

## **A sketch of Kimwani (a minority language of Mozambique)**

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### **1. Introduction and background**

Kimwani is spoken along the coastline in the Cabo Delgado province in northern Mozambique and on the islands of the Quirimba (Kerimba) archipelago. Ibo is the most populous island and likewise the prestige dialect of Kimwani (Grimes 1996: 318). The dialects differ noticeably with both lexical and morphological variation. The major dialects are (NELIMO 1989):

The central variety of the islands (Ibo, Mateme, Quirimba)

The central variety of the Quissanga area

The northern variety from the Mocímboa da Praia area

The urban variety from the city of Pemba

Kimwani is one of the few indigenous Mozambique languages of the Kiswahili cluster. Another one is Kimakwe, but there may be others as well. According to Grimes (1996), there are 100,000 speakers and another 20,000 who use it as a second language. The figures vary and Schadeberg (1994: 239) reports merely 50,000 speakers. Rzewuski (1979; quoted in Nurse & Hinnebusch 1993: 15) claims that the number of speakers range from 50,000 to 70,000. In the 1997 census, 65,001 respondents said they were native Kimwani speakers in the Cabo Delgado district (INE 1997: 55). All Kimwani speaking communities are coastal and the people are followers of Islam (Schadeberg 1994). Fishing and trading are important parts of the economy.

The six major varieties of the Kiswahili cluster are also referred to as the Sabaki group (Nurse & Hinnebusch 1993: 4). Though these varieties pertain to the Kiswahili family, it does not signify that the varieties are in immediate

relation to Kiswahili. It is obvious that Kimwani is a member of the Sabaki group and even that it is peripherally related to Kiswahili (Nurse & Hinnebusch 1993: 283). The name Kimwani means ‘at the coast’ “which looks like a calque of the term Swahili” (Schadeberg 1994: 239). However, the extent to which Kimwani is related to standard Kiswahili is not clear. According to Floor (in Grimes 1996: 318), the lexical similarity with Kiswahili is 60%. (I made calculations on our material and reached the figure 63%.) Referring to the Swahili varieties in southern Tanzania, Legère (1986) is of the opinion that the dialect continuum has to be taken into consideration when measuring similarity.

Kimwani is distinguished by a large number of loan words from Arabic and also from some Shimakonde dialect (Nurse & Hinnebusch 1993: 332). The NELIMO (1989) report calls Kimwani a southern variety within the Kiswahili group and suggests that it may even have been a vehicular language in earlier days. To the extent that Kimwani is currently written, the Latin script is used following Kiswahili orthographic conventions. Schadeberg (1994) regards both Kiswahili and Shimakonde to be the sources of Kimwani. He claims that the Swadesh-figure is 66% for Kimwani-Kiswahili and 53% for Kimwani-Shimakonde (1994). His hypothesis is that speakers of Shimakonde decided to “join the world of Uswahili” (Schadeberg 1994: 243). Nurse & Hinnebusch (1993: 15) adduce another theory. They are of the opinion that Kimwani is not a member of any other East African Bantu subgroup but the Sabaki-group. However, they cannot explain why Kimwani has some prosodic features from the neighbouring languages such as Shimakonde.

In all of the above-cited works on Kimwani, no one comments upon the resemblance to a variety called Kiwibu. Johnston (1919) puts Kiwibu down as an important dialect of Kiswahili. He also mentions a little about the southern dialect of Kiwibu, which in parenthesis is called Cabo Delgado (1919: 790). Nurse (pc May-00) explains that this refers to Ibo which is the prestige dialect of Kimwani. When Kimwani was “rediscovered”, no connection between the two variants was made

The following information is based on a questionnaire consisting of 105 words and 41 sentences (see appendix) collected in collaboration with the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) in Pemba. This work was part of a project called *Languages and language use in Mozambique* which was carried out by Karl Erland Gadelii, Göteborg University. The purpose of the project was to make a comparative study of the grammars and lexicons of 23 Mozambican languages. Some of the traditionally neglected languages, i.e. Kimwani, were studied in depth. The project aimed at suggesting a coherent orthographical system for the languages, thus hoping to make a concrete contribution to corpus

planning in Mozambique. An identical matrix has been used in the data collection of the different languages to facilitate comparisons and the informants have been given the same instructions. If nothing else is mentioned, the written material in this presentation derives from our Kimwani informant.

In addition to the information supplied by the Kimwani informant in this project, a few other sources have been consulted, for instance, Nurse & Hinnebusch (1993), in which Gérard Philippon is the main contributor to the Kimwani chapter. Another source that is used, is a report produced by NELIMO (1989). NELIMO (= Núcleo de Estudo de Línguas Moçambicanas) is a research group at the Eduardo Mondlane University in Maputo, which was responsible for an orthography seminar held in 1989. The purpose of this seminar was to compose a general orthography for the languages of Mozambique. The Kimwani group consisted of Armindo Ngunga, Eugeniusz Rzewuski and Samba Mbuub.

## 2. Phonology and orthography

The phoneme inventory of Kimwani is presented in table 1 below.

The NELIMO orthography includes one phoneme that does not occur in our informant's material. They have [h] in the word *haki* 'reason' or 'right'. It is normally not pronounced, but can be used stylistically. Some people strive to pronounce it in order to preserve the educated Arabic way of speaking.

In the case of [dʒ] there are also various suggestions. I define it the same way as NELIMO, that is to say as a voiced palatal affricate. Gérard Philippon (in Nurse & Hinnebusch 1993: xxxi, 571) chooses to call it a voiced implosive palatal stop instead. Since the [d] is pronounced softly, it is not easy to tell whether it is an implosive palatal plosive or an affricate.

The phoneme [g] is not frequent in Kimwani. When it occurs, it is usually prenasalised as in *ngema* 'good'. It was found non-prenasalised in merely one example. Nurse & Hinnebusch explain that [g] is lost in Kimwani but the exceptions that do exist are "attributable to borrowing" (1993: 104).

In most cases, [b] and [d] are also prenasalised. When they occur independently, they are according to Philippon implosive. I cannot hear this in our material but that may be because the informant's accent is less clear or because my recording is slightly blurred.

