Verbal Extensions in Kipsigis

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Abstract

In this paper we present a description of verbal extensions in Kipsigis. In addition, we briefly show how the principles of theta theory can account for the arguments presented. Kipsigis belongs to the group of languages that allows co-occurrence of extensions in addition to appearing individually in a structure. The language contains both valence-increasing morphemes; applicatives and causative, and valence-reducing morphemes such as; reciprocal, stative and impersonal. We noted that applicatives in Kipsigis include: benefactives, -w- and -chi-, locative –y- and instrumental –en- while the causative is represented by the morphemes –e- and –si- and a lexeme –yai. On the other hand, reciprocal is represented by –kee-, stative by –akse- and impersonal by -ki-, all of which are affixed to the verb root either as prefixes or suffixes. The effect of such operations is the change of the morphological structure of the host verb as well as the addition or reduction of arguments.

Keywords: Verbal extensions, morphemes, arguments, theta theory

Introduction

Kipsigis belongs to Kalenjin linguistic family. The Kalenjin languages belong to the Southern Nilotic group of the Eastern Sudanic branch of the Nilo-saharan language family, which also encompasses Tugen, Nandi, Keiyo, Sabaot, Okiek (Ndorobo), Pokot (Pakot) and Terik, Towett, T. (1979).

Whiteley (1974) notes that the most common basic word-stem shape in this language is CVC[i], He further observes that the morphological classes of verbs may be established with distinctive grammatical and tonal behavior. Verbal derivation by suffix is also common with the underlying ideas implying motion towards or away from etc. The word order in the language is VSO with considerable amount agglutination.

2.0 Kipsigis Verbal Extensions

Kipsigis can distinguish two forms of verbal extensions; those that increase the valence (argument increasing) and those that decrease valence (argument reducing). The derivational morphemes that increase the valence include applicatives and causatives while the devices that reduce the valence are reciprocals, statives and impersonals. Moreover, these morphemes can be stacked together so that there can be co-occurrence of; applicative-reciprocal-reflexive, causative-stative, Impersonal-applicative-reciprocal and impersonal-stative. While discussing Quechua language, Muysken (1988), notes that several other languages supply evidence that valency-changing operations can be combined freely, though they may be subject to some sequential constraints. This explains the reason why some of these elements do not co-occur and those that co-occur have a fixed order, Baker (1985). In this study, we are going to describe the nature of these verbal extensions by looking at both its distributional and structural properties as well as highlighting the arguments that have either been increased or reduced as per the theta theory.

2.1 The Theta Theory

Theta theory is a sub-theory in Government and Binding (GB) that is concerned with the assignment of semantic roles to the sentential arguments (Horrocks, 1987).

The theory is guided by the principle of the theta criterion, which requires that each argument must bear one and only one theta role, and that each theta role must be assigned to one and only one argument. The theta criterion according to Horrocks (1987) is made to apply at all levels of syntactic representations by the projection principle. This principle demands that syntactic representations must be projected from the lexicon because they observe the subcategorizing properties of the lexical item in question, (Radford, 1988).

2.1.1 Thematic Roles

Thematic roles are abbreviated as theta roles. These are semantic roles placed by arguments and may be among others, theme, agent, patient, benefactive, goal, experiencer etc. Below are some of the thematic roles that are associated with different syntactic arguments.

Table 1: Description of Theta Roles in Theta Theory

Thematic roles	Description
1. Agent	One who performs the action.
2. Theme	The one thing that undergoes the action.
3. Location	The place where the action happens.
4. Benefactive	One who receives the action as denoted by the verb.
5. Goal	The place to which the action is directed.
6. Source	The place to which an action originates.
7. Instrument	The means by which an action is performed.
8. Experiencer	One who perceives something
9. Causative	A natural force that causes change
10. Possessor	One who has something

Fromkin et al (2002)

Depending on the kind of argument-changing process applied to the verb in Kipsigis, some of the above theta roles are affected.

2.2 Valence Increasing Devices

In this section, we are going to give brief description of argument-increasing devices in Kipsigis. The language has two forms of these mechanism; applicative and causatives. Applicative are realized as morphemes while causatives occur both as affixes and a lexical item.

