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University of Dar es Salaam, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Minimalist Architecture of the Chimakonde Determiner Phrase

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Dominick Makanjila[1]

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Abstract
The question whether article-less languages project a determiner phrase (Abney, 1987) is long-standing, with various studies yielding conflicting outcomes. This paper contributes to this debate by arguing that Chimakonde, a Bantu language (P.23) which lacks an article system, projects a DP. To this end, the discourse-pragmatic interpretations of a demonstrative are explored. Specifically, the paper seeks to establish whether the demonstrative root (a-), induces definiteness or related discourse interpretations on the nominal head in pre- and/or post-nominal positions in Chimakonde. The data were collected through elicitation and introspection. The interpretations were done through the familiarity theory (Hawkins, 1978). Based on these interpretations, it was established that the demonstrative root intensifies the head noun in the prenominal position, rendering it more emphatic/specific. Emphasis or added specificity constitutes one of the interpretations that a typical determiner element may express (Asiimwe, 2014). As such, the findings support the view that Chimakonde projects a determiner phrase (DP), which is consistent with approaches that treat DP as a cross-linguistically available nominal structure. The structural representation of the Chimakonde DP was developed through the Minimalism operations of Select, Merge, and Move (Chomsky, 1995). The informational structural notion of focus was captured by projecting a focus phrase on the left periphery of the Chimakonde determiner phrase. The findings enhance our understanding of the role of the syntax and discourse-pragmatics interplay in expressing various concepts, particularly when a grammar of language lacks a category which is present in another.

Keywords: *Cartography, Chimakonde, definiteness, demonstrative root, determiner phrase, familiarity, Minimalism*

Introduction

Before the mid-1980s, it was standard to analyse a noun phrase as a constituent headed by a noun. For instance, the nominal expression '*the student'* would be analysed as in (1) below:

1. [NP [D' [D the N' student]]

[11] **Corresponding author:**
Dominick Dunford Makanjila, Department of Foreign Languages and Linguistics, University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. E-mail: makanjilad@gmail.com | makanjila@udsm.ac.tz

The traditional structural analysis of a nominal expression as given in (1) has a noun phrase (NP) as the topmost projection and assumes the determiner (D) to be the specifier of an N-bar (the intermediate category) and the lexical noun as the head (Carnie, 2013). The notion of 'head' in traditional grammar is semantically motivated. A head of a phrase expresses substantive content and is confined to major lexical items such as nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. According to Radford (2004), a noun denotes names of places or things, and therefore it can head a noun phrase. This view is problematic for two reasons. First, the term 'substantive content' itself is hard to define. Secondly, borderline cases exist which undermine notional definitions of lexical items. For instance, '*whiteness*' is a noun due to the suffix '*-ness*' but it is neither a thing or place. Such difficulties necessitate revisiting the traditional notion of head and what can be the head of a phrase. A generative syntax provides an alternative notion of head, according to which the head of a phrase is structural and distributional rather than semantic (Koeneman & Zeijlstra, 2017).

Thus, the analysis of nominal expressions as a noun phrase as in (1) was challenged by Abney (1987) following his intensive study on an English noun phrase. On both empirical and theoretical grounds, Abney concluded that a noun phrase is headed by a functional element he termed a determiner (D), which comprises elements which specify which entity is meant or whose it is, among other functions (van Gelderen, 2022). Thus, the NP '*the student*' exemplified above*'* is re-analysed as a DP as shown in (2) below.

2. [DP [D'[D the NP student]]

In (2), the determiner is the head and takes the lexical projection (NP) as its complement. The maximal projection is a now a determiner phrase (rather than a noun phrase), culminating into what Abney (1987) terms the Determiner Phrase Hypothesis (DPH).

Abney (1987) views the DP hypothesis as universal which can account for nominal expressions in any language, arguing that any language, through a nominal expression, can express whether a shared knowledge of an entity being talked about is assumed. This shared knowledge can only be accounted for if the presence of a determiner or a linguistic element bringing about that interpretation on a nominal expression is assumed, whether physically or covertly realised.

Review of Empirical Literature on the DP Hypothesis

As already established, the DPH was conceived through a language with an article system, namely English. Given that not every language has an article system corresponding to English, many studies e.g. (Asiimwe, 2014; Longobardi, 2001; Siloni, 1997; Veselovská, 2018) were carried out, particularly on the languages that have no articles, to empirically establish whether the universal status of the DP hypothesis is tenable. It emerged from these studies that the universal view of the DPH was polarised. On the basis of both empirical and theoretical evidence, some scholars (Aboh, 2004; Leu, 2008) maintain the view that all nominal expressions, in both languages with and without articles, are headed by a determiner element. However, not every scholar takes such a view. In the following section, a brief review of the debate is given.

Corroborative Evidence for the DP Hypothesis

Evidence to support the DP hypothesis compelling. Abney (1987) observes that in English descriptive adjectives can come after the head noun (e.g., *someone clever*) instead of preceding it (e.g., 'a *clever man*) like typical head-initial languages like it would do. Abney proposes head-to-head movement to account for the modifier-after-the head noun configuration observed in English. He further proposes that the word *'one*' is nominal and as such it heads a lexical projection and *'some'* is functional, heading a functional projection. Under the standard minimalist assumption that head can only move to another head position (Radford, 2004), Abney assumes that the noun *'one'* raises to adjoin the functional head *'some'* which requires a nominal head as it its complement.

On the other hand, the DP hypothesis gets support from the observed parallelism between nominal and clausal domains (Giusti, 2006). In a verbal domain, an inflection (T) element, a functional head that expresses finiteness, dominates a verb phrase. The feature of finiteness situates a verb in context, specifying whether the situation took place in the past or is taking place now (Koeneman & Zeijlstra, 2017).

3. He likes apples.
   he like-s apple-s
   3SG like-3SG.Fin apple-PL
   He like apples.

It is the occurrence of the third-person singular functional morpheme *'s'* on the verb 'like' that situates the action represented by the verb as taking place in the present time. Without this functional element, the action would be understood generally as occurring rather taking place in a particular point in time. On the other hand, a determiner (D), a functional head which specifies the reference of a noun by picking out a particular member of the noun's range of reference dominates a noun phrase (Coene & D'hulst, 2002).

4. She dreads (the) cat
   she dread-s (the) cat
   3SG like-s (D) cat
   She dreads (the) cat.

The obligatory or optional occurrence of the determiner (D) as indicated in (4) affects the interpretation of the noun. There is a shared understanding of the referent of the noun between the speaker and addressee when the determiner is obligatory but no such understanding without it.

Thus, examples (3) and (4) demonstrate that in both nominal and verbal domains a functional head is required to make nouns and verbs referential. Without these functional elements, nouns and verbs can only be interpreted as generic rather than referring to specific situations or entities.