Nasalisation is another complex area in Kimwani. The informant marks two vowels for nasalisation. *rii* 'egg' and *mai* 'eggs', but they are not explicitly pronounced as nasals. When he pronounces the Portuguese nasalised vowels, one clearly hears the contrast between them and oral vowels. However, several vowels that are not marked for nasalisation tend to be slightly nasalised in front

VOWELS

|            | FRONT          | CENTRAL | BACK |
|------------|----------------|---------|------|
| CLOSE      | i <sup>1</sup> |         | u    |
| HALF CLOSE | e              |         | o    |
| OPEN       |                | a       |      |

CONSONANTS

|            |                  | LABIALS | ALVEOLARS | PALATALS            | VELARS  |
|------------|------------------|---------|-----------|---------------------|---------|
| PLOSIVES   | <i>voiceless</i> | p       | t         |                     | k       |
|            | <i>voiced</i>    | b       | d         |                     | g       |
| NASALS     |                  | m       | n         | ɲ <ny>              | ŋ <ng'> |
| FRICATIVES | <i>voiceless</i> | f       | s         | ʃ <sh> <sup>2</sup> |         |
|            | <i>voiced</i>    | v       | z         |                     |         |
| AFFRICATES | <i>voiceless</i> |         |           | tʃ <c> <sup>3</sup> |         |
|            | <i>voiced</i>    |         |           | dʒ <j>              |         |
| GLIDES     |                  | w       |           | j <y>               |         |
| LATERAL    |                  |         | l         |                     |         |
| TRILL      |                  |         | r         |                     |         |

*Table 1. Kimwani phoneme/grapheme chart.*

Where the phonemic and graphemic symbolizations differ, the latter are given in angular brackets.

*Notes*

- [i] is sometimes pronounced close to [e]. Cf. example A.10 *mwiri* ‘body’ (in the appendix).
- Nurse & Hinnebusch (1993) use <s>.
- Our informant writes <ch>, which is the most common way of writing it in Kiswahili and other Bantu languages. Nurse & Hinnebusch (1993) write <c>.

of a cluster with one nasal and one consonant. In the words of Nurse & Hinnebusch (1993: 571), Kimwani “has some apparent nasalisation of vowels, almost exclusively before NC”.

As for pitch, Kimwani has movable pitch accent (Nurse & Hinnebusch, 1993: 524). Philippson in Nurse & Hinnebusch (1993: 256) has several complicated rules that will not be dealt with here. Kimwani does not have the

penultimate stress common in Kiswahili and its variants. In addition, I have seen no evidence that Kimwani is a tone language, but Philippson reports (pc June-00) that tone is distinctive in some verb paradigms.

Labialisation is common in Kimwani. NELIMO discusses this: “Labialisation of consonants... should be realised by the grapheme <w> following the consonants in question” (NELIMO 1989: 13, *my translation*) Examples are *kwipika* ‘to cook’, *kufwa* ‘to die’ and *umbwa* ‘dog’.

Palatalisation also takes place in the language. A phoneme that occurs palatalised is [r] in for instance *kurya* ‘to eat’.

### 3. Grammar

The following sketch of Kimwani grammar is based on the questionnaire. The numbering of examples refers to the phrases’s original place in this questionnaire, which can be found in the appendix.

#### 3.1 Noun classes

Kimwani’s noun class system is fairly representative of Bantu languages in general. Below are listed the noun classes found in the sample. There are no noun classes that correspond to 12 and 13.

| SINGULAR  | PLURAL            | ENGLISH      |
|---|-------------------|--------------|
| 1 <i>munu</i>                                     | 2 <i>wanu</i>     | person(s)    |
| 3 <i>muti</i>                                     | 4 <i>miti</i>     | tree(s)      |
| 5 <i>riwe</i>                                     | 6 <i>mawe</i>     | stone(s)     |
| 7 <i>chala</i>                                    | 8 <i>vyala</i>    | finger(s)    |
| 9 <i>ng’ombe</i>                                  | 10 <i>ng’ombe</i> | cow(s)       |
| 11,14 <i>wingu</i>                                | 6 <i>mawingu</i>  | cloud(s)     |
| 15 <i>kuwa</i>                                    |                   | to be        |
| 16 <i>pakiswa pangu</i>                           |                   | on my head   |
| 17 <i>kunyumba</i>                                |                   | to our house |
| 18 <i>mmuti</i> (full prefix form is <i>mu-</i> ) |                   | from a tree  |

#### 3.2 Adnominals

In for instance Kiswahili, there are several different sets of agreements depending on the type of adnominal. The adjectives and numerals found in our sample are displayed below.

### 3.2.1 Adjectives

The adjectives seem to take the noun class prefixes of the noun they modify, but there are not enough occurrences of adjectives in our sample to create a matrix of the markers.

#### C.6 *Panenende kitambo kikulu nimmona nyoka nrefu*

‘When I had walked a long distance I saw a long snake’

|        |        |       |         |            |      |      |
|--------|--------|-------|---------|------------|------|------|
| pa     | n      | enend | e       | kitambo    | ki   | kulu |
| CONJ   | SM.1SG | walk  | SUBJ    | 7-distance | cl.7 | big  |
| ni     | m      | mona  | nyoka   | n          | refu |      |
| SM.1SG | OM.1   | see   | 9-snake | cl.1       | long |      |

The nasal marks adjectival agreement. It may also be *m* when the adjective starts with a vowel.

### 3.2.2 Numerals

The numerals and their agreement markers look as follows:

| CLASSES | AGREEMENT    | EXAMPLES                | ENGLISH     |
|---------|--------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| 1       | <i>m</i>     | <i>munu mmoja</i>       | one person  |
| 2       | <i>wa(w)</i> | <i>wanu wawiri</i>      | two persons |
| 3       | <i>m</i>     | <i>muti mmoja</i>       | one tree    |
| 4       | <i>mi(w)</i> | <i>miti miwiri</i>      | two trees   |
| 5       | <i>ri</i>    | <i>rino rimoja</i>      | one tooth   |
| 6       | <i>ma(w)</i> | <i>mapongolo mawiri</i> | two bones   |
| 7       | <i>ki</i>    | <i>chala kimoja</i>     | one finger  |
| 8       | <i>vi(w)</i> | <i>vyala viwiri</i>     | two fingers |
| 9       | <i>m</i>     | <i>nyuki mmoja</i>      | one bee     |
| 10      | <i>m</i>     | <i>nyuki mbiri</i>      | two bees    |
| 11, 14  | <i>ri</i>    | <i>wingu rimoja</i>     | two clouds  |

It has not been possible to determine whether or not numeral agreement is identical to adjectival agreement.

