

The Bantu connective construction

Mark Van de Velde (LLACAN – C.N.R.S.)

Prefinal version. To appear in Carlier, Anne & Jean-Christophe Verstraete (eds.) *The Genitive*. [Case and Grammatical Relations across Languages] Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Acknowledgements

1. Introduction

When two nominal constituents are in a relation of dependency in the Bantu languages, the syntactically dependent constituent is usually introduced by a relator. In Bantu studies this relator is called *connective* (also *associative* or *connexive*) *element* (or *pronoun*, *clitic*, *prefix*, *marker* or *particle*).¹ The order is HEAD (R1) – RELATOR (REL) – DEPENDENT (R2).² I will use the term *connective construction* to refer to the entire construction, i.e. R1 REL R2, rather than to REL R2, as is sometimes done in the literature. A typical example is provided in (1).³

(1) Kagulu (Tanzania; Petzell 2008: 86)

m-eji g-a mu-nyu
6-water VI-CON 3-salt
R1 REL R2
'salt water'

This paper provides an overview of the variation in connective constructions throughout the Bantu languages. It will be shown that connectives form a category with fuzzy boundaries, for which no definition in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions can be given. In order to deal with the variation in connective constructions I will adopt an approach inspired by canonical typology, as developed most notably by Corbett (2006,

¹ In some sources the terms *connective* and *connexive* refer to the conjunction *na* 'and, with'.

² R1 and R2 are short for first and second relatum. Dependency relations are not always unproblematic, as we will see in Section 5.1. The terms *relator* and *relatum* are from Dik (1989).

³ Most sources do not provide glosses, so glossing is generally mine. Where glosses are provided in the sources, I adapted them for the sake of homogeneity. Arabic numbers gloss overt noun class markers on nouns and roman numbers gloss class/number agreement prefixes. The following conventions and abbreviations are used: - affix boundary, = clitic boundary, ~ boundary between stem and reduplicant, AU augment, CAUS causative, CON stem of the connective relator, COP copula, DEF definite, INDEF indefinite, FV final vowel (a TAM morpheme), GER gerund, INF infinitive, HAB habitual, HPST hodiernal past, LOC locative, NEG negative, PASS passive, PF pre-final (a multifunctional TAM-morpheme), PFV perfective, PL plural, POS stem of a possessive pronoun, PPR personal pronoun, PROH prohibitive, PRS present, PROG progressive, PST past, REFL reflexive, REL relative, RP remote past, RPST recent past, SBJV subjunctive, SG singular, SUB subordinator.

2007). That is, I will define a canonical connective construction and then describe the formal variation found among connective constructions in terms of departures from the canon along several dimensions. Note that a canonical approach makes no claims whatsoever regarding the status of the canonical type as either being frequent or diachronically primary. The canon is simply a starting point for mapping the variation among related constructions. Section 2 introduces the canonical type. Sections 3 to 7 each discuss departures from the canon along a single dimension:

Section 3. Departures from the canonical R2

Section 4. Departures from the canonical connective relator

Section 5. Departures from the canonical dependency relations

Section 6. Departures from the canonical R1

Section 7. Departures from the canonical arrangement of constituents

Depending on how one counts, there are between 300 and 600 Bantu languages, spoken in an area south of a line between Cameroon in the west and Kenya in the east. The internal classification of the Bantu languages is problematic, but *grosso modo* the Bantu languages can be subdivided in an eastern, a western and a north-western group. The north-western Bantu languages, spoken in Cameroon, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, parts of the two Congos and the CAR, are closest to what is generally accepted to be the Bantu homeland. Not surprisingly, linguistic fragmentation is highest in the northwest. The typological characteristic of the Bantu languages most relevant for this chapter is their noun class system and extensive noun class agreement. Typically, Bantu languages have somewhere between ten and twenty noun classes, which are overtly marked on the noun by means of a prefix. The noun classes are numbered and usually come in pairs in which the odd numbered class contains the singular nouns and the even numbered class the plurals. Such noun class pairings are traditionally called *genders*. Nominal modifiers, pronominals and verbs agree in gender with nominal controllers. See Maho (1999) for an overview of Bantu noun classes and agreement.

This study is based on a convenience sample of about forty areally differentiated Bantu languages. This sample sufficed to find most, if not all, logically possible departures from the canonical type, but it does not allow to determine how recurrent each of these departures is within the entire family. Interestingly, an overwhelming majority of the departures from the canon can be found in a single language, viz. Mongo.⁴ I do not know

⁴ But note that the Mongo language in Hulstaert's grammar actually refers to a large and rather diverse dialect cluster, which Father Hulstaert tried to unify in an effort of standardisation. Many construction types for which I did not give Mongo examples (for the sake of variation) do exist in Mongo as well.

whether Mongo is exceptional in this respect, or whether it is simply exceptionally well described.

2. The canonical connective construction

The purpose of the canonical connective construction as it will be defined in this section is to be an ideal point of reference for an overview of the variation in connective constructions within the Bantu family. The characteristics of the canonical type proposed here are based on knowledge of what is typical in the Bantu languages. In a sense, the canonical connective construction is what is most likely the prototypical connective construction, not in the mind of the Bantu speaker, but in the mind of the Bantu linguist.

The canonical connective construction relates nominal constituents headed by a canonical Bantu noun by means of an overt relator. A canonical Bantu noun can be characterised as a lexeme that can function as an argument of a lexical verb and that has a unique gender specification, i.e. that does not derive its gender marking from another element in the context. Canonically there is a uniform element that relates R1 to R2. We will call this element the *connective stem* and gloss it as CON.⁵ The connective stem canonically takes a prefix (AG) that indexes R1. This prefix belongs to a paradigm called *pronominal prefixes* in Bantu studies. In Meeussen's (1967) reconstruction of Proto-Bantu grammar the connective stem is reconstructed as $\sim a$, where the tilde symbolizes a tone that is harmonic with that of the preceding prefix. I will incorporate this form of the connective stem in the canonical construction (but without the tonal specification). The canonical form of the connective relator is thus AG- $\sim a$. In the canonical connective construction, the connective relator is placed iconically in between R1 and R2. Since it marks R2 for being syntactically dependent on R1, it is more closely linked to R2 than to R1 and this is reflected in a relatively high degree of morphological bonding between the relator and R2. In all descriptions that I consulted and that discuss this issue explicitly, the degree of bonding between the relator and R2 is higher than that between separate words. Moreover, in the Bantu languages that have premodifiers that I am aware of, the connective relator precedes the first element of R2 and therefore behaves as a phrasal affix. This is shown in the example from Songye in (2).

⁵ If a connective relator lacks a stem, i.e. if it consists solely of an agreement marker, the agreement marker that serves as a connective relator will be glossed CON.

- (2) Songye (DRC; Stappers 1964:81)
 ba-ntu b-aá = ky-ǎbu kí-pîndi
 2-people II-CON = VII-their 7-neighbourhood
 ‘the people of their neighbourhood’

Due to the strong phonological integration between the connective relator and the following word, the former is not analysed as a separate word in Stappers (1964). In many of the languages in my sample, the degree of bonding between REL and R2 can be described as being intermediate between that of a word boundary and that of an affix boundary. Therefore, typically, the Bantu connective relator is a proclitic and I will integrate this formal characteristic in the canonical type used in this study.

Other characteristics of the canonical construction are that R2 modifies R1 and that the two nominal constituents are not co-referential.

The connective construction is not dedicated to the expression of a specific relation. The examples in (3-8) illustrate equally typical uses of the canonical connective construction. In (3) and (4) the connective construction is used to express linguistic possession. That is, the number of potential referents of R1 is restricted to those that have a privileged relationship with the (prototypically human) individual denoted by R2.

- (3) Kinyamwezi (Tanzania; Maganga & Schadeberg 1992: 89)⁶
 m̄-zuna w-aa-m̄-kúma
 1-younger_sister I-CON-1-woman
 ‘the younger sister of the woman’

- (4) Swahili (Tanzania; Hawkinson 1979:86)
 ni-li-tafuta zawadi y-a = m-toto
 1SG-PST-seek [9]present IX-CON = 1-child
 ‘I sought a present to give to the child’ (recipient)
 ‘I sought a present on behalf of the child’ (benefit)
 ‘I sought the child’s present (i.e. that he misplaced)’ (ownership)

R2 frequently qualifies (5-6) or classifies (7) R1, or locates it in space or time (8). Note that the head noun of R2 can be property denoting (5) or entity denoting (6) in a qualifying canonical connective construction.

⁶ Maganga & Schadeberg analyse the connective stem as a prefix in Kinyamwezi. However, they point out that the tonal behaviour of the connective relator resembles that of a prefix in some contexts and that of a word in others, which could be used as an argument to analyse the connective relator as a proclitic.

(5) Mongo (DRC; Hulstaert 1966: 246)

ntando ěy = o-lindó

[9]river IX.CON = 3-depth

‘a deep river’

(6) Mongo (Hulstaert 1966: 247)

e-kútu ě-a = n-dǎsó

7-calabash VII.CON = 10-pores

‘a porous calabash’

(7) Swahili (Welmers 1963: 433)

nyumba z-a = ma-we

[10]houses X.CON = 6-stones

‘houses made of stone’

(8) Mongo (Hulstaert 1966: 255)

m-pótá ě-a = lo-kolo

9-injury IX.CON = 11-foot

‘a foot injury’

3. Departures from the canonical R2

This section discusses departures from the canonical R2. The two departures discussed first involve an R2 that has formal characteristics of respectively an adjective (Section 3.1) and a verb (Section 3.2). These departures move gradually from almost canonical connective constructions to typical adjectival and relative constructions respectively. It will be shown that any clear cut off point between connective constructions on the one hand and adjectival and relative constructions on the other hand is arbitrary. Section 3.3 deals with possessive pronouns, which are often connective constructions with a pronominal R2, if not synchronically, then historically. Section 3.4, finally, provides a brief overview of miscellaneous departures in which the R2 position is occupied by members of minor word classes.

3.1. R2 has adjectival features

Morphosyntactic departures from the canonical R2 will be increasingly important as we move through this section. In (5) we saw an example of a qualifying canonical connective

construction, in which R2 is a canonical noun that denotes a quality. A first departure from this situation is illustrated in (9), where R2 has the morphological properties of a noun, but the distributional potential of an adjective. In contrast to canonical adjectives in Makwe, which “agree in class with the noun on which they syntactically depend” (Devos 2008: 115), the word *kibúúli* ‘silent’ is inherently of class 7. In contrast to canonical nouns, *kibúúli* cannot be used as the head of a referential phrase. It occurs only as R2 in a connective construction or as a predicate following a copula. Moreover, it does not have a morphological plural (Maud Devos, p.c.).