Furthermore, Longobardi (2001) argues that, in some languages a bare noun, being a nominal predicate, cannot be an argument, i.e., a referring expression, unless it is embedded under a functional element. To support this view, (Wiltschko, (2014) gives evidence from Halkomelem in which case proper names appear in the subject position (argument position) only if they co-occur with a determiner element.

5. kw'etslexwes tl' Strang te Konrad (Halkomelem, Wiltschko, 2014: 13)
   kw'ets-l-exw-es tl' Strang te Konrad
   see-TRANS-3O-3S D.ERG Strang D Konrad
   Strang saw Konrad.

In (5), proper nouns 'Strang' and 'Konrad' are in argument positions, namely subject and object positions, respectively. Consequently, each takes an obligatory determiner as required by the grammar of the language. This is because, according to Wiltschko (2014), proper names in Halkomelem are treated as nominal predicates that require a determiner to become an argument. As such, Halkomelem projects a DP above an NP.

Moreover, in some languages, agreement between a noun and subject is established when the noun bears a determiner element. Abney (1987) exemplifies this morphological evidence with languages with ergative systems, namely Alaskan Yup'k and Tibetan, in which case only nouns with possessive determiners agree with subjects the same way the verb agrees with the subject.

6. (a) Angutet kiputaat (Yupik, Abney, 1987: 39)
   angute-t kiputa-a-t
   man-ERG-PL buy-OM.SG-SM-.PL
   The men bought it.
   (b) Angutet kuigat
   Angute-t kuig-a-at
   man-ERG-PL river-SG.AGR.PL
   The men's river

Examples in 6(a&b) demonstrates verbal agreement and possessor agreement on nouns, respectively, in Yupik. Abney (1987) argues that agreement in the nominal domain is identical to the agreement in the verbal domain in that ergative arguments in the former and possessor nouns in the later are marked

by the same agreement morpheme *(t).* Possessor agreement is explained by posting a DP with the head (D), endowed with phi-features, probing the possessor in the specifier position.

Arguments against the DP Hypothesis

The universality of the DP hypothesis remains highly debated. Consequently, various scholars (Bošković, 2005; Goodness, 2014, among others) have expressed views against this hypothesis. The main argument offered by many scholars who are against the DP hypothesis is the lack of an overt element in respective languages corresponding to the English articles which are quintessential determiner elements. Two influential DP hypothesis rebuts, namely Bošković (2005)'s Left-Branch Extraction and Chierchia (1998)'s Nominal Parameter Mapping are reviewed below:

Left-Branch Extraction

Bošković (2005) argues against the DP analysis using the left-branch extraction constraint (LBE). The LBE prohibits the leftmost element—such as an adjective, numeral, or possessive determiner to move out of a larger noun phrase that contains it (Ross, 1986). Bošković argues that the LBE is possible in articleless languages like Serbo-Croatian but impossible in article languages like English due to the Phase Impenetrability Condition (PIC) (Chomsky, Derivation by phase, 2001). According to the PIC, the movement of linguistic materials within an XP which is a phase is restricted to the head and edge of the phase (specifiers). Non-head materials such as complements cannot be extracted from the phase (Chomsky, 2001).

7. (a) Serbo-Croatian-no articles-NP (Bošković, 2005: 3)
lijepe$_i$ on gleda [t_i kuče] *(Literally: 'beautiful he sees houses)*
He sees beautiful houses.
(b) English- has articles-DP (Bošković, 2005:.2)
*beautiful he sees [the ti houses)
Intended: He sees the beautiful houses.

According to Bošković (2005), LBE is disallowed in article languages (7b) because they contain a DP which is a phase (a barrier) but is allowed in article-less languages (7a) as they contain NP which is not a phase (no barrier). Because the DP is a phase, extracting the adjective from within the DP in (7b) forces it to directly land into the specifier of the same phrase (Spec-DP). As such, the movement becomes too short and is banned by anti-locality, as no single distinct structural node is crossed. On the contrary, as the NP is not a phase, the adjective in (7a) moves out of it freely to the higher sentence position.

Nominal Mapping Parameter

Chierchia (1998) argues that languages vary in terms of what they allow their NPs to denote. The variation is encoded in semantic constraint he terms Nominal Mapping Parameter (NMP). According to the NMP, nouns are either argumental (+arg), predicative (+pred) or both. Argumental nouns denote names of individuals and kinds (referential NPs) and therefore they can be in an argument position without a determiner (+arg, -pred). He gives Chinese and Japanese as representing this group of languages. According to Chierchia, these languages do not project a DP. Predicative nouns are non-referential and they require a determiner for them to be in an argument position (-arg, +pred), French and Italian being the examples cited. These languages project DP unequivocally. The third group of languages has nouns needing (mostly count singular nouns) or not needing plural and mass nouns mainly) a determiner in an argument position (+arg, +pred). As a result, a nominal projection can be an NP or DP. With these observations, Chierchia concludes languages may or may not project a DP, depending on the nature of nouns.

Zooming in on the LBE and NMP and the Knowledge Gap

The underlying hypothesis under the LBE is that it is allowed in languages that have no overt articles. However, it is well established that categories can be expressed covertly. For example, Case in lexical nouns in English is expressed covertly (e.g. John loves apples). The lexical noun 'John' bears nominative case *(he)* but covertly. Moreover, subject-verb agreement with third-plural nouns in English is expressed without an overt agreement marker (e.g. They need him). Thus, the absence of an overt morpheme in the grammar of a language may not be an equivalence to a lack of a category.

As for Chierchia's proposal, literature shows that a lot of languages distinguish singular vs plural from count vs mass nouns. However, mass or count nouns in some of these languages do not denote kinds but yet they can occur in argument positions, hence not correlating with the NMP parameter (cf. Schmitt

& Munn, 2002 for Brazilian Portuguese). This observation further points to the uniqueness of languages cross linguistically.

Considering these observations cross-linguistically, we take the standard assumption that every language has a means to express a feature/meaning that is expressed differently or which is absent in another language. According to Minimalism, *'languages differ in the properties they select for functional categories* (Visser, 2002: 280). What this assertion means is that category X present in a particular language can be expressed or realised as category Y in another language. It is these selectional properties, rather than functional categories themselves, that makes every language unique. Thus, the view that the absence of a physical element corresponds to the absence of a feature is not adopted in this study.

Chimakonde, like many other Bantu languages, does not exhibit articles corresponding in form to the English ones nor does it have pre-prefixes, elements on the morphology of nouns that are likened to the English articles in function in some Bantu languages (e.g., Mgaya, 2025 for Kibena).