2.2.1 Applicative

Shibatani (1996) notes that an applicative is a grammatical element –verbal affix that increase valence. This means that an applicative has been understood as a valence increasing mechanism where intransitive roots become transitive, transitive become ditransitive and so on. Applicative licenses a semantic role not normally subcategorized for by the lexical verb when appearing outside a particular applicative (instruction), as a core syntactic argument.

In Kipsigis, this extension exemplifies four different morphological realizations which apply to the action described in the verb to someone or something. Applicatives have an effect of changing the syntactic properties of the verb change, where an applied object is introduced. In most scenarios, the new object has different semantic realizations.

Applicatives in Kipsigis include: benefactives, -w- and -chi-, locative –y- and instrumental –en-.

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2.2.1 Benefactive

Benefactive can be described as a valence increasing operation that brings a peripheral participant onto center stage by making it a direct object which generally becomes the beneficiary of the action denoted by the verb, Payne (1997). Benefactive in Kipsigis as mentioned earlier is expressed in two forms; -w- and –chi- morphemes.

i.   –w-

1.   Ki-   i-   rir-   w-   an
         Pst   2sg/Nom   cry   Ben   1sg/Dat
         You cried for me.

2.   Ki-   i-   cheng-   w-   ech   got
         Pst   2sg/Nom   search   Ben   1pl/Acc   house-Dat
         You searched for us a house.

The two sentences show the benefactive morpheme–w-being embedded in the verbal structure. Sentence (1) has intransitive root –rir- 'cry' while structure (2) has transitive verbs -cheng- 'search'. The applicative –w- in Kipsigis when affixed to the verb allows otherwise intransitive root to accommodate an accusative NP i.e –an- 'Me' in example (1) and -eech- 'us' in (2). The syntactic expression of semantically peripheral argument is added thus increasing the valence of the verb by one. When the applicative –w- is suffixed to the verb, it has to co-occur with an object pronominal suffix and not a lexical NP because of its structure. It is thus selected by given types of verbs and not others. From the examples, intransitive and transitive verbs select this affix in an applicative construction and not ditransitive. In a sentence structure, the –w- morpheme represents a condition of doing something 'on behalf of'.

ii.   –chi-
Consider:

        (3)   Ki-   yat-   chi   Murenet   Chepyoset   got
                 Pst   open   Ben   man-Nom   woman-Acc   house-Dat
                 The man opened the house for the woman.

        (4)   Ki-   mwet-   chi   Chepyoset   murenet   ngoroik
                 Pst   wash   Ben   woman-Nom   man-Acc   cloths-Dat
                 The woman washed the clothes for the man.

A transitive verb ideally requires two arguments. However, with the incorporation of an applicative morpheme in Kipsigis, there is an addition of an argument to become a ditransitive. The above examples presents a peculiar feature in that the verbs cannot accept more than two arguments without an applicative. The applicative in such cases licenses a benefactive argument, Chepyoset 'woman' and murenet 'man' in (3) and (4) respectively. This characteristic further illustrates why the applicative is a valence increasing morpheme.

On the other hand, ditransitive verb requires three arguments, but with the affixation of the applicative, the number of participants increases to four.

(5)   Ki-   i-   nde-   chi   kitaphut   meset   konetindet
         PST   2sg/Nom   put   BEN   book- Acc   table-Loc   konetindet
                                                                                  teacher- Dat.
         You put the book on the table for the teacher.

In (5), three arguments have been increased to four with the affixation of –chi- morpheme. In other words, a benefactor konetindet 'teacher'has been introduced to the structure.Therefore, the benefactives in Kipsigis incorporates the benefactive theta role as specified by the theta theory. For example in (1), the agent I 'you', is benefiting from the action of crying from –an 'me', where   –an- 'me' is crying on behalf of –i- 'you'. The same benefit is accrued in examples (2), (3),(4) and (5).

2.2.1.2 Instrumental –en-

Instrumental applicative in Kipsigis is represented by morpheme -en-, which operates to license the core status of otherwise peripheral participants. This morpheme is associated with a broad range of semantic roles. When used, it expresses a notion of 'by means of'.

