

## Relative clauses in Swahili – internal relation and external relation

Nobuko Yoneda

(Research Institute for World Languages, Osaka University / ILCAA Joint Researcher)

Two types of relative clauses are found in Swahili: one marked with the overt complementizer *amba-* (“*amba* relative”) and the other without it (“*amba-less* relative”).

There are some “well known” restrictions that apply only to *amba-less* relatives; first, tense markers that can be used are limited, and second, the verb must be placed immediately after the head noun. It has been generally accepted that these restrictions are the major characteristics of *amba-less* relatives which essentially distinguish them from *amba* relatives.

While this is basically correct, previous studies have looked into only the constructions in which the head noun holds an “internal relation” to the relative clause. Other types of relations, namely appositive and external, have never been taken into account.

Relative clauses can be categorized into three groups according to the relation that holds between the relative clause and its head noun:

Internal relation: There is a case relation between the head noun and the relative clause.

Appositive relation: The relative clause expresses the content of the head noun.

External relation: There is no case relation but an interrelation between the head noun and the relative clause.

In this presentation, we will discuss the behavior of relative clauses in regard to these three possible relations and explain a fundamental difference between the two types of relative clauses in Swahili. The *amba-less* relatives can modify mainly the head nouns that hold internal relations with the relative clauses. In contrast, the *amba* relatives can modify not only the head nouns that have internal relation, but also those in appositive or external relation with the relative clause.