8. Umwana umudede (Mgaya, 2025: 87)
u-mu-ana u-mu-debe
PRP-CL1-child PRP-CL1-small
The small child

According to Mgaya (2025), a preprefix (PRP) is obligatory on a noun in Kibena if the noun is to be interpreted specifically. Mgaya (2025) further points out that a noun may be ambiguous between the interpretation in which a specific referent of the noun is intended and the interpretation in which no specific referent is intended if the preprefix is omitted.

As noted earlier, all languages have a mechanism to compensate for categories present in one language but lacking in others (Cinque, 2008). Against this background, this study examines the structure of a Chimakonde DP. Specifically, it seeks to determine the appropriate structure for representing the inflectional properties of number, person and gender and discourse-pragmatic characteristics on a demonstrative. The DP hypothesis pioneered by Abney in 1987 is adopted. The structure of the Chimakonde DP is determined by interpreting the morpho-syntactic characteristic and discourse-pragmatic the demonstrative in pre-nominal and post-nominal positions. The interpretation which the demonstrative brings about in these positions is studied by assuming a familiarity theory as pioneered by Lyons in 1999. As is the case with all other languages, Chimakonde exhibits demonstratives whose semantic function, namely expressing definiteness (Hawkins, 1978) can be equated to an article in languages with this article system, suggesting that a determiner heads the noun phrase as a lexical projection in Chimakonde.

Methods and Procedure

Both primary and secondary sources were consulted as sources of the data for this study. Some of the secondary data was extracted from the master's thesis by Makanjila (2012) which was a descriptive study as it provided an overview of the Chimakonde language structure without an attempt to understand the structures observed from a particular theoretical perspective. The current study also owes some of its data to a study by Makanjila (2019). However, with evidence of a new set of data, mainly drawn from informal social settings and social media platforms such WhatsApp and Facebook groups involving Makonde native speakers, the current study provides robust and enriching data to account for the phenomenon being investigated more thoroughly. In terms of theoretical assumptions, a study by Makanjila (2019) adopted Giusti's view of agreement as concord according to which feature sharing is a modification relation (thus optional) and only modifiers (but not heads) bear uninterpretable features (Giusti, 2015). In contrast, the current study adopts the standard view of agreement as advanced in Chomsky (1993) and subsequent work according to which agreement is a selectional process (obligatory) and both the selector (head) and selected (modifier) should have uninterpretable features for activation and valuation purposes (Chomsky, 1993). Furthermore, the data reported in this study was obtained through compositions that were made by five Chimakonde native speakers who were purposively sampled. The speakers were asked to compose stories around themes of their own choices. From these compositions, 50 sentences involving nominal expressions (nouns + demonstratives) were extracted. This approach helped avoid collecting decontextualized data which normally obtains when traditional data collection methods such as questionnaires are used (Bowern, 2008). As the researcher speaks the language under investigation natively, he also contributed to

constructing sentences. However, these self-made constructions were also double-checked with the five consultants for well-formedness and acceptability.

A total of 70 sentences involving nominal expressions, particularly the combination of nouns and demonstratives were extracted. The patterns were established. Two patterns involving the position of the demonstrative with respect to the head noun, namely postnominal and prenominal demonstratives, were identified and the discourse-pragmatic meaning they induce on the head noun interpreted. The interpretation of the established patterns was informed by the discourse-pragmatic theory of definiteness as put forward by Lyons (1999). All the glosses on and translations of the sentences and phrases are[2] given on footnote.

Theoretical Assumptions

Minimalism and Cartography

Minimalism assumes the autonomy of morphology and syntax in building syntactic structures. It is therefore lexicalist (Chomsky, 1995). In deriving a construction, minimalists assume that lexical items are merged into terminal nodes on a syntactic tree with their inflectional features not removed. Because some of these features are semantically uninterpretable (a lexical item is not affected semantically by their presence) , they can cause a derivation to crash at some point in syntactic computation i.e., causing it to be ungrammatical, they need to be deactivated/deleted (Chomsky, 1995). According to Chomsky (1995), the number feature on a noun is interpretable whereas it is uninterpretable on a verb.

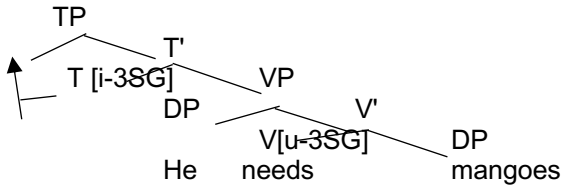
9. (a) The student likes swimming.
   (b) The students like swimming.

In (9), the verb is inflected for number, singular for (9a) and plural for (9b). This number morpheme has a syntactic function; it establishes agreement between the noun and the verb. The meaning of the verb is the same regardless of whether it is singular or plural. Thus, the number specification on a verb is semantically uninterpretable. In contrast, the singular-plural distinction on the noun affects the way it is interpreted. In (9a), it is only one student that is predicated as liking swimming, and in (9b), it is predicated of more than one student that they like swimming. Thus, the number distinction on a noun is semantically interpretable.

As pointed out, uninterpretable features are not needed at the LF interface and thus they need to be deleted/deactivated. The deletion/deactivation of undesired features is achieved through a feature checking system. With this system, a category merged in a base position in a tree may move higher in order to check its features against another category with corresponding features. An example of feature checking operation is given in example (10).

10. (a) He needs mangoes.

(b)



In English, a finite verb agrees with a subject DP in the c-commanding domain of a functional finite verbal category (T). Given that the verb '*needs'* in (4a) carries the uninterpretable features of number and person (*u-3SG*) through the morpheme *-s*, a c-commanding functional verbal category carrying the corresponding interpretable number and person features (*i-3SG)* is projected into the clause to value the uninterpretable number and person features on the verb via agreement. When valuation is complete, the subject DP moves to the specifier position within TP to become a structural subject, a

[2] Abbreviations used in the glosses are as follows: AgrS= Subject agreement morpheme; AgrO= Object Agreement Morpheme; ASS=Associative morpheme; APPL= Applicative morpheme'; DEMagr= Demonstrative agreement morpheme; DEMrt= Demonstrative root; EPP=Extended Projection Principe FocP= Focus Phrase; Fin; Finiteness, NCP= Noun Class Prefix; NEG= Negative; PERF=Perfective Morpheme; Prox= Proximal demonstrative morpheme; TAM = Tense, Aspect and Mood; V= Verb

requirement imposed by the Extended Projection Principle (EPP) that a finite clause must have a subject in English (Chomsky, 1995).

The basic operations underlying this theory, namely Select, Merge, C-command, Move and feature checking are thus adopted in the current study. Adopting these minimalist operations will make it possible to determine the internal structure of the Chimakonde DP, involving the head noun and a demonstrative. On the other hand, the idea by Rizzi (1997) and Cinque (2012) that information structural notions such as focus can project in syntax was adopted. Adopting this cartographic view was relevant to the study as it enabled to relate an interpretive function induced by the demonstrative root *-a*, namely focus and emphasis, with the head noun to syntax. As such, with the support of empirical data, it was argued that Chimakonde requires the discourse-related functional projection of focus phrase (FocP) in the higher part of the determiner phrase.