- (9) Makwe (Mozambique; Devos 2008: 136)
 muú-nu w-á = ki-búúli
 1-person I-CON = 7-silent
 ‘a silent person’

Hulstaert’s Mongo grammar (1966: 30-32) distinguishes three types of quality denoting R2s that do not agree in gender. The first type are those that do not agree with R1 at all, they always appear in the singular. This type includes words for ‘black’, ‘white’, ‘careful’, ‘respectful’ and ‘beautiful’. The second and third type illustrate a further departure from the canon, in that the number of R2 depends on that of R1. R2 always agrees in number in the second type (10). Nouns that do not denote a quality, strictly speaking, but rather an entity defined by a quality, are always of the second type (11).

- (10) Mongo (Hulstaert 1957: 1176 (a) & 1966: 30 (b))
 a. bo-nto o-ǎ = li-nsimí
 1-person I-CON = 5-taciturn
 ‘a taciturn person’
 b. ba-nto b-ǎ = ba-nsimí
 2-persons II-CON = 6-taciturn
 ‘taciturn persons’
- (11) a. ba-álí b’ = â-fokú
 2-wife II.CON = 6-beautiful_women
 ‘beautiful wives’ (li-fòkú ‘beautiful woman’ (cl.5))
 b. bà-ékòlì b-ǎ = bi-séngà
 2-pupil II-CON = 8-stupid_persons
 ‘stupid pupils’ (è-séngà ‘stupid person’ (cl.7))

In the third type, a plural R1 licences, but does not require a plural R2. A plural R2 has a distributive meaning in this case.

- (12) Mongo (Hulstaert 1966: 31)
- a. nteke y-ǎ = bo-salangano
[10]partiesX-CON = 3-cheerful
'cheerful parties' (for one person or one occasion)'
 - b. nteke y' = ê-salangano
[10]partiesX.CON = 4-cheerful
'cheerful parties' (for several occasions)
- (13) a. b-ámàtò b' = ô-tsélé
2-women II.CON = 3-implacable
'women relentless at quarrel' (in group)
- b. b-ámato b' = ê-tsélé
2-women II.CON = 4-implacable
'women relentless at quarrel' (considered individually)

When R2 also agrees in gender, the resulting construction could be characterised as a connective construction with an adjective in R2 position. R2 is doubly marked for the function of modification: by means of an agreement prefix and by means of the (equally agreeing) connective relator. This type of construction can be found in Koongo of Boko (14).

- (14) Koongo of Boko (Congo; Bouka 1994: 14)
- a. di-nkondi di-a = di-nené
5-banana V-CON = V-big
'a big banana'
 - b. bw-atu bw-a = bu-nené
14-canoes XIV-CON = XIV-big
'a big canoe'
 - c. m-atu m-a = ma-nené
6-canoes VI-CON = VI-big
'big canoes'

In some other varieties of the Koongo dialect cluster the same quality denoting lexemes can be employed in two different constructions with the same meaning, but possibly different pragmatics. Both construction types involve a connective relator, but in only one of

them R2 has an agreeing prefix (15a). In the other type of connective construction R2 is invariant (15b).

- (15) Suundi (Congo; Bouka 1994: 16)⁷
- a. ki-salu ky-a = kí-kèèke ‘a small job’
 bi-salu by-a = bí-kèèke ‘small jobs’
 zi-ngasi z-a = zí-kèèke ‘small palm nuts’
 - b. ki-salu ky-á = n-kèèke ‘a small job’
 bi-salu by-á = n-kèèke ‘small jobs’
 zi-ngasi z-á = n-kèèke ‘small palm nuts’

The presence of the connective relator can be optional too. This is the case in Bakueri, also known as *Kpe* or *Mokpwe* (16).⁸

- (16) Bakueri (Cameroon; Kagaya 1992: 12, 16, 151)
- a. mgbá y-a = ndéne
 [9]dog IX-CON = [9]big
 ‘a big dog’
 - b. mgbâ ndéne
 [9]dog IX.big
 ‘a big dog’

In Lingala of Kinshasa the use of the invariant connective relator *ya* (historically agreement pattern IX) is optional for a closed class of quality denoting lexemes when they modify a noun. These lexemes never agree in gender with the head noun and only four or five of them agree in number. According to Michael Meeuwis (p.c.) the presence versus absence of CON marks a subtle pragmatic difference in that the connective relator tends to be used when the head noun is topical (and the qualification new), whereas the absence of CON correlates with a non-topical nominal constituent. Hulstaert (1966: 291) describes a similar distinction for a number of qualifying nouns in Mongo.

⁷ Bouka (1994) cites Jean Baka (p.c.) as the source of these examples. The tonal difference on the connective relator between the examples in (15a) and (15b) is said to be due to rules of tone displacement. Still according to Bouka, the construction exemplified in (15b) is historically derived from that in (15a) by means of a generalisation of agreement pattern IX in R2 position.

⁸ Since I found no other examples than the one in (16), it is impossible to know whether R2 should be analysed as a class 9 noun or as an agreeing adjective.

(17) Lingala (DRC; Meeuwis 1998: 15)

lo-pángo (ya =)mo-ké
11-compound (CON =)3-small
'a big tree'

We will come back to connective constructions with a property denoting modifying noun in Section 5.1, which discusses dependency reversal.

3.2. R2 has verbal characteristics

This section provides a brief overview of connective constructions in which R2 has verbal characteristics. Thus, it explores the grammatical space in between the canonical connective construction and typical relative constructions. In the simplest case, R2 is a non finite verb form consisting of a verb stem and a nominal prefix, such as the infinitive, which in many languages has a prefix of class 15, or the non finite verb form called *gerund* (*gérondif*) in Hulstaert (1966), illustrated in example (18). In the canonical case the verb stem refers to an event (18), but often it refers to a property, so that an infinitival R2 can have adjectival characteristics (20). Note in passing the difference in coordinating multiple R2s between (18b) and (19). The connective relator is repeated in the latter, not in the former.

(18) Mongo (Hulstaert 1966: 251)

- a. i-síni y-ǎ = n-kǒ~kɔt-a
19-machine XIX-CON = 9-GER~write-FV
'writing machine'
- b. ba-éfa b-ǎ = n-kĩ~kis-a la m-bétám-á
6-days VI-CON = 9-GER~sit-FV and 9-lie-FV
'days off' (lit. 'days of sitting and lying down')
- c. b-ɔlɔtsi w-ǎ = n-dekól-á
3-goodness III-CON = 9-surpass-FV
'really very good' (lit. 'goodness of surpassing')

(19) Ruwund (DRC; Nash 1992: 369)

mà-d ma-kùnd m-à = ku-kùn âap m-à = ku-dà?
VI-COP 6-beans VI-CON = 15-plant or VI-CON = 15-eat
'Are they beans to plant or to eat?'

- (20) Makwe (Devos 2008: 136)
 muú-nu w-á = ku-dóóba
 1-person I-CON = 15-be_lazy
 ‘a lazy person’

Bantu infinitives can be expanded in many ways that make them more typically verbal (see Hadermann 1994 for an overview) and all kinds of expanded infinitives can be found in the R2 position of connective constructions. In the following Ruwund examples the infinitive has a complement (21) or a subject (22).

- (21) Ruwund (Nash 1992: 367)
 a. m-es m-à = kù-tekàp ordinateur
 6-table VI-CON = 15-put computer
 ‘computer table’ (lit. ‘table of to put computer’)
 b. mi-jik y-à = kù-sangar-esh a-ntu
 4-music IV-CON = 15-rejoice-CAUS 2-people
 ‘music to make people happy’

- (22) Ruwund (Nash 1992: 370)
 tu-kìmb-in n-dônd y-à = kù-laal mw-ânt
 1pl-search-PRS.PROG 9-place IX-CON = 15-sleep 1-chief
 ‘We are looking for a place for the chief to sleep.’

In (23) the R2 position is occupied by an infinitive that has more verbal properties in that it has passive morphology and it is preceded by the negative adverb *bílá*.

- (23) Makwe (Devos 2008: 405)
 ñ-táama w-á = bílá ku-kálángí-iw-a
 3-sorghum III-CON = NEG 15-fry-PASS-FV
 ‘sorghum that has not been fried’

R2 is more typically verbal (and the resulting construction more typically relative) if it is finite, i.e. when it has a subject prefix. The example in (24) comes from Makwe, where the subject prefix is preceded by a connective relator in all non-subject relatives.⁹

⁹ There is a formal difference between the connective relator when it is followed by a noun (including infinitives) or by a finite verb form. Only in the former case the relator has a structural high tone. Devos (2008:261) suggests that this tonal difference is due to a difference in degree of morphological bonding. In relative verb forms the connective relator is analysed as a (complex) prefix, elsewhere as a proclitic. The morpheme *á* glossed as I is the third person subject prefix of agreement pattern I.

- (24) Makwe (Devos 2008: 394)
 víi-nu vy-á = á-yúm-íite
 8-thing VIII-CON = I-buy-PRS.PFV.REL
 ‘the things that he has bought’

If the non-subject relative clause has a nominal subject, the latter follows the verb form in Makwe (25). In Konzo, the nominal subject is in its usual preverbal position, preceded by the connective relator (26).¹⁰

- (25) Makwe (Devos 2008: 396)
 ku-nyéenje k-a = jí-péele ji-ng’úúnde
 17-side XVII-CON = X-grow.PRS.PFV.REL 10-bean
 ‘at the side where the beans grow’

- (26) Konzo (Uganda; Tucker 1960: 27)
 o-mu-ndú e-y-a = a-ba-ndú bá-lángíra
 AU-1-person AU-I-CON = AU-2-peopleII-saw
 ‘the person whom the people saw’

The connective relator can also introduce a clause that functions as a complement or an adjunct of a noun and that often cannot be analysed as a relative clause, since the antecedent (R1) does not necessarily have a role in it (27a, b). Hulstaert (1946 & 1966: 275-279) provides some Mongo examples. The clause in R2 position can be complex (27c, d). In (27b), the connective relator is followed by an optional subordinating conjunction.

- (27) Mongo (Hulstaert 1946 (a,b) 1966: 278 (c,d))
 a. ts-ók-a eefé é-â = w-ǎné w-ǎné tǒ-tá-l-á y-ǒmba
 1PL-feel-FV [7]pain VII-CON = 3-day 3-day 1PL-COND-eat-FV 19-thing
 ‘We suffer because we haven’t eaten anything all day long.’
 (lit. ‘we feel pain of day day we didn’t eat thing’)
 b. bo-tsó bó-ki w-ílima w-ǎ = (te) á-ongan-e nkǒle
 3-night III-COP.PST 3-darkness III-CON = (SUB) I-hurt-SBJV [9]injury
 ‘The night was so dark that he hurt himself.’

¹⁰ Note that the augment is used in Konzo to pronominalise a connective relator (see Section 6.2). The connective relator in Konzo non-subject relative clauses always takes the augment.