Consider:

(6)   sir-en Peter   baruet   kalamit
          Write-Instr   Peter-Nom   letter-Acc   pen- Dat
          Peter is a writing a letter with a pen.

(7) a.   ki-a-pir   lakwet
             Pst-1sg/Nom   child-Acc
             I caned the child

b.   ki-a-pir-en   lakwet   kirokta.
          Pst-1sg/Nom-Instr   child-Acc   stick-Dat
          I caned the child with/using a stick

In examples (6) and (7), the transitive verbs sir 'write' and pir 'cane' normally take one object, with the suffixation of the instrumental morpheme –en-, the same verb license the addition of an instrumental object in kalamit 'pen' and kirokta 'stick' respectively.

The form of the morpheme –en- can also denote a number of meanings and interpretation. This is exemplified in the following examples:

(i)   Meaning of 'from'
(8).   a.   ko-phet   bukuit
                   Pst-lost book-Nom
                   The book got lost

          b.   ko-phet-en   bukuit   kiprop
                   Pst-lost-Instr   book-Nom   Kiprop-Acc
                   The book got lost from Kiprop.

(ii) Meaning of 'to'

(9).   a.   kee-et   amitwogik
                   Inf -refuse   food-Acc
                   to refuse food

          b.   kee-et-en   amitwogik   Lakwet
                   Inf -refuse   food-Acc   child-Acc
                   to refuse food to a child

(iii) Meaning of 'on'
(10).   a.   ru-e   kiphet
                   Sleep-Asp   kiphet-Nom
                   Kiphet is sleeping.

          b.   ru-e-en   kiphet   muito
                   sleep-asp-Instr.   Kiphet-Nom   skin-Dat
                   Kiphet sleep on the skin (a traditional mat)

(iv) Meaning of 'for'
(11).   a.   ki-a-rir
                   Pst-1sg/Nom-cry
                   I cried
          b.   Ki-a-rir-en   piik
                   Pst-1sg/Nom-cry-Instr   people-Dat
                   I cried for the people.

(v)   Meaning of 'in'
12.   a.   ki-a-um
                Pst-1sg/Nom-shade(take shelter)
                I shaded/took shelter.

       b.   ki-a-um-en   got
                Pst-1sg-shade-Instr   house-Dat
                I shaded (took shelter) in the house

(vi) Meaning of 'over'
13.a.   ki-a-rir
                Pst-1sg/Nom-cry
                I cried

b.   Ki-a-rir-en   lakwet
                Pst-1sg/Nom/cry-Instr   child-Dat
                I cried over the child.

(vii)   Meaning of 'of''
14.   a.   indo-i   chebet
                Infront-Asp   Chebet
                Chebet is infront

       b.   indo-en   Chebet   Chela
                infront-Instr   Chebet-Nom   Chela-Dat
                Chebet is infront of Chela.

An instrument according to theta theory is the means by which an action is performed. In example (6), kalamit 'pen' is the instrument by which an action of sir 'write' is performed by the agent Peter. The instrumental role has been licensed by the conjugation of the instrumental morpheme –en-. While in example (7b), kirokta 'stick' is the licensed instrument by which the agent –a- 'I' uses to cane the child, it is also clear when the syntactic structure in example (7a) is compared with (7b).

2.2.1.3 Directional –y-

The directional applicative in Kipsigis is denoted by the morpheme –y- .This morpheme is glued as a suffix to the verb. The affixation of a directional morpheme licenses the addition of anargument to the structure, while at the same time denoting the direction of the implied object or 'thing', from the speaker.
 The following structures help to illustrate the applicability of a directional applicative:

15.a.   Ki-nerech   chito .
        Pst- angry   Person-Nom
        The person was angry

b.   Ki-nerek-y-in   chito .
        Pst- angry-Dir-2nd/Sg/Dat   Person-Nom
        The person was angry towards you.

16.a.   Ki-mus   Peter
        Pst-come early   Peter-Nom
        Peter came early.

b.   Ki-mus-y-an   Peter
        Pst-early-Dir-1st/Sg/Dat.   Peter-Nom
        Peter came early to me.