Definiteness as Familiarity

The referent of a noun can be definite or indefinite. According to Lyons (1999), definiteness refers to whether an entity is familiar (definite) or unfamiliar (indefinite) to the speaker and addressee. Lyons further expresses the view that the familiarity of an entity encompasses four aspects, namely physical setting, discourse-anaphora, general knowledge and association. An entity which is present in physical setting in which the speakers are is familiar to them for the reason that the speakers can see or touch it. If a linguistic expression can be connected with another in linguistic context (co-text), then it is familiar. Human beings possess common knowledge about some things in the universe. Such things are therefore familiar to them. An entity can be familiar because one can link it with another. Consider example (11) below.

11. I came to the meeting late because <u>the tires went flat</u>.

In (11), the determined noun '*tires'* occurs for the first time in this syntactic context. The choice of the definite article is hinged on the assumption made by the speaker that the addressee has encyclopedic knowledge that every car has tires. Upon hearing the sentence in (11), the addressee brings to surface his knowledge of cars and immediately infers that it is the tires of the car the speaker was travelling with that went flat.

Such assumptions in the interpretations of a Chimakonde DP underlie the current study. In particular, definiteness in Chimakonde is understood as interpretational rather than grammaticalized. As such, the familiarity theory, an interpretational framework which views definiteness as arising from discourse-pragmatic contexts, is relevant to the study.

According to Abbott (2010), indexical expressions such as demonstratives and temporal adverbs require, appropriate discourse-pragmatic settings in guiding an addressee to identify an intended referent. Example (12) below illustrates a case in point.

12. (a) Tomorrow will be a public holiday.
    (b) *Chiteng'u achino chinikapatapala*.
    chi-teng'u a-chi-no chi-ni-katapal-a
    7-chair DEMrt-8DEMagr-Prox 8AgrS-TAM-be beautiful-Fv
    'This chair is beautiful.'

In example (12a), the noun phrase *'tomorrow'* can only be interpreted as suggesting the day after today provided that the addressee knows the day in which the utterance was spoken. Without such a clue, ambiguity may arise and the addressee may get misguided. In example (12b), the referent of the chair is unambiguously interpreted as familiar to the addressee due to the occurrence of the deictic demonstrative *achino* (this), which makes the chair salient in the context. Thus, the familiarity theory, which requires discourse-pragmatic clues, will help guide the interpretation of the demonstrative versus the head noun.

Chimakonde Language Profile

Before the discussion of the findings is offered, three aspects essential to contextualizing the study, namely the dialect involved, the noun class system, and word order, are described. Chimakonde (Bantu, P.23, Tanzania) exhibits several dialects, the number of which is contested. The present study is based on Chimahuta spoken in Newala district in Mtwara region. The dialect is under-represented in linguistic description, thus warranting an own study. According to Amani (2010), Chimakonde exhibits eighteen noun classes, as given in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Noun Class System in Chimakonde

CL.	Prefix	Example	Gloss
1	Mu	*mwana*	'Child'
2	Va	*Vana*	'Children'
3	Mu	*nnyitu*	'Forest'
4	Mi	*mihitu*	'Forests'
5	Li	*linadi*	'Empty coconut shell'
6	Ma	*manadi*	'Empty coconut shells'
7	Chi	*chinanda*	'Bed'
8	Vi	*vinanda*	'Beds'
9	N	*mbula*	'Rain'
10	jiN	*Jimbula*	'Rains'
11	Lu	*lukuni*	'Firewood'
12	Ka	*kwamwana*	'Small child'
13	Tu	*tuvana*	'Small children'
14	U	*Ubila*	'Semen'
15	Ku	*Kuimila*	'To stand'
16	Pa	*Pakaya*	'At home'
17	Ku	*Kukaya*	'To home'
18	Mu	*nnyumba*	'In the house'

Source: (Amani, 2010: 59)

In Table 1 above, seven noun class groupings involving singular and plural forms can be established, namely 1&2, 3&4, 5&6, 7&8, 9&10, 11& 10, and 12&1). As shown in the table, some of the examples given are affected by phonological processes such as nasalization (*munyumba-nnyumba; nbula-mbula*) and vowel deletion (*muhitu-mhitu*.)

In terms of word order, it can be noted in the first place that determining a language structure requires one establishing the descriptive word order facts about that language. In a clause domain, Chimakonde exhibits a typical SVO order like most other languages.

13. *Mwana akutila liandazi.*
mu-ana a-kut-il-a li-andazi-a
1-child 1AgrS-cry-APPL-Fv
'The child is crying for (the) doughnut.'

In example (13) above, the sentence is SVO. The subject is the noun *mwana* (child) which precedes the verb *akutila* (cry for) and the object *liandazi* (a doughnut). The doughnut is either definite or indefinite in such a context. In Chimakonde, objects may get focused by fronting them. In such cases, a pronominal form reflecting the inflectional properties of the focused object must occur in the inflectional morphology of the verb.

14. *Liandazi mwana analikutila.*
li-andazi mu-ana a-na-li-kut-il-a
5-doughnut 1-child 1AgrS-TAM-5OBJ-cry-APPL-Fv
'The doughnut, the child is crying for it.'

While a pronominal object corresponding to an object is optional in non-focus constructions as in example (14) above, it occurs obligatorily in focus constructions as in example (15) below. The interpretation of a focused object is definite due to familiarity.

In a nominal domain, modifiers and determiners typically follow the head noun. Uncanonically, some determiners and modifiers can come before a head noun, somewhat modifying the meaning of the head noun in the process. Although the determiner/modifier before head noun configuration occurs atypically in Chimakonde, it will be shown in this study that it has a significant consequence in interpreting the head noun and determining the structure of a determiner phrase in Chimakonde.

15. *Chilongo achila pameza cha chinyakala*.
Chi-longo a-chi-la pa-meza ch-a chi-nyakala
7-pot DEMrt-DEMrt-7DEMagr -Distal 16-table 7-ASS 7AgrS-very old
'That pot (which is) on the table is very old.'

In Chimakonde, as example (15) illustrates, dependents come serially after the head noun they modify. The order of modifiers relative to their head is quite flexible. However, demonstratives tend to be closer to the head noun than other modifiers. Further, demonstratives, as pointed out, are capable of preceding head nouns, changing the meaning of the head noun it modifies as a result.

16. *Ala mabati lanasulula.*
a-la ma-bati la-na-sulul-a
DEMrt-5DEMagr 5-iron sheet 5AgrS-TAM-leak-Fv
'These iron sheets are leaking.'