- c. ba-nto bă = mpángá ba-kit-áká ko băol-ékel-a ba-móng'ésé
 2-person II-CON = nextII-arrive-RPST and II.HPST-accustom-FV 2-native
 'men of they-hardly-arrived-and-they-are-accustomed-to-the-natives'
- d. bo-támbá w-ǎ = ngá w-ô-tumb-a bó-fó-longól-é
 3-tree III-CON = if2SG-III-set_fire-FV III-PRS.NEG-burn-FV
 'a tree that does not burn if you set fire to it'

Finally, in a rather idiosyncratic departure from the canon, Mongo has a connective construction in which R2 consists of a fully reduplicated verb stem that characterises R1 in terms of an action that is either repeated or futile.

- (28) Mongo (Hulstaert 1966: 256)
- a. bo-támbá w-ǎ = kotá kotá
 3-tree III-CON = cut cut
 'a tree impossible to cut down'
- b. bo-lókó w-ǎ = sangá sangá
 3-speech III-CON = talk talk
 'an endless speech'

3.3. R2 is pronominal

Possessive pronouns often originate in a connective construction in which R2 is a pronoun. This origin is fully transparent in some Bantu languages, but has become opaque in many others, to the extent that sometimes a connective origin cannot be demonstrated. A consequence of the connective origin of possessive pronouns is that they index both the possessor and the possessed. In other words, they agree with two controllers. This aspect of Bantu possessive pronouns is mentioned in Corbett's (2006:18) overview of departures from canonical agreement. The canonical paradigm of possessive pronouns has a form for every possible combination of possessor and possessed. The Namibian Bantu language Herero provides an example of this canonical situation. It has eighteen noun classes, which can each control R1 and/or R2. This gives a paradigm of $18 \times 22 = 396$ forms.¹¹ Examples of possessive pronouns with two non-human controllers are given in (29).

¹¹ 22, since the discourse participants can occur in R2 position too.

(29) Herero (Namibia; Möhlig et.al. 2002: 60)

- a. òmù-tí n-òví-yàò vy-á-⁴w-ó
 3-tree and-8-leaves VIII-CON-III-PPR
 ‘the tree and its leaves’
- b. òtjì-kúnìnò n-òmí-tí vy-á-⁴ty-ó
 7-garden and-4-trees IV-CON-VII-PPR
 ‘the garden and its trees’

There are at least three ways in which paradigms of possessive pronouns can depart from regular connective constructions with a pronominal R2. First, the connective relator used in the possessive pronoun can differ from that used in connective constructions with a nominal R2. For instance, in the north-western Mongo dialects the connective stem is *-ka* when R2 is pronominal and *-a* elsewhere. Second, frequency of use can lead to a stronger morphological integration of CON and a pronominal R2, often accompanied by reduction and idiosyncratic phonological changes. Third, in many languages the paradigm of possessive pronouns is reduced, often to six stems: two (singular and plural) for each discourse participant and two for the third person.

All phenomena cited above can be illustrated with Eton data. Consider the possessive pronoun stems of Eton in Table 1, and compare them to the paradigms of connective relators (Table 2) and personal pronouns (Table 3). The possessive pronoun stems in Table 1 take different paradigms of agreement prefixes, none of which is identical to that of the connective relators.

Table 1: Eton possessive pronouns

1SG	-amà	1PL	-è:ní
2SG	-ò	2PL	
3SG	-ě	3PL	-èbní

Table 2: Eton connective relators

I	à	II	bó
III	H	IV	mí
V	é	VI	mó
VII	í	VIII	bí
IX	ì	X	í

Table 3: Eton personal pronouns

1SG	mà	1PL	bî
2SG	wò	2PL	mîn
I	ɲě	II	bǒ
III	wǒ	IV	mǒ
V	dǒ	VI	mǒ
VII	jǒ	VIII	bjǒ
IX	jò	X	jǒ

The paradigm of possessive adjectives has been reduced to five forms. Third person possessors belonging to the singular noun classes invariably select the possessive stem *-ě*, those belonging to the plural noun classes select *-ěbní*. Moreover, the first and second person plural stems have merged. In order to disambiguate between first and second plural, one can use a connective construction, as in (30b-c).

(30) Eton (Cameroon; Van de Velde 2008a: 156-157)

- a. b̀ kálàdà b̀èèní
 |b̀ kálàdà b-è:ní|
 PL book II-our
 ‘our/your (PL) books’
- b. b̀ kálàdà bé ‘byá
 |b̀ kálàdà b́ = bíǎ|
 PL book II.CON = 1PL.PPR
 ‘our books’
- c. b̀ kálàdà bé mí‘ná
 |b̀ kálàdà b́ = mínǎ|
 PL book II.CON = 2PL.PPR
 ‘your (PL) books’

The form for the first person singular, *-amà*, is the only possessive adjective that transparently consists of a connective relator and a personal pronoun in Eton. Moreover, the connective relator has the canonical Bantu form *-a* (with a harmonic tone), which occurs nowhere else in the language. This structure is blurred in the forms that agree with a possessee of noun class 1 or 3, where the form of the possessive adjective is *-amò*, rather than *-amà* (31).

- (31) ñnàm wámô
 |ñ-nàm ú-a-mà|
 3-country III-CON-1SG
 ‘my country’

The change from /a/ to /ɔ/ is due to a rather unusual mechanism of reinterpretation by analogy at the morphophonological level (see Van de Velde (2008b) for more details).

3.4. Miscellaneous other departures

So far we have seen departures from the canonical R2 in the direction of adjectives and verbs, as well as pronominal R2s. It turns out that many other types of elements can occur in R2 position too. The following is a brief enumeration.

In the majority of Bantu languages, ordinal numbers are introduced by the connective relator (Bynon-Polak 1965: 134).

(32) Eton (Van de Velde 2008a: 182)

lèwòl lé 'báà
 |lè-wòl |lé = báà|
 5-hour V.CON = second
 'the second hour'

Another recurrent departure from the canon is that in which R2 is a locative noun, derived from another noun by means of a locative prefix. In the following Ruwund examples the class 18 nominal prefix *mù-* is a locative marker.

(33) Ruwund (Nash 1992: 357)

- a. ci-kùmbu c-à = mù-Zaire
 7-house VII-CON = 18-Zaire
 'Zairian house' (lit. 'house of in Zaire')
- b. yi-twaamu y-à = mu-ci-kùmbu
 8-chairs VIII-CON = 18-7-house
 'house chairs' (lit. 'chairs of in the house')

R2 is an ideophone in (34) and a prepositional phrase in (35-36). Cardinal numbers too are construed as R2 in a connective construction in Bafia (35).

(34) Mongo (Hulstaert 1966: 246)

- a. ba-úta b-ǎ sénjele
 6-oil VI-CON *ideophone*
 'pure oil'

- (35) Bafia (Cameroon; Guarisma 2000: 208)
 ɓɔ-yíp ɓɔ = ʰbɛ̀ɛ ɓɔ = á bɛ̀y
 2-women II.CON = two II.CON = LOC [9]past
 ‘the two women of before’
- (36) Mongo (Hulstaert 1966: 270)
 bobúngá w-ǎ = la j-ángo
 3-error III.CON = with 5-plan
 ‘an intentional error’

4. Departures from the canonical connective relator

There is considerable variation in the form of the connective relator. Some of this variation is unconditioned, i.e. a number of languages and dialects have a single connective relator that deviates from the canonical Bantu AG-*a* form. Other languages have several connective relators, the choice of which can be conditioned by factors such as prosody, morphological and/or pragmatic-semantic characteristics of R1 and/or R2, the type of relation between R1 and R2 and/or tense. This section provides an overview, starting with examples of unconditioned variants of AG-*a* (4.1), followed by some types of conditioned variation (4.2-4.4) and closing with an illustration of a language that has more than one relator, viz. Songye (4.5).

4.1. Unconditioned variants

In many north-western Bantu languages, such as Eton, Basaa and Bafia, the connective relator has no stem. It consists solely of an agreement marker, which does not necessarily correspond to an agreement prefix used in other modifiers or pronouns. Sometimes the form of this connective relator is similar or identical to a demonstrative, e.g. in Basaa (Hyman 2003: 266).

In languages where the connective relator does have a stem, this is not always *-a*. Thus, some northern dialects of Mongo have a connective stem ʒká rather than *-a*. This variant is found in literary registers in the other dialects, where it also serves in the formation of the possessive pronoun (see Section 3) (Hulstaert 1965: 171). Another, more frequent, alternative for *-a* as the only connective stem in Mongo dialects is *-na* or *-nda* (Hulstaert 1993: 336). Some languages have an AG-V relator, where the stem is a vowel other than *a*. Such is the case for Bodo (D332), where the connective stem is *-o* (Asangama 1983: 253). Interestingly, the Bodo reflex of the Proto-Bantu comitative relator **na* (Meeussen 1967: 115) ‘and, with’ is *no* (Asangama 1983: 399). In languages where the stem

of the connective relator is a vowel other than *a*, this vowel may be a trace of the pre-prefix or augment of R2 (Nzang Bie 1995:50-53). The augment is a prefix found in many Bantu languages. Its function differs from language to language. Often it can be characterised as what Greenberg (1978) calls a stage 2 or non-generic article, i.e. a further development of a definite (stage 1) article, in that its use generalised to most contexts, excluding generic utterances and inherently definite nominals such as proper names.

In the Bantu based creole Kituba, the invariable comitative relator *na* ‘and, with’ serves as the connective relator (37). Mufwene (2003: 200) cites the absence of agreement here as an example of morphosyntactic impoverishment in creolised variants.

- (37) bá-na na móno
 2-children with 1SG
 ‘my children’

In Kol (Cameroon), we find a peculiar departure from the canonical AG- in the connective relator. One of the three different series of connective relators, the so-called “qualificative associative”, has the canonical connective stem *-a* (Henson 2007: 114), but this stem is preceded by a paradigm of agreement prefixes that usually appears before consonant initial stems, which may point to a *-Ca* (possibly *-na*) origin of the stem.

4.2. “Amplexives”

A well known example of conditioned variation in the form of the connective relator is that in which the AG-*a* connective is followed or replaced by a so-called amplexive morpheme, often *ka* or *kwa* (but many other forms can be found throughout Bantu), when R2 belongs to class 1a.¹² Class 1a usually contains proper names, kinship terms, borrowings and some other nouns. These nouns lack a class prefix and/or an augment and trigger class 1 agreement. Usually class 1a is analysed as a subclass of class 1, but see Van de Velde (2006) for an alternative analysis that argues that these nouns lack a gender specification. In Zulu, for instance, the amplexive *ka* replaces the connective stem *a*. Moreover, it is preceded by the subject agreement prefix, rather than by the so-called pronominal prefix. According to Doke (1997:120), the *ka*-relator appears before class 1a nouns, obligatorily when they have animate reference (39), optionally when they do not (40). Example (38) illustrates the default connective relator before an animate R2 that does not belong to class 1a.