### 3.2.3 Pronouns

Below is a matrix over the independent personal pronouns. They are optional

since all verbs already carry a subject marker indicating person (see further below).

|     | Our informant | Nurse & Hinnebusch (1993) |
|-----|---------------|---------------------------|
| 1SG | ?             | <i>ómi</i>                |
| 2SG | <i>uwe</i>    | <i>úwe</i>                |
| 3SG | <i>iyé</i>    | <i>éyu</i> (?)            |
| 1PL | <i>ofwe</i>   | <i>ófwe</i>               |
| 2PL | ?             | <i>úmwe</i>               |
| 3PL | <i>ewo</i>    | <i>éwa</i>                |

The form *éyu* that Nurse & Hinnebusch present for the third person singular may be a misapprehension. Nurse (pc May-00) says that the correct form is *iyé*.

### 3.2.4 Possessives

The possessives are formed by adding class prefixes of the possessed nouns to the possessive pronouns of which *-ngu* ‘my’ and *-itu* ‘our’ were found in the sample.

#### C.8 *Iye kanigwira pakiswa pangu* ‘It fell on my head’

|            |           |           |           |            |           |              |           |            |
|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|--------------|-----------|------------|
| <i>iye</i> | <i>ka</i> | <i>ni</i> | <i>gw</i> | <i>ira</i> | <i>pa</i> | <i>kiswa</i> | <i>pa</i> | <i>ngu</i> |
| it         | SM.1      | OM.1SG    | fall      | APPL       | cl.16     | 7-head       | cl.16     | POSS       |

#### C.38 *Mwananlume kaja kunyumba yetu katipa waraka* ‘The man came to our house and gave us a letter’

|                   |           |           |               |               |           |            |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------|---------------|---------------|-----------|------------|
| <i>mwananlume</i> | <i>ka</i> | <i>ja</i> | <i>ku</i>     | <i>nyumba</i> | <i>ya</i> | <i>itu</i> |
| 1-man             | SM.1      | come      | cl.17         | 9-house       | cl.9      | POSS       |
| <i>ka</i>         | <i>ti</i> | <i>pa</i> | <i>waraka</i> |               |           |            |
| SM.1              | OM.1PL    | give      | 9?-letter     |               |           |            |

### 3.3 Morphology of the verb (phrase)

The verbal system in Kimwani is characterised by much simplification in comparison to that of other Sabaki languages, that is, absence of certain features which other members of the Sabaki group exhibit. The Sabaki inheritance is obvious, although some features are presumably borrowed from neighbouring

P20 languages like Shimakonde.

Underneath is a disposition of the verb phrase. Each entry is discussed in detail in the following paragraphs.

1. Negation (NEG)
2. Subject marker (SM)
3. TAM-marker
4. Object marker (OM)
5. Stem
6. Verbal extensions
7. Final vowel

### 3.3.1 Subject markers

Below is a list of the subject markers (SM) according to Nurse & Hinnebusch and our informant.

|     | Our informant | Nurse & Hinnebusch (1993) |
|-----|---------------|---------------------------|
| 1SG | <i>ni, n-</i> | <i>ni</i>                 |
| 2SG | <i>ku, u</i>  | <i>ku, u</i>              |
| 3SG | <i>ka, a</i>  | <i>ka, a</i>              |
| 1PL | <i>ti, tu</i> | <i>ti</i>                 |
| 2PL | ?             | <i>mu</i>                 |
| 3PL | <i>wa</i>     | <i>wa</i>                 |

1SG: In the sample, there are two occurrences in one sentence of the first person singular. The sentence starts with a time conjunction *pa-* (when) and then the first SM *ni* is shortened before the following vowel to *n*. The following SM is the full *ni*.

2SG: There are two sets of SMs in the second person singular (and also in the third person, see below). Set one is *ku* and set two is *u*. *ku* occurs exclusively with past positive and *u* with all other tenses (Nurse & Hinnebusch 1993: 709). It is sometimes problematic to tell if the *ku* is a SM or a prefix to the stem in the short verbs (cl.15). The tones are the distinctive elements in this case. Set one (*ku*) has a low tone which distinguishes it from the infinitive prefix cl.15 (Philipsson, pc June-00).

3SG: Set 1: *ka*, Set 2: *a*. *ka* occurs with past positive alone and *a* with all other tenses (Nurse & Hinnebusch 1993: 709). The majority of the SMs in the sample is in the third person singular and the past positive *ka* is the most recurrent.

1PL: Remarkably, there are two distinct SMs for the first person plural in the sample. The *ti* is the only one Nurse & Hinnebusch (1993) state and the most frequent one in the sample. Moreover, there are two cases of *tu*, which is the Kiswahili prefix in for the first person plural. *tu* is also used in Shimakonde (Guerreiro 1963: 18) and considering that Kimwani is influenced by Shimakonde, it may originate from there, or even from standard Kiswahili. Johnston has them both (1919: 137), but that does not mean that they both exist today in all the separate dialects.

2PL: The second person plural did not occur in our sample.

3PL: The occurrences of the third person plural in the sample all correspond to the literature.

### 3.3.2 The TAM-markers

#### 3.3.2.1 Mood

##### *Indicative*

The indicative is said to be the unmarked mood. A verb in the indicative has the final vowel *-a*.

##### *Subjunctive*

The subjunctive in Bantu languages is more extensively used than in most Indo-European languages. Moreover, “It should be remembered that subjunctive is a formal label and covers a variety of nonfactive situations” (Nurse & Hinnebusch 1993: 371). Changing the neutral final vowel *-a* to *-e* creates the subjunctive in Kimwani.

#### C.39 *Iye katilebela timpereke*

‘He asked that we should come with him’

|     |      |        |       |        |      |           |      |
|-----|------|--------|-------|--------|------|-----------|------|
| iye | ka   | ti     | lebel | ti     | m    | perek     | e    |
| he  | SM.1 | OM.1PL | ask?  | SM.1PL | OM.1 | come with | SUBJ |

##### *Imperative*

The only example of an imperative in the sample is *Njo kuno!* ‘Come here!’ (C.37). In Kiswahili, *njoo* is the irregular imperative of *kuja* ‘to come’. Given the probable irregularity of this verb also in Kimwani, it is impossible to draw any conclusions of how the imperative is formed in Kimwani.