Structures (15) and (16) shows that the derivational morpheme –y- which marks directional in the language occurs immediately after the main verb and also licenses a pronominal object marker to co-occur with it and not a lexical NP. The affixation of this morpheme then marks the addition of one argument structure.

Theta theory provides the concept of a goal to imply the place or person to which the action is directed to. Kipsigis marks the semantic role of a goal through the directional morpheme –y-. In example (15a) there is lack of a goal to which the action is directed to while in (15b), the action of anger is directed to ¬–in- 'you', who then becomes a goal after the addition of the directional morpheme –y-. The same role of a goal is evident in structure (16.b).

2.2.2 Causatives

Causation is viewed as a device for creating a verb form meaning "to cause X to verb" from a form "X verbs", Spencer (1991:24). It is under such an argument that a causative construction can be symbolized as: CAUSE (x, P) = x causes P (Payne, 1997:176). Causative in the language is divided into three types: morphological, lexical and analytic. The first two types are considered as valence increasing operations both in the syntactic and semantic level while the third only increases valence when looked at semantically.

In Kipsigis, causation is marked by three extensions. These are morphological causatives –e- and –si-, and a lexical causative –yai- .

Consider the following examples:

(17)   Ki-mwet-e   Mauwek
        Pst-wash-Caus flowers-Nom
        The flowers are being washed

(18)a. ru-i-si   lakwet
        sleep- Caus   child-Acc
        make/cause the child to sleep.

b.   lany-si   ketit   Lakwet
        climb-Caus   tree-Acc   child-Acc
        make/cause the child to climb a tree.

19)   Ki-   yai   Goruchon   Lakwet   ko-lany'   ketit
        Pst   made   Mother-Nom   Child-Acc   inf-climb   tree-Acc
        The mother made the child to climb a tree.

The morphological causative not only applies to intransitive verbs, but also transitive. From the above examples, there are two ways in which the causative increases valence: morphological and lexical. The morphological causative is the most productive in the language. What is notable is that the occurrence of the two causative elements seems to be in free variation.

There are several forces that cause change brought about by the addition of causative morphemes –e-, -si- and lexical yai to the verb. When causative morphemes are applied to the verb, it causes the change of state or action of the experiencer as in examples (17-19).

2.3 Valence Reducing Devices

There are three types of valency-reducing operations in Kipsigis: reciprocal, stative and impersonal. These are formed by adding the affixes –kee,-akse, and prefix -ki- respectively to a verb stem. We are going to explain in detail in the following sections.

2.3.1 Reciprocal

Reciprocal refers to a form indicating that the action of the verb is reciprocated, done 'to one another'. Reciprocal in the language under study is marked by morphemes –kee- and –yo- which are suffixed to the verb. The following structures help us put this feature into focus.

In Kipsigis, the reciprocity for instance can comprise of situations in a transitive construction such as:

(20).a. Ki-   a-   cham-   in
        PST   1SG/NOM   love   2SG/ACC
        I loved you.

b.   Ki-   i-   cham-   an
        PST   2SG/NOM   love   1SG/ACC
        You loved me.

c.   Ki-   ki-   cham-   kee
        PST   1PL/NOM   love   REC
        We loved each other.

In order to encode a situation in (20a and b), we combine the expression for the two simple situations with a reciprocal –kee. This means that a reciprocal construction in Kipsigis is formed by marking the verb with a suffix –kee. By comparing examples in (20a-b) and its' (c) counterpart, it can be seen that –kee is added to the base form of the verb. The situation in (20c) therefore implies that the clause describes a reciprocal situation and not just the situation denoted by the verb –cham 'love' without repeating the verb for each simple situation, (i.e. in 20a. and b). The conjugation of a reciprocal –kee as observed also brings forth the incorporation of a conjunction to realize a plural NP subject. Another feature worth noting is that when we compare the reciprocal constructions and its' non-reciprocal structure, we note that the number of arguments decreases once the reciprocal marker is 'glued' to the verb. In example (20a & b), the verb takes two arguments-i.e. a subject, a 'I' and I 'You' and an object, -in- 'You' and an 'I' respectively. In structure (20c), the same verb marked by –kee takes only one plural argument. This illustrates that reciprocal reduces the valence of the verb by demoting the object, (i.e. transitivity of the clause is lowered). The following example further illustrates the syntactic structure of a reciprocal construction.