¹² The exact conditioning for the appearance of the “amplexive” may be more intricate than that in many languages, e.g. involving only proper names or only class 1a nouns with human reference, or proper names whether they belong to class 1a or not. Better descriptive work is needed on this issue.

(38) Zulu (South Africa; Doke 1997: 120)
 izihlalo zomlungu
 i-zi-hlalo z-a = u-m-lungu
 AU-10-chairs X-CON = 1.AU-1-white_man
 ‘the white man’s chairs’

(39) izihlalo zikababa
 i-zi-hlalo zi-ka = baba
 10.AU-10-chairs X-CON = father
 ‘father’s chairs’

(40) a. ubukhulu bukatamatisi
 u-bu-khulu bu-ka = tamatisi
 14.AU-14-size XIV-CON = tomato
 ‘the size of the tomato’
 b. ubukhulu botamatisi
 u-bu-khulu bu-a = tamatisi
 14.AU-14-size XIV-CON = tomato
 ‘the size of the tomato’

Apparently, animacy is not the only relevant factor for the obligatory use of the *ka*-connective, since Doke points out that names of coins, such as *umpondwe*, *usheleni*, *umfagolweni* and *uzuka* “take only the construction with *-ka*.” This may mean that the *ka*-connective is obligatory if R2 is a class 1a proper name (or kinship term) and that names for different types of coins are construed as proper names in this construction. Several hypotheses concerning the origin of *ka* have been forwarded: a contraction of the connective relator *kwa*, which contains the locative class 17 agreement prefix *ku-* (Van Eeden 1956), a reflex of a proto-Niger-Congo connective stem **ka* (Welmers 1963), a reflex of the often diminutive class 12 prefix *ka-*, a grammaticalisation of the Proto-Bantu noun **ka* ‘wife’ (Bosch 1997), and finally an origin in a Southern Bantu locative prefix *ka-* (Güldemann 1999).

Specific connective relators for an R2 belonging to class 1a do not always involve an amplexive morpheme. In Oshindonga the connective relator is AG-*a* before a class 1a noun and AG elsewhere (Fivaz 1986: 85).¹³

¹³ It may be that the presence versus absence of an augment is the real conditioning factor here, rather than class 1a membership. Class 1a nouns typically lack an augment and since the augment is vocalic in Oshindonga, the absence of the connective stem *-a* before other nouns might be due to a phonological rule of vowel hiatus resolution. Since Fivaz does not explicitly mention the connective construction in his overview of where vowel hiatus resolution rules apply, we can assume that he analyses the connective relator as lacking a stem except

4.3. Different relators for different relations

The choice between multiple connective relators can be conditioned by the function of the modifier, i.e. whether CON R2 classifies, qualifies, quantifies or anchors R1. Thus, the north-western Bantu language Kol has three paradigms of connective relators (Henson 2007: 113). The connective relator that Henson calls *basic* consists of AG (^H in class 3, Ø in classes 1, 9 and 10). The connective relator called *possessive* consists of the stem *mà*, preceded by a floating high tone in classes 2-8. Finally, there is a nearly canonical AG-*a* relator (see 4.1) called *qualificative*. Henson's description does not make clear how these connectives differ from each other functionally and the descriptive labels are not very revealing of their function. Nevertheless, it seems clear that the choice for one of the three types of connective construction in Kol depends on the nature of the relation expressed by the connective.

There are several cases in which a non-canonical relator is used to mark a (type of) possessive relation, as defined in Section 2, where a canonical relator is used for any other relation. For instance, several Mongo dialects have more than one connective stem, usually *-a* and another one, viz. *-ná*, *-ká*, *-áká*, *-náká*, *-ánáká* or *ǀlěka*. In these variants the *-a* connective tends to be the more general one, whereas the other stem usually expresses possession or some kind of focus on R2 (Hulstaert 1993). The exact functional difference between both connective relators is not always clear. The following examples (41-42) are from the Bombwanja dialect (Hulstaert 1965: 172).

(41) m-póngɔ y-á n-sombo
9-fat IX-CON 9-pig
'pork fat'

(42) m-póngɔ i-ná n-sombo
9-fat IX-CON 9-pig
'the fat of the pig'

The connective relator *ǀlěka* historically derives from a relative form of the copula *le* 'be' followed by the preposition *ěka* 'at (somebody's place)'.¹⁴ It is used to express ownership (and contrastive focus on the owner). Consequently, R2 must have human reference.

before class 1a nouns. An example of a connective construction with an R2 of class 8 could show which analysis is correct, since the augment of class 8 is *i-* and vowel hiatus resolution in the case of *a + i* involves coalescence to *e*. Unfortunately, there is no such example in his grammar.

¹⁴ According to Hulstaert (1965:178) native speakers are not aware of this origin, i.e. they do not recognise the preposition 'chez' as a constituting part of the connective relator.

- (43) Mongo (Hulstaert 1965: 178)
- a. w-áto bǒ-lěka Mbangó
 3-canoe III-CON Mbangó
 ‘Mbangó’s canoe (not sb. else’s)’
- b. bi-tóo bǐ-lěka wě
 8-clothes VIII-CON 2SG
 ‘your own clothes’

In Makwe, if R2 is human and singular, i.e. if it is a prototypical possessor, the connective relator takes the form of a possessive pronoun (44a). The canonical connective relator cannot be used (44b).¹⁵

- (44) Makwe (Devos 2008: 136)
- a. ki-táabu c-á-ke = mw-áana
 7-book VII-CON-I.POS = 1-child
 ‘The book of the child.’
- b. *ki-táabu c-á = mw-áana
 7-book VII-CON = 1-child

There is prosodic evidence for the claim that the possessive pronoun functions as a relator in this construction. Devos (2008: 136) points out that “Whereas the possessive [pronoun] normally occurs in a single phonological phrase with the possessed it now occurs in a single phonological phrase with the possessor, the possessed forming a phonological phrase on its own.” The possessive pronoun can also have a specific tone pattern and some phonological reduction in the construction exemplified in (44a). Compare (44a) to (45). In (45) the possessive pronoun has phrase final penultimate lengthening, not R1. In (44a) it is the other way around.

- (45) ki-tabú cáa-ke (mw-áana) ‘his/her book, (the child’s)’

Similar constructions can be found in other Bantu languages (46-47), where the exact conditioning for its use may differ. In Ruund, for instance, R2 does not need to be singular and the use of a possessive pronoun relator is optional.

¹⁵ Interestingly, the canonical connective construction is used (obligatorily) if a singular, human R2 is itself modified by a possessive pronoun: ki-táabu c-á=mw-áná w-áa-ngu (7-book VII-CON=1-child I-CON-1SG.POS) ‘the book of my child’.

(46) Kagulu (Petzell, 208: 197)
 di-sina dy-akwe mw-ana-angu
 5-name V-3SG.POS 1-child-1SG.POS
 ‘My child’s name’

(47) Ruund (Nash 1992: 364)
 cikùmbu cèndaay Yâav / cikùmbu ca Yâav
 ci-kùmbu ci-èndaay-Yâav / ci-kùmbu ci-a-Yâav
 7-house VII-3SG.POS-Yaav / 7-house VII-CON-Yaav
 ‘Yaav’s house’

4.4. Tense

In a number of Bantu languages, such as Tetela and Mongo, the connective construction has a past versus non-past tense distinction. In order to express that the genitive relation does no longer hold or that the relation between R1 and R2 is due to a past event, these languages use a relative past tense form of the copula as a connective relator (48). In this construction, the copula replaces the canonical connective relator, which is the main argument for analysing it as a connective relator. Note in this respect that REL = R2 can follow a copula as a non-verbal predicate in Mongo, see example (96a) in Section 6.2.

(48) Mongo (Hulstaert 1966: 145)

- a. ntaa ě-kí ngóya
 [9]goat IX-CON.PST my_mother
 ‘the goat of my late mother’
- b. li-sála ĩ-kí ngóya
 5-field V-CON.PST my_mother
 ‘the field that my mother planted’
- c. ts-ă tǒ-kí ’mí
 13-fire XIII-CON.PST 1SG
 ‘the fire I lighted’

In their typological overview of nominal tense, Nordlinger and Sadler (2004: 781) point out that in constructions such as the Bantu connective construction there are two semantic predicates with respect to which the tense marker may be interpreted: “One possibility is that the tense marker temporally locates the nominal referent itself (e.g. ‘former house’). Another possibility is that the tense marker does not refer to the nominal, but rather provides the time at which the possessive relation holds (e.g. ‘formerly possessed’).” The

interpretation of nominal tense in such constructions is ambiguous in the majority of the languages of their sample (which does not include Bantu). I do not have sufficient data for an analysis of the preferred interpretation of tense in Bantu connective constructions. The examples I found contain no clear illustrations of a cancelled possession interpretation. In contrast, examples (48b) and (48c) illustrate a third possible interpretation, viz. a temporal location of the establishment of the possessive relation.

4.5. Illustration of a language with complexly conditioned variation in the form of REL

We will conclude this section with a closer look at the variation in the form of the connective relator in one Bantu language, viz. Songye. In his description of Southern Songye, Stappers (1964) distinguishes two dialectal variants, Milembwe and Ekii, which hardly differ from each other, except in their connective constructions. The form of the connective relator in Southern Songye depends on the dialect, on the noun class of R1, on the form of the class prefix of R2 and on whether R2 is a kinship term, another common noun or a proper name. In Milembwe the canonical Bantu situation, with a connective relator of the form AG-*a*, can be found if R1 is not a class 1 noun and if R2 does not have a gender prefix of the form CV-, i.e. if R2 is a noun of class 5, 9 or 10. The representation of the high tone of AG depends on the tonality of the stem.¹⁶

- (49) bu-jitu bw-ǎ = n-gévu
 14-weight XIV-CON = 9-elephant
 ‘the weight of the elephant’

If R2 has a regular CV-prefix (i.e. in all classes, except 5, 9 and 10) the connective relator is reduced to AG- (50), except if the stem of R2 is monosyllabic and high toned (51). This shows that the conditioning for the appearance of the connective stem -*a* is at least partly word-prosodic.

- (50) e-jiná di = lú-patá
 5-name V.CON = 11-village
 ‘the name of the village’

- (51) e-sakí dy-ǎ = mu-cí
 5-leaf V.CON = 3-tree
 ‘the leaf of the tree’

¹⁶ In what follows, I will disregard the representation of the underlying high tone of the pronominal prefix, which further complicates things. A description can be found in Stappers (1964).