### 3.3.2.2 Tenses

There are two major tenses in Kimwani: past and non-past. Non-past does not only express the present tense but also the future tense, though there are some borrowed forms with *ta* only mentioned in one source (Nurse & Hinnebusch 1993: 710). Zero marking is common which makes it problematic to differentiate between the tenses. A narrative tense is also used at times.

#### *Non-past*

There is a zero tense marker (TM) for the non-past. The subject marker is only followed by the stem in most verbs, and *ku* (cl.15) in verbs with initial vowel or short stems.

#### C.27 *Ewo wamwijiwa mwanamuka-yo*

‘They know the woman’

|      |      |      |       |           |       |
|------|------|------|-------|-----------|-------|
| ewo  | wa   | mw   | ijiwa | mwanamuka | yo    |
| they | SM.2 | OM.1 | know  | 1-woman   | DEM.1 |

Adding the prefix *a-* forms the negative.

#### C.28 *Ewo awamwijiwa mwanamuka-yo*

‘They do not know the woman’

|      |     |      |      |       |           |       |
|------|-----|------|------|-------|-----------|-------|
| ewo  | a   | wa   | mw   | ijiwa | mwanamuka | yo    |
| they | NEG | SM.2 | OM.1 | know  | 1-woman   | DEM.1 |

There is no separate marker for the future tense in Kimwani but the use of the present and auxiliary verbs or adverbials indicates future time (Nurse & Hinnebusch 1993: 384). Several sentences in the future tense in the sample were indistinguishable from those in the present tense.

#### C.33 *Ofwe tíona nyumba*

‘We will see the house’

|      |        |     |         |
|------|--------|-----|---------|
| ofwe | tí     | ona | nyumba  |
| we   | SM.1PL | see | 9-house |

#### *Past*

Kimwani does not discern between far and near past. The past is not marked by

any TM and is therefore in several cases indistinguishable from the present. The difference can only be seen in the second person and the third person singular of noun class 1 where there are two different sets of SMs, the presence of *ku* and in additional suprasegmental indication (Nurse & Hinnebusch 1993: 439). Generally there is no insertion of *ku* at all in the past tense. Nurse & Hinnebusch observe this too, but add that they do not have sufficient data for making generalisations about the incidence of *ku* (idem: 709). According to Nurse & Hinnebusch, the pitch pattern differs from that in the non-past, but it was not noticeable in our sample. Nurse (pc May-00) explains that there are large dialectal differences and that both the incidence of *ku* and the different tones may depend on the dialect in question. Likewise, Philippson (pc June-00) draws attention to the idiosyncrasy of high versus low tones.

### C.3 *Iye kasowera naye*

‘He talked to her’

|     |             |        |    |     |
|-----|-------------|--------|----|-----|
| iye | ka          | sowera | na | ye  |
| he  | SM.3SG.PAST | talk   | to | her |

In the negative, the same SMs are used in both past and non-past. In order to distinguish the negative past from the non-past, the suffix *-ire* is added. *-ire* is likewise used in relative sentences.

### C.9 *Aanilumire*

‘It did not bite me’

|     |        |        |      |          |
|-----|--------|--------|------|----------|
| a   | a      | ni     | lum  | ire      |
| NEG | SM.3SG | OM.1SG | bite | NEG.PAST |

### *Narrative*

The *ki* is a past narrative or a past continuous marker that occurred once in the sample (see sentence C.40 in the appendix). Nurse & Hinnebusch (1993: 440) have two other examples: *ákíwápo mfalme* ‘there was a king’, and *mwana ákiríra subuui* ‘the child was crying that morning’.

#### 3.3.2.3 Progressive aspect

The only example of the progressive form in our sample was in a negative construction. In the present negative, the form *aari* is found as an independent auxiliary in one phrase (see below). Nurse & Hinnebusch do not discuss this

phenomenon in detail, but they briefly mention that *ri+ku* means ‘be not...ing’ which is a progressive form both in the negative and in the positive (1993: 709). NELIMO (1989: 16) defines the present progressive in a similar way, namely as *ri* followed by the infinitive.

C.30 *Iye aari kunnang’a niza mwari*

‘He does not see the girl’

|     |     |      |      |       |      |             |        |
|-----|-----|------|------|-------|------|-------------|--------|
| iye | a   | a    | ri   | ku    | n    | nang’a niza | mwari  |
| he  | NEG | SM.1 | PROG | cl.15 | OM.1 | see         | 1-girl |

Nurse & Hinnebusch (1993: 364) present another form of the progressive in *kawakusikira* ‘he is listening’, which consists of *wa* from the verb *kuwa* ‘to be’, the cl.18 locative marker *mu* (reduced form in the example below) and the infinitive form of the verb. NELIMO (1989: 16) has the same. This construction is present in Shimakonde as well. There is interestingly enough an example of this in our sample, but our informant reduced it slightly:

C.29 *Iye kankunang’a niza mwari*

‘He sees the girl’ (≈ He is in the process of looking at the girl)

|     |      |      |       |       |             |        |
|-----|------|------|-------|-------|-------------|--------|
| iye | ka   | (wa) | n     | ku    | nang’a niza | mwari  |
| he  | SM.1 | be   | cl.18 | cl.15 | see         | 1-girl |

### 3.3.3 Object markers

There are not sufficient occurrences of object markers in our material to allow any general conclusions. Nurse & Hinnebusch (1993: 377) only have *muu* as in *nímuurya* ‘I eat him’ and *n* as in *kansíngana* ‘She met him’ (idem: 389). In the sample, the OM *mu* is realised in three ways though it refers to the same classes, namely class 1 and the animate nouns in class 9. It appears as if the shape of the OM depends on the pronunciation of the verb. The OM found for the third person singular are: *m*, *mw* and *n*. *mw* occurs before vowels and *n* or *m* before a consonant; the syllabic nasal takes on the point of articulation of the following consonant (Philipsson, pc June-00). The *m* transforms the *w* into another *m* in verbs like *kuwona* where ‘he saw her’ becomes *kammona* according to phonological rules. The OM for the first person singular is *ni* and *ti* for the first person plural. According to Philipsson (pc June-00), the OM for class 2 is always *wa* except when it assimilates with a following vowel.