Owing to the demonstrative occurring in prenominal position, the DP in (16) is both definite and focused. How this interpretation precisely obtains is a question that this study seeks to investigate.

Data Analysis and Discussion

This section presents the data and discusses the findings of the study. A major argument made through this section is that the demonstrative *root -a* is an instance of a determiner category in Chimakonde. The discourse-pragmatic reading of the demonstrative in pre-nominal and post-nominal positions against the head noun is offered as evidence to support the argument. Furthermore, the interaction between an agreement object marker (AgrO) and demonstrative root is examined with view to establishing the interpretive differences they bring to the head noun.

Demonstrative as a Determiner Category in Chimakonde

It is argued in this section that a demonstrative is a determiner category in Chimakonde expressing added specificity and contrastive focus. This conclusion is arrived at by mainly considering the discourse pragmatic interpretations that obtain when a demonstrative occurs before and after the head noun. The structure of a Chimakonde DP considering the order of demonstrative and head noun in

post and pre-nominal position will then be proposed. First of all, the general and language internal characteristics of demonstratives are described.

General Properties of Demonstratives

Thematically, demonstratives are assumed to be functional words, as they constitute a closed class and do not have substantive content (Radford, 2004). As is typical of functional words, demonstratives express semantically obscure and multi-faceted concepts such as definiteness (Lyons, 1999). They are also assumed to belong to the class of words termed *indexical* as they are principally used to point to entities in discourse (Abbott, 2010). In some languages such as English, demonstratives are free morphemes whereas in others such as in Chimakonde they are bound. Both free and bound demonstratives have semantic and/or discourse implications.

In languages such as Chimakonde where demonstratives are bound, it is only one morpheme in a complex demonstrative that corresponds to the semantic implication of the demonstrative. Other morphemes in the complex demonstrative express morpho-syntactic roles such as number and agreement features. Such decomposition cannot be established in languages with free demonstratives such as English.

Since demonstratives are deictic, they are assumed to be inherently definite as the objects they point out must be salient in the discourse (Lyons, 1999). Diachronically, for most languages that exhibit articles in their grammar systems, (cf. Abney, 1987 for English), demonstratives are said to be the source of them (Diessel, 1999; Lyons, 1999). This lends support to the view that demonstratives are definite and therefore determiner-like categories akin to articles.

Demonstratives in Chimakonde

As pointed out, demonstratives in Chimakonde are bound morphemes. The complex Chimakonde demonstrative consists of three morphemes, typical of other Bantu languages but differing from them in fundamental respects, as will be explicated in this study. The morphemes are the root, agreement and deictic ones. Canonically, demonstratives follow head nouns. However, demonstratives can appear before nouns, causing a significant change in the meaning of the head noun, as will be demonstrated in the subsequent sections. According to Kraal (2005) and Makanjila (2019), demonstratives in Chimakonde distinguish three spatial contrasts, namely proximal (this, these, and here), medial (that, those and there) and distal (yonder), as illustrated using the first four noun classes below:

Table 2: Demonstrative System in Chimakonde

Noun Class	Noun	Proximal	Medial	Distal	Gloss
1	*Mwana*	*Ayuno*	*aneyo*	*ayula*	'This/that child'
2	*Vana*	*Avano*	*anevo*	*avala*	'These/those children'
3	*Nnandi*	*Auno*	*aneo*	*aula*	'This/that tree'
4	*Miandi*	*Aino*	*aneyo*	*aila*	'These/those trees'

The Demonstrative Root

As pointed out, the complex demonstrative in Chimakonde exhibits three morphemes and one of which is a demonstrative root (henceforth DEMrt). The demonstrative root is realised as the morpheme *-a*, similar to many Bantu languages. However, the demonstrative root in Chimakonde displays peculiar properties. Two such features are relevant to this study. First, it occurs optionally in the inflectional morphology of the demonstrative in post-nominal position, atypical in some other Bantu languages such as Runyankore (cf. Asiimwe, 2014) and Xhosa (cf. Visser, 2008) where the root in the respective languages occurs obligatorily in the inflectional morphology of the demonstrative.

17. Omushaija taraagure egyo mbuzi (Asiimwe, 2014: 180)
O-mu-shaija ti-a-ra-gur-e a-gi-o n-buzi
IV-1man NEG-1.3SG-NEG-buy DEMrt-9-MEDIAL 9-goat

18. Aba abafazi besebenza kwaMasipala. (Visser, 2008: 19)
aba a-bafazi(2) ba-sebenz-a kwa-Masipala
These women AgrS-work-Pres at-(place-of-)-Municipality
These women work at the Municipality.

With respect to example (17) above, Asiimwe (2014) argues that the demonstrative root which is realised as morpheme *(a-)* occurs obligatorily in various syntactic contexts including in negative sentences as it is the core morpheme that expresses deictic meaning in Runyankore and Bantu languages generally. Similarly, Visser (2008) asserts that the head noun *abafazi* (women) in example (18) above is interpreted as exhibiting the additional property of specificity if the preprefix (the demonstrative root) *-a* is present on the head noun. However, the obligatory occurrence of a demonstrative root in all syntactic contexts is not tenable in Chimakonde, as will be demonstrated in this study.

Root in Traditional and Generative Grammar

We respect to the notion 'root', one caveat is in order. In traditional morphology, the root of a word is understood to be an obligatory element which determines the basic meaning of the word (Katamba & Stonham, 2006). While we succumb to the view that a root is central part of the word's meaning, the view that the root should obligatorily occur in an inflectional morphology of a word is not adopted in this study. Instead, we take the view held in generative grammar that a morpheme can occur covertly, i.e., without its phonetic features spelt out but without affecting its basic meaning (Carnie, 2013). Literally, this would be understood to mean that a morpheme, whether a root or just an inflection, can occur optionally in the inflectional morphology of a word. For instance, Case is a universal property of all nouns (Ouhalla, 1999). However, in some languages such as English, Case manifests overtly only in pronouns and covertly in lexical nouns.

19. (a) John plays football with Jane.
(b) He plays football with her.
(c) *Her plays football with she.

In the absence of Case overt markers on nominal items '*John and football'* in (19a), one would argue that Case is only property of pronouns (19b). However, the ungrammaticality of (19c) can only be accounted for by considering the Case markers realised. The pronouns *'her' and 'she'* are with the wrong Case markers, namely accusative and nominative cases, respectively. As a result, sentence (19c) is ungrammatical. Thus, with empirical evidence such as a substitution test, it can be established that anything nominal bears Case, whether optionally realised on not.

This line of argument is followed with respect to the demonstrative root in Chimakonde which, as pointed out, occurs optionally. As such, the remaining part of the demonstrative complex, namely agreement and deictic morphemes may merge with the head noun, as shown below.