In proper names derived from a common noun, the original CV- noun class prefix behaves as part of the stem (morphologically and, apparently, prosodically) and does not cause the omission of the connective stem *-a* (52).

- (52) mupangu waLúmánu
 mu-pangu ú-a = Lumanu
 3-knife III-CON = Lumanu
 ‘Lumanu’s knife’

Things are still different when R1 is a locative noun. Nouns that are inherently locative belong to class 16, 17 or 18. These must be distinguished from nouns that refer to a location and that are derived from common nouns by means of a locative pre-prefix of class 16, 17 or 18. Inherently locative nouns have two alternative connective constructions, with minimal semantic difference. The first has a connective relator that differs from that found with a non-locative R1 in that the connective stem *a* is represented before an R2 with a CV-prefix (53). Stappers (1964: 52) analyses the second construction as a compound in which R1 and R2 are linked by the connective stem *-a*.¹⁷

- (53) mu-uṅaaza mw-a = bú-fukú
 18-middle XVIII-CON = 14-night
 ‘in the middle of the night’

- (54) mu-uṅaaza-a-bú-fukú
 18-middle-CON-14-night
 ‘in the middle of the night’

Two locative nouns *peepí* ‘close’ and *pankací* ‘between’ in R1 position use the comitative relator *na*.

- (55) pe-epí na = mú-sulú uLúvubú
 16-close CON = 3-river Lufubu
 ‘close to the river Lufubu’

¹⁷ But note that the class 14 prefix *bu-* of *bu-fukú* carries a high tone in (54) too. This high tone is analysed as that of AG in examples such as (53). Therefore, a more accurate analysis of (54) might be one in which the connective consists of a floating high tone agreement marker (arguably that of agreement pattern 1) and the connective stem *-a*.

The connective relator agrees with the inherent noun class of R1 nouns that refer to a location or direction and that are derived from another noun by means of a locative prefix (56), except if the source noun of R1 refers to a residence. In that case the agreement is locative (57).

(56) mw-i-benga di = kí-subáabu
 18-5-pocket V.CON = 7-jacket
 ‘in the pocket of the jacket’

(57) mu-n-dibú mw-ǎ = mú-ngí mú-kájí
 18-9-hut XVIII-CON = I-other 1-woman
 ‘in the hut of the other woman’

Finally, if R1 belongs to class 1 the pronominal prefix (AG) of class 1 *ú-* is represented by its high tone only and the connective stem *a=* is not dropped before a CV-prefix (53). However, if R2 is a proper name, the connective relator is reduced to its stem *a=*, i.e. there is no structural high tone (59).

(58) mukají amúzungu
 mu-kají ^H-a = mu-zungu
 1-woman I-CON = 1-white_person
 ‘the wife of the white person’

(59) mu-ntu a = Kabemba
 1-person I.CON = Kabemba
 ‘a person from Kabemba’

5. Departures from the canonical dependency relations

5.1. Dependency reversal: R1 is the attribute

Several Bantu languages show examples of so-called dependency reversal in connective constructions, in that the morphosyntactic head (i.e. R1) modifies the morphosyntactic dependent (R2), as illustrated in the Eton examples in (60-61). Similar constructions have been identified in languages as diverse as Basque, Hausa, Latin and some Oceanic languages of northwest Melanesia (see, e.g., Malchukov 2000, Ross 1998). Within Bantu, this construction type is common only in the north-west. A short survey suggests that

dependency reversal is an areal phenomenon that can be found in the core of the so-called Macro Sudan belt, comprising Nilo-Saharan, Niger-Congo and Afroasiatic languages (see Güldemann 2008). More research is needed to confirm this.

(60) Eton (Van de Velde 2008: 218)
 ì-ŋgúŋgwál í=m-ôd
 7-miserable VII.CON = 1-person
 ‘a miserable person’

(61) òpúm ndá
 |N-púm^H = ndá|
 3-white III.CON = [9]house
 ‘a white house’

R1 determines external agreement (62a), at least when agreement is syntactic. In languages that have semantic agreement, agreement will be determined by R2. In Eton, semantic agreement occurs on pronominal targets when the controller is a noun with human denotation (including personified animal characters in fairy tales), that does not belong to gender 1/2 (62b).

(62) Eton (Van de Velde 2008: 402)
 a. dô mîŋ-kód mí=mbú mí-‘bá mí-ŋgá-só
 then 4-skinny IV.CON=[10]dog IV-two IV-RP-come
 ‘Then two skinny dogs came.’

b. bó èèy bó nâ: [“íjí yô byàkê.”]
 II.SUBST with II.SUBST CMP
 ‘They (the dogs) said to them (the animals): [“This one (road) we will go.”]’

The position of the qualifying noun in the connective construction is lexically determined in Eton, with the overwhelming majority of property denoting nouns that qualify another noun always occurring in R1 position. A rare example of a qualifying noun that does not impose dependency reversal is given in (63).

(63) ònàŋ míntàg
 |N-nàŋ H = mì-ntàg|
 3-albino III.CON = 4-satisfaction
 ‘a happy albino’

Languages in which the same property noun can be construed either as R2 or as R1 may provide insight in the way dependency reversal originated. In Mongo dependency

reversal is rather rare. When it occurs, the property denoting noun acquires an augmentative reading, as seen in the examples in (64) from Hulstaert (1966: 247). Rodegem (1970) proposes a similar analysis for some property nouns in Kirundi.

- (64) a. e-sus' é-a = nsombo
 7-bigness VII-CON = [9]wild_boar
 'a huge boar'
- b. n-sombo ě' = e-susá
 9-wild_boar IX.CON = 7-bigness
 'a big boar'

Some Mongo nouns expressing superlative qualities can only appear in R1 position in connective constructions, e.g., *ekóla* 'tremendous, splendid' in (65).

- (65) e-kóla ě-a = i-lɔmbe
 7-tremendous VII-CON = 5-house
 'a tremendous house'

Note that strictly speaking the dependency reversal constructions discussed here should be distinguished from those in which R1 and R2 both refer to objects (rather than properties), such as in English *this crook of a servant*. This type is more common in the languages of the world and can be found throughout the Bantu family, not only in the northwest. This type departs from the canonical dependency relations too, in that R1 and R2 are co-referential (see Section 5.2). It is very frequently used to express 'male' (R1 = 'husband'), 'female' (R1 = 'wife') or 'small/young' (R1 = 'child') (66).

- (66) Eton (Van de Velde 2008:220)
 j̄ɲóm mbú
 |N̄-jóm ^H = mbú|
 3-husband III.CON = [9]dog
 'male dog'

5.2. R1 and R2 are co-referential

Another set of connective constructions depart from the canonical construction in that R1 and R2 are coreferential. In the following overview of constructions of this type X represents the more general term and Y the more specific one.

5.2.1. X CON Y ‘X called Y’

When R2 is a proper name for an individual of the category expressed by R1, the connective construction expresses the relation of ‘being called’. This can be compared to the prepositional genitive construction exemplified by *the city of London* and *the month of August* in English.

(67) Mongo (Hulstaert 1966: 250)

i-bonga y-ǎ = Mbándáká

5-town V-CON = Mbandaka

‘the town of Mbandaka’

(68) Mongo (Hulstaert 1966: 250)

batswá b’ = Îkéja

2-pygmees II.CON = Ikeja

‘Ikeja pygmies’

5.2.2. X CON Y ‘X of the type Y’

In languages such as English, the possibility of occurring as the second member in a close appositional construction of the type ‘the city of London’ can be used as a formal criterion for proper name status (Van Langendonck 2007: 87). In at least some Bantu languages this criterion is not valid, since we find examples of connective constructions very similar to those in Section 5.2.1, in which R2 can hardly be analysed as a proper name.

(69) Orungu (Gabon; Odette Ambouroué, p.c.)¹⁸

a. òŋwáŋgà w = ókwárà

3.iron.tool.DEF III.CON = 3.machete.INDEF

‘the iron tool called *machete*’

b. nyámà y = ínyárè

9.animal.DEF IX.CON = 9.cow.INDEF

‘the animal called *cow*’

(70) Mongo (Hulstaert 1966: 250)

li-kɔngá j-ǎ = bo-ntómbá

5-lance V-CON = 3-type.of.lance

‘a lance of the type *bontomba*’

¹⁸ It is very unusual for Bantu languages to have a formal distinction between definite and indefinite nominals. See Ambouroué (2007) for a description.

5.2.3. Y CON X ‘Y of the type X’

There are also connective constructions that relate the same types of elements as the constructions in the two previous subsections (5.2.1 & 5.2.2), but in the reverse order. That is, R1 is the term with the more restricted extension. R2 is either disambiguating or semantically redundant (non-restrictive). In Eton, a lower level category term is frequently supplemented by its basic level term in R2 position (Van de Velde 2008a: 222). This is reminiscent of noun classifiers in Australian languages (see Rijkhoff 2002: 74).

(71) è-yáŋ é = ‘ɲóy
 5-green_mamba V.CON = [9]snake
 ‘green mamba’

(72) bé⁴té wô yòlò mé⁴bádná mé mwé
 |bá-Lté wô L-jòlò H mà-bàdná m⁶ = m-óé|
 II-PR 2SG.PPR INF-give LT 6-nickname VI.CON = 6-name
 ‘They give you a nickname.’

(73) ì-sòm í = m-úŋá
 7-toddler VII.CON = 1-child
 ‘a toddler’

In Mongo, constructions of the type *Y CON X* are used to disambiguate R1 (69b), as compared to simple appositive constructions without a connective relator, which are non-restrictive (74a).

(74) Mongo (Hulstaert 1966: 289)
 a. ndòí ě-kám bò-làkì
 [9]friend IX-my 1-instructor
 ‘my friend the instructor’
 b. ndòí ě-kám ě-à = bò-làkì
 [9]friend IX-my IX-CON = 1-instructor
 ‘my friend, the instructor (not another friend).’

Word order is “free” in the appositional construction, compare (75a) to (74a).

(75) Mongo (Hulstaert 1966: 289)
 a. nkàngà Ìkányà
 [9]fetishist Ikanya

- ‘the fetishist Ikanya’
- b. ì-kányà y-ǎ = nkàngà
 19-Ikanya XIX-CON = [9]fetishist
 ‘Ikanya the fetishist (not another person called Ikanya)’

Example (75b) illustrates a typical usage of the construction, viz. to disambiguate between several individuals who carry the same name (76, 77b, 78)) or between a name and its etymological source (79). R1 is construed as a depropriat noun in these cases, i.e. a noun meaning ‘individual called *x*’ (see Van de Velde & Ambourou, in press). Compare (76) to the non-restrictive (67) where the order (and dependency) is inverse and note that *Mbandaka* is construed as a depropriat noun in (76) and as a proper name in (67). In (78) the restrictive R2 is a proper name (a nickname). In (77) we see again that the presence of a connective relator signals restrictive modification (77b), as opposed to non-restrictive modification (77a).