### 3.3.4 Verbal derivation

#### 3.3.4.1 Applicative

There is one construction in the sample that is not mentioned in the literature about Kimwani. It is the suffix *-ir-*, which is attached to the stem. It is used when there is an applicative meaning as in ‘he told me’ or ‘it fell on my head’ or ‘...ran away’. Such directional or beneficiary constructions require the applicative extension, which is a characteristic feature of Bantu languages.

C.10 *Mwanamuka kamwambira: ...*

‘The woman said to him: ...’

|           |      |       |      |      |             |
|-----------|------|-------|------|------|-------------|
| mwanamuka | ka   | mw    | amb  | ir   | a           |
| 1-woman   | SM.1 | OBJ.1 | tell | APPL | final vowel |

#### 3.3.4.2 Passive

There are no occurrences of passive constructions in the material, nor is there anything about this in the Kimwani literature.

#### 3.3.4.3 Relative

Our data suggest that the antecedent is followed by some variant of relative marker but this needs to be investigated further. According to Nurse & Hinnebusch (1993: 709), the demonstrative suffix is sometimes used as the relative marker, which consists of the class marker with or without *o*. *zibakire-zo* ‘those which remained’ (idem: 439), *zire zatitafiti-zi* ‘those that we are looking for’ (idem: 709).

### 3.3.5 Copular sentences

Several of the copular sentences in the present tense have no overt copula, only a small pause (Floor, pc June-00).

C.41 *Wanawalume warefu*

‘They are tall men’

|            |      |      |
|------------|------|------|
| wanawalume | wa   | refu |
| 2-man      | cl.2 | tall |

In the past tense, the narrative marker *ki* is used with the verb *kuwa* ‘to be’.

C.40 *Ákiwa mwananlume nrefu*

‘He was a tall man’

|      |      |    |            |      |      |
|------|------|----|------------|------|------|
| a    | ki   | wa | mwananlume | n    | refu |
| SM.1 | PAST | be | 1-man      | cl.1 | tall |

The negative is formed with *si* plus an agreement marker, as in *Munu ire siyo mwema* ‘That person is not good’. In the positive, the marked or clefted copular sentence is formed with the *ndi* copula, as in *Munu ire ndi mwema* ‘That person is-it-who-is good’. (Examples from Floor, pc June-00.)

### 3.4 Questions

There is one question word in the sample: *nyengapi* ‘how many’. Other examples deriving from Nurse & Hinnebusch (1993: 687) include *kinani* ‘what’, *nani* ‘who’. Unlike most Indo-European languages, the question word is placed at the end of the phrase.

C.24 *Kuwona nembo nyengapi?*

‘How many elephants did you see?’

|        |      |             |       |          |
|--------|------|-------------|-------|----------|
| ku     | wona | nembo       | nye   | ngapi    |
| SM.2SG | see  | 10-elephant | cl.10 | how many |

### 3.5 Conjunctions

#### 3.5.1 Co-ordinating conjunctions

The most common co-ordinating conjunction is *na* ‘and’.

C.13 *Epa ukurya na ukunywa*

‘You shall eat and drink here’

|      |        |       |     |      |        |       |       |
|------|--------|-------|-----|------|--------|-------|-------|
| epa  | u      | ku    | rya | na   | u      | ku    | nywa  |
| here | SM.2SG | cl.15 | eat | CONJ | SM.2SG | cl.15 | drink |

#### 3.5.2 Subordinating conjunctions

There is one subordinating conjunction in the sample: *pa* in *panenende* ‘when I walked’ (C.6). It may mean ‘where’ as well, depending on the context (Nurse & Hinnebusch 1993: 709).

#### 4. Concluding remarks

I have tried to give a tentative description of the Kimwani language. Although it is far from complete, it is the most extensive piece written about Kimwani so far. However, further research is required to clarify issues that have been left unanalysed in this present work.

#### ABBREVIATIONS

|      |                        |      |                     |
|------|------------------------|------|---------------------|
| cl.  | noun class (marker)    | PL   | Plural              |
| CONJ | Conjunction            | SG   | Singular            |
| DEM  | Demonstrative          | SM   | Subject marker      |
| NEG  | Negative               | SUBJ | Subjunctive         |
| OM   | Object marker          | TAM  | Tense, aspect, mood |
| pc   | personal communication | TM   | Tense marker        |

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### APPENDIX: The questionnaire (English, Portuguese, Kimwani)

The words and sentences were translated into Kimwani, in both written and spoken form. The latter was also tape recorded. The tables below contain the informant's written version. Where this deviates significantly from what the informant later recorded, the spoken version is given in square brackets.

#### A. Wordlist / Léxico

| REF. | ENGLISH                    | PORTUGUES                     | KIMWANI   |
|------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| A.1  | ashes                      | cinza                         | <i>rivu</i>   |
| A.2  | bad                        | mau                           | <i>mbaya</i>  |
| A.3  | one bee,<br>two bees       | uma abelha,<br>duas abelhas   | <i>nyuki [oki] mmoja,</i><br><i>nyuki [oki] mbiri</i> |
| A.4  | the belly                  | a barriga                     | <i>mimba</i>  |
| A.5  | big                        | grande                        | <i>ulu [olu]</i>                                      |
| A.6  | one bird,<br>two birds     | uma ave,<br>duas aves         | <i>nyuni mmoja,</i><br><i>nyuni mbiri</i>             |
| A.7  | to bite                    | morder                        | <i>kuluma</i>   |
| A.8  | black                      | preto                         | <i>werufi</i>   |
| A.9  | blood                      | sangue                        | <i>damu</i>   |
| A.10 | the body                   | o corpo                       | <i>mwiri [mweri]</i>                                  |
| A.11 | one bone,<br>two bones     | um osso,<br>dois ossos        | <i>kongolo rimoja,</i><br><i>mapongolo mawiri</i>     |
| A.12 | breasts                    | seio, mamas                   | <i>were, mawere</i>                                   |
| A.13 | charcoal                   | carvão de lenha               | <i>makala</i>   |
| A.14 | the chest                  | o peito                       | <i>kifuwa</i>   |
| A.15 | one child,<br>two children | uma criança,<br>duas crianças | <i>kisimana mmoja,</i><br><i>wasimana wawiri</i>      |
| A.16 | one cloud,<br>two clouds   | uma nuvem,<br>duas nuvens     | <i>wingu rimoja,</i><br><i>mawingu mawiri</i>         |
| A.17 | cold                       | frio                          | <i>baridi</i>   |
| A.18 | to come                    | vir                           | <i>kuja</i>   |