20. (a) *nnandi (a)uno unatibu.*
n-nandi a-u-no u-na-tib-u
3-tree DMrt-3-Prox 3AgrS-TAM-heal-FV
'This tree is medicinal.'
(b) *nnandiuno unatibu*
n-nandi-u-no u-na-tib-u
3-tree-3-Prox 3AgrS-TAM-heal-FV
'This tree is medicinal.'

Example (20a) shows that the demonstrative root is optional in postnominal position. As such, the root merges with/cliticises onto the head noun (20b). As will be explicated in the following sections, the optional occurrence of a demonstrative root in the complex demonstrative affects the interpretation of the head noun.

In many Bantu languages, the demonstrative root ***a-*** may be realised as ***a-, e-,*** *or* ***o-,*** corresponding in form with the noun class prefix vowel of the head noun it co-occurs with. However, the demonstrative root in Chimakonde is morphologically invariable, contra to these other Bantu languages. This can be illustrated with nouns from classes 5 and 6 and 7 and 8 in Table 2 below.

Table 3: Invariable Demonstrative root in Chimakonde

Class	Noun	Demonstrative	Gloss
5	*Lidodo*	a-lino	'This leg'
6	*Madodo*	a-lano	'These legs'
7	*Chinanda*	a-chino	'This bed'
8	*Vinanda*	a-vino	'These beds'

The invariable nature of the demonstrative root in Chimakonde, as shown in Table 3, departs greatly from other Bantu languages and leaves a lot to be desired. However, such a conundrum is beyond the scope of this study.

The Demonstrative Agreement Morpheme (DEMagr)

The demonstrative agreement morpheme (DEMagr) in a complex demonstrative consists of a syllable whose vowel is homophonous with a noun class prefix vowel. The DEMagr is the only obligatory element on a complex demonstrative, whether in pre-nominal or post-nominal position, as illustrated below.

21. (a) *Ligali alino lininyata*.
li-gali a-li-no li-ni-nyat-a
5-car DEMrt-5DEMagr-PROX 5-be ugly-FV
'This car is ugly.'

(b) *Achila chilongo chinihila*.
a-chi-la chi-longo chi-ni-hil-a
DEMrt-7DEMagr-DISTAL 7-TAM-wear out-FV
'That pot is worn out.'

In example (21a), the postnominal demonstrative *'alino'* contains '-li- as an agreement marker whereas in (21b), the prenominal demonstrative *'achila'* contains **'-**chi- as an agreement marker. Neither in postnominal nor in prenominal position can any of these agreement markers be deleted.

The Deictic Morpheme

The deictic morpheme in Chimakonde expresses three spatial contrasts in distance between the speaker and an object, namely proximal, medial and distal (refer to Table 2 above). The deictic morpheme can optionally occur in the complex demonstrative, leaving demonstrative root and agreement morphemes alone. In other words, a deictic morpheme can be realised in its full or short form. This is illustrated in Table 3 below with proximal demonstratives from the first six noun classes in Chimakonde.

Table 4: First Six Noun Classes in Chimakonde

NCP	Full Form	Short Form	Example	Gloss
Mu-	*Ayuno*	*Ayu*	*munu ayu(no)*	'This person'
Va-	*Avano*	*Ava*	*vanu ava(no)*	'These people'
Mu-	*Auno*	*Au*	*nnandi au(no)*	'This tree'
mi-	*Aino*	*Ai*	*milandi ai(no)*	'These trees'
Li-	*Alino*	*Ali*	*lina ali(no)*	'This name'
Ma-	*Alano*	*ala*	*malina ala(no)*	'These names'

Source: Research findings, 2026

The full and short form of a deictic morpheme exhibits a little difference in the interpretation of a noun phrase. Whereas a full demonstrative form is used when the speaker holds an object being talked about, a short demonstrative form is used when the speaker is simply in the proximity of the object being expressed. This also extended to medial and distal demonstratives.

Interpretation of a Demonstrative in Post- and Pre-nominal Positions

It has been pointed out that the interpretation of a head noun changes when a demonstrative comes before or after the head in a discourse-pragmatic setting. However, no precise explanation has been offered as to how exactly this occurs, which this section does. As the majority of examples given illustrate, the typical position of a demonstrative in Chimakonde is to follow the head noun. In this configuration, the demonstrative root occurs optionally.

The (non)-occurrence of the demonstrative on the inflectional morphology of a demonstrative affects the interpretation of the DP. Consider the examples below.

22. (a) *Mwana ayuno analambila*.
mu-ana (a)-yu-no a-na-lambil-a
1-child DEMrt-1DEMagr-Prox 1AgrS-TAM-lie-FV
'This child lies.'

(b) *Lilombe alyi likanowa*.
li-lombe a-li li-ka-now-a
5-maize DEMrt-Prox 5AgrS-NEG-be sweet-FV
'This maize is not sweet.'

The head nouns *mwana* (child) and *lilombe* (maize) in example (22) are close to the speakers (proximal) and therefore they induce a deictic interpretation, a canonical meaning expressed by demonstratives cross-linguistically. As a result, the demonstrative root occurs optionally. As both referents of the head nouns are located in a physical setting where both the speakers and addressee are present, the referents are definite. The speakers would utter them while pointing to/touching the referents designated by the linguistic expressions, thus rightly guiding the addressee to the intended referents. However, the demonstrative root in these occurrences is optional. It is optional because the speaker does not have special meanings such as clarity, focus or emphasis that they would give to the referents of the head nouns. It can be noted that in many languages special or non-basic meanings are achieved through special/non-basic constructions such as cleft sentences (e.g., Radford, 2004 for English) or supra-segmental features such as tone (e.g., Aboh, 2010 for Kwa).

Now, consider demonstratives in prenominal position.

23. (a) *[3]*(A)yu mmahe akamala kuhita*.
a-yu m-mahe a-ka-mal-a ku-hit-a
DEMrt-1- 1-woman 1AgrS-NEG-know-FV 17-refuse-FV
'THIS[4] woman does not know how to refuse' (*Lit.* The woman is unfaithful.)

[3] Obligatory implying without which the intended interpretation cannot obtain.
[4] Emphasis/contrastive focus implying only this one.

(b) **(A)la makaka lanakala*.
a-la ma-kaka la-na-kalal-a
DEMrt-6 6-dried cassava 6AgrS-TAM-be bitter-FV
'THESE dried cassavas are bitter.'

As the parentheses around the demonstrative root in example (23) indicate, the root occurs obligatorily in the inflectional makeup of the demonstratives in prenominal position. The demonstrative root in this position is articulated with a high tone. The obligatory occurrence of the demonstrative root in this position changes the manner in which the head nouns are interpreted. In addition to being familiar, the referents of the head nouns are interpreted as emphatic and contrastive in the sense that they contrast with other possible referents in a given pragmatic-discourse setting (Repp, 2010). In (23a), the speaker has in their mind more than one woman. They then assess and compare the woman in vicinity against others. To this very woman in vicinity, the infidelity vice is attributed, as opposed to others. In (23b), the speaker must have tested the cassava physically and in contrast to other cassavas they attribute bitterness to the ones physically available in the context. It should be emphasized that these interpretations obtain only when the demonstrative root occurs obligatorily in prenominal position.