- (76) Mongo (Hulstaert 1966: 250)
 Mbándáká ěa = i-bonga
 Mbandaka IX-CON = 5-town
 ‘Mbandaka the *town* (not the indigenous village)’

- (77) Mongo (Hulstaert 1966: 289)
- a. ñj-às-à Lòkòkú bò-sí Mbélò
 1SG.PRS-search-FV Lokoku 1-native Mbelo
 ‘I am looking for Lokoku, native to Mbelo.’
- b. ñj-às-à Lòkòkú jw’ = ôsí Mbélò
 1SG.PRS-search-FV [11]Lokoku XI.CON = 1-native Mbelo
 ‘I am looking for the Lokoku native to Mbelo (not another person called Lokoku)’

- (78) Mongo (Hulstaert 1966: 251)
 Etangwa ěa Bonjúmba
 Etangwa IX-CON Miser
 ‘Etangwa, the Miser’

The village name *Batsina* has a fully transparent etymology in the plural noun *batsína* ‘origins’. The connective construction with the basic level term ‘village’ in R2 position in (79) is used to disambiguate between the village name and its etymology.

(79) Mongo (Hulstaert 1966: 251)

Batsína b' = ǒ-moto

Batsina VI.CON = 3-village

'Batsina the village'

Mongo has other means of distinguishing between a restrictive, disambiguating and a non-restrictive reading in connective constructions of the type discussed here. In (80) agreement marks the difference between the two readings. In (80b) the use of agreement pattern I signals that the agreement controller is not in need of referential disambiguation (see Van de Velde 2006). Therefore, it is non-restrictively modified by CON R2. Much of the analysis presented here is based on examples found in Hulstaert's detailed Mongo grammar. It is not clear whether the use of alternative agreement patterns described here is restricted to personal proper names in R1 position.

(80) Mongo (Hulstaert 1966: 7)

a. Ilumbé y-ǎ = bo-kúnji

[19]Ilumbe XIX-CON = 1-harpist

'Ilumbe the *harp player* (not another person called Ilumbe)'

b. Ilumbé ǒ-a = bo-kúnji

Ilumbe I-CON = 1-harpist

'Ilumbe, the harp player'

In a further departure from the canonical connective construction, the $Y\ CON\ X$ construction can have a pronominal R1.

(81) Mongo (1966: 242)

a. emí ǒ-a = bo-laki

I I-CON = 1-instructor

'I, the instructor'

b. ísó b-ǎ = tuu

we II-CON = black

'we, blacks'

5.2.4. $X_1\ CON\ X_1$ 'a real X'

In the extreme case R1 and R2 are identical, rather than merely co-referential. The non-compositional meaning of the construction is 'a real x'. I found examples in Mongo and Kinyarwanda.

(82) Mongo (Hulstaert 1966: 257)

a. nsósó ěa = nsósó

[9]chicken IX-CON = [9]chicken

‘a real chicken (not a similar bird)’

b. t-o-n-jél-ák-é bo-sáánga w’ = ô-sáánga,

PROH-2SG-1SG-bring-PF-SBJV 3-spiral_ginger III.CON = 3-spiral_ginger

o-n-jél-ak-a bo-sáánga w’ = ě-sukúlu

2SG-1SG-bring-PF-IMP 3-spiral_ginger III.CON = 7-owl(sp.)

‘Don’t bring me a *Costus afer* (spiral ginger) proper, bring me one of the esukulu variety.’¹⁹

(83) Kinyarwanda (Rwanda; Kimenyi 1989: 54)

umugore nya mugore ‘a real wife’

umugabo nya umugabo ‘a real man’

umuntu nya muntu ‘a real person’

The Kinyarwanda examples show a number of peculiarities not discussed by Kimenyi. First, *nya* is not the connective form of class 1 (which is *wa*). Kimenyi does analyse *nya* as a connective relator. Second, in two of the three examples the augment of R2 is dropped and third, all examples are with human nouns.

In a rather extreme departure from the canon, Makwe has a connective construction with two identical infinitival relata. I have no data regarding this construction other than the example in (84).

(84) Makwe (Devos 2008: 136)

mámáá-ye kú-m-móona kw-á = kú-m-móona ku-fúláái

[9]mother-3SG.POS 15-1-see XV-CON = 15-1-see 15-be_happy

‘His mother became happy the very minute she saw him.’

5.3. The connective construction has a non-compositional meaning

The meaning of the canonical connective construction can be derived from the meaning of its constituents, R1 and R2. Semantically opaque connectives abound in the Bantu languages. The meaning of the entire construction can be partly (85a) or fully (85b) opaque.

¹⁹ Esukulu is a species of owl (*Ciccaba woodfordi* Smith), whose cry is seen as a bad omen. In *Costus afer* and other plants it refers to a type of malformation which the Mongo attribute to the fact that the plant was planted too late in the evening, after the owl’s cry.

- (85) Eton (personal field data)
- a. ìsò íbéǵî
 |ì-sò ^H=ì-béǵî|
 7-plate VII.CON = 7-tear
 ‘breakable/porcelain plate (as opposed to the traditional wooden plate)’
- b. kpèkpàǵ à = njî
 toothbrush I.CON = gorilla
 ‘first glass of palm wine in the morning’

Names of biological species, especially those low on the (folk) taxonomy, are often partly opaque connective constructions (86).

- (86) Mongo (Hulstaert 1966: 250)
- e-káá ěa = bo-ntamba
 7-anabas VII-CON = 1-slave
 ‘mottled ctenopoma, *Anabas oxyrhynchus* (fish species)’ (lit. ‘Anabas of slave’)

Sometimes, a non-compositional meaning is formally signalled. In Mongo, for instance, idiomatic connective constructions can have a relator that consists solely of the stem *a*, i.e. that lacks AG (Hulstaert 1965: 173).

- (87) a. ba-tói b-ǎ = njòku
 6-ears VI-CON = [9]elephant
 ‘the ears of the elephant’
- b. ba-tói ’ǎ = njòku
 6-ears CON = [9]elephant
 ‘mushrooms with large caps’

In Makwe, some semantically opaque connective constructions have a tone bridge between the first high tone of R1 and the last one of R2 (Devos 2008: 112), which points to their univerbation, since tone bridge formation is a rule that applies within the lexical domain in Makwe. However, these compounds retain morphological characteristics of full syntagms, in that the connective relator agrees in number with R1.

- (88) Makwe (Devos 2008: 112)
- a. li-kójójo (class 5) ‘sea cucumber’; luú-zi (class 11) ‘thread’
 - b. li-kójójó-ly-á-lúú-zi
5-sea_cucumber-V-CON-11-thread
‘sea cucumber (sp.)’
 - c. ma-kójójó-y-á-lúú-zi
6-sea_cucumber-VI-CON-11-thread
‘sea cucumbers (sp.)’

- (89) ñ-kóngá-w-á-n-néembo
3-trunk-III-CON-1-elephant
‘banana (sp.)’

Other semantically opaque connective constructions in Makwe have an irregular tone pattern or contain words that do not exist in isolation.

6. Departures from the canonical R1

The connective relator marks R2 for the function of modification and it is prosodically and morphosyntactically closely linked to R2. In contrast, R1 is much less affected by the connective construction. Therefore, departures from the canonical R1 are less relevant for this overview and I will pay less attention to them. Section 6.1 provides a brief and incomplete enumeration of constructions in which R1 is not a canonical noun. The most relevant departure from the canon is that in which there is no R1, i.e. in which CON R2 is used independently, discussed in Section 6.2.

6.1. R1 is not a canonical noun

In R1 position we find more or less the same range of variation as in R2 position: infinitives, ideophones, pronominals, numbers, and so on. An infinitive R1 is illustrated in (90-91). The connective relator can introduce a diverse set of verbal complements and adjuncts, such as adverbials (90) and agents/notional subjects (91).

- (90) Kete (DRC; Kamba Muzenga 1980: 187)
kù-cìmb kù-a = mánkâm
15-walk XV-CON = nothing
‘a pointless walk’

(91) Shona (Zimbabwe; Perez 1985: 120)

kù-chémà kw-é = mw-àná

17-cry XVII-CON = 1-child

‘the crying of the child’

In Mongo, when a gerund is followed by its complement, the latter is introduced by a connective relator if and only if the gerund heads a constituent that functions as a clausal subject. In all other cases the complement follows the infinitive without extra marking. Hulstaert’s interpretation of this fact is that the gerund is more nominal in character when in subject position and more verbal in other positions.

(92) Mongo (Hulstaert 1966: 294)

a. n-ká~kúnd-a ě-a = b-óna [éfosóngi la wě]

9-GER~beat-GER IX-CON = 1-child

‘Beating the child [doesn’t suit you].’

b. n-ganja ě-a = n-ká~kúnd-a b-óna

9-stick IX-CON = 9-GER~beat-GER 1-child

‘a stick for beating a child’

When R1 is a locative noun derived from a non-locative noun by means of one of the locative class prefixes, many Bantu languages allow alternative agreement patterns. That is, the connective relator can agree with the inherent noun class of R1 (93a, 94a) or with the locative class (93b, 94b).

(93) Ruwund (Nash 1992: 357)

a. ku-ci-kùmbu c-à = Yâav

17-7-house VII-CON = Yaav

‘at Yaav’s house’

b. ku-ci-kùmbu kw-à = Yâav

17-7-house XVII-CON = Yaav

‘at Yaav’s house’

(94) Makwe (Devos 2008: 135)

a. pa-li-pááta ly-á = n-náandi

16-5-stump V-CON = 3-tree

‘at the stump of the tree’

- b. ñ-nyúumba mw-á = íimba
 18-[9]house XVIII-CON = [1a]lion
 ‘in the house of the lion’

6.2. R1 is absent

In many Bantu languages the connective relator can be used pronominally. It then either agrees endo- or exophorically, or it selects a default agreement pattern. Agreement on the pronominalised connective relator is anaphoric in the Mongo examples in (95) and exophoric with an intended class 5 controller in the Ruwund example (96a). The connective relator acts as an independent pronoun in (96b), where it selects agreement pattern VII, the default pattern for the singular in Ruwund (the plural is VIII).²⁰

- (95) Mongo (Hulstaert 1966: 240)
- a. b-ón’ ɔ-né á-fa ǒ-a = bo-laki
 1-child I-this I-COP.PRS.NEG I-CON = 1-instructor
 ‘This child is not that of the instructor.’
- b. i-lòmbe ÿ-tútsí la y-ǎ = ntúndu
 19-houseXIX.REL-be_close with XIX-CON = [9]edge
 ‘the house that is close to that at the edge’
- c. by-ili ngá by’ = ô-senge
 4-roots like IV.CON = 3-uapaca
 ‘roots like those of an *Uapaca guineensis*’

- (96) Ruwund (Nash 1992: 359)
- a. Ni-kàt-in d-à = Yâav
 1SG-like-PRS.PROG V-CON = Yaav
 ‘I like Yaav’s’ (referring to a class 5 controller)
- b. Tù-kwet-àp c-à = kù-mw-ink
 1PL.NEG-have-NEG VII-CON = 15-I-give
 ‘We don’t have anything to give him/her.’ (lit. ‘We have not of to give him.’)