(21) a. Ki-   mas   kibet   chebet
        PST   hit   Kibet-NOM   Chebet-ACC
        Kibet hit chebet.

b.   Ki-   mas-   kee   kibet   ak   chebet
        PST   hit   Rec   kibet-   Conj   chebet-NOM
        Kibet and Chebet hit each other.

When examples in (a) and (b) are compared, it can be observed that the suffix –kee- is conjugated to the base form of the verb as a suffix. The reciprocal is also adjacent to the verb. When this morpheme is affixed to the verb, a conjunction –ak- is introduced where it adjoins the NPs. The reciprocal –kee- in the verb is anaphorically then bound to the NP as an aspect of syntactic binding.

In addition to the structure of the reciprocal morpheme, we also realize that the syntactic configuration in which the reciprocal form appears are largely similar in that the reciprocal requires a plural or group-denoting subject NP. This means that the reciprocal derives a one-place predicate from a two place predicate and two-place predicate from a three-place predicate.Generally, it reduces by one the array of syntactic arguments associated with the non-reciprocal predicate.

Another syntactic property of the reciprocal is one related to transitivity of a reciprocal construction. From the data, -kee- attaches to transitive verbs as in -cham- 'love' in (20) and -mas- 'hit' in (21). It is also attached to ditransitive verbs like -gochi- 'give' as in example (22).

(22)   ki-gochi-kee   lagok   amitwogik
        Pst-give-Rec   Children   Food
        The children gave each other food.

The reciprocity in example (22) denotes that the subject lagok 'Children' are giving each other food. In this case, participants are identified as a whole, instead of individuals, and perform an act jointly thus the reciprocal –kee- express a collective situation.

When the reciprocal morpheme is attached to intransitive verbs like sleep or die, its semantic interpretation refers to a situation that is done 'on behalf of' which is a property of an applicative since a reciprocal cannot occur on its own in a structure.

(23)   ki-ru-chi-kee   lagok
        Pst-sleep-Appl-Rec   Children
        The children slept on behalf of each other.

In such case, the interpretation would imply that each child was sleeping on behalf of the other, may be in turns. The suppression of the syntactic arguments of the experiencer and theme is realized in reciprocal constructions where the demotion leads to an agent which denotes a plural form or a group denoting NP.

2.3.2 Stative

Stative forms in Kipsigis verbs signal a given condition or a state of being without a reference to the semantic roles of an agent or actor. It shows that whoever or whatever is concerned is able to receive an action irrespective of whether there is a subject or not. It is the recipient of the action that is endowed with the possibility of that action taking place.

Consider:

(24) a. Ki-   nap   Chepto   ngoriet
        PST   sew   girl-Nom   dress-Acc
        The girl sewed the dress.

b.   Ki-   nap-   akse   ngoriet
        PST   sew   Stat   dress
        The dress was 'sewable'.

(25) a. Ki-   a-   am   amitwogik
        PST   1Sg/Nom   eat   food-Acc
        I ate the food.
 b.   Ki-   am-   akse   amitwogik
        PST   eat   Stat   food
        The food was 'eatable'.

Whoever is concerned in (24.b) and (25.b) to receive an action is marked by a stative marker –akse-. The stative form of the verb in Kipsigis is made by suffixing it to the verb stem. Kipsigisstative suffix almost corresponds to the Swahili morpheme –ka-. In Kipsigis, when a stative marker is applied, the structure of the verb as well as other arguments is affected. The verbal morphology is altered as can be observed with the verb kinap 'sewed' in (24.a) to kinapakse 'sewable' in (24.b). The same applies to example (25.a) and (b) where the verb changes from kiaam 'ate' to kiamakse 'eatable' respectively.

Affixation of a stative morpheme alters the syntactic structure of the sentence as well. A look at the non-stative structures and the stative constructions shows the number of arguments to have been reduced. In (24.b) and (25.b) the agents chepto 'girl'and –a-'I' have been elided. The implication of such deletion is that the stative morpheme detransitivises the verb from being a transitive to intransitive. Such a process leads to arguments in object position which are assigned the theta role of theme to occupy the agent position.