|      |                                  |                                |  |
|------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| A.19 | to cook                          | cozinhar/cozer                 | <i>kwipika</i>                               |
| A.20 | to cut                           | cortar                         | <i>kusinja</i>                               |
| A.21 | to dance                         | dançar                         | <i>kuvina</i>                                |
| A.22 | to die                           | morrer                         | <i>kufwa</i>                                 |
| A.23 | one dog,<br>two dogs             | um cão,<br>dois cães           | <i>umbwa mmoja,<br/>umbwa mbiri</i>          |
| A.24 | to drink                         | beber                          | <i>kunywa</i>                                |
| A.25 | an ear,<br>two ears              | uma orelha,<br>duas orelhas    | <i>sikiro rimoja,<br/>masikiro mawiri</i>    |
| A.26 | to eat                           | comer                          | <i>kurya</i>                                 |
| A.27 | one egg,<br>six eggs             | um ovo,<br>seis ovos           | <i>rii rimoja,<br/>māi mawiri</i>            |
| A.28 | one elephant,<br>three elephants | um elefante,<br>três elefantes | <i>nembo mmoja,<br/>manembo watatu</i>       |
| A.29 | one eye,<br>two eyes             | um olho,<br>dois olhos         | <i>riso rimoja,<br/>maso mawiri</i>          |
| A.30 | to fall                          | cair                           | <i>kugwa</i>                                 |
| A.31 | one finger,<br>five fingers      | um dedo,<br>cinco dedos        | <i>chala kimoja,<br/>vyala viwiri</i>        |
| A.32 | the fire                         | o fogo                         | <i>moto</i>                                  |
| A.33 | firewood                         | lenha                          | <i>uni [oni]</i>                             |
| A.34 | one fish,<br>many fishes         | um peixe,<br>muitos peixes     | <i>inwi mmoja,<br/>inwi nyingi</i>           |
| A.35 | to give                          | dar                            | <i>kumera</i>                                |
| A.36 | one goat,<br>four goats          | uma cabra,<br>quatro cabras    | <i>mbuzi mmoja muka,<br/>mbuzi nne nyika</i> |
| A.37 | good                             | bom                            | <i>ngema</i>                                 |
| A.38 | grass                            | relva, capim                   | <i>miyani</i>                                |
| A.39 | hair                             | cabelo                         | <i>nywiri [weri]</i>                         |
| A.40 | one hand,<br>two hands           | uma mão,<br>duas mãos          | <i>nkono mmoja,<br/>makono mawiri</i>        |
| A.41 | happy                            | feliz/contente                 | <i>radi</i>                                  |
| A.42 | the head                         | a cabeça                       | <i>kiswa</i>                                 |
| A.43 | the heart                        | o coração                      | <i>moyo</i>                                  |
| A.44 | here                             | aqui                           | <i>epa</i>                                   |
| A.45 | honey                            | mel                            | <i>ansali</i>                                |
| A.46 | one horn,<br>two horns           | um chifre,<br>dois chifres     | <i>nyanga rimoja,<br/>manyanga mawiri</i>    |
| A.47 | one house,<br>many houses        | uma casa,<br>muitas casas      | <i>nyumba mmoja,<br/>manyumba mengi</i>      |
| A.48 | hunger                           | fome                           | <i>njala</i>                                 |

|      |                                |                                 |   |
|------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| A.49 | to hunt                        | caçar                           | <i>kulumbata</i>                        |
| A.50 | one hyena,<br>three hyenas     | uma hiena,<br>três hienas       | <i>fisi mmoja,<br/>mafisi watatu</i>    |
| A.51 | one kidney,<br>two kidneys     | um rim,<br>dois rins            | —                                       |
| A.52 | to kill                        | matar                           | <i>kuulaya</i>                          |
| A.53 | one knee,<br>two knees         | um joelho,<br>dois joelhos      | <i>lundi rimoja,<br/>malundi mawiri</i> |
| A.54 | to know                        | saber                           | <i>kwijiwa</i>                          |
| A.55 | to laugh                       | rir                             | <i>kuseka</i>                           |
| A.56 | one leaf,<br>many leaves       | uma folha,<br>muitas folhas     | <i>samba rimoja,<br/>masámba mengi</i>  |
| A.57 | the liver                      | o fígado                        | <i>rini</i>                             |
| A.58 | long                           | longo                           | <i>kitambo</i>                          |
| A.59 | meat                           | carne                           | <i>nyama</i>                            |
| A.60 | the moon                       | a lua                           | <i>mwezi</i>                            |
| A.61 | one mountain,<br>two mountains | uma montanha,<br>duas montanhas | <i>mwango mmoja,<br/>myango miwiri</i>  |
| A.62 | the mouth                      | a boca                          | <i>kanywa</i>                           |
| A.63 | a name                         | um nome                         | <i>zina rimoja</i>                      |
| A.64 | the navel                      | o umbigo                        | <i>ntoku</i>                            |
| A.65 | the neck                       | o pescoço                       | <i>singo</i>                            |
| A.66 | one night,<br>seven nights     | uma noite,<br>sete noites       | <i>usiku mmoja,<br/>usiku saba</i>      |
| A.67 | the nose                       | o nariz                         | <i>mula</i>                             |
| A.68 | one path,<br>many paths        | um caminho,<br>muitos caminhos  | <i>njira mmoja,<br/>njira nyingi</i>    |
| A.69 | the rain                       | a chuva                         | <i>nvula [mvula]</i>                    |
| A.70 | red                            | vermelho                        | <i>weundu [werundu]</i>                 |
| A.71 | a river                        | o rio                           | <i>muto [moto]</i>                      |
| A.72 | salt                           | o sal                           | <i>munyu [monyo]</i>                    |
| A.73 | sand                           | areia                           | <i>nsanga</i>                           |
| A.74 | to see                         | ver                             | <i>kuwona</i>                           |
| A.75 | to sing                        | cantar                          | <i>kwimba</i>                           |
| A.76 | to sit                         | sentar-se                       | <i>kwikala</i>                          |
| A.77 | the skin                       | a pele                          | <i>sambala</i>                          |
| A.78 | to sleep                       | dormir                          | <i>kulala</i>                           |
| A.79 | small                          | pequeno                         | <i>noto</i>                             |
| A.80 | the smoke                      | o cheiro, o fumo                | <i>kunuwa, rosi [rosi]</i>              |