The examples given in (23) provide empirical evidence to postulate that the demonstrative root in Chimakonde is a determiner category endowed with definiteness and contrastive focus/ emphasis features. Theoretically, this suggests that a functional head bearing definiteness and focus (Foc) features should be projected in a structure representing the Chimakonde determiner phrase. This head will serve a goal bearing interpretable features to which the noun will raise to get an extra feature of emphasis.

The use of demonstrative to give nouns special meanings finds support in some other Bantu languages. Discussing the strategies used to indicate definiteness in Chiyao. Taji (2020: 59) provides cases where the demonstrative is used as an emphatic marker.

24. *Mw-anache jw-a-jilivile ma-kaka jula a-utwiche*.
1-chid REL-SM1-steal.PST 6-dried cassava 1DEM SM1-escape.PFV
'That/the child who stole dried cassava has escaped.'

As shown in example (24), the emphatic demonstrative in Chiyao has occurred after the head noun, contra to Chimakonde. However, Taji (2020) notes in passing that the demonstrative in post-nominal position should bear special tone for emphasis to be achieved.

According to van der wal (2015), information structure interpretation of constituents in Banu languages can be achieved through what she calls the conjoint/disjoint alternation. According to the scholar, the choice of either a conjoint or disjoint verb is determined by a relation that the verb has with a constituent that comes after it. She further asserts that conjoint verbs trigger the information-structure interpretation of the following constituent. According to Ndayiragije (1999), as cited in Van der wal (2015:16), Kirundi (JD62) is one of the Bantu languages that expresses the conjoint-disjoint alternation.

25. Abâna ba-á-nyôye amatá (Kirundi, van der wal, 2015: 16)
children 2SM-PAST-drink. PERF milk
Children drank milk. (not water)

In (25), the noun ***amatá*** is interpreted as focused following the conjoint verb ***ba-á-nyôye.***
In a study on Xhosa demonstratives, Van de Velde (2005: 14) provides cases where a prenominal demonstrative expresses emphasis whereas postnominal ones do not.

26. Lowo u-m-ntu (Xhosa, Van de Velde, 2005: 14)

1DEM.DIST AUG1-person
THAT person

According to the data provided in examples (25) through (26) is that in many Bantu languages special meanings such as emphasis or contrastive focus are indicated through special strategies. Correspondingly, Chimakonde, through a demonstrative in pre-nominal position, can express information-structural notions such as emphasis/focus.

Further Evidence: The Interaction between the DEMa and the Object Agreement Morpheme (AgrO)

It is assumed in many studies that the presence or an absence of an object agreement morpheme (in object marker in traditional parlance) in some Bantu languages correlates with the definiteness or indefiniteness reading of a head noun, respectively (Kimambo, 2018 for Kiswahili; Lusekelo, 2021 for Kinyakyusa; Mojapelo, 2013 for Northern Sotho). In Chimakonde, the head noun occurring with an object agreement morpheme is ambiguous between a reading in which a head noun is definite or indefinite unless the head noun contains modifiers which are assumed to be inherently definite such as demonstratives or pronominal anaphoric reinforcers (cf. Kraal, 2005; Makanjila, 2019).

27. *Mwana achitumbwele chikombe*.
mu-na a-chi-tumb-ile chi-kombe
1-child 1AgrS-7AgrO-break-PERF 7-glass
'The/child has broken the/a glass.'

As example (27) indicates, both subject and object DPs allow for the interpretations in which they are definite/specific or indefinite/non-specific, despite the occurrence of the object agreement morpheme (AgrO). The addressee has to rely on discourse-pragmatic cues for them to infer the proper referent intended by the speaker.

However, the interaction between the demonstrative root and an object agreement morpheme clears up the ambiguity. Since the demonstrative root is inherently definite whereas an object agreement morpheme is ambiguously definite or indefinite, the demonstrative root overrides the object agreement morpheme when they co-occur such that the head noun is interpreted with exclusive focus, suggesting that the speaker has only one entity in their mind designated by the linguistic expression.

28. (a) *Nnyeni a*(li)lambela lilombe *(a)lino*.
Mu-nyeni a-*(li)-lambel-a li-lombe *(a)-li-no
1-guest 1AgrS-5AgrO-want-FV 5-mazie DEMrt-5-Prox
'The guest wants this maize, this one.'

(b) *Valume vaviveda milandi (a)yi*.
va-lume va-vi-veda-a mi-landi a-yi-no
2-men 2agrS-4AgrO-FV 6-tree DEMrt-4-Prox
'The men are carving these trees.'

It can be recalled from section 1.6 that postnominal demonstratives afford the deictic interpretation of a head noun. Since demonstratives are inherently definite, head nouns occurring with demonstratives are also definite. However, additional interpretation construes when the demonstrative root and an object agreement morpheme co-occur in the post-nominal position. In post-nominal positions, the head noun is interpreted as exclusively focused when the demonstrative root and object agreement morpheme interact obligatorily such as in (18a). In contexts such as this, there is usually only one entity which a linguistic expression uttered by the speaker designates. To capture the meaning that it is only entity that is intended in this particular position, the speaker combines the demonstrative root and an object agreement morpheme.

In contexts where the demonstrative root interacts optionally with an object agreement morpheme, such as in (28b), the head noun is only definite but no exclusiveness of the head noun is implied.

In conclusion, what the examples in (28) indicate is that is possible to express information structure through the interaction between the demonstrative root and an object agreement morpheme. Specifically, the obligatory occurrence of the demonstrative root with an object agreement morpheme is crucial to interpreting the head noun as focused. This piece of evidence supports the view that the demonstrative root in Chimakonde is an instance of determiner category characterised as having focus and definiteness features.

In the next section, the structural diagrams for the DPs involving pre-nominal and post-nominal demonstratives are proposed. The structural representations consider the Minimalism and Cartography assumptions in structure building and presenting the information structural notions of focus in syntax, respectively.

Internal Structure of DPs Containing Demonstratives

In this section, structural diagrams representing the Chimakonde DP involving the head noun and post-nominal and pre-nominal demonstratives are proposed. The diagrams are informed by the Minimalist ideas, as elaborated in section 1.3. The interpretations of the DPs containing demonstratives are informed by the definiteness theory through the familiarity hypothesis.

Structure of the Chimakonde DP with a Post-nominal Demonstrative

As already established, a DP containing a post-nominal demonstrative, as in example (29) below, is deictic and definite.