In such languages there can be a difference between coordinated R2s and coordinated REL = R2s, such that coordinated R2s together modify one R1 (97a), whereas coordinated REL = R2s involve different referents (97b).

²⁰ In Nash’s (1992:359) words “Without specific contextual referents, cl 7 and cl 8 associative phrases refer automatically to implicit *côm* ‘thing’ and *yôm* ‘things’ respectively.”

(97) Mongo (Hulstaert 1966: 286)

- a. i-lɔmbɛ y-ǎ = Boliá la Bolínga
19-house XIX-CON = Bolia and Bolinga
'the house of Bolia and Bolinga'
- b. i-lɔmbɛ y-ǎ = Boliá la y-ǎ = Bolínga
19-house XIX-CON = Bolia and XIX-CON = Bolinga
'the house of Bolia and that of Bolinga'

If a pronominalised connective construction modifies a constituent that is itself R2 in a connective construction, the result is a succession of two connective relators (98b).

(98) Tswana (Botswana; Creissels 1993: 349)

- a. m̀híjǎnà w-á = s̀lèpè s-á = m̀òńná
'the handle of the axe of the man'
- b. m̀híjǎnà w-á = s-á = m̀òńná
'the handle of the one of the man'

We saw in Section 3.2 that the subject prefix is preceded by a connective relator in all non-subject relatives in Makwe. The antecedent of the relative clause occupies the R1 position. A headless relative clause can be formed by leaving out R1. Note that the resumptive demonstrative pronoun *kuuyá* is optional in (99) (Maud Devos, p.c.).

(99) Makwe (Devos 2008: 394)

- ̀n-ní-úuma k-a = ni-li-piy-íite kuu-yá
1SG-PRS.PFV-come_out 17-CON = 1SG-REFL-hide-PRS.PFV.REL 17-DEM
'I came out from where I was hiding.'

In languages that have an augment, the latter often functions as a pronominaliser when prefixed to modifiers such as the connective relator (100b).

(100) Kete (Kamba Muzenga 1980: 111, 113)

- a. o-mw-a:n y-a: = kú-m-pal
1.AU-1-child I-CON = 17-9-face
'the first child'
- b. ó-y-a: = kú-m-pal
1.AU-I-CON = 17-9-face
'the first one'

(101) Bemba (Zambia/DRC, Tsibashu Balekelay 1985: 34)

- a. u-mw-ana w-a = ma-somo
1.AU-1-child I-CON = 6-school
'the child from school'
- b. ù-w-ǎ = ma-somo
1.AU-I-CON = 6-school
'the one from school'

(102) Dzamba (DRC, Bokamba 1971: 224)

- o-Salomi tɛɛnɛki o-mw-ana w-a = m-bongo emba, kasi o-w-a = n-gbeya
1.AU-Sally did_not_see 1.AU-1-child I-CON = 9-elephant NEG but 1.AU-I-CON = 9-pig
'Sally did not see the baby-elephant, but that of a pig.'

The combination of CON and R2 is a common source of word formation. Often the target is a (pro-)adverbial. As can be seen in (104) the agreement prefix on the connective relator is often that of the locative agreement pattern XVII (*ku-*).

(103) Mongo (Hulstaert 1966: 236)

- ǒ-a = nsómí
I-CON = [9]first_born
'firstborn'

(104) Makwe (Devos 2008: 135)

- a. kwa cáani 'why?'
- b. kwa úyóovi 'therefore'
- c. kwa kílá síku 'everyday'
- d. kwa yaámbi 'as for now'
- e. kwa síku jámbééle 'in the future'

The Ruwund interrogative pro-adverbial meaning 'what for' consists of a pronominalised connective relator followed by the interrogative 'why'. The relator agrees with the noun for the entity the purpose of which is questioned.

(105) Ruwund (Nash 1992: 372)

- a. lêt ci-twààmu
bring 7-chair
'Bring a chair!'

- b. c-áa-k
VII-CON-why
'what for?'

Certain patterns of lexicalisation of CON R2 are so recurrent that the connective relator involved in them can be analysed as a derivational morpheme. In Zulu, patronyms are regularly derived from personal names by means of the connective relator *ka*, which does not contain an overt agreement marker in agreement patterns I, III, IV, VI and IX (106).

(106) Zulu (Doke 1997: 119)

- a. *uNtengo kaJojo* 'Tengo, son of Jojo'
- b. *uMpande kaSenzangakhona* 'Mpande, son of Senzangakona'
- c. *wena kaJojo!* 'Thou, son of Jojo!'

In Langi, many nominals consist of a connective relator of agreement pattern VII - apparently agreeing with the class 7 word *ki-ntu* 'thing' - and a full noun, e.g., *tfaamutondo* 'breakfast' (< *mutondo* 'morning', cl.9) (Dunham 2005: 114).

Pronominalised connective relators, followed or not by a fixed R2, are a very common source of closed class elements such as prepositions, subordinators and adverbs.²¹ In some cases the distinction between derivational morpheme and preposition is not self evident, for instance where a connective relator of a locative agreement pattern preceding a personal noun expresses the notion of 'at somebody's place' (107-108). In many languages locative nouns cannot be directly derived from personal proper names by means of a locative class prefix.

(107) Ha (Tanzania; Harjula 2004: 65)

- a. *Ngendé kwa Máriámu*
'Let me go to Mariamu'
- b. *mwa Chíisohoye*
'at Chisohoye's'

(108) Songye (Stappers 1964: 56)

- kwamúkají* 'at the woman's place'
- kwămfumú* 'at the chief's'

²¹ It would be interesting to know whether this evolution is sometimes accompanied by antimorphologisation, i.e. an evolution towards a lower degree of morphological bonding (see Idiatov 2008).

In Ruwund the connective relator of agreement pattern V (*dà*) developed into the preposition ‘via’ or ‘through’ and that of agreement pattern XI (*rà*) into a preposition meaning ‘by (means of transportation)’ (109). Something similar is found in Mongo, where ‘via’ is expressed by the connective relator of agreement pattern I (110). Another recurrent preposition that develops from connective relators is ‘for’ (111-112).

(109) Ruwund (Nash 1992: 382)

- a. *dà masuku*
‘through the bush’
- b. *dà kûns*
‘by side path’
- c. *rà nking*
‘by bike’
- d. *rà pânsh*
‘on foot’ (*pânsh* ‘on the ground’)

(110) Mongo (Hulstaert 1966: 239)

to-ó-y-é *õa ntando*
1PL-HAB-come-FV via [9]river
‘We come via the river.’

(111) Ha (Harjula 2004: 65)

b-a-rim-a *kwa Tunguhore*
II-PRS-cultivate-FV for Tunguhore
‘They cultivate for Tunguhore’ (*kwa* < *ku-a* XVII-CON)

(112) Lwalwa (DRC, Ndembe-Nsasi 1972: 120)

bwáamí
‘for me’ (< *bu-a = mi* XIV-CON = 1SG.PPR)

When R2 is a non-finite verb form, such a pronominalised connective relator functions as a subordinator introducing an adverbial clause.

(113) Makwe (Devos 2008: 135)

ńníída kw-a = ku-lífúunda ki-máakwe
I.came XV-CON = 15-study 7-Makwe
‘I came to study Makwe’

(114) Kete (Kamba-Muzenga 1980: 112)

bw-a: = kú-cwu-mon
XIV-CON = 15-1PL-see
'in order to see us'

In the Lwalwa example in (115), *bwáamí* (see ex.112) introduces a purpose clause. This is another example of agreement in an unusual place: a subordinator indexing the complement of the adverbial clause it introduces.

(115) Lwalwa (cited via Nzang Bie 1994: 501)

bwáamí kumóno 'in order to see me'

7. Departures from the canonical arrangement of constituents

7.1. R1, CON and R2 are not adjacent

Canonically R1, the connective relator and R2 are adjacent. In a common departure from the canon, CON R2 is separated from R1 by other modifiers of R1 (116). Example (116) also illustrates that CON R2 can be preceded by modifiers that have scope over it.

(116) Kagulu (Petzell 2008: 196)

i-mu-ana yu-ya u-a = i-chike
AU-1-child I-DEM I-CON = AU-feminine
'that young girl'

7.2. The order of elements is not R1 CON R2

The connective relator is placed iconically between R1 and R2 in the canonical construction. Departures from the canon on this dimension are rarely mentioned in the literature. One partial departure can be found in Mongo in the case of coordinated R1s, where CON R2 can be placed either canonically after the second R1 (117a), or, non-canonically, in between the coordinated R1s (117b).

(117) Mongo (Hulstaert 1966)

- a. bo-ngángo l' a-kulá w-ǎ mbengi
3-bow and 6-arrow III-CON 9.hunter
- b. bo-ngángo w-ǎ mbengi l' a-kulá
3-bow III-CON 9.hunter and 6-arrow
'the bow and arrows of the hunter'

Also in Mongo, CON R2 can be placed in front of R1 in order to express contrastive focus.

(118) Mongo (Hulstaert 1966: 284)

- y-ǎ = fâfâ nyàmà y-ǎl-òtsw-à nd' é-lóngó
X-CON = my_father [10]animals X-PST-enter-FV in 7-barn
'My father's animals have entered the barn (in contrast to the others).'

8. Conclusions

The main typological characteristics of a typical connective construction, the construction used to express adnominal possession in the Bantu languages, are well known and can be summarised as follows:

- (119) a. two nominal constituents are in a relation of dependency
b. the dependent nominal follows the head nominal
c. the dependent nominal is marked by a dedicated connective relator, which agrees with the head nominal
d. the connective construction is not dedicated to the expression of possession, nor of any other relation

Even the minimal characteristics in (119a-c) prove to be too strong as necessary definitional criteria for the connective construction. They do not apply to several construction types, illustrated in this paper, that one would wish to classify as connective constructions on the basis of their family resemblance with typical instances of the construction. Thus, we saw several construction types in which a connective marker links a head nominal to a clearly non-nominal dependent and there is not always a clear cut-off point between a clearly nominal and a clearly non-nominal dependent. For instance, as we saw in Section 3.2, nominalised verb forms such as infinitives, that are marked by a connective relator, can be gradually elaborated with more and more verbal features, which creates a continuum of

construction types between a typical connective construction on the one hand and a typical relative clause construction of the other, with no non-arbitrary cut-off point in between them.