|       |                                 |  |  |
|-------|---------------------------------|--|--|
| A.81  | a snake                         | a cobra                                  | <i>nyoka</i>   |
| A.82  | to stand                        | estar em pé                              | <i>kwimira</i>   |
| A.83  | a star                          | uma estrela                              | <i>nondwa moja</i>   |
| A.84  | to steal                        | roubar                                   | <i>kwiwa</i>   |
| A.85  | one stick,<br>two sticks        | um pau,<br>dois paus                     | <i>muti [moti] mmoja,<br/>miti [mieti] miwiri</i>                    |
| A.86  | one stone,<br>ten stones        | uma pedra,<br>dez pedras                 | <i>riwe rimoja,<br/>mawe kumi</i>                                    |
| A.87  | one stranger,<br>four strangers | um desconhecido,<br>quatro desconhecidos | <i>munu mmoja sejiwikana,<br/>wanu wane sawejiwikana</i>             |
| A.88  | the sun                         | o sol                                    | <i>juwa</i>  |
| A.89  | one tail,<br>two tails          | um rabo,<br>dois rabos                   | <i>mkira mmoja,<br/>mikira miwiri</i>                                |
| A.90  | to talk                         | falar                                    | <i>kusowera</i>  |
| A.91  | there                           | aí/ali/lá                                | <i>epo, pare, eko</i>  |
| A.92  | one thorn,<br>many thorns       | um espinho,<br>muitos espinhos           | <i>mwiwa mmoja,<br/>miwa mingi</i>                                   |
| A.93  | the tongue                      | a língua                                 | <i>lilimi</i>  |
| A.94  | one tooth,<br>six teeth         | um dente,<br>seis dentes                 | <i>rino rimoja,<br/>meno sita</i>                                    |
| A.95  | one tree,<br>nine trees         | uma árvore,<br>nove árvores              | <i>muti wa nviri [ɲwiri] mmoja,<br/>miti ya miviri [mwiri] kenda</i> |
| A.96  | twins                           | gêmeos                                   | <i>masa</i>  |
| A.97  | to vomit                        | vomitar                                  | <i>kutapika</i>  |
| A.98  | to walk                         | andar                                    | <i>kwenenda</i>  |
| A.99  | to wash oneself                 | lavar-se                                 | <i>kunawa</i>  |
| A.100 | water                           | água                                     | <i>maji</i>  |
| A.101 | white                           | branco                                   | <i>welupa</i>  |
| A.102 | a wind                          | um vento                                 | <i>mepo</i>  |
| A.103 | one wing,<br>two wings          | uma asa,<br>duas asas                    | <i>mbawa moja,<br/>mbawa mbiri</i>                                   |
| A.104 | one woman,<br>eight women       | uma mulher,<br>oito mulheres             | <i>muka mmoja,<br/>waka nane</i>                                     |
| A.105 | one year,<br>three years        | um ano,<br>três anos                     | <i>mwaka mmoja,<br/>myaka mitatu</i>                                 |

## B. Numerals / Numerais

| REF. | ENGLISH | PORTUGUES | KIMWANI              |
|------|---------|-----------|----------------------|
| B.1  | one cow | uma vaca  | <i>ng'ombe mmoja</i> |

|      |                 |                     |                                  |
|------|-----------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| B.2  | two cows        | duas vacas          | <i>ng'ombe mbiri</i>             |
| B.3  | three cows      | três vacas          | <i>ng'ombe natu</i>              |
| B.4  | four cows       | quatro vacas        | <i>ng'ombe nne</i>               |
| B.5  | five cows       | cinco vacas         | <i>ng'ombe ntanu</i>             |
| B.6  | six cows        | seis vacas          | <i>ng'ombe sita</i>              |
| B.7  | seven cows      | sete vacas          | <i>ng'ombe saba</i>              |
| B.8  | eight cows      | oito vacas          | <i>ng'ombe nane</i>              |
| B.9  | nine cows       | nove vacas          | <i>ng'ombe kenda</i>             |
| B.10 | ten cows        | dez vacas           | <i>ng'ombe kumi</i>              |
| B.11 | fifteen cows    | quinze vacas        | <i>ng'ombe kumi na ntanu</i>     |
| B.12 | twenty cows     | vinte vacas         | <i>ng'ombe shirini</i>           |
| B.13 | thirty cows     | trinta vacas        | <i>ng'ombe talatini</i>          |
| B.14 | thirty-two cows | trinta e duas vacas | <i>ng'ombe talatini na mbiri</i> |
| B.15 | one boy         | um rapaz            | <i>nnemba mmoja</i>              |
| B.16 | two boys        | dois rapazes        | <i>wanemba wawiri</i>            |
| B.17 | three boys      | três rapazes        | <i>wanemba watatu</i>            |
| B.18 | four boys       | quatro rapazes      | <i>wanemba wane</i>              |
| B.19 | five boys       | cinco rapazes       | <i>wanemba watanu</i>            |