29. *Mwana ayu*
mu-ana a-yu
1-child DEMrt-1DEMAgr
'This child' (*Lit. Child this*)

As noted earlier, the Minimalist framework assumes that nouns, such as ***mwana*** (child) in example (29), have the interpretable phi-features of number, person, and gender. Specifically, the noun in this example (and many others) is interpreted as definite through its occurrence with the demonstrative. As such, the noun has uninterpretable definiteness feature that has to be valued by a functional head carrying the corresponding definiteness feature, namely a determiner head in the form of the demonstrative root. Assuming that in Chimakonde the demonstratives (through demonstrative roots) are base- generated as heads, the proposed structural representation of the DP involving post-nominal demonstratives is as follows:

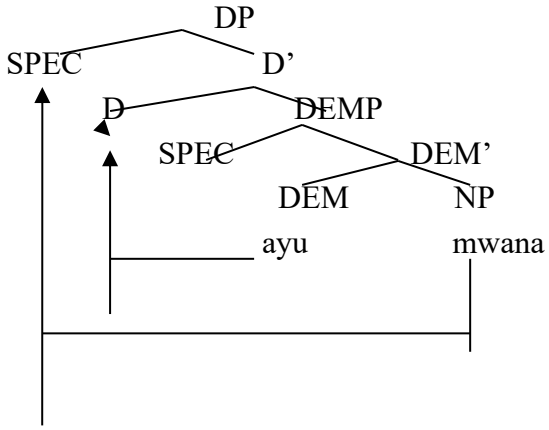


Figure 1: Structural Representation for the DP with a Post-nominal Demonstrative

The noun phrase (NP) which is lexically realized and headed by ***mwana*** (child) is indefinite. When it combines with the Demonstrative (DEM) *ayu* (this*)*, the NP is made definite as the child pointed out must be familiar to the speakers engaging in the discourse. To derive the surface order in which the

head noun comes before the demonstrative, the demonstrative (DEM), being a functional category endowed with the definiteness feature through the demonstrative root, first merges with the head noun to project a demonstrative phrase (DEMP). As can be observed in the configuration above, the D position is base-generated empty. Being strong and empty, D attracts the DEM (a functional head with the corresponding definiteness feature as D) generated under the DEMP to fill it out. As a result, the demonstrative raises to the D position. The lexical projection NP must have its definiteness feature checked and valued in a specifier position. This necessitates it to move to the specifier position of the determiner head to check the feature. When all this is done, the basic order in which the head noun precedes the demonstrative (i.e., N>DEM) obtains.

Structure of the Chimakonde DP with a Pre-nominal Demonstrative

Through various examples, it has been established that it is possible for a demonstrative to occur before a nominal head in Chimakonde. To cement this observation, an additional example is provided in (30) below.

30. (a) *Ava vana vakapilikana*.
a-va va-na va-ka-pilikan-a
DEMrt-2DEMagr 2-child 2AgrS-TAM-heed-FV
'THESE CHILDREN are not heedful.'

(b) *Achi chihima chikakudulike*.
a-chi chi-hima chi-ka-kudulik-e
DEMrt-7 7-well 7AgrS-NEG-be deep-FV
'THIS WELL is not deep.'

With the occurrence of the proximal demonstrative *ava* (these) and *achi* (this), the DPs in example (30) are familiar to the interlocutors through the physical setting. Additionally, with the proximal demonstratives occurring pre-nominally, the DPs are interpreted with added specificity (focus). Thus, the DPs are exhaustively focused. Note that the demonstrative root in the pre-nominal position is obligatory and exhibits a high tone. As such, the DPs are accentuated. Assuming with Rizzi (1997) that the left periphery of a functional head may contain focused materials, the data in these examples suggests that in Chimakonde a focus phrase hosting the focus interpretation of a DP is projected above a DP, as shown in the structural diagram below using example (30a).

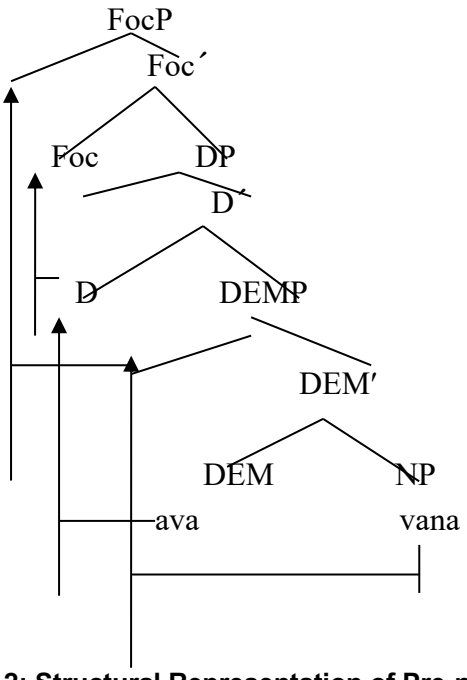


Figure 2: Structural Representation of Pre-nominal Demonstratives in Chimakonde

The DP in Figure 2 is both definite and focused. The derivation of the structure in Figure 2 can be accounted for as follows. First, the NP moves to Spec DEM′ to check its inflectional number and person features. Then, it moves to Spec, D′ for the definiteness feature provided by DEM. Finally, it raises to

Spec Foc′ to get focused. The demonstrative moves to the D head position to fill out this position which is base-generated empty. Finally, it moves to the Foc head position to fill it out but also to select the DEMP which contains the focused NP *(vana).*

Concluding Remarks

This study explored the structure of the Chimakonde determiner phrase. This was done by exploring the reading that obtains when a demonstrative occurs before and after a head noun. Guided by the familiarity hypothesis postulated by Lyons (1999), the study established that prenominal demonstratives induce added specificity reading whereas post-nominal demonstratives convey deictic meaning. However, it was argued that exclusive focus could be expressed in the post-nominal position when the demonstrative root interacts obligatorily with an object agreement morpheme. Following Lyons (1999) and Repp (2010), added specificity was understood as a feature by which a head noun is not only familiar to an addressee but also emphatic. Following these interpretations, it was proposed that the maximal projection of a Chimakonde nominal expression should be a DP rather than an NP. The DP structure for a Chimakonde nominal expression was sketched following the Minimalist assumptions as explicated in Chomsky (1993) and subsequent work. Since the prenominal demonstrative in Chimakonde induces a focus/emphasis interpretation of the noun it occurs with, a focus phrase, following Rizzi (1997), was assumed to project above a DP.

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Author Biography

Dominick Makanjila holds a PhD in African Languages from Stellenbosch University, South Africa. He works with the Department of Foreign Languages and Linguistics at the University of Dar es Salaam. His research interests lie in the morpho-syntax of African languages. He teaches undergraduate and postgraduate courses and supervises postgraduate students.