The aim of this paper is to provide an overview of the formal and functional variation in construction types that show a family resemblance to typical connective constructions. In order to do this, I defined a canonical type and then described the formal variation found among connective constructions in terms of departures from the canon along several dimensions. The canonical type reflects the prototypical connective construction in the mind of the Bantuist. No claims are made regarding the higher frequency or the diachronic primacy of the canonical type as opposed to other types. That being said, the canonical construction is the only one that was found in every description that I consulted, at least if we ignore the form of the connective relator in the definition of the canonical type. This may be due to the fact that many grammarians do not go beyond discussing the construction type that they perceive as prototypical. It may also mean that the canonical type *is* diachronically primary (with some uncertainty regarding the form of the connective relator in the proto language). The variation described in this paper could then be explained in terms of extensions from the original use of the connective relator. With respect to departures from the canonical second relatum (R2) it should be pointed out that in no Bantu language the use of the connective relator was “extended” to become a generalised marker of adnominal modification.

At several points in the discussion of departures from the canon, it becomes clear that a canonical approach is useful for the description of parts of speech categories in individual languages too. In Section 3.1, for instance, I referred to canonical Makwe adjectives in order to distinguish them from some of the non canonical adjective types that can occur in R2 position, which can equally well be characterised as non canonical nouns. Thus, *kibúúli* ‘silent’ has the distributional potential of an adjective, but the morphological characteristics of a noun.

Many of the departures from the canonical connective construction appear to be crosslinguistically rare and theoretically interesting. Examples are dependency reversal (Section 5.1), nominal tense (Section 4.4) and the classifier like constructions in Section 5.2.3. A connective origin explains a number of unusual agreement phenomena, such as the fact that Bantu possessive pronouns have two agreement controllers, or some instances of agreement in unusual places, e.g. on the non selective interrogative ‘what for’ in Ruwund. It is not clear at present where, how and why the impressive paradigm of possessive pronouns in some Bantu languages was reduced in others. Many other questions remain to be answered. I do not know, for instance, how recurrent the different departures from the canonical connective construction are throughout the Bantu family. For this we would need

much more detailed descriptive work. To this end, the canonical typology put forward here could serve as a questionnaire for future descriptive work.

References

- Ambouroué, Odette (2007). *Eléments de description de l'orungu, langue bantu du Gabon (B11b)*. PhD thesis. Université Libre de Bruxelles. (available at <http://theses.ulb.ac.be/ETD-db/collection/available/ULBetd-07162007-152714/unrestricted/TheseAmbouroue.pdf>)
- Asangama, Natisa (1983). *Le budu: langue bantu du nord-est du Zaïre. Esquisse phonologique et grammaticale*. PhD thesis. INALCO/Paris III.
- Baka, Jean (2000). *L'adjectif en bantu*. PhD thesis. ULB.
- Bokamba, Georges D (1971). Specificity and definiteness in Dzamba. In: *Studies in African Linguistics* 2-3: 217-237.
- Bosch, Sonja E. (1997). Possible origins of the possessive particle -ka- in Zulu. In: *South African Journal of African Languages*. 17 (1): 1–5.
- Bouka, Léonce Yembi (1994). L'accord des adjectifs du protobantou en zone H. In *Africana Linguistica* 11: 13–18.
- Bynon-Polak, Louise (1965). L'expression des ordinaux dans les langues bantoues. In: *Africana Linguistica* II:127–160.
- Corbett, Greville G. (2006). *Agreement*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Corbett, Greville G. (2007). Canonical typology, suppletion and possible words. In: *Language* 38 (1): 8–42.
- Creissels, Denis (1993) *Description du tswana*. Unpublished manuscript. Grenoble: Université Stendhal.
- Devos, Maud (2008). *A Grammar of Makwe*. München. LINCOM.
- Dik, Simon (1989). *The Theory of Functional Grammar*. Dordrecht: Foris.
- Dunham, Margaret (2005). *Elements de description du langi, langue bantu F33*. Louvain: Peeters.
- Fivaz, Derek. (1986). *A Reference Grammar of Oshindonga*. Windhoek: Bureau for Research, University of Namibia.
- Guarisma, Gladys (2000). *Complexité morphologique – simplicité syntaxique. Le cas du Bafia, langue bantoue périphérique (A50) du Cameroun*. Leuven/Paris: Peeters.
- Greenberg, Joseph H. (1978). How does a language acquire gender markers? In Joseph H. Greenberg, Charles A. Ferguson & Edith A. Moravcsik (eds.) *Universals of Human Language*, III: *Word Structure*, 47–82. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Güldemann, Tom (1999). The *ka*-possessive in southern Nguni. In: *Journal of African Languages and Linguistics* 20: 157–184.

- Güldemann, Tom (2008). The Macro-Sudan belt: towards identifying a linguistic area in northern sub-Saharan Africa. In: Heine, Bernd & Derek Nurse (eds.): *A Linguistic Geography of Africa*. [Cambridge Approaches to Language Contact.] Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hadermann, Pascale (1994). Aspects morphologiques et syntaxiques de l'infinif dans les langues bantoues. *Africana Linguistica*. 11: 79–91.
- Harjula, Lotta (2004). *The Ha Language of Tanzania. Grammar, Texts and Vocabulary*. Köln: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag.
- Hawkinson, Annie K. (1979). Homonymy versus unity of form: the particle –a in Swahili. *Studies in African Linguistics* 10,1:81–109.
- Henson, Bonnie (2007). The Phonology and Morphosyntax of Kol. PhD dissertation. University of California, Berkeley.
- Hulstaert, Gustaaf (1946). Connectieve bijzinnen in Lomongo. In *Aequatoria*. 5:135–137.
- Hulstaert, Gustaaf (1957). *Dictionnaire lomóngɔ-français*. Tervuren: Royal Museum for the Belgian Congo.
- Hulstaert, Gustaaf (1965). *Grammaire du lomóngɔ. Deuxième partie. Morphologie*. Tervuren: Royal Museum for Central Africa.
- Hulstaert, Gustaaf (1966). *Grammaire du lomóngɔ. Troisième partie. Syntaxe*. Tervuren: Royal Museum for Central Africa.
- Hulstaert, Gustaaf (1993). Connectif et possessif dans les dialectes mongo. In *Annales Aequatoria* 14:334–344.
- Hyman, Larry M. (2003). Basaá (A43). In Nurse, Derek and Gérard Philippson (eds.) *The Bantu Languages*, 257–282. London: Routledge.
- Idiatov, Dmitry (2008). Antigrammaticalisation, antimorphologization and the case of Tura. In: Seoane, Elena, María José López-Couso & Teresa Fanego (eds.), *Theoretical and Empirical Issues in Grammaticalisation*, 151-169. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Kagaya, Ryohei (1992). *A Classified Vocabulary of the Bakueri Language*. Tokyo: ILCAA.
- Kamba Muzenga, Jean-Georges (1980). *Esquisse de grammaire kete*. Tervuren: RMCA.
- Lumwamu, François (1973). *Essai de morphosyntaxe systématique des parlers koongo*. Paris: Klincksieck.
- Maganga, Clement & Thilo C. Schadeberg (1992). *Kinyamwezi: grammar, texts, vocabulary*. Köln. Rüdiger Köppe Verlag.
- Maho, Jouni Filip (1999). *A Comparative Study of Bantu Noun Classes*. *Orientalia et Africana gothoburgensia*, n 13. Göteborg: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis.
- Malchukov, Andrej L. (2000). *Dependency Reversal in Noun-Attributive Constructions: towards a typology*. München: LINCOM.
- Meeuwis, Michael (1998). *Lingala*. München: LINCOM.

- Mufwene, Salikoko S. (2003). Contact languages in the Bantu area. In Nurse, Derek and Gérard Philippon (eds.) *The Bantu Languages*, 195–208. London: Routledge.
- Möhlig, Wilhelm, Lutz Marten and Jekura Kavari (2002). *A Grammatical Sketch of Herero (Otjiherero)*. Köln: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag.
- Nash, Jay Arthur (1992). Aspects of Ruwund grammar. PhD thesis. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.
- Ndembe-Nsasi, Damase (1972). Esquisse phonologique et morphologique de la langue Iwalwa. Mémoire de licence. Université Nationale du Zaïre, Lubumbashi.
- Nordlinger, Rachel & Luisa Sadler (2004). Nominal tense in crosslinguistic perspective. In: *Language* 80-4: 776-806.
- Nzang Bie, Yolande (1995). *Le connectif dans les langues bantu: analyses synchroniques et perspectives diachroniques*. (2 vols) Université Libre de Bruxelles. PhD dissertation.
- Petzell, Malin (2008) *The Kagulu Language of Tanzania. Grammar, texts and vocabulary*. Köln: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag.
- Perez, Carolyn Harford. (1985). Aspects of Complementation in three Bantu Languages. PhD thesis. University of Wisconsin-Madison.
- Rijkhoff, Jan (2002). *The Noun Phrase*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Rodegem, Firmin M. (1970). Syntagmes complétifs spéciaux en rundi. In: *Africana Linguistica* 4:181–207.
- Ross, Malcolm (1998). Possessive-like attribute constructions in the Oceanic languages of northwest Melanesia. In: *Oceanic Linguistics* 37–2: 234–276.
- Rurangwa, Innocent Moïse (1982). Elements de description du ngungwel, langue bantoue du congo. Masters thesis. ULB.
- Stappers, Leo c.i.c.m. (1964). *Morfologie van het Songye*. Tervuren: RMCA.
- Tshibusu Balekelay (1985). Les formes pronominales en bemba (approche structurale). Lubumbashi: Institut Supérieur Pédagogique de Lubumbashi.
- Tucker, Archibald N. (1960). Notes on Konzo. In: *African Language Studies* 1:16–41.
- Van de Velde, Mark L.O. (2006) Multifunctional agreement patterns in Bantu and the possibility of genderless nouns. In: *Linguistic Typology* 10 (2): 183–221.
- Van de Velde, Mark L.O. (2008a) *A Grammar of Eton*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Van de Velde, Mark L.O. (2008b). Un cas de changement phonologique par réanalyse morphologique en éton. *Africana Linguistica* 14: 177–184.
- Van de Velde, Mark L.O. & Odette Ambouroué (forthcoming). The grammar of Orungu proper names. To appear in *Journal of African Languages and Linguistics*.
- Van Langendonck, Willy (2007). *Theory and Typology of Proper Names*. Berlin. Mouton de Gruyter.
- Van Eeden, B.I.C. (1956). *Zoeloe-grammatika*. Stellenbosch: Universiteitsuitgewers en boekhandelaars.

Welmers, William Everett. (1963). Associative *a* and *ka* in Niger-Congo. *Language*, 39 (3): 432–447.