₁ -carry -APPL -FV him₁
 'The boy carried him for her.'

It is understood from this sentence that the OM refers to the Benefactive NP. This observation does not hold if the Benefactive is non-human and the Theme is human. This is exemplified in (22).

- (22) a. Nlimi wa -wan -il -a danga nliisa
 farmer₁ SM₁/PAST -find -APPL -FV cattlepost₅ caretaker₁
 ‘The farmer found a caretaker for the cattlepost.’
- b. Nlimi wa -li -wan -il -a iye
 farmer₁ SM₁/PAST -OM₅ -find -APPL -FV him₁
 *‘The farmer found him for it.’
- c. Nlimi wa -n -wan -il -a ilo
 farmer₁ SM₁/PAST -OM₁ -find -APPL -FV it₅
 ‘The farmer found him for it.’

In (22a), the Benefactive NP — *danga* ‘cattlepost’ — is non-human and the Theme — *nliisa* ‘caretaker’ — is human. When these are pronominalized, it is the human Theme NP which occurs on the verb as an OM, not the non-human Benefactive. This means that animacy is critical in the assignment of Direct Objecthood in Ikalanga.⁸

6.3 Subjectization through passivization. When we apply the subjectization through passivization test, the result is as shown in (23a) and (23b).

- (23) a. Nliisa wa -ka -wan -ig -w -a danga ne nlimi
 caretaker₁ SM₁-RP -find -APPL -PASS -FV cattlepost₅ by farmer₁
 ‘The caretaker was found for the cattlepost by the farmer.’
- b. Danga la -ka -wan -ig -w -a nliisa ne nlimi
 cattlepost₅ SM₅ -RP -find -APPL -PASS -FV caretaker₁ by farmer₁
 ‘The cattlepost was found a caretaker by the farmer.’

These sentences show that both post-verbal NPs of the applied verb can become Subject of the passivized sentences.

6.4 Relativization. The application of the relativization test yields the sentences in (24a) and (24b).

⁸ Here again, we disagree with a reviewer who contends that (22b) is ambiguous.

- (24) a. Nlísá nŋimì wà -á -ká -wán -íl -á dàngá
 caretaker₁ farmer₁ OM₁ -SM₁ -RP -find -APPL -FV cattlepost₅
 ú -símbè
 SM₁ -lazy

‘The caretaker the farmer found for the cattlepost is lazy.’

- b. Dàngá nŋimì lá -á -ká -wán -íl -á nlísà
 cattlepost₅ farmer₁ OM₅ -SM₁ -RP -find -APPL -FV caretaker₁
 Íl -gùlù
 SM₅ -big

‘The cattlepost the farmer found a caretaker for is big.’

From (24a) and (24b), it is obvious that both post-verbal NPs of the applied verb can be relativized.

6.5 Summary. From the results of testing for the Direct Objecthood of the Benefactive and Theme NPs of the applied verb, we conclude that in the Ikalanga applicative construction in the unmarked case, where the Benefactive is human (unmarked because the prototypical Benefactive entity is human), the Benefactive bears the Direct Object relation, irrespective of the animacy status of the Theme NP. In the marked situation, where the Benefactive is non-human and the Theme is human, the two post-applied verb NPs are split in terms of the properties characteristic of Direct Object in Ikalanga. Whereas both have the property of subjectivizability and relativizability in common, it is the non-human Benefactive that occurs immediately after the verb. On the other hand, it is the human Theme that occurs on the verb as an object marker when pronominalized. This means that for such marked constructions, we can talk of “split Direct Objecthood.”

7. Conclusion.

Our goal in this paper was to explore the grammatical relations that are relevant for Ikalanga, an under-described Bantu language of Botswana and Zimbabwe. It has been established that the Subject NP in Ikalanga has the same properties that have been identified for the Bantu family generally. The Subject NP precedes the verb in word order; the verb agrees with the Subject NP and it is marked on the verb in the form of an agreement marker; in its pronominalized form, the agreement marker on the verb functions as the Subject marker; the Subject NP of the

basic active sentence can be demoted to Oblique or deleted through passivization; the Subject NP can be relativized.

The properties of a Direct Object NP are: it is the NP that occurs in the immediate post-verbal position; when pronominalized and in the absence of the full NP, it occurs on the verb as an object marker (OM); it can be subjectized through passivization; and it can be relativized.

In the context of Bantu typology of double object constructions, we have isolated two clear cases. In one of these, where the sentence has a prototypical ditransitive verb, our observation has been that for such verbs, the Recipient NP is the Direct Object since it exhibits **all** the properties of Direct Objecthood. In addition, the Theme NP displays **some** of the attributes of objecthood. Consequently, we propose to call the Recipient NP the primary object and the Theme NP the secondary object. Considering the facts of the language, the symmetrical/asymmetrical dichotomy of Bresnan & Moshi (1993) needs to be modified so that it can include intermediate cases such as that presented by Ikalanga.

In the second case, the verb has the applicative marker. For these sentences, the situation is not straightforward. As our discussion has shown, animacy becomes an issue in determining which post-verbal NP is Direct Object. We have argued that in unmarked cases, that is, where the Benefactive NP is human, it is that NP that bears the Direct Object relation. However, in marked situations — where the Benefactive is non-human and the Theme is human — we have split Direct Objecthood. The Benefactive NP is the only one that can occur in the immediate post-verbal position; but it is the Theme NP that can occur on the verb as an OM in the context of pronominalization. We would conclude that Ikalanga is an intermediate language on the basis of object symmetry, but has split objecthood on the basis of animacy.

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