### C. Sentences / Frases

|     |  |
|-----|--|
| C.1 | A big stranger came to the village yesterday.            |
|     | Um desconhecido grande veio a aldeia ontem.              |
|     | <i>Ijana mu aldeya kaja munu mmoja nkulu sejiwikana.</i> |
| C.2 | A nice woman saw him.                                    |
|     | Uma mulher simpática viu-o.                              |
|     | <i>Mwanamuka mwerevu kammona.</i>                        |
| C.3 | He talked to her.  |
|     | Ele falou com ela.                                       |
|     | <i>Iye kasowera naye.</i>                                |
| C.4 | He told her this.  |
|     | Ele disse-lhe isto.                                      |
|     | <i>Iye kamwambira javi.</i>                              |
| C.5 | "I walked on the path.                                   |
|     | "Estava a andar no caminho.                              |
|     | <i>Ákenenda munjira.</i>                                 |

|      |   |
|------|---|
| C.6  | When I had walked a long distance I saw a long snake.                 |
|      | Quando eu já tinha andado uma longa distância, vi uma cobra comprida. |
|      | <i>Panenende kitambo kikulu nimmona nyoka nrefu.</i>                  |
| C.7  | It fell from a tree.  |
|      | Ela caiu numa árvore.   |
|      | <i>Iye kagwa mmuti.</i>   |
| C.8  | It fell on my head.   |
|      | Ela caiu na minha cabeça.   |
|      | <i>Iye kanigwira [kabwira] pakiswa pangu.</i>                         |
| C.9  | It did not bite me.   |
|      | Não me mordeu.  |
|      | <i>Aanilumire [anilomiri].</i>  |
| C.10 | The woman said to him:  |
|      | A mulher disse-lhe:   |
|      | <i>Mwanamuka kamwambira:</i>  |
| C.11 | "You are happy.   |
|      | "Tu estás feliz.  |
|      | <i>Uwe kuwa radi.</i>   |
| C.12 | We will have a party.   |
|      | Teremos uma festa.  |
|      | <i>Tikuwa nao jambo ra sheree.</i>                                    |
| C.13 | You shall eat and drink here.   |
|      | Comerás e beberás aqui.   |
|      | <i>Epa ukurya na ukunywa.</i>   |
| C.14 | The children will sing and dance.                                     |
|      | As crianças vão cantar e dançar.                                      |
|      | <i>Wasimana wakwimba na wávina.</i>                                   |
| C.15 | We will also sing and dance."   |
|      | Nós também vamos cantar e dançar."                                    |
|      | <i>Ofwe novyo tívina na tukwimba.</i>                                 |
| C.16 | The man's cows are big.   |
|      | As vacas do homem são grandes.  |
|      | <i>Ng'ombe za mwananlume ulu.</i>                                     |
| C.17 | The leaves of the tree are green.                                     |
|      | As folhas da árvore são verdes.                                       |
|      | <i>Masámbe a miti a niri.</i>   |

|      |  |
|------|--|
| C.18 | The brave women killed the dangerous snake.                                      |
|      | As mulheres valentes mataram a cobra perigosa.                                   |
|      | <i>Wanawaka wakakatima wamulaya nyoka wa kuduru.</i>                             |
| C.19 | A stranger stole the big cows.   |
|      | Um desconhecido roubou as vacas grandes.   |
|      | <i>Mwananlume sejiwikana kewa ng'ombe ulu-ulu.</i>                               |
| C.20 | The stranger who stole the cows ran away.  |
|      | O desconhecido que roubou as vacas fugiu.  |
|      | <i>Munu mmojiwa ko kewa ng'ombe katira.</i>                                      |
| C.21 | He saw the man whose cows he has stolen.   |
|      | Ele viu o homem cujas vacas ele tinha roubado. (..a quem tinha roubado as vacas) |
|      | <i>Iye kammona mwananlume ewire ng'ombe.</i>                                     |
| C.22 | The cows which the stranger had stolen came back.                                |
|      | As vacas que o desconhecido tinha roubado voltaram                               |
|      | <i>Ng'ombe zewire [zewiri] munu sejiwikana ziludi.</i>                           |
| C.23 | How many cows do you have?   |
|      | Quantas vacas tens?  |
|      | <i>Kwanazo ng'ombe nyengapi?</i>   |
| C.24 | How many elephants did you see?  |
|      | Quantos elefantes viste?   |
|      | <i>Kuwona nembo nyengapi?</i>  |
| C.25 | He saw many elephants.   |
|      | Ele viu muitos elefantes.  |
|      | <i>Iye kaona nembo nyingi.</i>   |
| C.26 | They saw many cows.  |
|      | Eles viram muitas vacas.   |
|      | <i>Ewo waona ng'ombe nyingi.</i>   |
| C.27 | They know the woman.   |
|      | Eles conhecem a mulher.  |
|      | <i>Ewo wamwijiwa mwanamuka-yo.</i>   |
| C.28 | They do not know the woman.  |
|      | Eles não conhecem a mulher.  |
|      | <i>Ewo awamwijiwa mwanamuka-yo.</i>  |
| C.29 | He sees the girl.  |
|      | Ele vê a rapariga.   |
|      | <i>Iye kankunang'a niza mwari.</i>   |

|      |   |
|------|---|
| C.30 | He does not see the girl.                           |
|      | Ele não vê a rapariga.                              |
|      | <i>Iye aari kunnang'a niza mwari.</i>               |
| C.31 | He saw the girl.                                    |
|      | Ele viu a rapariga.                                 |
|      | <i>Iye kammona mwari.</i>                           |
| C.32 | He did not see the girl.                            |
|      | Ele não viu a rapariga.                             |
|      | <i>Iye aammonire mwari.</i>                         |
| C.33 | We will see the house.                              |
|      | Nós veremos a casa.                                 |
|      | <i>Ofwe tíona nyumba.</i>                           |
| C.34 | We will see it.                                     |
|      | Vamos vê-la.  |
|      | <i>Tuke likaone [sikaone].</i>                      |
| C.35 | They see the tree.                                  |
|      | Eles veêm a árvore.                                 |
|      | <i>Ewo wanang'aniza [wan̄kun̄an̄aniza] muti.</i>    |
| C.36 | They see it.  |
|      | Eles veêm-na.                                       |
|      | <i>Ewo wankunang'aniza - .</i>                      |
| C.37 | Come here!  |
|      | Vem cá!   |
|      | <i>Njo kuno</i>                                     |
| C.38 | The man came to our house and gave us a letter.     |
|      | O homem veio na nossa casa e deu-nos uma carta.     |
|      | <i>Mwananlume kaja kunyumba yetu katipa waraka.</i> |
| C.39 | He asked that we should come with him.              |
|      | Ele pediu que nós o acompanhássemos.                |
|      | <i>Iye katilebela timpereke.</i>                    |
| C.40 | He was a tall man.                                  |
|      | Era um homem alto.                                  |
|      | <i>Ákiwa mwananlume nrefu.</i>                      |
| C.41 | They are tall men.                                  |
|      | São homens altos.                                   |
|      | <i>Wanawalume warefu.</i>                           |