In cases where there are three arguments, stative morpheme also alters its syntactic structure.

Consider:

(26) a. Ki-   nde   Lang'at   raphisiek   mophuget
        Pst   put   Lang'at-Nom   money-Acc   pocket-Loc
        Lang'at put the money in the pocket.

b.   Ki-   nde-   akse   raphisiek   mophuget
        PST   put   Stat   money-Acc   pocket-Loc
        The money was 'putable' in the pocket.

In (26.a), the morphology of the verb is altered with the addition of a stative marker –akse- from ki-nde'put' (two morphemes) to ki-nde-akse'putable' (three morphemes). In effect the syntactic structure is also altered. The argument structure is reduced from three in (26.a) to two in (b). The agent Lang'at has undergone ellipsis. The theme raphisiek 'money' has alternatively been moved from the object position to the subject position. The locative mophuget 'pocket' which initially occupied the indirect object position now occupies the direct object position of the A-structure.

2.3.3 Impersonal

Impersonals are defined cross-linguistically as constructions in which the element that normally assumes the 'subject' function in topic-comment statements is either downgraded or completely suppressed. Siewierska (2008) observes that, in literature, there exist both structural and communicative-functional characterizations of "impersonal constructions". A function-first approach grounds the definition of an impersonal in agent defocusing. On the other hand, a structure-first approach to impersonal constructions centers on the construction having either no subject or a non-canonical subject.

Kipsigis has impersonal constructions in form of a derivational morpheme –ki- which is identified on the basis of its lack of a referential subject therefore missing the agent role.

(27)   ki-   ki-   ger   Telephision
        PST   Impr   see   Television
        The television was seen.

(28)   ki-   ki   sup   chorik
        PST   Impr   follow   thieves
        The thieves were followed.

(29)   ki-   ki-   al-   garit
        PST   Impr   buy   car

        The car was bought.

As mentioned earlier, impersonal constructions refers to a sentence clause or the verb form, where the grammatical agent is typically the "recipient" or "goal" of the action denoted by the verb In Kipsigis morphology, the impersonal is marked by –ki- morpheme, and has repercussions on the syntactic structure of a sentence. What we note also is that the impersonal marker is prefixed to the verb as opposed to other form of extensions which are suffixed. Its position is specifically before the verb root but after the tense morpheme.

In the language, in impersonal constructions, the NP in the theme position moves to the position normally occupied by NP agent while the agent is demoted.

2.4 Conclusions

In this work, we have described the verbal extensions in Kipsigis.We have shown that Kipsigis has two forms of extensions; argument-increasing and argument-decreasing. Argument-increasing devices are of two types; applicative and causative. The applicative morphemes are the most productive of all the extensions. Applicative are in form of benefactive–w- and –chi-, instrumental –en- and directional –y- which, apart from having morphosyntactic implications, it has a wide range of semantic interpretations. Causative are expressed as morphemes –i- and –si-and a lexical element yai.

Argument-decreasing devices include reciprocal –kee-, stative –akse- and impersonal –ki-. The operations have a way of reducing the argument structure of the verb in question.Regarding the position of these verbal extensions, we established that most of them are suffixed to the verb except the impersonal marker which is prefixed.

The sematic roles presented in the theta theory presented a formal way in which the arguments could be interpreted. Specific θ-role tends to be added to the syntactic structure after the incorporation of the verbal extension or elided from the structure.

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[i] Abbreviation used in glossing include:Acc-Accusative; Appl-Applicative; Asp-Aspect; Ben-Benefactive; Caus-Causative; CVC-Consonant-Vowel-Consonant; Dat-Dative; Dir-Directional; Instr-Instrumental; Nom-Nominative; Pl-Plural; Pst-Past tense; Rec-Reciprocal; Sg-Singular; Stat-Stative; V-Verb; VSO-Verb Subject Object; 1Sg-1st person singular; 1Pl-1st person plural; 2Sg-2nd person singular; 2Pl-2nd person plural; 3Sg-3rd person singular; 3Pl-3rd person plural; θ-Theta